



RAR 69 – Helen Oxenbury

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You’re listening to the Read-Aloud Revival podcast. This is the podcast that helps you make meaningful and lasting connections with your kids through books.

Hello, hello, Sarah Mackenzie here. You’ve got episode 69 of the Read-Aloud Revival podcast. Thanks for joining me. Today’s episode is going to appeal especially to our young writers and artists. We’re meeting a longtime favorite author and illustrator today, and she’s going to give us a bit of behind-the-scenes into how she makes her books. But before we get to that conversation I want to make sure you know that Read-Aloud Revival premium access is opening up enrollment soon. We only open enrollment twice a year at premium access membership so you don’t want to miss it. It’s hard to connect with our kids in this busy, noisy, crazy world, right? But sharing books with our kids gives us a chance to be fully and completely present. I’m a busy homeschooling mom of six myself so believe me when I say that I know that when life feels crazy spending a few minutes reading to my kids, even those who can read to themselves, maybe especially to those

who can read to themselves, is the best and most important thing I do all day. The great news is that connecting with our kids through books is easier than you might think. In Read-Aloud Revival premium access we do it in three simple steps: first, equipping ourselves with master classes, cheat sheets, and booklists; second, by inspiring our kids with live video streams with the best authors and illustrators around as well as whole family workshops on writing and illustrating taught by published authors and illustrators; and third, connecting with like-minded families who are doing the same thing we are. It’s \$15 a month, enrollment opens just twice a year. We’re opening the doors again in October. If you want to make sure you don’t miss out when that happens, get on the waiting list. You can do that by popping your email into the page at RARMembership.com. OK, are you ready? Then let’s get into today’s interview. I can’t wait.

3:03 Meet Helen Oxenbury

If you and your kids have ever gone on a bear hunt you are well-familiar with today’s guest. Helen Oxenbury is an illustrator and writer. You might know her books she’s worked on as *Farmer Duck*, *There’s Going to Be a Baby*, and of course, *We’re Going on a Bear Hunt*. She created some of my very, very favorite board books that are the *Tom and Pippo* series. She’s also illustrated the new book, *The Giant Jumperee* which is, I am completely convinced, destined to become a classic. She’s a two-time winner and four-time runner up for the annual Kate Greenaway Medal (the British Librarian’s Award for Illustration) and for the 50th anniversary of that medal, her 1999 illustrated edition of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* was named one of the top 10 winning works. She lives in North London



with her husband, John Burningham. You'll know him too as he is the brilliant author and illustrator behind the *Mr. Gumpy series*. Those are favorites in my house. I'm thrilled to have Helen Oxenbury with us today, Helen, welcome to the Read-Aloud Revival.

Helen: Thank you. A pleasure to talk to you.

Sarah: Oh, it's so wonderful to talk to you as well. Do you have any idea at this point how many books you've illustrated?

Helen: Do you know what? I absolutely have no idea. Had I known you were going to ask this question I would have found out but just off the top of my head, no, I have no idea I'm afraid.

Sarah: OK, so tell us ...

Helen: Gosh, I think it's getting, oh gosh, close to the hundred mark.

Sarah: Oh, I'm sure. I was actually, kind of, poking around looking to see how many books of yours I don't know about and we have so many of them in our house and oh my goodness, a lot. You have a lot of books under your belt.

Helen: Well, that's 45 years worth of work.

Sarah: Yeah, 45 years.

Helen: That has to be quite a lot.

Sarah: OK, so tell us a little bit about you and your family before we launch on into talking about your illustrations and your children's books.

Helen: Right.

Sarah: So, you live in North London with John Burningham. So, this is a little back story too. I had no idea you were married to John Burningham until we were getting ready to talk to you and I just squealed out loud when I figured

that out because I thought, 'Oh, you've got to be kidding, I love his work as well,' so...

Helen: Yes, really, I suppose he's the reason that I started doing children's books because I didn't actually study illustration, I settled into design at art school, which is where we met. And it was only after I'd worked several years in the theatre and films and television that we started a family, and it was impossible for me to do any sort of work in television because I wanted to be with the children. And I watched John do several children's books at that point and I thought, 'Well, perhaps you know, I'll have a go at that.' And it was something I could do at home. And I loved it straight away and thought, 'Yes, this is really what I want to do.'

Sarah: So, how many kids do you have?

Helen: Three.

Sarah: Three. OK. Wonderful. So they grew up with both of their parents making children's books?

Helen: Yes.

Sarah: That's amazing, I can't even imagine what that must have been like.

Helen: Are you going to ask me if we read our books to the children?

Sarah: Yeah.

Helen: And it's very strange that we don't, we didn't.

Sarah: Really?

Helen: No. I think, you have enough by the time you've done a book, and then to actually sort of read it to the children every night was just not on, we read a lot to them but not our books.



Sarah: What kind of books did you like to read to them?

Helen: Well, they loved, do you know the *Rupert Bear* stories?

Sarah: No. I don't know. *Rupert Bear*.

Helen: I didn't have any [****Inaudible**** 6:54] actually. And they loved the, do you know *Babar* books, yes, they loved those. And they loved *Dr. Seuss*.

Sarah: Of course.

Helen: Yes, you must know him. And, *Tintin*.

Sarah: Oh yes.

Helen: Really, no, we didn't sort of read our books to them.

Sarah: I can imagine that. I can imagine after you have spent so many hours poring over these books that you think, "Yeah, I'm done with that."

Helen: Exactly. That's exactly right, yes, that you want to read something fresh.

7:28 Becoming an artist

Sarah: Exactly. Did you draw a lot when you were growing up?

Helen: Yes, I suppose I did. I was away from school, nursery school and primary school, a lot when I was young because I had asthma rather badly, and so I spent a lot of time at home, and because there was no television in those days, really, not even a radio; my parents radio but it was in another room, and I was given lots of bits of paper and crayons and pencils, and sort of got on with it. So, yes, I did a lot of drawing as a child.

Sarah: You and John, together, collaborated on the book, *There's Going to Be a Baby*. Tell me about the experience of making a book together.

Helen: Well, it was alright, I suppose. It's about the same as doing a book with anybody else. We sort of talked about it a lot at the beginning, to get the story right, to get the format right, and the text and all that sort of thing, together with the art director. But then when all that was decided I was sort of just left on my own to get on with it, which is what I wanted anyway. It's not easy to have somebody looking over your shoulder, saying, "I didn't see it like that" or "I wish you had done her differently" (I don't think I could work like that) but John knows that and he left me alone which was very good.

Sarah: So you did the writing together and then you did the illustrations on that one, is that right?

Helen: And I did the illustrations, yes.

Sarah: OK. I was wondering about that because we talk to a lot of picture book writers and illustrators at Read-Aloud Revival and it's interesting to hear ... it makes sense to hear how important it is for an illustrator just to be let alone with text to create the pictures as they see them in their mind, so I wondered with you being in the same home how that would be; someone saying, "That's not what I thought it should be like."

Helen: Yes. I see it could have been trouble but we did avoid it somehow.

Sarah: Well, he knew because he's an artist too, right? So he knew the thing that was important.

Helen: Exactly, yes.



9:45 The Giant Jumperee

Sarah: OK, so I'm really excited to talk about your newest book, *The Giant Jumperee*. This is my favorite picture book of the year, for sure. I picked it up randomly when I was at the supermarket actually, getting groceries, or actually I can't remember what I went to go to the grocery store for, something else, and I saw it there and I saw Julia Donaldson and Helen Oxenbury on the cover and I didn't even flip through it, I just grabbed it and bought it. That's just going to be something we have to have for our shelf, right there. I just knew with the names on the cover.

Helen: Oh, how lovely!

Sarah: Julia Donaldson, of course, writes really delightful text but the expressions that you put on the animals faces in that book are just priceless. So tell me about illustrating that book. I heard that she requested you specifically to illustrate.

Helen: Yes. Gosh, [****inaudible**** 10:33] to hear because I'm such an admirer of her work as a writer for children and gosh, I absolutely jumped at it. But what attracted me most, of course, was these animals. I just knew that I could add to the character of the animals. She doesn't go into much description about them which is wonderful for an illustrator because you then can put in the extra bits with illustration.

Sarah: Yes. And I think the facial expressions really add a depth to the characters in that book and so, I read it ... so the rest of that story is that I brought the book home from the supermarket, I kind of forgot about it, it was dinnertime, we have 6 kids, it was crazy, and we got everybody to bed, and I went to go upstairs to bed and thought, 'Oh, I forgot to look at that book,' so I

went back downstairs in the dark of the house, clicked on the kitchen light and opened it up and read it to myself and started cracking up laughing. And my husband is like, "You're reading a picture book to yourself and laughing out loud?" And I'm like, "Look at this book!" That's how delightful the illustrations are.

Helen: Oh, that's lovely. How it started out it didn't finish up in the same way. It did evolve, which is what often happens with a children's book. You sort of do some illustrations, 'I could see it could be done in another way' and then so you scrap what you've done and that's how I went along. And it was great fun. Loved it.

12:14 Helen's favorites

Sarah: That makes me wonder, how long did it take you to illustrate that book? Do you remember?

Helen: Well, from the beginning to end from the first, sort of, thinking about the size of the book and all that sort of thing, I should think probably about a year.

Sarah: OK. Yeah, that's what I think I hear often. Does that seem pretty standard for you, about a year to work with a book?

Helen: Yes, I think it is now. When I was younger I used to, often, do two or three a books a year...

Sarah: Oh wow.

Helen: ... but I don't seem to be able to do that now.

Sarah: Yeah, yeah. Do you have a favorite? Do you have a favorite book you've ever worked on?

Helen: *The Jumperee* comes quite close to the top but there's another one I really had such fun



doing and loved doing and it was called *So Much*.

Sarah: I don't think I've seen that one.

Helen: Well, it is lovely. It was about people.

Sarah: OK.

Helen: No animals but perhaps you should ...

Sarah: I just found it.

Helen: Go and get it.

Sarah: Yeah, is it by Trish Cook?

Helen: Trish Cook, that's right.

Sarah: I'm getting it right now, I just put it in my cart. Oh, it looks lovely. I love this.

Helen: In fact, that was great fun. I enjoyed doing *The Bear Hunt*, *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, and I enjoyed doing *Alice* although I found *Alice* quite alarming to start with until I got into it.

Sarah: What made it alarming?

Helen: Well, it had been done so many times by so many wonderful illustrators and I just thought, 'Why am I doing this again? What can I contribute to this wonderful story?' I think in the end you have to think, 'Well, just stop thinking about it and just get on and do it' which is what I did but I suppose my plan was to make it much more of a picture book and therefore much more accessible to children today because it's quite wordy.

Sarah: Yes.

Helen: And I think it did need the help of illustration.

Sarah: And your illustrations in that one are ... I love *Alice* in particular because she looks very

much like a girl that kids today could relate to, could imagine themselves being.

Helen: Yes. She's much more, sort of, relaxed and easy within herself. And I loved Tanniel stories and I'm sure everybody in the end will go back to Tanniel who illustrated *Alice* but I find it a little bit frightening and *Alice* a little bit stiff.

14:45 Helen's artistic methods

Sarah: Do you use Watercolor when you're illustrating?

Helen: Yes. Well, I think the text rather indicates what medium one should use.

Sarah: OK.

Helen: For instance, there's so much of books I was talking to you about it definitely needed, well there's a paint called *gauche*, and it's quite a heavy paint and it's very dense but very, sort of, vibrant colors. Where, something like *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* which is landscapes I think lends itself to watercolor. I sort of rather get led by the atmosphere of the text.

Sarah: I'm looking at a lot of the covers and illustrations of your books, just kind of skimming here the ones that I love and the ones that I've never seen, and I can see how the watercolor has a softer appearance, maybe? Is that the right word? I'm not sure if that's the right word.

Helen: You can get a lot of atmosphere with watercolor ...

Sarah: Yeah.

Helen: ... with *gauche* it is, you get into strong shapes and colors ...

Sarah: Yeah.



Helen: ... which suits some stories. There's another book I illustrated in gauche was *Big Mama Makes the World* by Phyllis Root.

Sarah: Yes! I've seen that one.

Helen: Yes, that also leant itself, I think, to gauche. It's difficult to explain but it's just the feeling you get when you read the text. And it's almost immediate too.

Sarah: Really? Wow! OK, so you just know? You read the text and think, 'OK, if I'm going to make this one, I know ...'

Helen: Yes, I sort of immediately see how it would look by either watercolor or gauche.

Sarah: You do both illustrating other people's books, of course, and your own books that you write the book yourself. Do you have a preference to illustrating your own or illustrating someone else's?

Helen: It is easier illustrating somebody else's ...

Sarah: Oh, interesting.

Helen: ... because you've got something to start with. When you write your own it's absolutely a blank canvas and it is quite tricky.

Sarah: Yeah, yeah.

Helen: It's getting the first idea onto the page. And then as all good stories are to have a beginning, a middle, and an end, and I find the ending of stories is terribly, terribly difficult.

Sarah: Interesting. Why do you think makes the ending so difficult?

Helen: To have an idea is, you could have lots of ideas, but to actually make it into a story with a good ending, a satisfying ending, is very difficult and I think Julia Donaldson does that beautifully.

Sarah: She does.

Helen: And I think my husband, John, also does that rather well.

Sarah: Yes. Like at the end of *Mr. Gumby* books their picnic and ...

Helen: It's got to be satisfying.

Sarah: Yeah, exactly.

Helen: Not, you know, obviously quite uplifting too, I think. You don't want to leave a child feeling low or depressed after with a story.

Sarah: I really think that's the mark of an excellent book is when you finish it and you have, sort of, a ... even books that end up being heavy or sad in content, I think the really best writers and illustrators still leave you at the very end with this underlying sense of hope and satisfaction.

Helen: Yes, yes. I think so.

18:20 Drawing babies

Sarah: I really love the way you draw babies, in particular. You seem to have a particular gift for drawing babies especially well. Do you use memories of your own children as babies as inspiration or did you draw a lot of these when they were babies? You just have a gift for that really baby/toddler age.

Helen: Well, I just got, very recently, two new babies in the family, and I'm getting all sort of baby book minded at the moment.

Sarah: Oh yeah, I bet. Grandbabies?

Helen: Yes, yes. I just love looking at them. I think they're absolutely amazing little things. It's wonderful to draw them. I mean I will never quite get them right; you know it's lovely to try.



Sarah: I also really appreciate how so many of your books, your board books with babies, show a diversity in them like *Tickle Tickle* just as one example, but so many of them. I love that so much so that no matter who's reading this book to their little babies their babies are going to see themselves and they're going to see their families inside the illustrations. I love that.

Helen: Yes, yes. Absolutely [****inaudible**** 19:31] is how young they can actually appreciate looking at these board books that I did, that series, six, seven months old, they love them. And years ago they were considered sort of vegetables at that age. You know? Of course you don't show them books. Seven months old, six months old. They really look at them and love them.

Sarah: They do. They do. And then they continue to because I have twin boys now who are four and they will continue to look at the board books they loved as babies and they can recite a lot of them from memory.

Helen: Yes, yes. They're just like sponges, you know. They love it.

Sarah: I love, especially, there's a set of your board books that's called *Baby Love* that has four of those board books we're talking about. I'm going to put a link to those. And by the way, listeners, when you're listening to this podcast, go ahead and head to ReadAloudRevival.com and look for this episode because we will have links to a lot of Helen's work there in the Show Notes so that you can find the books that we're talking about without having to dig around on your own. We'll just make it really easy for you to find them. Can we talk a little bit about ... I know you said, so you use watercolor (now, I can't remember the other kind of paint you said you used, what was that called?).

Helen: It's called gauche.

Sarah: Do you have any favorite pens or pencils or watercolor brands or anything? I'm asking because we have a lot of young aspiring artists who listen to the Read-Aloud Revival and they love to know what their favorite artists use.

Helen: Yes, yes. Well, it's terribly uninteresting and not very exciting at all. As long as I've got a series of lovely sharp lead pencils and a box, honestly, it can be a child's box of watercolors, and some good watercolor paper, I'm fine. That's all I need. Of course, if I do something with gauche then I would need a whole range of tubes of paint but I really don't, sort of, need very much.

Sarah: I love that because that is something our young illustrators and artists can do, probably with a lot of the materials they already have stashed away in their home, right?

Helen: Yes, probably. Yes, it's quite important to get good quality paper because if you get, sort of, rotten quality it all sort of recoils or screws up and it's rather depressing so get good quality paper and on top of that you don't need much else. I mean, crayons is fine but nothing too sophisticated or elaborate.

22:30 Going on a Bear Hunt

Sarah: I almost forgot I wanted to ask you this question about babies because we were talking about you drawing babies. OK, so the book that probably most of our listeners have definitely read, probably have in their house even is the board book, *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* written by Michael Rosen. So, I heard a rumor that the author had more royal characters in mind and then you turned them into children. Can you tell me about that?



Helen: Yes. He did. I think he saw the line of kings and queens and jesters and that sort of thing, I think, if I'm right, and I couldn't see it that way at all. But fortunately, like all the lovely authors that I've worked with he left me on my own and let me do it as I wanted to and my publisher said, "You have to do it the way you see it" and so I did. And I saw it in the end as a family outing but I didn't want to include adults but everybody thinks the older brother is the father, which doesn't matter but I didn't actually intend it to be the father.

Sarah: So you intended it to be a group of children?

Helen: A group of children with an older brother with his siblings.

Sarah: I love that. You know what, I thought it was the father too but thinking through the illustrations ...

Helen: I know, everybody does.

Sarah: ... I love, I love that it's the older brother.

Helen: Yes, it can work as a father. It doesn't really matter but that was my intention.

Sarah: It makes more sense saying it as an older brother because ... it just makes more sense to have a group of children exploring. It's such a fun read. My kids never get tired of that book. I don't know how many, I would say hundreds of times I've read it, but I'm sure it's hundreds.

Helen: I think it's absolutely **[**inaudible** 24:21]** when I did it I had no idea that it would be so loved by children, absolute, sort of total surprise.

Sarah: I think it's partly the repetition, it's partly the ... especially with my really young kids, it's the excitement that they know what's coming, you know, the swishy swashy, they can say it all,

but also, they always want to make sure that they get back to the house.

Helen: Yes.

Sarah: And then that final page where the bear's walking back home, my 4 year old twins always say, "Oh, he just wanted to play."

Helen: Yes, that's right. That's right. That wasn't in the text.

Sarah: Yeah, they just picked that up and decided that's what the bear looks like to them; his posture of kind of 'bummed out.'

Helen: Yes, so disappointed. Yes. But it does go through the lots of adventure, a little bit of fear which is no bad thing, and then the excitement, and the action, too, is great, the repetition, and then there's this terrible run back home and getting into bed and again, it's that satisfying end.

Sarah: Yes, exactly - that satisfying end. That's an important piece, I think, we're uncovering. So, many of your books include animals and I know that kids listening today would love to know what your favorite animal is? Do you have a favorite? Or a favorite to draw, maybe?

Helen: I don't have a favorite. I've had dogs all my life and I would never be without one; they are just the most wonderful company that you can think of, but I really do love all animals and I'm interested in all animals from the largest, from the biggest elephant to the tiniest little mouse. I don't find any of them repulsive or anything, I think they're remarkable.

Sarah: Do you find animals or people are harder to draw?

Helen: I think probably people. There's such a variety of animals and the giraffe is the most



difficult thing to draw, it's legs bend in all an extraordinary way but probably people who are more difficult because everybody knows what a person looks like and you jolly well got to get it right, you know?

26:56 Illustration tips

Sarah: So, for kids who are listening and would like to draw more animals in their own illustrations or their own drawings, do you have any tips? Do you look at pictures of real animals when you draw, or?

Helen: Sometimes, sometimes. But my studio's very near London Zoo and I go there a lot and I think what I would say is just look at animals, just look at them, see how they're together. See how their legs are fitted onto their hips and how their heads are fitted onto their shoulders. I mean, that's really the key is just looking. And practicing, I suppose.

Sarah: Practicing. And looking. That's one of the things I think I notice in a lot of your works. I'm thinking back to one of your board books, *Eating Out...*

Helen: Oh yes.

Sarah: So what I love about this as a parent is ... so, for anyone who's listening and has not seen this book, it's basically a book where the mom is too tired to cook so they go out to supper as a family but then of course someone has to use the bathroom and someone falls and it's just a disaster. Every time my husband and I take our kids to eat it's a disaster so I have a strong affection for this book, because what I feel like is so many of your books is you looking at the world and then giving us this fresh vision and helping us see it; see the things that are all around us. Like, I can see how so much of what you draw is just

the things that you've seen but it somehow gives me, the reader, a fresh vision into my own life.

Helen: Yes, of course it's firsthand experience and also adults, they think that going for a ride in the car is going to be as restful of a break for the child as it is for them. And of course, it's not! A child doesn't sit in the back and look at the scenery. It's a lovely thing for adults to do. And once we were going to a restaurant a child so much prefers to have Mum's home cooking but of course it's a treat for parents to go out.

Sarah: Right.

Helen: And then we have to, you're rather, sort of, trying to force children to do things because we like to do them and it's really not a child-like thing to do at all.

Sarah: Exactly! And every time we do it my husband and I look at each other, like, "Why did we think this was actually going to be restful? This is more exhausting than making a pot of spaghetti at home."

Helen: And one never learns.

Sarah: Yeah, exactly.

Helen: You find yourself doing it again and again.

Sarah: I know!

Helen: And saying at the end, "No, never again!"

Sarah: That's so true. So, can you tell us anything about what you're working on now?

Helen: Right at this very moment I am not working on anything, believe it or not, but there is a twinkle in my eye which I never sort of talk about when it's at the twinkle stage so there is something but it's not even put on paper yet.

Sarah: Love that! Twinkle in your eye. Well, we will definitely not insist that you share your



twinkle with us. We'll just wait for you to bring your gift to the world and then we'll all rush out to see it because your work never fails to disappoint.

Helen: Oh thank you.

Sarah: Well, Helen, thank you so, so very much. This has been a lovely conversation. I'm really excited to share it with the people in the Read-Aloud Revival community. And what fun! I don't think I've ever called someone ... this is going to sound funny ... I don't think I've ever called someone for the show who's in London or England or overseas at all, actually, so this has been a fun thing for me.

Helen: Oh fantastic. Well, it's been lovely for me. It's been so nice talking to you.

Sarah: Well, it's been lovely to chat with you as well. And I can't wait to see what you make next. Thank you so much for joining me.

30:52 Let the Kids Speak

Now it's time for Let the Kids Speak. This is my favorite part of the podcast where kids tell us about their favorite stories that have been read aloud to them.

Child1: [Mom: What's your name?] Simon Michael Dugenhauser. [Mom: Simon Michael Dugenhauser how old are you?] 2. [Mom: 2? You're a big boy. Where do you live?] With mama. [Mom: With your mommy and your daddy and your family.] Can we do it again? Can we do it again? [Mom: OK, what's your favorite book?] *The Little Blue Truck*. [Mom: *The Little Blue Truck*. What's your favorite part?] The little blue truck. [Mom: The little blue truck is your favorite part. That's right.] Can we do it again? [Mom: You want to read it again? OK.]

Child2: I'm Vivien from Oregon. One of my favorite books is *Adventures with Waffles*. There are lots of funny parts like when Charles' grandpa put the rolling pin and the bazooka and when they tried to put a hole in the boat. We all laughed a lot.

Child3: Hi, my name is Silas. I am 5 years old. My favorite book is *Dash*. He can run on water.

Child4: Hi, my name is Abel and I'm from Ontario, Canada, and I'm 4 years old, and my favorite book is *Peter Pan* that my mother has read out loud to me, and I like it because it has fighting in it and there's a crocodile in it and it's fierce, my J. M. Barrie.

Child5: [Mom: Say hi, my name is Isabelle.] Hi, my name is Isabelle. [Mom: And I'm 2 years old.] I'm 2 years old. [Mom: And I'm from Ontario, Canada.] Ontario, Canada. [Mom: And my favorite book is... *Mockingbird*.] *Mockingbird*. [Mom: By Alan Alfred.] Alfred. [Mom: And, why do you like the book?] Cause there's a baby. [Mom: Because there's a baby in it?] Yes.

Child6: My name is Stacy and I'm 5 years old and I live in California and my favorite book is *Beatrix Potter*, my favorite part of it is when the rats gets a rolling pin out of it and a butter out of it. Bye.

Child7: Hi, I'm Isaac. I'm 11 years old and I live in California and one of my favorite books is *Mystery of the Roman Ransom*. It is a funny book that takes place in ancient Rome. My favorite part is when Rufus escapes the Catacombs with a lion to save his friends.

Child8: Hi, I'm Asher. I live in California and I'm 8 years old. One of my favorite books is *Weird But True* series by National Geographic kids. One of



the facts I learned was that chewing gum can put you in a better mood.

Child9: Hello, my name is Olive Davis and I'm 5 years old and my favorite book is *Amelia Bedelia*. What I like about it is that when Mr. says bear right she turns to the left because he thought a bear was on the right. And I'm from Savannah, Georgia.

Child10: Hi, my name is Noelle. I live in California. And I'm 6 years old. My favorite book is *Amanda Pig* because they sell [****inaudible**** 34:34] to people. Amanda and her best friend, Lollypop.

Sarah: So wonderful, thank you, thank you, kids. If your kids would like to leave a message for the Read-Aloud Revival go to ReadAloudRevival.com and look for the "Start Recording" button on the lower left hand of the page. That's where your kids can leave a message. We air every single one that we get in the order it's received and we'd especially love to hear from some older kids and teens. So, I don't know, buy your teens a milkshake or a pizza or something to tell us what they're reading! OK, anyway, we all want to know. So don't miss your chance to join ReadAloudRevival premium access membership. It's truly where you can get the very best resources and experiences to help you make meaningful and lasting connections with your kids. You can get on the waiting list. No commitment or anything, it's just a way for you to hear when we open up enrollment since we only open up twice a year you don't want to miss it. Get on that waiting list at RARmembership.com and hey, until next week, go make meaningful and lasting connections with your kids through books.