

# FIRST STORY

## **PATRICE LAWRENCE MBE ANNOUNCED AS FIRST STORY AMBASSADOR**



Carnegie Medal nominee, Patrice Lawrence MBE has been announced as Ambassador for First Story, England's leading creative writing charity for young people. Lawrence will champion First Story's mission to promote the power and pleasure of creative writing to students in low-income communities.

Author of nine books including *Eight Pieces of Silva*, *Orangeboy* and *Splinters of Sunshine*, Patrice Lawrence's work has won the inaugural Jhalak Children's & Young Adult Prize, the Waterstones Prize for Older Children's Fiction, the Bookseller YA Prize and been shortlisted for the Costa Children's Book Award.

Exploring themes of race and class, Lawrence's work offers its young readers the opportunity to see their lives and identities reflected on the page. The characters in Lawrence's fiction come from the marginalised communities where many First Story schools are situated; her gripping narratives are set in worlds that are familiar to First Story students and tell of the friendships, challenges and dilemmas that they experience. Lawrence's belief in the power of creative writing to give young people a voice is reflected in First Story's mission: to change lives through creative writing, and with Lawrence's support, First Story hopes to reach more young people than ever in 2022.

**Patrice Lawrence MBE, award-winning author said:** “I am incredibly proud to be the ambassador for First Story. Young people are funny, passionate, compassionate, astute and often deeply empathetic. It's a privilege to represent an organisation that elevates those voices which are so often ignored.”

**Antonia Byatt, CEO at First Story said:** “We couldn't be more excited to be joined by Patrice Lawrence MBE as our very first Ambassador. Patrice's award-winning writing provides powerful representation for the very young people First Story are hoping to reach: those who have a story to tell and deserve the space to share it. Patrice is the perfect First Story ambassador; her talent, energy and compassion will be an inspiration to our young writers, and we really look forward to working with her over the next period.”

### **Media contact**

For more information please contact Communications Manager at First Story, Gabrielle Johnson [gabrielle.johnson@firststory.org.uk](mailto:gabrielle.johnson@firststory.org.uk).

### **Editor's note**

Founded in 2008 by writer William Fiennes and teacher Katie Waldegrave, First Story is working towards a society that encourages and supports young people from all backgrounds to write creatively, for pleasure and agency. Our flagship programme places professional writers into schools, where they work intensively with students and teachers to develop confidence and ability. Through our core programme and extended activities, including competitions and events, we expand young people's horizons and encourage aspirations. Participants gain skills that underpin academic attainment and support achieving potential.

**[firststory.org.uk](http://firststory.org.uk)**

**[@FirstStory](https://www.instagram.com/FirstStory)**

**[Patrice Lawrence and Antonia Byatt are available to interview.](#)**