John Pilkington



Q: What were you like at school?

A: I was a bright child, if rather over-excitable! I was small for my age, which made me try to make up for it in other ways. I did quite well at most subjects, though not maths!

Q: What did you want to be when you were a child?

A: I didn't know. When I was a teenager I wanted to be a rock star, and played drums and guitar in bands for a few years, before realizing that I wasn't very good! Later I knew that I wanted to write.

Q: Which three words describe you best?

A: Short, thoughtful, changeable.

Q: What is your favourite word?

A: Too many to list - but how about 'free'?

Q: What makes you cringe?

A: How long have you got?

Lying politicians, rich bankers, shallow celebrities. And the smell of curry on someone's breath. I could go on - but I'd better not!

Q: What are you afraid of?

A: The future of the planet, if we don't combat things like climate change and over-population.

Religious zealots, money-grabbing tycoons, and all those who thirst for power over other people.

Q: When did you last have a really good laugh?

A: Last night, watching 'Have I got News for You?' on TV with my partner

Q: What is your most treasured possession?

A: I have several personal things, like a watch, that belonged to my father or my grandfather. Otherwise a few old photos, and some books from childhood days. And my piano - I'm having lessons late in life.

Q: What do you do as a hobby?

A: I walk in the countryside, play piano and listen to music. I swim a little and go to concerts and films. And woodwork - I get satisfaction from making things. Plus reading a lot of course, but all authors do that.

Q: What strange habits do you have?

A: Talking to myself, which alarms people sometimes.

Q: What's your favourite food?

A: Being a Lancashire lad, I still enjoy fish and chips.

Q: What do you day dream about?

A: Anything. Like many authors I spend far too long staring out of the window, though sometimes it's helpful!

Q: What's the most outrageous thing you've done?

A: I'll pass on that!

Q: What profession other than yours would you like to attempt?

A: Surgeon.

Q: Do you feel younger or older than your current age?

A: Younger. I find it baffling when I see Cabinet Ministers or business moguls on TV, and learn that they're younger than me. They seem like a different generation.

Q: If you could meet one person, dead or alive, who would it be?

A: Cochise, the great Apache (Native American) leader.

Q: What quality do you most admire in a person?

A: Kindness

Q: What is the most interesting place you have ever visited?

A: Istanbul

Q: What is the best advice anyone has ever given you?

A: Don't let anyone put you off doing what you really want to do.

Q: What would you most like to change about yourself?

A: I'd like to be more tolerant and less impatient with people.

Q: What has life taught you?

A: Not to waste time - as you get older you realize how short life is, and that you should take chances and try to make headway as soon as you can.

Q: How long have you been a writer?

A: On and off, for more than thirty years.

Q: Was there a specific moment in your life when you decide to become a writer?

A: When my second radio play was accepted by the BBC, I decided to commit myself to being a full-time writer.

Q: Where do you do your writing?

A: In my study at home. Though there's an old expression: 'a writer is always in his/her working clothes'. So I might be thinking about my work, wherever I happen to be.

Q: What are the best and worst things about being an author?

A: The best thing is the satisfaction of seeing your work published (or performed, or broadcast) - provided it goes well. Meeting your readers is also wonderful.

Worst things? The financial insecurity is one. The indifference most people have towards authors is another (unless you happen to be rich and/or famous). Also being in the power of other people, who can turn you down at any time.

Q: Where do you get your greatest ideas from?

A: Almost anywhere.

Q: Which of your own characters do you most identify with?

A: All of them, to some extent. It's hard to pick one out.

Q: What do you do to combat "writers' block"?

A: As I get older, I don't seem to suffer from it. Some writers don't believe it exists, through there are times when you don't feel like writing. But everyone has times when they don't feel like going to work!

Q: What was your favourite book as a child?

A: There were many, and it's hard to choose.

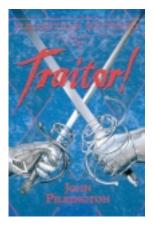
Q: What book do you wish you had written?

A: 'The Horse's Mouth' by Joyce Cary.

Q: What advice would you give to aspiring authors?

A: There's little I can give. If you want to write, you will anyway. Write about what interests you - not what you think might sell. Set regular times to write, read a lot, try out different sorts of writing (books, stories, plays, poetry) and find out what suits you best. Join a local writers' circle if it helps. And there's a lot of help and advice for new writers on the internet. Good luck!

My Books

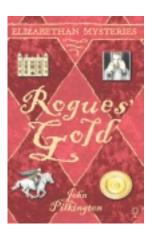


Traitor!



Revenge!

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Rogues' Gold



Thief!