



Diary of a Wimpy Kid

Jeff Kinney

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Boys don't keep diaries—or do they?

The launch of an exciting and innovatively illustrated new series narrated by an unforgettable kid every family can relate to

It's a new school year, and Greg Heffley finds himself thrust into middle school, where undersized weaklings share the hallways with kids who are taller, meaner, and already shaving. The hazards of growing up before you're ready are uniquely revealed through words and drawings as Greg records them in his diary.

In book one of this debut series, Greg is happy to have Rowley, his sidekick, along for the ride. But when Rowley's star starts to rise, Greg tries to use his best friend's newfound popularity to his own advantage, kicking off a chain of events that will test their friendship in hilarious fashion.

Author/illustrator Jeff Kinney recalls the growing pains of school life and introduces a new kind of hero who epitomizes the challenges of being a kid. As Greg says in his diary, "Just don't expect me to be all 'Dear Diary' this and 'Dear Diary' that." Luckily for us, what Greg Heffley says he won't do and what he actually does are two very different things.

Since its launch in May 2004 on Funbrain.com, the Web version of *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* has been viewed by 20 million unique online readers. This year, it is averaging 70,000 readers a day.

F&P level: T

Diary of a Wimpy Kid Details

Date : Published April 1st 2007 by Amulet Books (first published 2004)

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Author : Jeff Kinney

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From Reader Review Diary of a Wimpy Kid for online ebook

Rachel Hartman says

I find this whole series depressing. Sure, there are funny moments - I even laughed out loud once or twice, seriously - but the fact of the matter is, Greg is so completely devoid of any kind of human feeling or understanding of other people that I'm beginning to suspect he's some kind of clinical narcissist. He blames everyone else for his problems; he doesn't care about anyone. He doesn't grow, he doesn't learn, he doesn't change (does he even age? He's still in junior high after four books? I know one is set in summertime, but still). There is nothing there for me to LIKE, except Rowley.

At the end of the first book it seemed like maybe, just maybe he'd had some little epiphany about the nature of friendship, but no, next book he's back to the same ol' same ol' sociopathic crap. Very disappointing.

Lori says

While attending open house this year at my 10 year old sons school, he found this book for sale at the book fair. We thumbed through it, and thought it looked cute, so we purchased it, and read it together.

Its narrated by this middle-school aged kid in the form of a diary, with sketches and doodles included on every page, and basically follows his days from the beginning of the school year to the end. He is a bit of a loser, and trys to create a better image for himself through attempts at being class treasurer, a cartoonist for the school paper, a saftey patrol member....

We were both cracking up most of the way through the book. But there were times we also both looked at each other and shook our heads.. as the wimpy kid in question did some very mean and backhanded things as well....

Very cute, very interesting, and well worth the read for any school age kid and his parents....

We are going to run out to buy the new sequel....

Tony says

I read this for a conferance I'm attending about children's literature, and it's easily the worst thing I've come across in the 12 books or so on the reading list.

It features bland art that adds nothing (other than a misguided attempt to catch reluctant readers), boring characters who still managed to garner my dislike, a motionless plot with no character development or point. It was like a particularly uninspired Saturday morning cartoon stripped of any of the facile enjoyment of animation.

It's been mentioned before, but the characters learn nothing, and feature no real character development. I suppose there's an accurate depiction of middle school life contained in the sparse prose, but the actions and

words of the characters don't offer any sort of insight on it. He's a wimp in pretty much every sense of the word - willing to coast by on the status quo.

I suppose it would be a mildly funny book, if I was 12, but even given the conceit of the audience, the laughs still seem forced.

Apparently I'm in the minority, but I'd say this is a definite skip.

Harini says

When I told my friend I was reading 'Diary of a Wimpy Kid', she said only one thing "What are you... 12"? If enjoying reading this book makes me 12, so be it. I liked this book. Its funny, a very quick read, unique and very cute. Worth a read for anyone who has a child living inside them.

Archit Ojha says

My first Wimpy Kid and is surely not the last. Who knew this Wimpy Kid would be playing with my head for such a long time.

Jolie says

I got this book based on a quick skim in the store where I saw lots of funny line illustrations and large fonts that mimic handwriting. Although the tone was sarcastic, I thought that it would prove to be a good read-aloud for my 6 year old son, who still needs some enticement into stories. I pictured him, the boy who fancies himself an author and artist, just eating up this book. And actually, he would have--except after one night of reading this out loud I discovered that the content was definitely not age appropriate (nor redeeming in any way, to my mind). I'm willing to cut an author some slack with characters that start out rough but learn valuable life lessons, but not with a character that embodies mediocrity, laziness, and is a smart aleck to boot...

To be fair, I didn't finish the book, and it may very well be a great book to give to a fifth or sixth grader who still struggles with recreational reading. But I did what I almost never have to do--I took the book back to store. I suppose one good thing came from it: Jacob came home from school the next day, sat down with a new notebook, and proceeded to design a cover and several entries for his new "diary" book.

***** Update *****

Oddly enough, this book review seems to be engendering strong reactions in a number of readers. Thought I'd offer an update to be more specific and put to rest unfounded concerns...

This book is about a middle schooler. It is, despite the easy vocabulary and large font and illustrations and incessant marketing towards younger children, apparently intended for middle school ages and up.

alienating than reading about a kid your age who always has the lesson learned and the happy ending. Some folks need to look at these not through the eyes of an adult reader, but of an awkward pre teen.

Jenne says

Jesus, what an asshole.

Khadidja says

This was so cute and funny, i laughed out loud many times even the comedy books that i have read didn't make me laugh this hard!

“I'll be famous one day, but for now I'm stuck in middle school with a bunch of morons.”

“The best person I know is Myself.”

Ha, Me too!! XD

“And if you don't spend every second outdoors, people think there's something wrong with you.”

i know, Right?

Lucy says

it was an awesome and very funny book it got the laughs right out of me

Amanda says

Yes, I know kids love it. Duh. Kids are dumb. And so is this book. (Ok, that was mean. I apologize.)

One of my students gave me his copy of Wimpy Kid and then asked me every day for a month if I had read it yet. Not wanting to disappoint a student excited about a book, I finally sat down one afternoon and flew through it. Eh. The protagonist is a mean, unfunny little jerk. I freely admit that I probably "just don't get it,"

and I'm okay with that.

I celebrate any book that makes kids want to read. I suffered through all four of the ridiculous Twilight books just so I could keep up with my obsessed students, and when asked my opinion I gave it freely - Bella is a fool. The result was one I couldn't have planned; my kids became more entrenched in their identities as readers. They loved Twilight with an unashamed passion.

I'm gentler with the Wimpy Kid fans. I lie. I say: "It was funny. I guess. He was kinda mean." And then I listen as they defend this mess of a book - asserting opinions and then backing them up by flipping through well-worn copies and citing passages. I watch in amazement as my students become not only readers, but scholars.

So maybe I should give this book more than two stars - for all it has done for kids - but I won't. And you can't make me.

Ted says

Haven't actually read this, am writing the review for my grandson. He'll be seven in a month.

He's not here, so I'm guessing five stars. It could be a four.

He's read this one and the next in the series. Liked them both.

As he was leaving this afternoon I showed him Asterix the Gaul, telling him it was sort of a comic book.

"Oh so *that's* what a comic book is!", he said.

I mentioned that there were some rather large words in it (just glancing) and that he might not be able to read it quite yet.

"I think if I can read two Wimpy Kid books I can probably read anything, Pop-Pop."

That's a positive outlook I guess.

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Previous review: Invitation to the Dance

Next review: War and Peace

Recent review: Robert Frost: Critical Essays

Previous library review: Animalia *ABCs for all ages*

Next library review: Wimpy Kid #12 : The Getaway
