

EPISODE **59**

Chatting with the author of the Ashton Place series

Guest: Maryrose Wood

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Meet Maryrose Wood



She has been an actor, a director, a playwright, and a comedian. Now, Maryrose teaches fiction writing at NYU and loves to speak to young readers and writers at schools.

The Incurable Children of Ashton Place is Maryrose's first series for middle grade readers. Book number five, The Unmapped Sea was named a best children's book of 2015 by NPR.

You can find out more at her website, maryrosewood.com.

In This Episode

Sarah and Maryrose talk about how her own experience as a mother and a homeschooler influenced her books. She talks about her own writing process and encourages young writers to play with language.

She tells us about her favorite books as a child and her favorite books to read aloud to her kids. She even reads a selection from one of her books. And there is howling!

The Listening Guide

Use this guide to skip to parts that most interest you, or listen to the entire podcast.

- 4:50 A little more about Maryrose's family
- 6:30 All about The Incurrible Children
- 10:30 The original idea for The Incurrible Children
- 14:00 Maryrose's own sweet, wild children
- 16:30 Agatha Swanburne's academy
- 21:30 Favorite childhood books
- 25:15 Maryrose's writing process
- 28:30 Knowing where the writing is going
- 35:00 Jon Klassens's process
- 38:20 Working with an illustrator
- 40:00 Reading with her own children
- 43:20 Storytime with Maryrose
- 48:10 Let the Kids Speak

I felt like from the time they were infants one of the great advantages of being a mother was that someday in the not too distant future I would be able to read *The Phantom Tollbooth* aloud to somebody who had never heard it before. - Maryrose Wood

Quotes and Questions

* **Planning with an open hand.**

“And they are delightful and prove to be very adept pupils but she has to really change, as we do when we work with children, she has to really adapt her plan, her preconceived notion about what she was going to do, to the children’s needs.”

Ah, adapting our plans and preconceived notions to the actual child in front of us. There’s the rub! Sarah calls it planning with an open hand: “God is glorified even when the day looks nothing like it did when I mapped it out on paper. I’m so intent on having things go my way that I don’t leave room for Him to turn the whole thing on its head and do with it what He wills.” [Read the rest here!](#)

* **Giving ourselves grace.**

“We see completed published books in a hard cover all the time, and we think that that’s what it is to write, but we don’t see is all the mess.”

We do this as homeschoolers too! We judge our humble beginnings against families who have already found their groove. Let’s give ourselves grace and know that we are exactly the parents that God has given us exactly what we need to do this work.

* **True classics.**

“Charlotte’s Web and The Hobbit are...books that you wouldn’t change a word of, and that just get better the more times you read them and the older you get the better these books get. And to me that’s the mark of a true classic.”

What a wonderful definition of a classic! What books go on your list of classics? And what about your children’s list?

Show Notes

Books from today's episode:

- [The Incurable Children Ashton Place](#)
- [Jane Eyre](#)
- [Curious George](#)
- [No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency](#)
- [The Jungle Book](#)
- [Black Beauty](#)
- [The Black Stallion](#)
- [My Friend Flicka](#)
- [The Golden Treasury of Children's Literature](#)
- [A Wrinkle in Time](#)
- [Game of Thrones](#)
- [The Hobbit](#)
- [Wonder](#)
- [Harry Potter](#)
- [Calvin and Hobbes](#)
- [The Phantom Tollbooth](#)
- [Charlotte's Web](#)
- [Some Writer](#)

Other links from today's show:

- [Maryrose's site](#)
- Registration is opening up again for 10 days in March- head to RARMembership.com to get on waiting list for when doors open!

- [RAR Bonus Episode with Melissa Sweet](#)

To find more resources to help you build your family culture around books, visit ReadAloudRevival.com.