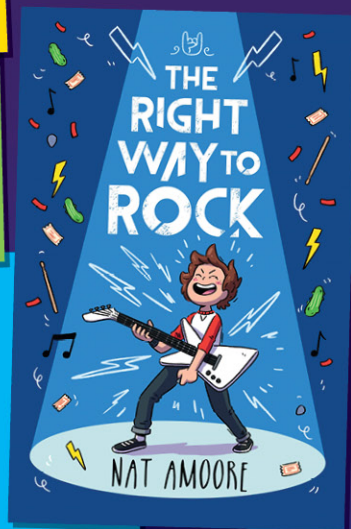


NAT AMOORE

We catch up with author Nat Amooore and find out about her latest book *The Right Way To Rock*

JK: Can you please give us a very quick intro to your new book *The Right Way To Rock*?

NA: Sure, I'd LOVE to. So, it's the third and final (I think) book set in the 'Watterson World'. It follows Mac Cooper (who we very briefly met in *The Power Of Positive Pranking*) who comes from a family who love rock! Mac however has a secret passion for Broadway Musicals. He joins a secret Broadway Society, meets a new friend and brings the town together to save the arts in the only appropriate way to end an epic trilogy – with *Watterson: The Musical!*



JK: Where did the idea for this book come from, do you have a musical background?

NA: I love music! I always have. I wouldn't say I am particularly musical, certainly not as musical as I'd like to be but music makes me feel things in a way that I can't really compare to anything else. I can't sing, I played saxophone for a bit, I like to dance but I'm not amazing at it, I have OK rhythm, I can read music but not well, but I don't care – I just LOVE music! And I have loved, listened to and memorised Broadway musicals since I could walk, even snagging a few roles that were more character-driven than needing an awesome singing voice (throwback to my Year 7 role as The Artful Dodger in *Oliver!*).

So, this book is a bit about that love of music but also a lot about finding your own tune and being brave enough to step out of the path that is expected of you. Mac's fear of disappointing his mother is real and he needs to find a way to be himself despite that fear.

JK: When did you start writing stories and what was your first story?

NA: Honestly, I couldn't tell you when it started. Before I could even write I was making my parents sit down in the lounge room while I acted out stories in front of them (playing ALL the roles of course) while they were bored to death! I told bedtime stories to my younger cousins about Fernanda the chicken who farted her way to success. And I used to staple together pages to make books that I could write and illustrate (although I am a terrible drawer). Storytelling is in my blood in all its forms. It's probably why I love music so much because it's just another form of storytelling.



JK: Who is your favourite character in *The Right Way To Rock*?

NA: Well, there are a few comebacks of some of my favourite characters from *Secrets Of A Schoolyard Millionaire* and *The Power Of Positive Pranking* like Mr Piddles (who will always be a fav!) but as far as the new characters go, I REALLY love Mac's little brother Stevie. He is loosely based on my next door neighbour (who just moved recently and I was SO sad!) and he just has that awesome four-year-old-ness that I love and wish I still had (like who needs pants right!?!?).

JK: Can we look forward to another wonderful story from you that you might have started or have in your mind?

NA: You can! I have another book coming out in 2022 which doesn't have anything to do with my first three books. It's a stand-alone middle grade novel about four kids who are obsessed with a comic book and when they hear it is being made into a movie up on the Gold Coast, they run away to audition for the lead roles.

That one is already written so I am also starting to brainstorm about what might come after that and am playing with some ideas for one book based on the caravan park where I used to holiday as a kid and another book involving some animals characters – all very mysterious right?

JK: What is your number one writing tip for kids?

NA: No fear! There will always be mistakes in your writing. A spelling error, some incorrect grammar, missed punctuation. Write like all those things don't matter, tell your story, let it ooze out of you onto the page. You can come back and fix all that other stuff later. But if there's nothing on the page, you've got nothing to fix. Story first! Get the story out and then concentrate on all those little details. Remember, people read for the joy of a story, not for the joy of well-placed punctuation.

JK: If you were stuck on a desert island, what three items would you choose to take with you and why?

NA: My best friend because they are WAY more entertaining than anything electronic and never run out of power. An endless supply of Shin Ramyun noodles because, um duh, have you tasted them? And a solar powered iPod with Bluetooth speakers, loaded with all the best songs ever written because (like Mac Cooper says) without music, the world is just blah!

