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## Meet author Kira Vermond

**KIRA VERMOND** is an award-winning writer with more than 1,000 articles in print. She is a frequent contributor to *The Globe and Mail*, *Chatelaine*, and *Today's Parent*, and is the author of Owlkids Books titles *The Secret Life of Money*; *Growing Up, Inside and Out*; and the Norma Fleck Award – winning *Why We Live Where We Live*. She lives in Guelph, Ontario. Visit her website at [kiravermond.com](http://kiravermond.com) and find her on Twitter as @KiwiV.

*Half-Truths and Brazen Lies* answers questions like: Why do we lie? What types of lies are there? And when is it okay or even good to lie? Told in a witty, conversational tone with an index and full-color illustrations, the book takes a thorough approach to this fundamental aspect of human behavior.

### When you were a kid, what was your favorite thing to do?

This probably comes as no surprise, but I loved to read, write, and draw. My family moved around a lot and I was a shy kid (until I got to know someone, then it was... look out!) so until I made friends at my new school—which could take months—books were my way of feeling like I still had people to hang out with.

I loved drama too, though, so I wrote, produced, and directed plays for school. I still think it's amazing that other kids came to my auditions and let me boss them around, as the director, every recess for a month while we rehearsed! But the performances were fun and all that hard work was worth it.

### What did you most dislike doing when you were a child?

Cleaning my room. Full stop.

### As a child, where did you dream of living?

Because we moved so often, I've lived in small villages of 300 people, on an island, in city suburbs, near the ocean in California, and all sorts of other places. So I don't think I ever really dreamed of living somewhere when I grew up—I was just concentrating on getting to know the place where I was living right then!

### What did you think you were good at when you were a kid?

Running. And triple jump. I held a city record for 11-year-old girls for years: seven meters and thirty-six centimeters.

### When you were a kid in school, what did you look for in a friend?

I had a lot of best friends and I had to leave most of them behind when I moved, but if I think about all these

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# The Petit Proust Questionnaire

from Owlkids Books



fantastic girls now (and a lot of boys too!), I'd say they all had one personality trait in common: they were kind. I didn't like kids who made fun of other kids.

## What did you want to be when you grew up?

A kids' book author! I'm living the dream.

## What was your favorite book as a child?

Oh my gosh, there were so many. When I was really little, I loved *Bread and Jam for Frances* by Russell Hoban (and now that I'm all grown up and looking at it from another perspective, I have to say the mother is brilliant) but when I got older, I loved spooky books. My all-time favourite book is still *Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark* collected by Alvin Schwartz, with the original, super-creepy illustrations. I memorized almost every story in that book and told them to all the neighborhood kids. Eek!

## What is your favorite pastime now?

I still love to read and write, but I do that for a living. So does that count? If I've been sitting in front of a computer writing all day, I'm happy to play with my kids and snuggle up to read with them.

And I love, love, love to cook. I actually made my first pie from scratch—pastry and all—when I was 12. It was raisin and so good. (But you've got to like raisins to really get that pie. Just saying.) Today I have over 500 cookbooks and counting. I read them like novels and can pretty much make any dish someone wants to eat and from any country in the world. My fridge and pantry are bursting with cool condiments like kerda pickle and quince paste. I like having friends over for a feast and introducing kids to new foods they probably have never tasted before. It's fun!

## What do you find an absolute chore?

Cleaning my room. I do it, but I still hate it.

## If you could live anywhere, where would you go?

Guelph, Ontario! Seriously, I love where I live. It's such an awesome small city full of friendly people and I chose it for that reason. But if I had a second choice, I'd move to San Francisco. Every time I visit, I come home happy.

## What is the one talent you wish you had?

The ability to surf. I'm terrible. But I keep trying. The "pop up" is hard!

## What makes a good friend?

Someone who's funny, a good listener, a little wild, and makes me feel happy when we're together. And I mentioned the word "kind," right?

## If you weren't an author or illustrator, what job would you have?

When I was in high school, I took a career test that told me I should either be a journalist or a firefighter. I chose journalist.

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## What children's books have caught your attention lately?

I read *The Last Train* by Rona Arato earlier this year and it broke my heart. I couldn't stop talking about it. But I'm also interested in reading some of Raina Telgemeier's books because it seems every 9-year-old girl on the planet is devouring them. And I CAN'T WAIT to read my cousin's first YA book coming out this summer! It's called *Learning to Swear in America* and because my cousin Katie Kennedy is so, so, so funny and smart in real life, I know it's going to be a great read.

## If you had to have a motto, what would it be?

"Don't worry about being brilliant. Worry about being reliable."

