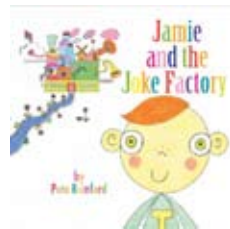
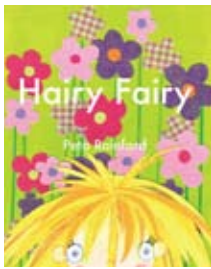


# Peta's School Bag: ILLUSTRATION AND LITERACY

As well as writing the words, I draw the pictures – or, to use the proper word, do the **ILLUSTRATIONS** – that appear in my books.

These are the books I've published so far: click on the covers to find out more!



## ILLUSTRATING WITH LETTERS!

My book **Isabella, Rotten Speller**, is set in a land where everything and everybody is made out of letters.

It makes a fun resource for activities aimed at helping children recognise, read and write letter shapes.



These lovely letter images were made by children in Years 1 and 2:



I loved the fact that this particular group of children set themselves extra challenges that I hadn't thought of, like: drawing a self portrait using only the letters of their names or, seeing how accurately they could recreate the image found in a book using only letter shapes.



Because my illustrations in *Isabella, Rotten Speller* incorporate words, they can be used with children working on particular aspects of literacy, such as enriching vocabulary with description, alliteration and rhyme.

Also, I have been really pleased that they have helped children who are just beginning to recognise and create letter shapes. This is an extract from one of my favourite Amazon reviews for *Isabella, Rotten Speller*:

*"My grandchildren love it and as well as being a great story book is also a wonderful learning aid. One of my grandchildren has had hours of fun drawing using letters and his writing and reading have improved so much down to this book."*



Children (and quite a few grown-ups!) love the idea of using letter shapes to create images. You can draw the letters, create them on a computer, or...

... try using letters and words cut out from and magazines to create images



## Case study: Tolworth Infant & Nursery, Surrey, Reception

These 50 minute sessions with each of the three Reception classes were great fun. I started each one by reading *Isabella, Rotten Speller* and sharing the illustrations; encouraging the children to identify and name letter shapes. There are plenty of opportunities for participation in the telling of this story, with the children making various letter shapes with their mouths, for example, and doing other actions.



The children were encouraged to imagine a world where everything was made up of letters, and together we drew a letter face.

The children then devised their own letter portraits, based on my [template](#), and incorporating sticky foam letters (the glittery ones were particularly popular!), written letters and letters that the children cut from newspapers and magazines. Some of the children took the initiative and incorporated their own names, or the names of siblings etc, into their illustrations.



The sessions were **lots of fun and very creative**, but also allowed children to demonstrate competence against several **EYFS learning goals**.

## Taking letters off the page

The children I've worked with seem to enjoy exploring and designing with letter shapes. We've had fun taking letters off the page and incorporating them into 3-D crafts.



Here's my paper puppet boy, with paperchain 'O's for his arms and legs (the template to make him is [here.](#))

Why not make some letter-shape puppets, write a script, and put on a show?

Or make a pot of letter-shape flowers, like the children I worked with at a recent library visit (the template is [here.](#))

Use foam letters to spell your name out on the flower pot.



Please email [petarainford@gmail.com](mailto:petarainford@gmail.com) if you would like me to come into your school to share *Isabella*, *Rotten Speller* and work with children on some letter-based arts and crafts.