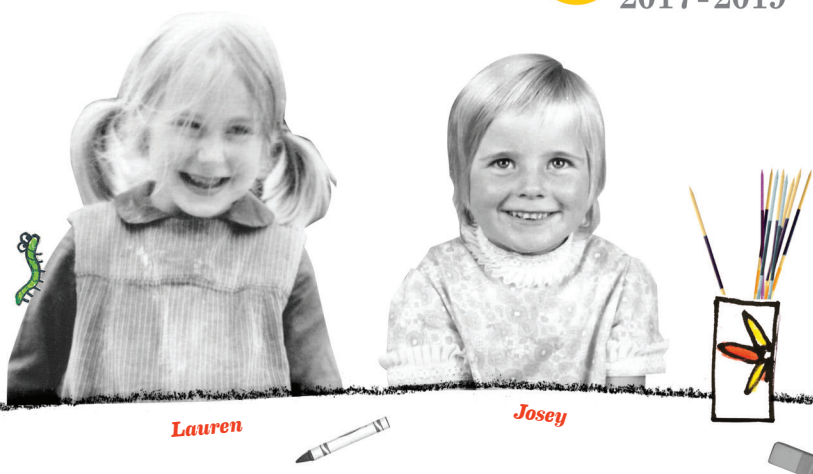




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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Hello from **Lauren Child**



Lauren

Josey

I want to use my role as the Waterstones Children's Laureate to encourage creativity. Everywhere. Inside and outside school, in adults and children alike. Allowing ideas to float, collide and connect is, for me, the most inspiring way to learn. Creative thinking helps us to problem solve, to understand who we are, and how we relate to those around us and the world we live in. It is now widely recognised that creativity is as important as literacy or numeracy, and that allowing ourselves the time, space and freedom to be creative is essential for good mental health.

The question I am asked more than any other is: *Where do you get your ideas from?* It's a profound question, which could take an age to answer, because finding the source of creativity is as fundamental as asking: *What makes you you?* Fostering creativity is not about knowing where to find your ideas, but how to develop the habit and aptitude for looking.

For me, ideas come from *everywhere*, the particles of them are everywhere: on the pavement, in a supermarket queue, out of the window, in the past, in the moment, a sentence overheard,

a conversation with a close friend, with a stranger, a film watched, a book read, a football kicked and on and on and on.

We all have the facility to link ideas and to allow our minds to be led in new directions, to be inspired, but we need 'mind space' to do so. That's why boredom can be the creator's greatest ally; one's mind struggles with boredom, hating the inactivity, and this is when ideas and thoughts are so often conjured. And by the same token, we stifle our own ability to create by seeking distraction. Tablets and smart phones are incredible tools for some purposes, but they also have the capacity to suffocate reflection, wonder and creative thought.

Sometimes we need to stare into space.

While it is easy to say that I have put nurturing creativity at the centre of my aspirations for my time as Waterstones Children's Laureate, finding a way of putting that into practice is not. One way of trying to do so is to look closely at the ideas of others, consider what the artist wanted to achieve, the thoughts behind their work and the materials used. Can you create something unique using these same techniques, materials or initial ideas?

I have teamed up with Josey Scullard, a talented teacher and creator of arts and crafts. Together, we gathered up books which reflect the theme of my mission. The books explore delight in thought and discovery. They are all at once philosophical, artistic and highly personal.

Here you will find six creative resources to use at home, in schools, in libraries, in museum education rooms and anywhere you like. I hope you find them inspiring and enjoy creating your own projects. If you like you can share your own creations online using **#Staringintospace**

on Twitter **@UKLaureate**,

on Instagram
@LaurenChildThatsMe

or on Facebook
@LaurenChildBooks

Download all the creative resources plus find more information and images
www.childrenslaureate.org.uk/staringintospace.

See Lauren's website
www.staringintospace.me
for more creative inspiration

With my very best wishes,