

Diary of a Wimpy Kid

CABIN FEVER

Book
6



Discussion Guide

to accompany *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Cabin Fever* by Jeff Kinney
(978-0-141-34300-6, £6.99)

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About the Diary of a Wimpy Kid and this guide.

Jeff Kinney's Diary of a Wimpy Kid series is one of the most popular series of children's books currently on the market. Alongside the books, published in the UK since 2007, there have also been three films, stationery ranges, calendars, board games, apparel and other merchandise. As of 2015, there were over 150 million Diary of a Wimpy Kid books in print worldwide.

The humorous nature of the books provides a familiar context through which universally recognisable childhood issues, both at home and at school, can be addressed without children feeling threatened or awkward. Consequently the books are enjoyed by children, parents and teachers alike. The fictional experiences of Greg Heffley, the main character, mirror events in children's own lives and they therefore find it very easy to relate to the antics in which Greg becomes involved.

Jeff Kinney's cartoons, which reinforce the text, provide a visual reference, helping the children to understand what they are reading and adding to their enjoyment as they picture what Greg, his friends and family are up to. For many children, especially younger or more reluctant readers, the addition of the cartoons helps to make the books accessible and ensures greater engagement with these hilarious stories.

The Diary of a Wimpy Kid books make excellent starting points for discussion. These guides outline a host of ideas for discussions and other activities that can be used in the classroom, in a reading group or at home.

The activities within the guides are suitable for ages 7-11. They provide teaching ideas to help you deliver the literacy components of the primary curriculum as well as many additional ideas for PSE, Health and Wellbeing, Drama, Art and Technology. There are lots of ideas for discussion sessions, both to help the children further understand the texts they are reading and to probe more deeply into the problem areas with which the characters engage. The guides provide stimulating ideas which will encourage collaborative learning and real engagement with the books.

We hope you will find the ideas useful when planning for your students' activities as our aim is to ensure learning is fun!

MILLIONS OF KIDS ARE READERS BECAUSE OF THESE BOOKS



**BOOK 10 COMING
NOVEMBER 2015**

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Diary of a Wimpy Kid

CABIN FEVER

Introduction

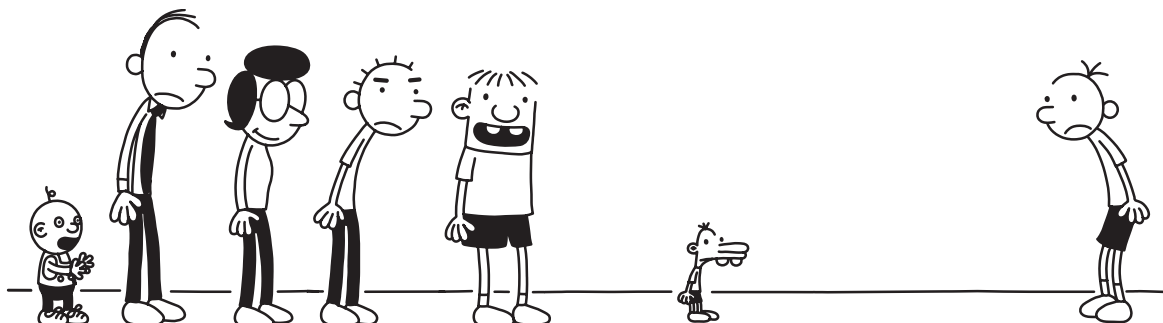
Greg Heffley continues his diary, detailing all his adventures, mishaps and private thoughts. Covering the months of November and December, Greg gives us his own personal view of his family, school life, friends and his neighbourhood during the Thanksgiving and Christmas season.

Christmas is fast approaching. Greg is concerned about how he can stay off of Santa's naughty list, especially as Mom has placed one of his 'spy' elves, Santa's Scout, in his house. His older brother, Rodrick, is feeding the elf false information about Greg to take back to the North Pole and as the elf appears in a different room on a daily basis Greg finds himself avoiding the occupied room. Decorating the tree doesn't go any better either with younger brother, Manny, insisting all the decorations must be removed so he can hang his favourite one first.

Greg worries how he can make some money to buy gifts for his family now that Mom is refusing to give money to him. He decides to sell a favourite book signed by the author. Unfortunately he discovers that the signature is a fake, leaving Mom with a lot of explaining to do! The money situation becomes critical when his virtual pet 'Greg's Little Friend' demands both attention and money. He offers to sweep the snow from neighbours' drives but this has disastrous results when he decides to use a hosepipe to shift the snow quickly. Greg and best friend Rowley then decide to set up and advertise their own business to make some money, but this leads to them being accused of vandalizing the school building and having to hide from the police.

Greg and Rowley's friendship continues to have its ups and downs. As ever, Greg forces poor Rowley to be his stooge in all manner of situations in an effort to make himself look good.

Greg's father has to work away from home just as a snowstorm hits the town. Greg, Mom, Rodrick and Manny are confined to the house with burst water pipes, no electricity and dwindling food supplies. Will the weather ease up? Can the Heffleys avert a disastrous Christmas? And will Dad make it home for the festivities?



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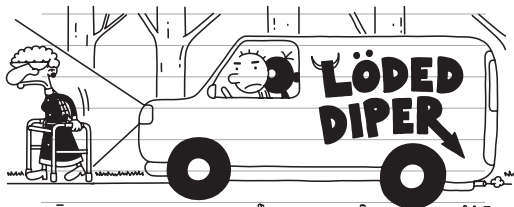
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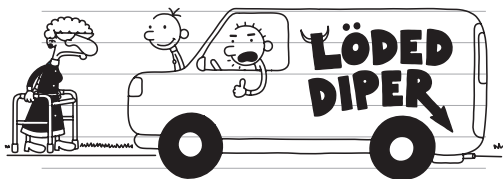
Understanding the text

- (Pages 8-10)** Manny is upset because someone else hung his favourite ornament on the Christmas tree. He insists all the ornaments are removed so that he can hang the first decoration. Ask the children how they would describe Manny in this situation. Do they think Mom was right to let Manny do as he wanted?
- (Pages 28-30)** Greg once had a teacher who taught him lots of good ways to remember multiplication tables. Ask the children to think of some good ideas they have had to help them remember important things. Has anyone else suggested some good ideas to them? Who and what were they?
- (Pages 59-66)** Greg tells us about a time he was expected to go round knocking on doors, selling things as a fundraiser for his school. He found this difficult as he thought what he was asking people to buy was rubbish. What suggestions would the children give to the school as good items to sell?
- (Pages 140-143)** Read the extract below. Greg and Rodrick try to help an old lady get to the supermarket. How does this backfire on them? Ask the children their opinion: was the old lady right to ignore the offer of help to get home? How could Greg and Rodrick have avoided this situation?

When we got to the parking lot of Leisure Towers, there was a lady walking around who looked like she was lost.

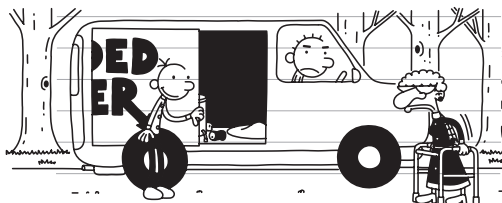


We asked the lady if she needed any help, and she said she was just walking to the supermarket on the other side of the apartment building. But I knew the nearest supermarket was almost five miles away in the opposite direction, so we said we'd give her a ride.

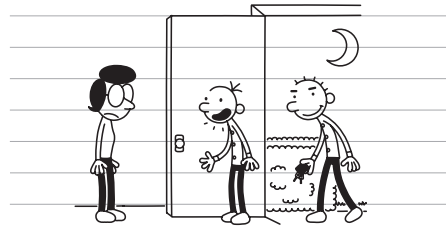


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The only condition was that she had to ride in the back because I had already called shotgun.



We dropped the woman off at the supermarket, and then we went home. When we walked in the door, I was pretty excited to tell Mom about my good deed. I told her about the lady and how we gave her a ride to the supermarket a few miles from Leisure Towers and saved her a lot of walking.



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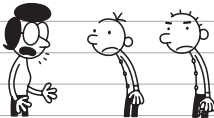


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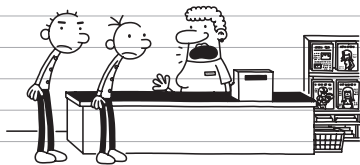
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Understanding the text

But Mom said there was a brand-new supermarket a block away from Leisure Towers and the woman had probably been heading THERE. So that meant we'd dropped her off five miles from where she was trying to go, and now she didn't have a way to get home.



Mom said we had to get back in the van and see if we could find the lady, so we went to the supermarket where we'd dropped her off. But a cashier told us she'd already finished her shopping and left.



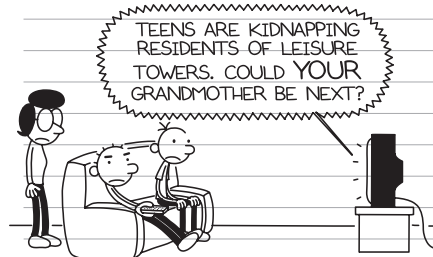
We eventually found the lady walking along the highway with her groceries.

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We tried to offer her a ride back to Leisure Towers, but this time she wouldn't get in the van.



I guess she must've called the local TV station to report us once she got home, because that night we were on the news.



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5. (Page 152) Greg and his school friends are taken on a visit to the local jail. Greg thinks the scariest thing is not being locked up but having no privacy to go to the loo. What do the children think might be the scariest thing in jail?
6. (Page 162) In Greg's diary we are told about his virtual pet 'Gregory's Little Friend'. Greg is constantly being asked to buy tokens for this pet to keep him happy. Ask the children to discuss why Greg continues to ask Mom for money. Would they spend money on this pet? Get them to explain their answers.

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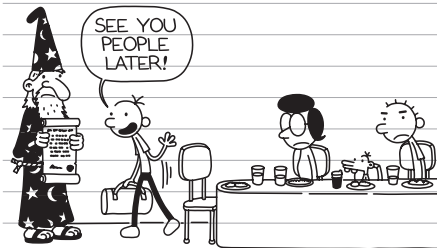
Understanding the text

7. (Page 175) Read the extract to the class. Which kid do they think Greg is referring to here and why do they think now would be a perfect time for Greg to get his invitation to this special school?

But Mom told me Manny likes his line of mustard
ACROSS the hot dog, and when I did it like
that he finally calmed down.



See, this is the kind of nonsense I'm dealing with
right now. I've seen a lot of movies where a kid
my age finds out he's got magical powers and then
gets invited to go away to some special school.
Well, if I've got an invitation coming, now would
be the PERFECT time to get it.



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Understanding the text

8. (Page 177) Mom keeps a 'memory box' for each of her children and Greg finds his after the basement flooded. Many of the things in Greg's box are very embarrassing for him. Ask the children why they think Greg is embarrassed. If their parents kept a 'memory box' for them, what sort of things might they want to keep and why?

Mom keeps a "memory box" for each of us kids, and mine was on the bottom shelf, so it was mostly underwater. One of the things that was in the box was my bed-wetting calendar from when I was eight years old.

Let me just say in my defence that there was a perfectly good reason why I was wetting the bed back then. In those days I drank a lot of water before I went to sleep at night, and then I'd have these crazy dreams that made me need to go.



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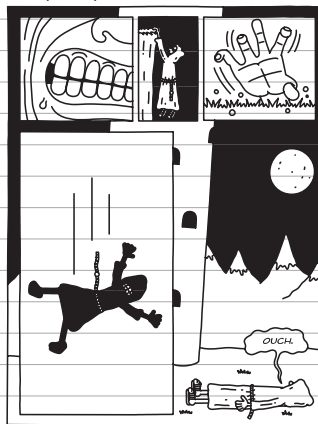
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In-depth discussion points

1. (Page 111) Greg disagrees with some of his teachers who think that graphic novels (or comic books) are not real novels and should not be counted when it comes to book reports. Ask the children to discuss both the reasons why Greg's teachers might think this way and why Greg disagrees. (See Project Idea 3 as an extension for this discussion point.)

I can thank my librarian, Mrs Schneiderman, for getting me into the "Tower of Druids" series to begin with, because she's the one who started the graphic-novel section in our school library.

I don't know when they started calling comic books graphic novels, but I'm glad they did. Some of the teachers complain that they don't count as REAL reading, but, the way I see it, if they're in the library they're fair game for book reports.



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In-depth discussion points

2. (Page 113) Discuss the meaning of the word 'plagiarised' with the class and read the extract below. How is plagiarism relevant to Greg at this moment and why do they think Mom was so angry? Now read page 115 to the class (show extract). In the children's view was Mom right to be so angry with Greg? What had she done which was also illegal?

How is plagiarism relevant to Greg at this moment and why do they think Mom was so angry? Now read the extract from **pages 114-115** to the class:

I realized all the good ideas were taken before I was even born.

Mom said if I wanted to be an author I should try coming up with something original. But it was really hard coming up with a fresh idea, so I just took one of my favourite books and more or less copied it word for word with a few small tweaks.

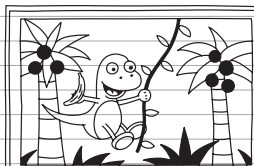
When Mom read what I wrote, she was really impressed, and I guess she thought I was some kind of genius or something.



But I think Mom got a little carried away. She sent my book to a publisher in New York, who told her I'd plagiarized "Geoffrey the Gorilla", which was already a bestselling kids' book.

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Mom was pretty mad at me for passing off the book as my own, but I'm surprised she couldn't figure it out herself from reading it.

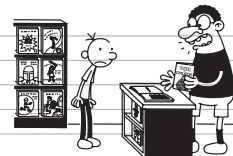


Geoffrey the Dinosaur swings from vine to vine. He perches in a tree and eats a banana. "Ooh ooh ooh," Geoffrey says as he pounds his chest.

Thursday

Well, it turns out my first-edition copy of "Tower of Druids" is totally worthless. I brought it to the comic-book shop yesterday afternoon hoping to cash in, but the guy who works there told me the autograph was a forgery.

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I told him he didn't know what he was talking about, because Mom got my book signed by the actual author. But the comic-book guy showed me a catalogue with Kenny Centazzo's signature in it, and it looked COMPLETELY different.

I was really confused, but on the walk home I realized what must've happened. Mom probably got tired of waiting in line at the comics convention and just signed the book HERSELF. In fact, I should've figured that out from the inscription.

Readers are winners! Keep reading to make your dreams come true!

*Your pal,
Kenny*

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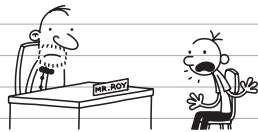
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In-depth discussion points

3. (Pages 149-150) Read the extract to the class. Greg refuses to name Rowley as his co-conspirator and takes all the blame and the punishment himself. Ask the class to discuss how they might have expected Greg to behave, giving reasons for their answers.

Rowley had confessed, but he'd kept himself anonymous. I don't know if Rowley did it that way on purpose or if he's just a total doofus, but I'm guessing it's door number two.

I didn't see any reason to play dumb at that point, so I told Vice Principal Roy the whole story. I told him about the signs and how the rain had made the poster board bleed and how we'd panicked and ran.



Vice Principal Roy thought about it for a while, and then he told me I should've come clean earlier. He said he was gonna have to give me a punishment to make sure I learned my lesson and said that after school I had to scrub the green dye off the wall with bleach.

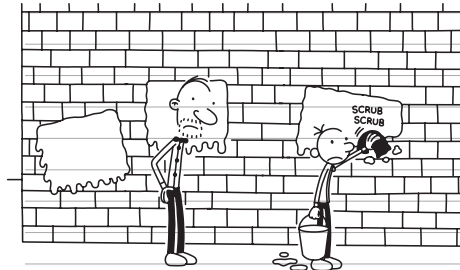
Then he gave me a choice.

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He said I could name my "co-conspirator" or I could just take the punishment myself.

Let me tell you, that was not an easy one. I really wanted to stick it to Rowley for writing my name on that piece of paper, but I also didn't see the point in both of us getting in trouble for something that I'd basically dragged him into.

So I decided this time around I'd just take one for the team.



And, if Rowley gets into a good college or gets some dream job later on, I hope he remembers to thank me.

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In the children's view was Mom right to be so angry with Greg? What had she done which was also illegal?

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Main project

CREATE A GRAPHIC NOVEL

Objective:

To create a graphic novel.

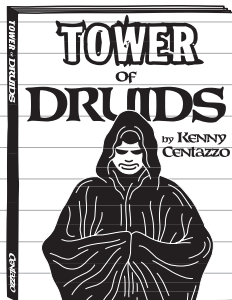
Curriculum areas:

Literacy, art and design, ICT

Starting point:

Greg's favourite author, Kenny Centazzo, writes comic books. Read the extract on **pages 108-109** to the children.

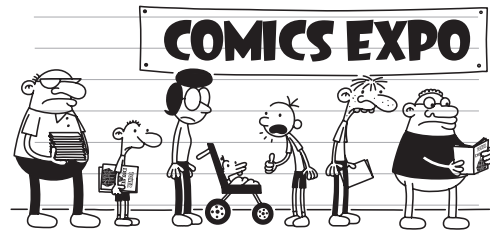
I realized something today, though. I might not have any cash, but I DO have something valuable: my first-edition signed copy of the "Tower of Druids" graphic novel.



I got "Tower of Druids" signed by the author, Kenny Centazzo, at the comics convention in the city last year.

Well, actually, I didn't technically get it signed - Mom did. I waited in line for two and a half hours, and then I had to take a bathroom break. By the time I got back, Mom had got my book signed.

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I was bummed that I didn't get to meet Kenny Centazzo, but at least I got his autograph.

I looked on the computer today and found out that a first-edition signed copy of "Tower of Druids" is worth forty bucks. So that'll cover me for Christmas presents, and I'll have enough left over to get Gregory's Little Friend that jacuzzi he seems to want.

I told Mom about my plan to sell my book, and she didn't like the idea. She said I waited a long time to get that thing signed and I would really regret selling it.

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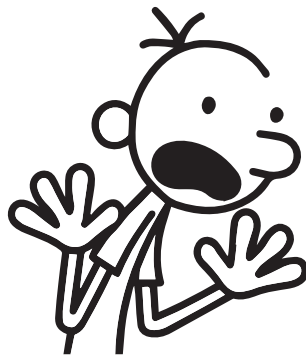
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Main project

CREATE A GRAPHIC NOVEL

Main Activities

1. Ask the children to think of a good alien or horror story for a short comic book.
2. Explain that they will need to plan their story carefully using a storyboard. Ask them to start by dividing an A4 piece of paper into four sections, or they could use the worksheet provided.
3. Pupils should sketch the first four pictures of their story and include speech bubbles, sound effects (e.g. POW!) and if necessary a caption below each picture to tell the story.
4. They should use extra paper, or photocopies of the worksheet, as necessary to continue their storyboard.
5. Encourage the children to read their storyboards carefully to check for spelling and grammar mistakes. Have they missed anything important or included something that is not relevant?
6. Ask them to swap with a friend to read their work and listen to suggestions they may give on ways to improve it.
7. Now pupils will turn their sketches into the real thing! Provide them with a fresh piece of paper or a new worksheet so they can draw and colour their story again. Prompt them to make sure they use their best writing and make their graphic novel really come to life.
8. If your school computers have a package such as 'Comic Life', pupils could create their graphic novels on this instead.



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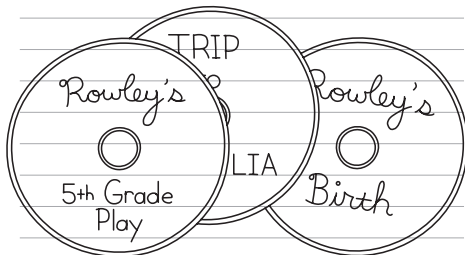
Other Project Ideas

1. (Pages 50-51) **Play a game of Wacky Sentences.** Read and explain the extract to the class. Pupils should work with a friend to play their own game of 'Wacky Sentences'. They should take it in turns to ask each other for a word e.g. the name of a breed of dog. Ask them to do this about six times, making sure they choose a different topic each time. Ask them to write down all the words suggested and then see who can come up with the wackiest sentences using these words. The pairs should then present their sentences to the whole class, who could choose their favourite wacky sentence by voting.

Plus, the reason our ancestors invented technology in the first place was so they didn't HAVE to interact with one another.

Mom sent me and Rowley down to the basement, and the two of us tried to figure out what to do. I'd asked Rowley to bring some DVDs with him so we could stay up late watching movies.

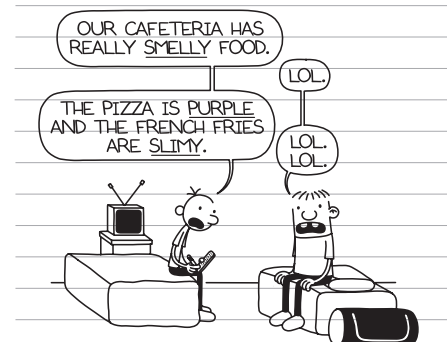
But he only brought HOME movies, and you couldn't PAY me to watch THOSE.



Mom brought us down some "Wacky Sentences" books, where you fill in the blanks to create funny phrases.

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For the first round, Rowley came up with the words and I wrote them down in the blanks. The phrases we made were actually pretty funny, but what WASN'T funny was Rowley's new habit of saying "LOL" instead of laughing.



It was really driving me CRAZY. So we switched roles, and I came up with the words instead. Rowley started by asking me for the name of a sport, so I said "volleyball". But he told me it's "bolleyball", with a "b". So then we got into this huge argument about what letter "volleyball" starts with.

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2. (Page 94) **Devise a healthy-eating snack.** Greg's school is trying to encourage the pupils to eat healthily. They introduce new snacks such as 'EXTREME SPORTS STIX', which turn out to be carrot sticks. Ask the children to consider how the packaging tries to attract the pupils to buy it. Now they should devise their own healthy-eating snacks. Encourage them to take something ordinary and turn it into something more appealing by giving it a fancy name. Pupils should design the packaging and name to grab as much attention as possible and to appeal to their classmates.

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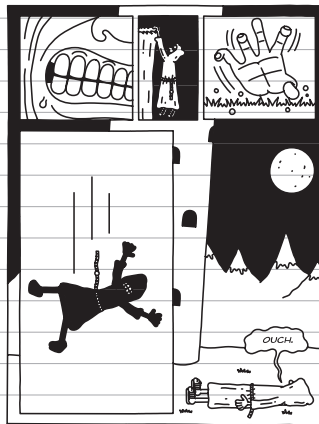
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Other Project Ideas

- 3. (Page 111) Hold a debate.** Hold a short debate and ask two pupils in your class to argue for and against allowing graphic novels to be included in book reports. Children should vote for the person they feel had the best arguments. The arguments should start with a rhetorical question and be carefully considered. Remind the class to listen carefully to each argument before deciding which one to vote for.

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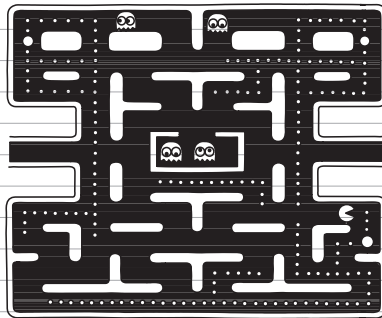


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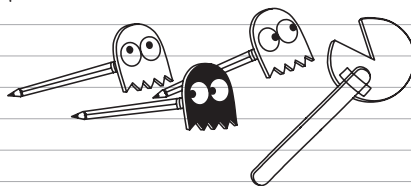
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Other Project Ideas

- 4. (Page 125) Design an arcade game.** Ask the children to think of a computer or arcade game they like playing. Now ask them to consider how they could replicate this game using such things as old cardboard boxes – just like Greg and Rowley do. Get them to design the game on paper first. This should be detailed, outlining what they will use to make the game and how the game will be played. Read the extract from page 125 to the class, to see how Greg did it. Now pupils can make their games, sticking to their designs as closely as possible. If they have to change anything get them to explain why.



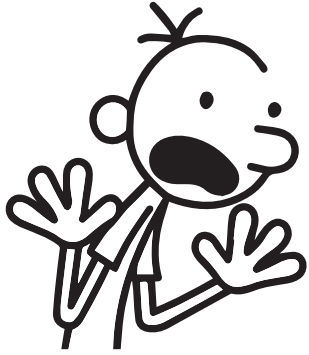
In our version we were gonna have Rowley on the inside of the box operating ghosts glued to pencils, while the person who was playing the game manoeuvred Pac-Man from the outside with a popsicle stick.



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Storyboard

MAIN
PROJECT
WORKSHEET
1.

1

2

3

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