



## AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR

**Gillian Cross** is the award-winning author of over 40 books, including the thrilling Demon Headmaster series. She has four children, lives in Dorset and loves to go orienteering and play the piano.

**Alan Snow** is an author and illustrator, probably best known for *Here Be Monsters!* which was adapted into a stop-animation film called *The Boxrolls*.

## WEBSITE

<http://www.gillian-cross.co.uk/main.html>

<https://www.davidficklingbooks.com/CatalogueItems.php?pubID=325>

## LINKS

Gillian talks about Ollie Spark's first adventure.

<https://www.readingzone.com/news/an-unexpected-adventure-for-ollie-spark/>

Books for Keeps review

<https://booksforkeeps.co.uk/review/ollie-spark-and-the-accidental-adventure/>



# OLLIE SPARK AND THE ACCIDENTAL ADVENTURE

Younger Readers Shortlist 2023

## INTRODUCTION

Ollie is the go-to member of his large family if something needs mending. His love of **machines** comes in very handy during his **adventure** in a mysterious country where 'he is mistaken for a spy, adopted by a loveable dog, and recruited into the local eco-resistance.' (Andrea Reece, LoveReading4Kids). This is a light-hearted, accessible **mystery** story which also touches on matters relating to **human rights** and **environmentalism**.

When introducing the book, read aloud from pages 15-24, which explain how, while helping to restore his aunt's van, Ollie ends up having 'an accidental adventure'.

## ACTIVITIES

**Read:** In the book, wind turbines are used to solve the city's pollution problem. Ask your child or children to research other sustainable or renewable sources of energy, in library books or online, and share what they find out.

**Write or illustrate:** The illustration on page 81 provides a comic strip style summary of what's been happening during the previous 30 pages. Photocopy the illustration and have fun adding speech bubbles, captions and sound effects. Your child or children might like to try summarising another part of the story in the same way.

Or try retelling the story from Gasket the dog's point of view.

**Make:** Draw and label a diagram of a wind turbine or (with a bit of adult help) try making a model of one.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qeVTCe8HLi0>

## NOW READ ON

*Ollie Spark and the Exploding Popcorn Mystery* by Gillian Cross & Alan Snow (David Fickling Books, 2023) This undercover spying mission is Ollie's most exciting and dangerous yet!

*My Mum is a Spy* by Andy McNab and Jess French (Welbeck Flame, 2022) Combines espionage and adventure with a conservation theme.

*How Everything Works* By Clive Gifford and James Gulliver Hancock (Lonely Planet Kids, 2022) Lift over 40 flaps to discover how the ordinary can become extraordinary. Ideal for budding engineers with curious minds.