

# Meet a Reading a-z Author

## Francis Morgan, Tommy Tales creator, Talks To Fans

**Francis Morgan** grew up hearing many delightful stories from his grandfather, Joe Slade. These stories sparked a desire in Francis to be a storyteller as well. And a storyteller he became. Francis Morgan has written several books for Learning A–Z, including the popular Tommy Tales series. Some of these books are written under the name Joe Slade, in honor of his grandfather.



Francis mainly writes stories about characters that go on adventures. When getting ideas for his stories, he tries to pick topics and places that will be interesting to readers. He also puts in interesting facts so that readers will learn something while having fun reading.

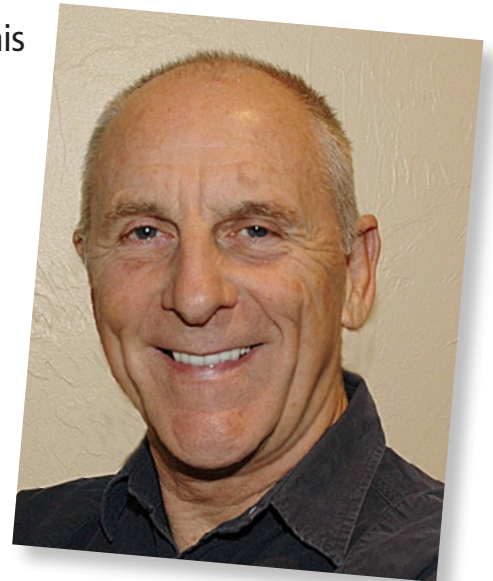
For example, in *Tommy's Trip to France*, readers learn about France, French culture, and the Eiffel Tower. One interesting but little-known fact about Francis's books is many of the places in his stories get their names from real places where Francis grew up: Wales, Great Britain. RK-5's (Tommy Tales) home planet of Gendroz is actually based on a place in South Wales called Gendros. Many of the places in the treasure map from *Tommy and the Pirates* are also based on places in Wales.

In addition to his adventure stories, Francis has also written several silly read-aloud books. He likes these because they use alliteration to tell the story, such as in his favorite, *A Super Special Soup*. All of his stories are first written in a special journal. He then transfers the stories to a computer for fine tuning and editing. Francis enjoys writing and creating stories, and he encourages other aspiring authors to read lots of books about lots of different things, just as he did when he was young.

Francis Morgan lives in Tucson, Arizona, with his wife, Josephine, and dog, Billy.

### Reading A–Z books

As you read one of Francis's books, see if you can identify any of the real places from Great Britain.



Francis Morgan

## Collection of Author's Materials on Website Grows

Tommy Tales series  
Playful Puppy B  
Who Runs Faster? D  
Billy Gets Lost G  
Weird Bird Beaks H  
A Visit to the Zoo I  
Families I  
Animal Olympics J  
Jessica Loves Soccer L  
The State Hermitage: Russia's  
Amazing Museum P  
Charlene's Sea of Cortez Journal R  
A Super Special Soup (Read Aloud)  
Bears and Beans (Read Aloud)  
Crazy Cat (Read Aloud)  
Fox and Frog (Read Aloud)  
Grandpa's Goat (Read Aloud)  
Yuri's Yams (Read Aloud)  
and more ...

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Book Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Where? _____	Where? _____
Draw:	Draw:
What happened? _____	How did it end? _____
Draw:	Draw:

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Have students answer the questions about the article above and then illustrate their responses.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Have students read (or read aloud to students) the *Meet the Author* article about Francis Morgan. After reading, discuss the kinds of stories Francis writes. As a class determine the main idea of the article, and then have students write details to support the main idea.

Main Idea
▼
Detail
▼
Detail

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the *Meet the Author* article about Francis Morgan and then answer the questions.

1. Who sparked a desire in Francis to be a storyteller?
  - (a) his father
  - (b) his wife
  - (c) his mother
  - (d) his grandfather
  
2. Where does Francis get the idea for names of places in his stories?
  - (a) his home country
  - (b) his readers
  - (c) his grandfather
  - (d) his favorite books
  
3. Francis encourages aspiring authors to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (a) talk to their grandparents
  - (b) read lots of books
  - (c) visit Wales
  - (d) go on their own adventures
  
4. Why does Francis like the read-aloud books he wrote?
  - (a) They use silly alliteration.
  - (b) They are about his family.
  - (c) They tell readers interesting facts.
  - (d) They are about places in Great Britain.
  
5. Where does Francis first write all of his stories?
  - (a) on the computer
  - (b) in a notebook
  - (c) on notecards
  - (d) in a journal
  
6. **Extended Response:** If you were to write an adventure story of your own, what would be the title?

Why does Francis sometimes write stories under the name *Joe Slade*?

Divide the stories written by Francis into categories. Which ones could have happened to Francis or his family in real life?

After reading several Tommy Tales books, what types of lessons could you say readers learn from the characters' relationships with one another that they can use in their everyday lives?

Describe how Francis's grandfather helped Francis become a professional author.

Write a summary about what you might expect a story titled "Tommy and the Pirates" to be about.

Research the city of Tucson, Arizona, where Francis lives. Write a report about the city answering these questions: What is the city's population? What are some of the jobs people who live there have? What is the geography like around the city?

If you were to write an adventure story, what would the title be?

After reading one of Francis's stories, write a new solution to the main character's problem.