

Jeff Kinney Hot Seat Event Transcript

16th February 2011

Hi Jeff when are you coming to the UK?

I'm hoping to come to the UK some time in this calendar year. I'm excited to meet the Wimpy Kid fans overseas!

Where do you get your fantastic ideas from?

I spend a lot of time trying to come up with good ideas, but the best ideas always seem to come from real life!

What inspired you to start writing the book?

I always wanted to be a cartoonist... a newspaper cartoonist. But I couldn't break into the business, so I became an author instead!

Hey why do you not include very many girls in your books?

Greg doesn't really understand girls, and girls don't really want to be around him. That's why most of the characters are girls.

Do you have another dairy of the wimpy kid book coming out after the ugly truth

Yes! I'm writing the sixth book now!

How many years have you been a writer?

I've been a cartoonist for about 20 years, but an author for only four!

Which one of the wimpy kid books is your favourite

I think I'll always like the red one best because it was my first one! But I always like the one I'm currently working on.

I've been taught that when writing, to use words instead of said. But lately I've been noticing books with a lot of "said"s. What should I do?

Well, I'm not sure. My books are very unconventional. I'm sure somebody would've told me not to put cartoon drawings into my books, but it's worked out for me. I'd say you should go with what feels right to you. But in a story, actions speak more strongly than words!

Are any of your characters based on real people?

Well, yes and no. My characters are fictional, but I wouldn't have been able to dream them up if I hadn't met a lot of people in real life.

What is the title of your new book?

Only I know, and it has to be a secret!

What made you want to become an author?

I wanted to be a cartoonist... I never dreamed I'm become an author!

How long does it take to write a book

It takes me about nine months from end to end. But it took me almost eight years to get my first book published!

Are you excited about your books being turned into a film??

Yes, it's been a lot of fun! I've gotten to be on the set and I'm good friends with the actors. In fact, Zach Gordon (Greg) turned 13 yesterday and I called to wish him a happy birthday!

How many books are there in the whole collections ?

There are five books so far, plus a Do-It-Yourself book and a Movie Diary.

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Why did you choose this story line?

I write a bunch of jokes, put them in a big pile, and see if I can string them together into a story!

Where you ever like Greg ?

I was a little bit like Greg. Greg is sort of like an exaggeration of my worst traits.

Are you going to write anymore books ?

Yes, I'm planning more Wimpy Kid books!

What does zoo wee mama mean?

I think Zoo-Wee Mama means whatever you'd like it to mean!

What does zoo wee mama mean

It means: !!!!

Hi Jeff

What inspired you to write the Diary of a wimpy kid?

Was your life like this in anyway?

I've never read one of your books but they sound good!

My inspiration was my childhood... I had a lot of funny things happen to me, and I wanted to fictionalize them and send them out into the world!

When you were a kid from 12 who was your favourite author

I think my favorite author at that time was Piers Anthony!

Why did you invent the cheese touch?????

In the U.S., kids have a make-believe virus called "cooties." I wanted to make up a sort of nuclear form of cooties.

Do you like the film or not ?

I do. I think it's just a different form of the book. I like it that you care about the relationship between Rowley and Greg... that's something that doesn't happen in the books.

What was your childhood like? Was it like Greg's?

My childhood was sort of like Greg's. He and I experienced many of the same things!

Do you enjoy writing wimpy kid books?

It's really hard work! I don't enjoy writing them, because it's hours and hours of sitting there, trying to think up jokes. But I like it when the books are done!

Do u have any other intrests

Yes... I have two boys, and I really like spending time with them!

when did you start wriiting diary of a wimpy kid ?

I started writing it in January of 1998... probably before you were born!

How did you come up with the title of your book Diary of a Wimpy Kid?

I wanted to write a book about a kid who is not the strongest or most popular. And since I was a bit of a wimpy growing up, I thought "wimpy kid" was perfect.

in a scale how awsome do u think your books are?????

I'll say this... I would've enjoyed reading them as a kid!

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As an author, what was the biggest challenge you faced in making such a succesful series of books?

The biggest challenge is coming up with ideas. It's really hard for me to think of new jokes all the time!

What was your favourite book when you were younger

I liked Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing and Freckle Juice.

Do you have a friend like Rowley?

I don't have a friend like Rowley any more, but I've known lots of Rowleys in the past!

What started your career?

I created a comic strip called "Igdoof" in college... I guess that's where I got my start!

As an author, what famous people have you met? (other authors, singers, actors, etc.)

I've met two presidents, James Cameron, and lots of actors and even a few athletes.

Do u support a football team and what is it

Yes... I like the New England Patriots!

Why didnt you call it the journal of a wimpy kid?

I thought it would be more fun to call it a diary since boys don't typically write in diaries.

Which was your hardest book to write?

I think the one I'm working on now (book 6) is the hardest!

What was your family's reaction when you became a writer?

They were happy for me! They always knew I wanted to be a cartoonist, so they were glad when it finally happened!

HOW LONG WAS IT FOR YOU TO WRITE THE BOOK??

Almost eight years for the first one!

Which subject did you find the hardest in school? Why?

I had trouble with Chemistry. I'm surprised I passed!

When did you become a aurther

I became an author four years ago, almost to the day!

Do you enjoy writing books

It's hard work, but I think it's satisfying!

Hello Jeff what is your favourite food?

I like pizza and fried chicken, although I'm worried that diet is going tokill me.

Why don't you have coloured illustrations in your books?

I like the look of black and white illustrations. I think that's all you need to get the point across!

Did you like English when you were at school? If so why?

Yes, I always like English and writing in school! I love stories!

Did you like writing in school

Yes, I was always pretty good at it!

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Did u have a memory, and decided to write about it?? was that u??

A lot of my stories come from my memories and experiences, yes!

How long does it take to write one of your books, and how long does it take to get into print?

It takes me about nine months to write a book these days, and they come out in print about three months later.

What is your favourite sweets ?

My favorite candy was Good and Fruity, but they discontinued it!

Thanks for the answer how did you start up your career was it hard or easy io bet it was hard to get published.

I got lucky, and it was easy for me. But it was hard to get my cartoons published in newspapers... it never happened for me!

If you were not an author what would you be

I think I'd be doing what I do for my day job... creating video games for kids!

Would you prefer the film to be animated instead of having real actors?

I like having real actors. I think audiences laugh harder and care more when there are real actors on the screen.

Which was the book you most enjoyed writing?

Writing is never easy for me, but I really did like writing the Movie Diary.

Do you have a wife.

Zoo-eee-Mama

I do! We've been married for ten years.

When did you take instrest in books?

I've always been a reader... so I was pretty young!

You must think these things up. right

Yes, most of my writing is from my imagination.

Who is your favourite char-tar?

skelton school

I think Rowley is my favorite. He's a pure kid, unlike Greg. Greg is always in a big rush to grow up.

Hello Jeff my fave bit of the ugly truth is when rowley and the girls cry because of there eggs being dumped

Thank you! I liked that, too!

Have you tried to write other kinds of stories?

I haven't, really! But I'd like to create something new in the future!

Do u like any other cinds of things in life or just diary of a wimpy kid

Yes, I like lots of things in life. My favorite thing is to ride my bike in circles in my cul de sac. No joke.

What will your next book be called

I know, but I can't tell anyone! Sorry!

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Hi your books are great im reading one now awesome pictures

Thank you!!!

I really like the ugly truth you are brilliant

Great! I appreciate that!!!

Did You use the computer to write the book or did you write on paper

Yes, I use a computer. I draw on a tablet and I type the text in on a keyboard. No pencil and paper involved.

Hello, I love your Books Gregs little brother Manny is so funny the illustration is funny ! Dog Days is hilairious, How did you think of the characters, characters names , and the whole story ?

P.S. I am in the middle of the D I Y version so funny.

Thank you! I spent a lot of time dreaming up the characters, but I took a long time to name them. I wanted to make sure I "knew" the characters before I named them.

Hi Jeff do you like the film better than the book ?

I will always like the books best, but the films are a lot of fun. The next movie is really funny ,and I can't wait until people see it!

Why did you choose to write the books in a diary form

I thought it would make them seem realistic if they were written in diary form!

Have you become famouse by writing your books

I don't really think so. My life is very ordinary and no one ever approaches me about the books. I have a pretty normal face

Who are your favourite Authors?

I liked Judy Blume, Piers Anthony, and JRR Tolkein as a kid.

I really likes the book THANKS

Thank you!!!!

Did the movie make the books more popular?

Yes! I think a lot of people found out about the books because of the movie!

Whats the most scariest thing you have done in your life

I recently rode in a hot air balloon with my young kids. That was pretty scary!

Did u get any help writting the books

No, but my younger brother always reads the books and gives me his input!

Are any of the characters like you?

Greg is the most like me... but only in a bad way!

Hey am a real fan !!! love your books !!!

Thank you!!!

Do you have any hobbies? What do you do for fun?

I don't have any real hobbies because I'm almost always working. But I'm the den leader of my son's Cub Scouts den, so that's what I do in my free time.

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I really admiror your work how did you get this good

Thank you so much! I worked hard at it. I turned off the TV and got to work

What did you have for lunch? I LIKE LUNCH

It's only 9:48 a.m. in the US... lunch is hours away!

When you were a young boy did you enjoy writing at school?

I did. I enjoyed reading and writing!

Did u have a bro like rodrick skelton school

Well, I have an older brother who played the drums like Rodrick. But my older brother is much nicer than Rodrick.

Is it exciting writing a books

It's exciting finishing books and then meeting readers like you!

Why didnt you call it the journal of a wimpy kid?

I thought "diary" was a funnier word!

What will your next book be called?

I know the answer but I'm not allowed to tell!

Whats your daily routine

I don't really have a routine, but I do have a dog. I'm about to walk him after we're done here

Witch book are you working on?

I'm working on the sixth book now!

What Primary School did you go to?

I went to Potomac Landing Elementary School!

Do you play any sports?

I did... I played soccer and was on the swim team!

In your sixth book are you going to include a new charater

I'm sure I will, but I don't know who it will be yet!

What inspired you to make a movie?

I thought it would be fun to do something completely different and see how a movie turned out!

Do you think adults would enjoy reading your books?

I hope so! I actually wrote my books for adults, not kids

What was your favorite class in school

I liked English the best!

Do you need special skills or qualifications to be a writer? What are they?"

I don't think so... I was a Criminal Justice major in college, so I'm not qualified to be a writer!

What was your most embarrassing moment?

When I was on the swim team, I used to hide out from my coach in the locker room... I'd wrap myself in toilet paper to keep warm, just like Greg!

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Was it hard to find the characters for the film or not?

Yes! It took us about six months to find Greg! We had to look all over the country!

Was there a particular author which inspired you to write a book or did you just started writing

I was inspired by newspaper cartoonists like Bill Waterson, who wrote Calvin and Hobbes!

What make you think of writing it as a diary/journal instead of in the first person?

I wanted to write a book that felt like something a kid would actually write!

Whens your birthday

MY birthday is in a few days... February 19th!

Who's Fregley based on?

Fregley isn't really based on anyone... he's just a strange kid who lives up the street!

What do you think is the funniest part of the First book?

I like the moment where Greg tells Rowley "We can both learn a valuable lesson from this."

When is your next book coming out in the UK, and what will it be called?

Hopefully, it will come out this fall! I can't say what the title is just yet!

How are you today ??

Pretty good!

Hello what was your favourite subject at school

I always liked English the best!

How old are Gregg and Rowley in the series?

I don't really know! I think they're between 11 and 12.

Will there be another film coming out? Me, my mum and my brother really enjoyed the first one!

Yes! The next film is coming out soon!

What is the next cover colour going to be?

I'm not sure yet, but we're running out of decent colours!

Do you have a mascot to inspire your writing like Jacqueline Wilson?

I don't! I haven't heard of that... having a mascot inspire you!

Did you have anickname at school if. what was it

Yes, but it's too embarrassing to say!

Will you ever make any new characters up or change your style of writing?

I sometimes throw in a new character. I'm not sure if I'll ever change my stlye of writing!

Are you enjoying the fame that the books have brought you?

I'm not really famous... my life is really very plain!

How did you disced that you wanted to be a Author

I wanted to become a newspaper cartoonist and decided to become and author when that didn't work out!

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Do you think you are a better illustrator or an author?

I think I'm about as good a writer as I am an illustrator. There are much better writers and illustrators out there, though!

What is your life like? (not writing books)

Well, I have a full-time job and I'm a dad. We also recently got a dog... so, pretty busy!

Did u play a part in the movie

Yes, in the next movie, I'm Holly Hills's dad!

Do you think you will always be a writer?

I hope so! Although books are changing a lot. I hope there's always a spot for me!

What car do you drive?

I drive a Toyota Prius!

What music do you like listening to?

My favourite band is Third Eye Blind!

Hello,

Plz can u answer tis question:

Does anyone elsa in your family write books??

No, I'm the only person who writes fiction in my family!

What school did you go to and did you enjoy it?

I went to an all-boys' high school. I enjoyed it at times!

Maisie asks "is Manny ever going to grow up? Is he like your brother - if you have one!?"

No... I don't think Manny will ever grow up. But he is sort of like my younger brother.

Why do u think they turned the book into a movie

I love the movie

They turned the book into a movie because I said they could... we worked on it together!

Hello Mr Kinney I absolutely love your books I think you are the best author ever! Are you going to do anymore books?

Please reply

Thank you!! Yes, I'm going to write more books!!

Were you one of the better students in your english class

I did pretty well in English! So I guess so, yes!

Do any of the characters relate to you in any sort of way or your life?

Greg is the most like me, but only the bad parts!

Why does Manny have such a HUGE nose and why is Roderick so mean???"

I thought it would be funny to draw Manny as a little alligator. And aren't all older siblings mean?

Do you do any other jobs?

Yes, I have a full-time job. I work on the web site Poptropica!

Who directed your movie from your first book? & Can we all star in it please?

Thor Freudenthal directed the first one. David Bowers directed the second one... he was born in the UK! You'll have to ask him if you can be in it

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Did you enjoy writing as a child?

I didn't do much writing, but I did a lot of reading!

Have you ever had any broken bones or injuries in your past?

I've never broken anything big, but I've had lots of sprains and injuries!

Alex asks "Why is the mum so bonkers and un-normal?"

I think Mom is great! I think she just gets a little too involved!

What was it like when it became a flim?

IT was fun! It was very exciting when the 20th Century Fox logo appeared on the screen!

Was it hard to find greg for the movie

It was! It took about six months!

Hello i have all your books you are the most famous aurther in my house i love dog days please write another story

Thank you!!! I will keep writing if you'll keep reading!

Is there any cool merchandising coming out?

Yes, there are tee shirts, hats, puzzles, and a number of other things!

Did you ever enter any writing competitions and win?

No, I never did! But I won a contest where I designed a giant Easter egg!

What is a Portugese Water dog?!

Wow, how did you know I have a Portuguese Water Dog? It's a black dog that swims

Can you choose when you write a book or does your manager make you get your head down.

Yes, I can choose when I write my books!

When you were a kid did you write a diary?

No, I didn't, but I wish I had!

What is your favourite animal ?

I've always liked turtles!

What sport do you enjoy?

I love watching American football and basketball!

Why did you want to talk to us

I thought it would be fun... I've never really gotten to meet my UK fans!

Are you planning on writing another set of books? Seperate from the Wimpy Kid series?

Yes, I'd like to write something completely new in the future!

What was your favorite tv porgarm when you were 11

I liked He Man when I was about 11. I like Phineas and Ferb now!

Do you like being famous

I'm not really famous, but this has been fun!

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When will you stop writing books

Hopefully never!

Can I have some tips for a good story please?

Yes... look at your own life and write stories about it. The best stories are about real life, I think.

Why does gregs mum keep imbarresing him

I think she's a great mom, but every kid is embarrassed by their parents at some point

Do you stay up all night to write a book? :zzzz:

Sometimes I do!

How did you think up Greg as a character? In your opinion what is the funniest part out of all your books?

Greg is a little like me. The funniest part in all of the books? Hmm... I'm not sure! Maybe when Greg lets Rowley take the fall for chasing the kids with a worm on a stick.

How are you today are your books all about greg but are you going to write a book about a girl and greg in love

I think it would be a lot of fun to write about Greg with a girlfriend. Or maybe Rowley with a girlfriend!

What is your fav film?

I like "Ghost"!

What is the best moment in your life

I think it was when I first received the finished Wimpy Kid book in the mail!