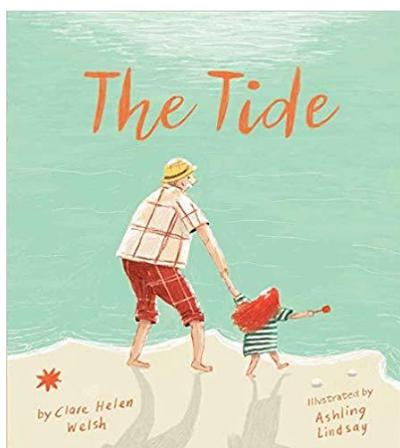


# THE TIDE – AN INTERVIEW WITH

## CLARE HELEN WELSH



### Where is the book based?

Inspiration for *The Tide* came from an Easter break to Perranporth, Cornwall. Perran Sands is a glorious stretch of beach and our family spent an entire day there, moving our chairs and blankets further back towards the cliffs as the tide came in. It was the first time my children learned about tides. They were running in and around the rock pools singing, '*The tide is coming in! The tide is coming in!*' It was a lovely and special day and it's where I penned my first draft of the story. However, Ashling didn't base the illustrations too closely on this beach. The setting couldn't be too specific. It needed to speak and appeal to a wide range of families living all over the world.

### What or who inspired the book?



Around six months after our family holiday to Cornwall, I was inspired to turn my first draft of *The Tide* into the text it is today. My husband's grandmother, Ronnie Spry, lived with dementia. It was the first time my children learned about this word, too. When I first met Ronnie, dementia was already a big part of her life. I wish I had known her before, when she was a nurse, a primary school teacher and an artist, too.

### **What is the role of the mother in the story?**

I wanted the story to focus on the relationship between the girl and her Grandad, but the mother is the supportive figure who helps the child navigate and understand her feelings. Also, I didn't think it would be realistic for the girl and Grandad to be on their own, given his condition.

### **Why does the Mother not join in with the play between Grandad and the girl?**

The story is very much centred around the girl and the relationship with her Grandad. I wanted the focus to be on intergenerational friendships and the joy young children can bring to people living with dementia.

### **Why is there no speech in the book?**

The authorial voice is that of the girl recounting and making sense of her day, almost as if she is talking through her experiences and making sense of them herself. Interestingly, though, the story was born from speech. I had these lines before I had anything else - '*The Tide is coming in! The Tide is coming in!*'

### **Why does the reader not know the girls' name?**

The story is written in first person, which I think gives it a sense of immediacy. By not naming her, she could be anyone. A friend, a family member, even you.

### **Further Reading:**

You can view a gallery of Ashling's illustrations for *The Tide* on the Book Trust website: <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/404>

You can read more about the story behind the story on *Two in a Teepee*: <https://twoinatepee.com/2019/05/23/blog-tour-the-beach-that-made-the-tide/>

Clare's post about using stories to support children's emotional development can be read here, courtesy of Library Book Boy and Girl: <https://librarygirlandbookboy.wordpress.com/2019/05/22/the-tide-by-clare-helen-walsh-illustrated-by-ashling-lindsay/>

Read about Clare's research into the benefits of intergenerational friendships on Booklover Jo's blog, here: <https://bookloverjo.wordpress.com/2019/05/24/the-tide-guest-post-clare-helen-walsh/comment-page-1/?unapproved=18464&moderation-hash=8b89ce9b17c85d5a221d101393a2a574#comment-18464>

You can read Clare and Ashling's Reading Zone interview about the making the book here: <https://readingzone.com/index.php?zone=sz&page=interview&authorid=e0edfe56fe160773bf1880729597949a>