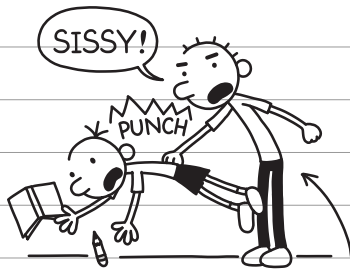


## SEPTEMBER

Monday

I guess Mom was pretty proud of herself for making me write in that journal last year, because now she went and bought me another one.

But remember how I said that if some jerk caught me carrying a book with "diary" on the cover, they were gonna get the wrong idea? Well, that's exactly what happened today.

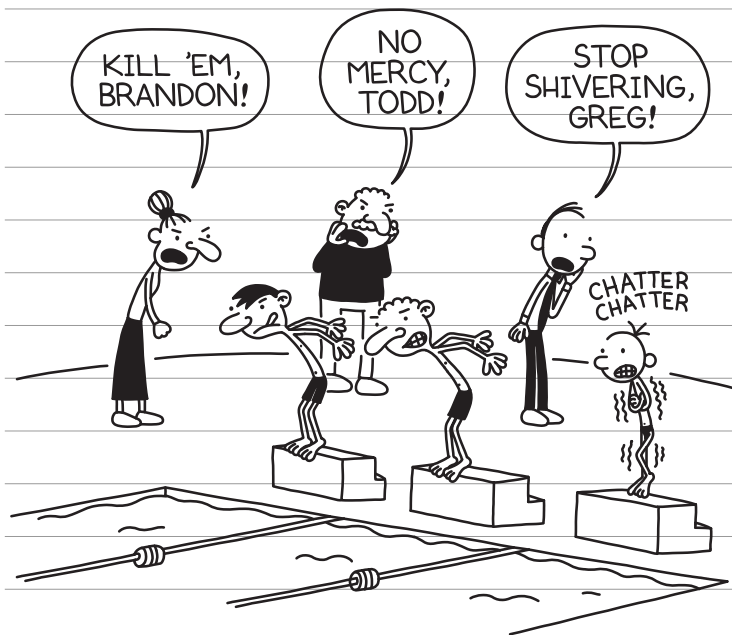


(MY BROTHER RODRICK)

Now that Rodrick knows I have another journal, I better remember to keep this one locked up. Rodrick actually got hold of my LAST journal a few weeks back, and it was a disaster. But don't even get me started on THAT story.

Even without my Rodrick problems, my summer was pretty lousy.

Our family didn't go anywhere or do anything fun, and that's Dad's fault. Dad made me join the swim team again, and he wanted to make sure I didn't miss any meets this year.

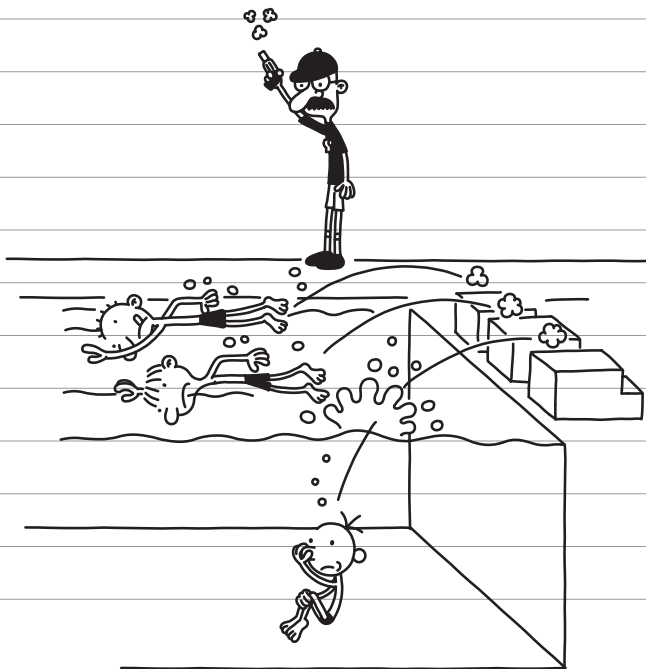


Dad's got this idea that I'm destined to be a great swimmer or something, so that's why he makes me join the team every summer.

At my first swim meet a couple of years ago,  
Dad told me that when the umpire shot off the  
starter pistol, I was supposed to dive in and  
start swimming.

But what he DIDN'T tell me was that the starter  
gun only fired BLANKS.

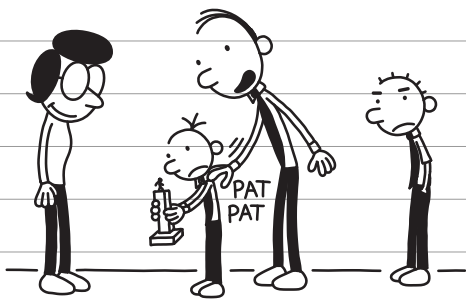
So I was a whole lot more worried about where the  
bullet was gonna land than I was about getting  
myself to the other end of the pool.



Even after Dad explained the whole "starter pistol" concept to me, I was still the worst swimmer on the team.

But I did end up winning "Most Improved" at the awards banquet at the end of the summer. That's only because there was a ten-minute difference between my first race and my last one.

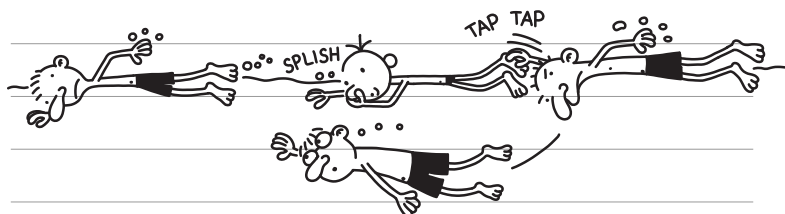
So I guess Dad's still waiting for me to live up to my potential.



In a lot of ways, being on the swim team was worse than being in middle school.

First of all, we had to be at the pool by 7:30 every morning, and the water was always FREEZING cold.

And, second of all, we were all crammed into two lanes, so I always had somebody on my tail trying to get round me.



The reason we had to use two lanes was because swim practice was at the same time as the Water Jazz class.

I actually tried to convince Dad to let me do Water Jazz instead of swim team, but he wouldn't go for it.

