Elizabeth Kennedy

I moved to Aberystwyth in 1999 to study Law at the University, and fell in love with the warm people and the truly stunning setting. After attending Chester Law School I returned to Aberystwyth to practice law as a solicitor in a high street firm for approximately 10 years. I then took a short career break to raise my two children. It was whilst on this extended leave that I decided I needed a change from the legal papers, contracts and the monotonous view of the lamppost outside the window. Fate was certainly in my favour as I was able to follow my lifetime love of reading and become the librarian at Ysgol Penglais, Aberystwyth.

There is truly no better job in the world than to encourage children to read and develop the same love for reading that I have. I devoured books as a child and was frequently found reading by torchlight when I was meant to have been asleep. I had ridden polar bears in the North, joined an academy for witches, eaten snozzcumbers, flown with dragons, jumped down rabbit holes and enjoyed secret gardens – all before secondary school! The imagination and experience from books can truly take you anywhere and I have the privilege of being in a position to encourage children to find their own worlds. Job satisfaction is through the roof when I have a student eagerly discussing their current book or asking for recommendations for their next read. I have increased borrowing in our school library three-fold and continue to develop and nourish a Reading for Pleasure ethos across the school. It is my aim to encourage and support every child in their reading journey, whether it is with a graphic novel, magazine, non-fiction book, manga, classic novel, young adult fiction or an e-book.

I was delighted to be asked to be a Tir na n-Og panellist as I never say no to reading new books. Being asked to read and explore books with a Welsh background and connection is a pleasure and I cannot wait to get started! It is exciting to see an abundance of great books being published, and these awards help to ensure that fantastic children’s literature is celebrated.

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Symudais i Aberystwyth yn 1999 i astudio’r Gyfraith yn y Brifysgol, a chwympo mewn cariad â’r bobl gynnes a’r lleoliad gwirioneddol syfrdanol. Ar ôl mynychu Ysgol y Gyfraith yng Nghaer, dychwelais i Aberystwyth i ymarfer y gyfraith fel cyfreithiwr mewn cwmni am tua 10 mlynedd. Wedyn cymerais seibiant byr o’m gyrfa fer i fagu fy nau blentyn. Yn ystod y cyfnod hwn penderfynais fod angen newid o’r papurau cyfreithiol, contractau a’r olygfa undonog o’r postyn lamp y tu allan i’r ffenest. Roedd tynged yn sicr o’m plaid gan fy mod yn gallu dilyn fy nghariad oes at ddarllen a dod yn llyfrgellydd yn Ysgol Penglais, Aberystwyth.

Does wir ddim swydd well yn y byd nag annog plant i ddarllen, a datblygu yr un cariad at ddarllen ag sydd gen i. Fel plentyn ro’n i wedi gwirioni ar lyfrau, ac fe’m canfuwyd yn aml yn darllen â fflachlamp pan oeddwn i fod yn cysgu! Roeddwn i wedi marchogaeth eirth gwyn ym Mhegwn y Gogledd, ymuno ag academi ar gyfer gwrachod, bwyta *snozzcumbers*, hedfan gyda dreigiau, neidio i lawr tyllau cwningod a mwynhau gerddi cyfrinachol – y cyfan tra mod i’n dal yn yr ysgol gynradd! Gall y dychymyg a’r profiad a geir gan lyfrau fynd â chi i unrhyw le, ac mae gen i’r fraint o fod mewn sefyllfa i annog plant i ddod o hyd i’w bydoedd eu hunain. Pan fydd gen i fyfyriwr eiddgar sydd am drafod y llyfr mae wrthi’n ei ddarllen, neu pan fydd rhywun yn gofyn i mi argymell cyfrol i’w darllen nesaf, fy swydd i yw’r orau yn y byd. Rwyf wedi treblu nifer benthyciadau llyfrgell yr ysgol, ac rwy’n parhau i ddatblygu a meithrin ethos o ddarllen er mwyn pleser ar draws yr ysgol. Fy nod yw annog a chefnogi pob plentyn ar ei daith ddarllen, boed hynny gyda nofel graffig, cylchgrawn, llyfr ffeithiol, manga, nofel glasurol, ffuglen i oedolion ifanc neu e-lyfr.

Roeddwn i’n falch iawn o gael fy ngofyn i fod ar banel beirniaid gwobrau Tir na n-Og gan fy mod yn gwironi ar ddarllen llyfrau newydd. Mae cael cais i ddarllen ac archwilio llyfrau gyda chefndir a chysylltiad Cymreig yn bleser, ac rwy’n ysu am gael dechrau ar y gwaith. Mae’n gyffrous gweld toreth o lyfrau gwych yn cael eu cyhoeddi ac mae’r gwobrau hyn yn helpu i sicrhau bod llenyddiaeth wych i blant yn cael ei dathlu.