

That's Not My...Birthday

By Clare Henrys

Everyone's heard of them, but who wrote them and how many are there?

The "That's Not My..." books are one of Usborne's flagship series. These touchy-feely books are the brainchild of Fiona Watt and the Usborne team. They published their 50th book, "That's Not My Unicorn", in 2017 and are still going strong. This year they are celebrating their 20th birthday with the release of a special edition of their first ever book, "That's Not My Puppy", and the addition of even more titles – due in May is "That's Not My Zebra", closely followed by "That's Not My Flamingo" in June. There are also colouring books, activity sheets and two books focussing on colours and sizes: "That's Not My Zebra's Colours" and "That's Not My Taller and Shorter".

It may be hard to believe but the series nearly didn't happen; Usborne were reluctant to publish such a negative title. Thank goodness they did though, as it's now earned them millions and brought untold joy to families across the world.

Fiona Watt is an editorial director at Usborne, and the woman responsible for bringing the series into being (among many other titles). She was originally a teacher and is now technically the sixth best-selling UK children's author. Watt doesn't like to take full credit for the series because the books are actually 'written' by a team. Though only the names Fiona Watt and Rachel Wells appear on the front cover, other notable contributors are Non Taylor, Mary Cartwright and Jenny Taylor. You can see an example [here](#) of how the books are created, including the selection of their rigorously safety-tested 'patches'.

To celebrate the 20th birthday of "That's Not My...", we have put together a special unit of work that can be used with any of the books in the series. This extremely flexible and adaptable unit has a special page to guide you in the books you might want to use together to fit into pre-existing topics, or you can just use whatever you can get your hands on.

Page two of the Unit Overview has a link to [a full list](#) of the "That's Not My..." books and suggested topic lists, with contents such as Christmas, Pets and The Farm. It is such an adaptable unit and a great place to start your Reception class' journey with the Literacy Shed at any time of the year. The planning includes a range of activities, including book reviews, recognising repeating patterns and planning and writing their very own "That's Not My..." book.

Also included, as with all Reception planning, is the Continuous/Enhanced Provision Suggestions, though it is on page three of the Unit Overview rather than in its normal spot on page two. The suggestions included for most areas are adaptable for use with most books in the series and have specific suggestions for the topics listed on page two.

So, come and celebrate 20 years of "That's Not My..." with us and check out the extra-special unit [here](#).

REFERENCES:

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