

## Here are the answers to some of your questions...

### How did you get the idea for Horrid Henry?

I got the idea for Horrid Henry when a friend asked me to write a story about a horrid child. Horrid Henry was born on the spot. I also wanted to write about sibling rivalry and families where one child was considered "perfect" and the other "horrid."

### Is Horrid Henry based on a real child?

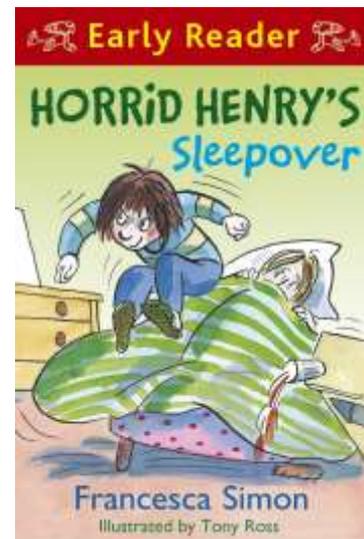
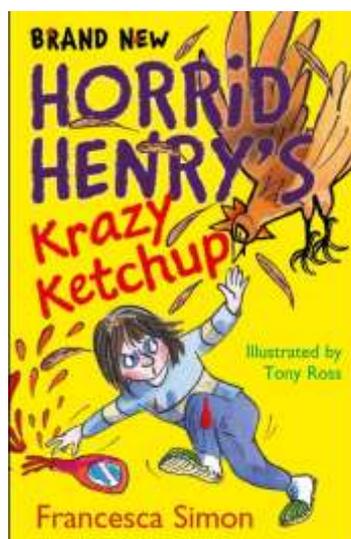
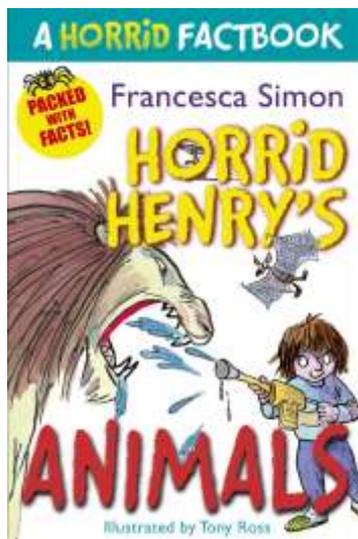
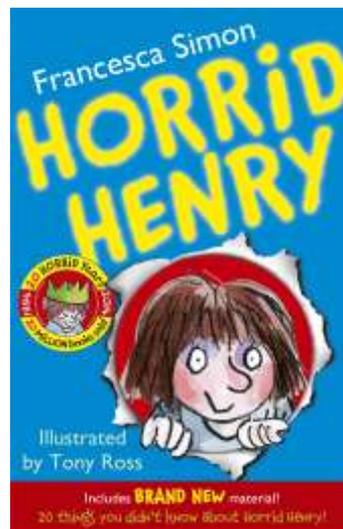
No, but I think there's a bit of Henry and Peter inside everyone.

### Where do you get your ideas from?

I get my ideas from things that happen to me, or to people I know, or from my imagination. I think of ordinary situations, like birthday parties or getting nits, and then add a "horrid" twist. So if my son has to have an injection, I think of how Henry would behave.

### Will there be any more Horrid Henry books?

There will be lots more Horrid Henry books. This year, 2014, is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the very first Horrid Henry book, and in May there will be a special anniversary edition of **HORRID HENRY**, with extra material including 20 things you didn't know about Horrid Henry, all from questions you have sent in. My brand new story book **HORRID HENRY'S CRAZY KETCHUP** will be published in June 2014. There will be some more Early Reader titles this year and some new Factbooks too.



**How long does it take to write a Horrid Henry book?**

Around 4 months.

**Who is your favourite character?**

I like Moody Margaret, because I was bossy like her when I was her age. But of course I love Henry and Peter. And Beefy Bert makes me laugh.

**What's your favourite Horrid Henry story?**

I usually like the one I'm writing at the moment the best, but old favourites include "Horrid Henry's Injection" and "Horrid Henry's Gets Rich Quick." I'm scared of injections and it makes me laugh when I read it.

**Do you like writing books?**

YES! But I hate starting a new book, I am happiest when I am improving my rough drafts.

**How do you get your characters' names?**

I think of funny adjectives, like "sour" or "rude" and match names to them. I love alliteration and use it as much as possible.

**Who is your favourite writer?**

My favourite author as a child was Edward Eager, who wrote about magic adventures. I also really liked Beverley Cleary, whose Ramona and Henry Huggins books are published here. My favourite author now is Anthony Trollope, a Victorian novelist who wrote 43 very long books.

**How many books have you written?**

I've written over 50 books.

**What was your first book called?**

"Papa Forgot" published in 1993.

**Do you have any children?**

Yes I have a son, Josh, who is grown-up and in his 20s now. He works as a theatre director.

**Where do you write?**

On a computer in my very messy office in the attic of my Victorian house in London.

**Why did you want to be an author?**

I've always enjoyed writing, and started writing fairy tales when I was 8 years old, so it is never too early to start. I used to be a journalist, but I became an author after my son Joshua was born in 1989. I started to get a lot of ideas, and began writing them down. It did take me over a year to have my first book accepted, however. I started writing because I kept getting ideas—I think it's because I love reading, and I was reading a lot of children's books to him.

**Can you give me any writing tips?**

Ideas are everywhere, and you must listen out for them. Your stories will be more fun if you give them a twist. So, if you want to write about football, what about an alien football match, or a pets' football match? It's always easier to write the beginning and end first, and the middle last. Think of where your character is at the beginning, and what they are like, and how they are different at the end. The middle bit is what changed them. The best way to learn to be a writer is to be a reader.

**Have you written any other books beside HORRID HENRY?**

My favourites are HELPING HERCULES, DON'T COOK CINDERELLA, THE TOPSY-TURVIES, and, for older children, THE SLEEPING ARMY and THE LOST GODS.