

THE
ULTIMATE EPIC GUIDE
TO USING
DAV PILKEY'S
BOOKS IN THE CLASSROOM



SCHOLASTIC

WARNING!

Dav Pilkey's books have been known to be devoured by children aged seven to one hundred years old. Even the most reluctant readers just can't seem to get enough of that wedgie-wielding superhero, Captain Underpants! And then there are those riveting graphic novels by George Beard and Harold Hutchins, *The Adventures of Super Diaper Baby* and the brand-new *The Adventures of Ook and Gluk, Kung-Fu Cavemen from the Future*.

This guide is designed for teachers who have desperately tried to pry Dav Pilkey's books from the hands of students during math, social studies, and science lessons. It is based on the radical concept that, hey, maybe the students who love these books so much might actually be learning something from them! Included you will find ideas for use in the classroom that will enrich your curriculum and create outrageous amounts of fun and learning.



"Encourage kids to be creative without worrying about being perfect."

Dear Teachers,

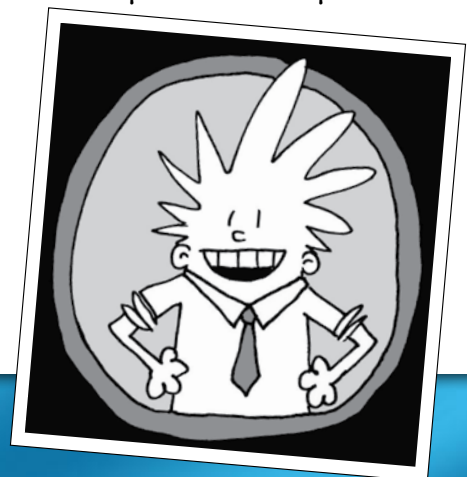
When I was a kid, I loved to draw and make up stories. I didn't worry about drawing things perfectly or spelling things correctly. I just wanted to get my ideas and stories on paper. I loved the freedom that came with creating stories just for fun.

Once I got published, I spent years traveling to different schools and talking with kids about my books. During these school visits, I was surprised to learn that most kids didn't consider themselves to be artists or writers. Most kids thought they had to be able to draw Garfield perfectly to be an artist. They had also convinced themselves that they needed to spell perfectly in order to be writers. Everywhere I went, I met kids who were stifled creatively because of their fears of imperfection.

My goal at these school visits was to encourage kids to be creative without worrying about being perfect. I showed kids examples of Impressionists who drew houses upside down, painted freely, and broke all the rules. Much to the dismay of the teachers in the room, I also gave examples of famous writers and poets who didn't use conventional spelling, grammar, and punctuation. I think the kids I spoke with were inspired by these examples, but I wanted to reach more kids, all over the world.

That's how Captain Underpants came along. I designed each book to contain two or three "mini-comics" which were created by the stories' protagonists, George Beard and Harold Hutchins. George and Harold's simple, silly, and wildly imperfect mini-comics turned out to be one of the most popular parts of each book. My hope was that George and Harold's "imperfect examples" would give kids permission to invent their own stories without concern for perfectionism, and so far, it seems to have worked. Every year, I get hundreds of original comics and stories mailed to me from kids. These kids didn't make their comics because of a school assignment. None of these stories were proofread or graded or marked up with a red pen. These stories were all made for one reason—for fun!

And isn't that what creativity is all about?



PART 1: A GENERAL GUIDE TO USING DAV PILKEY'S BOOKS IN THE CLASSROOM

Dav Pilkey's books are jam-packed with sidesplitting humor and fast-paced action. His characters come alive and engage the reader from beginning to end. Use your students' enthusiasm for Pilkey's books to enrich your language arts curriculum.

EXPLORING CHARACTER TRAITS

George Beard and Harold Hutchins, two outrageously mischievous, creative, comic book-writing fourth graders from the hilarious Captain Underpants series, are certain to inspire your students to want to become authors and illustrators of their own comic book adventures.

Encourage your students to create an original superhero. Explore the qualities that define a superhero. Work with your students to brainstorm a list of character traits they feel would be essential for a superhero to possess. You may want to start them off with a few examples, such as, *brave*, *confident*, *daring*, *imaginative*, *strong*, etc. Post your list and have students add to it as they discover new word choices.



Once your list has been established, encourage your students to write a story about their superhero. Suggest that the superhero act in ways that demonstrate the character traits he/she may possess. Have your students create an illustration of their superhero to go along with their stories.

USING DESCRIPTIVE LANGUAGE

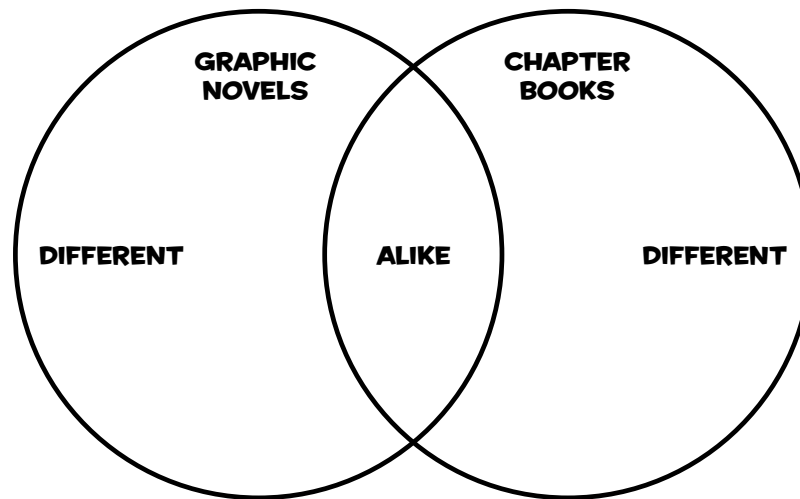
Action and adventure are essential elements of Dav Pilkey's books. They provide the teacher and the student with a wonderful opportunity to explore the use of powerful verbs and descriptive language.

Have your students work cooperatively to find and list the verbs found in pre-selected sections of Dav Pilkey's books. They will see that their lists will soon begin to contain words such as *demand*, *shouted*, *screamed*, *whimpered*, *cried*, and *laughed*. Discuss how these words help Pilkey's stories come alive and how important word choice is to good writing. Ask your students to write a conversation between two characters using these vivid verbs.

Demonstrate the correct use of punctuation when writing dialogue: quotation marks, commas, periods, question marks, and exclamation marks.

INTRODUCING GRAPHIC NOVELS

Introduce your students to the format of graphic novels, which are stories written and illustrated in the style of comic books. Use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast graphic novels with chapter books. What do your students notice that these formats have in common? What are some of the differences? Generate a conversation regarding the elements of graphic novels. For example, the pictures and narrative tell a sequential story. Quotation marks are not necessary because the dialogue appears in speech bubbles.



Challenge your students to create an original comic strip. Remind them that it is easier to write the dialogue first and *then* enclose it in a speech bubble!

WRITING A FRIENDLY LETTER

Help improve your students' persuasive letter-writing skills by having them write to their favorite Dav Pilkey character! Who will they choose? Will it be Captain Underpants, George, Harold, or maybe even mean Mr. Krupp?!

Begin by reviewing the five parts of a friendly letter: the heading, greeting, body, closing, and signature. Then have your students try to persuade their favorite character to come visit their school. Encourage your students to be clear about the benefits of visiting the school from the character's point of view.

For example, a student may appeal to George and Harold by stating that the principal of their school is fair and open-minded (unlike mean old Mr. Krupp), and that he/she enjoys creative children. Therefore, visiting their school would be a pleasant and enjoyable experience for George and Harold.

INFUSING SPELLING INSTRUCTION

While George and Harold are clearly creative, they could certainly use some help with their spelling. Borrow time from formal spelling instruction by integrating spelling training with writing. Challenge your students to use their weekly spelling lists to find and correct the errors found in George and Harold's comics.

PART 2: A GUIDE TO USING THE ADVENTURES OF OOK AND GLUK, KUNG-FU CAVEMEN FROM THE FUTURE IN THE CLASSROOM

Prepare to travel back in time with Dav Pilkey's endearing, plucky, kung-fu cavemen, Ook and Gluk! Use their hilarious adventures as a springboard for bringing science, environmental awareness, and the peaceful resolution of conflicts to life in your classroom.

Ook and Gluk live in prehistoric times...along with a couple of *dinosaurs*! Your students are sure to question this scientific anomaly. Did dinosaurs and humans live during the same time period? *The Adventures of Ook and Gluk, Kung-Fu Cavemen from the Future* will provide students with a variety of opportunities for scientific inquiry—starting right at the beginning with the “Scientific Disclaimer,” followed by the “Scientific Disclaimer Disclaimer,” and continuing with questions about whether time travel could ever be possible.

EXPLORING THE MESOZOIC ERA

Engage students in a discussion about dinosaurs and the Mesozoic Era, also known as the “Age of the Dinosaurs.” Guide students to understand how life on Earth was during this period. Provide them with examples, such as: the climate was warmer, seasons were mild, there were no polar ice caps, and the continents were pushed together to form Pangaea. Work with your students to conduct the following experiment, which will explore the formation of continents and geographical landforms on our planet.

Take a hard-boiled egg and crack its shell. Ask your students if it reminds them of anything. Lead them to see that the egg could be a tiny model of planet Earth. The shell is Earth's crust, divided into plates. Within the shell lies the mantle. Move the shell around and show the students how the “mantle” seems to buckle in other places. Remind them that this is happening on Earth now. This is what causes the formation of mountains, creates earthquakes, and makes changes on the ocean floor.

CONDUCTING DINOSAUR RESEARCH

Lily, the tiny, ferocious, upchucking dinosaur, is certain to capture the hearts of your students. But exactly what kind of dinosaur is Lily? Is she a *Tyrannosaurus rex*, an *Albertosaurus*, or possibly a *Velociraptor*?

Invite your students to conduct research on these three dinosaurs. They should also be able to find information identifying which prehistoric period their dinosaur was alive. Have them discover if their dinosaur was an herbivore, a carnivore, or an omnivore. Can they find information about their dinosaur's enemies? Students should also research their dinosaur's appearance. What did it look like? Did it have any distinguishing characteristics that helped it adapt to its environment? Students can present their findings in a diorama to share with their classmates.

CREATING AN ECOSYSTEM

When Ook and Gluk are forced through the time portal to the year 2222 AD, they find themselves at the mercy of J. P. Goppennopper. Goppennopper is the C.E.O. of the world's most evil corporation. He uses his time portal to travel to Caveland, Ohio, in order to steal all the trees, oil, and water in the land. It is up to the heroic Ook and Gluk to save the day—and Caveland's natural resources.

Engage students in a discussion about the importance and finite supply of the world's natural resources. Work together with your students to brainstorm possible ways to preserve them. Some examples may include shutting off lights when leaving a room, biking or walking to school instead of being driven, conserving water when brushing teeth, and planting trees in the community.

Encourage your students to try their hand at directly caring for their own little piece of the environment. Provide them with an opportunity to create an ecosystem. Each student will need the following items in order to construct his/her terrarium.

- 1 washed and empty 2-liter soda bottle
- About 3 cups of potting soil
- 4 to 6 bean seeds
- 1 teaspoon of grass seed
- Enough water to moisten the soil
- Optional: a small snail or worm

Instructions

(Step 1 must be done by an adult!)

1. Cut off the top of the soda bottle just before the neck tapers toward the cap.
2. Save the top and the cap for later use.
3. Place potting soil in the bottom of the soda bottle. Gently tap the base to settle the soil.
4. Push the bean seeds into the soil.
5. Sprinkle grass seed on top of the soil.
6. Lightly sprinkle water on the soil until it is damp, but not soaking wet.
7. Add a small snail or worm to your terrarium.
8. Gently fit the bottle part from Step 1 into the bottle part with the soil and seeds.
9. You may tape the two parts together if you wish.
10. Place the terrarium in a warm, sunny spot. It should not require water again!

SOLVING CONFLICTS PEACEFULLY

Master Wong teaches Ook and Gluk that the mind is a mighty warrior in the battle for truth and justice! He helps them discover that walking a path of peace requires patience, wisdom, and, okay, maybe a little bit of kung fu.

Have your students practice settling their differences peacefully. Create a list of key words that can be used in your classroom. These words will be instrumental in helping your students take responsibility for resolving conflicts peacefully. For example, consider posting phrases such as:

STOP	Stop your behavior.
SAY	State the problem.
LISTEN	Listen to the other person's point of view, then restate the problem from their point of view.
THINK	Brainstorm solutions to the problem.
CHOOSE	Choose a plan and put it into action.

Role-playing activities will provide your students with the opportunities they need to practice these skills. You may wish to provide the following scenarios:

- You have arrived at the playground to play basketball with a group of your friends. You take a shot at the basket and miss. Someone starts to make fun of you. What would you say to that person?
- Your favorite eraser is missing from your desk. You notice a classmate appears to have one just like it. What would you do next?
- At recess your friend has told you that you cannot join in the game. How would you react?

It won't take long for your students to see that they too can walk the path of peace—minus the kung fu!



PART 3: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

There's a lot to talk about in Dav Pilkey's books! Get students to contribute their ideas.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR THE CAPTAIN UNDERPANTS BOOKS

Captain Underpants is a clever, fearless superhero. Together with George and Harold, he seems to be able to outwit even the most evil villains.

1. How does Captain Underpants use his superpowers for good?
2. George and Harold do not have superpowers, so how do they help save the day?
3. How would you describe Mr. Krupp? Is he a fair principal? Why or why not? What would make Mr. Krupp a better principal?
4. Who are the superheroes in your life? Why are they your superheroes? Which character traits do they possess?
5. Which character do you believe you are most like in the Captain Underpants books? What is it that makes you most like that character?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR THE ADVENTURES OF OOK AND GLUK

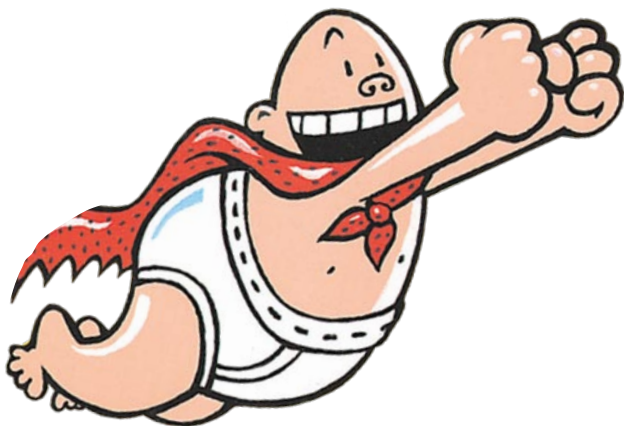
Ook and Gluk discover that the future is not so bright in 2222 AD. Their new friend Master Wong helps them see how to save the day.

1. Master Wong encourages Ook and Gluk to walk the path of peace. How do you walk the path of peace? How can you help others walk the path of peace?
2. Do you think it is a good idea to be able to travel back and forth in time?
3. What kinds of problems did time travel cause for Chief Goppernopper and J. P. Goppernopper?
4. If you had a time machine, where would you have it take you?
5. What kinds of problems do you think you might encounter traveling through time?
6. Master Wong asks Ook and Gluk who they believe to be the greatest man. They answer that no one is the greatest man. Why do you think they gave that answer?

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

CAPTAIN UNDERPANTS SUPER WORD SEARCH

S	L	Y	Y	M	E	D	W	Y	I	X	N	E	E	T
U	C	Z	M	I	E	E	I	K	W	O	F	C	G	R
L	B	S	G	P	Y	L	H	Z	R	R	M	I	R	A
U	W	D	R	X	U	I	V	T	O	V	R	U	O	L
T	E	D	V	E	Z	R	O	I	P	P	A	J	E	A
W	E	A	Z	D	K	E	P	V	N	N	T	R	G	L
B	M	L	L	U	N	C	H	L	A	D	I	E	S	A
U	R	P	I	I	D	C	A	G	E	O	S	W	K	A
I	O	D	B	O	Y	U	J	R	L	P	F	O	N	A
Q	N	M	M	N	T	P	X	Y	C	N	O	P	M	A
C	O	M	I	C	B	O	O	K	T	W	N	T	Q	A
C	S	R	E	G	O	O	B	O	B	O	R	J	T	H
U	K	O	M	D	G	N	I	R	O	N	P	Y	H	Y
H	A	R	O	L	D	S	Q	K	U	I	R	J	K	S
L	M	J	J	H	Z	W	Z	E	F	T	T	S	F	W



COMBINE-O-TRON
COMIC BOOK
CRACKERS
GEORGE
HAROLD
HYPNO-RING
LUNCH LADIES
MELVIN

POWER JUICE
PURPLE POTTY
ROBO-BOOGERS
SULU
TRA-LA-LAAAAA
TURBO TOILET
WEDGIE

NOTE: THE HYPHENS AND SPACES IN THE CLUES DO NOT
APPEAR IN THE ANSWERS IN THE WORD SEARCH BOX.

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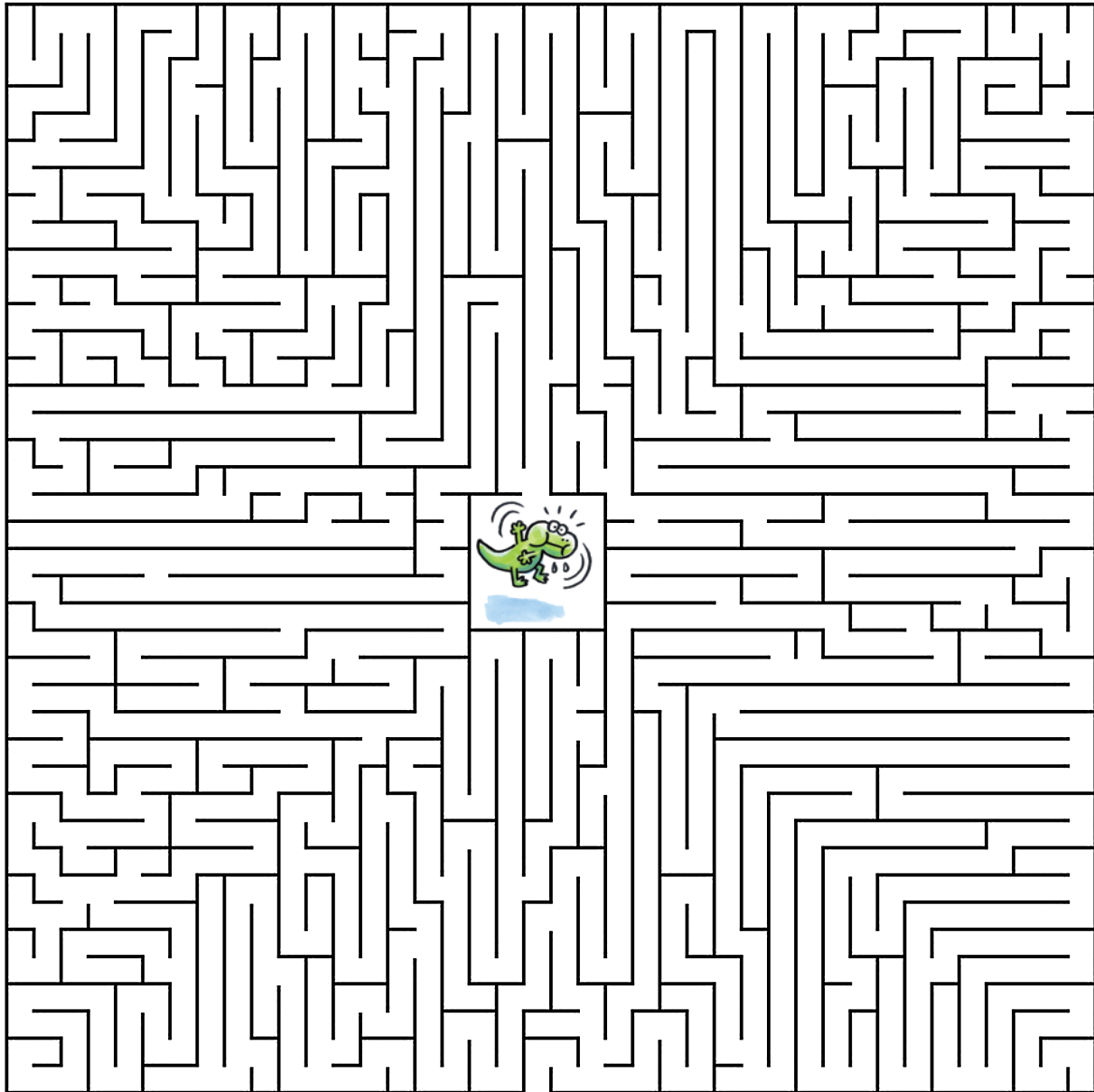
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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

RACE TO REACH LILY

HELP OOK AND GLUK FIND LILY BEFORE CHIEF GOPPERNOPPER DOES!



START



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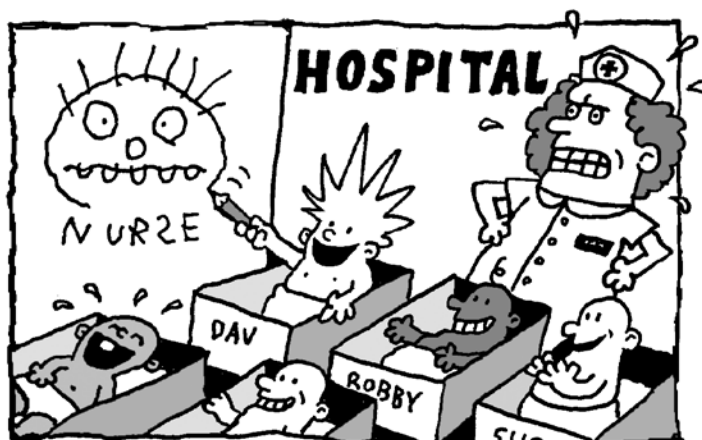


ILLUSTRATE A BIOGRAPHY

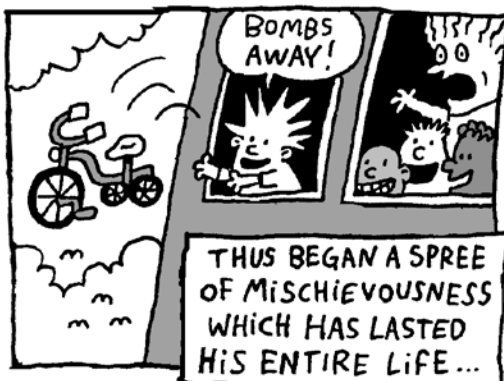
Learn more about Dav Pilkey by reading his illustrated biography on the following pages, and then have your students write their own biographies in graphic novel form!



DAV PILKEY WAS BORN ON MARCH 4, 1966 ... AND FROM THE VERY START, HE WAS TRYING TO MAKE KIDS LAUGH ... AND GETTING INTO TROUBLE!



AT THE AGE OF 4, DAV WAS KICKED OUT OF "SAFETY SCHOOL" FOR THROWING STUFF OUT THE WINDOW



AND WHENEVER DAV DID ANYTHING BAD, HIS TEACHER WOULD SNAP HER FINGERS, POINT TO THE DOOR, AND SHOUT:



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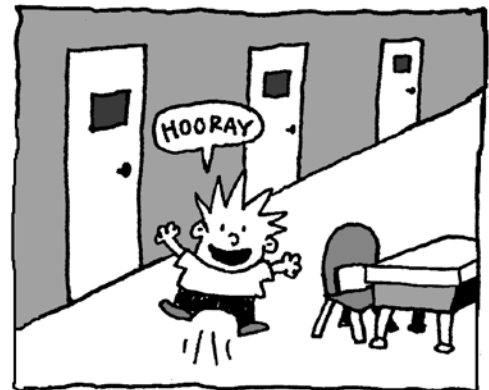
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THE ALMOST COMPLETELY TRUE ADVENTURES OF DAV PILKEY

PART 2: THE "NOT QUITE AS
EARLY AS BEFORE" YEARS

WHEN WE LAST
SAW OUR HERO,
HE HAD BEEN
SENTENCED TO
A MOST CRUEL
AND UNUSUAL
PUNISHMENT:

AN AFTERNOON
IN THE HALLWAY!



DAV ALWAYS KEPT HIS
HALLWAY DESK WELL STOCKED...

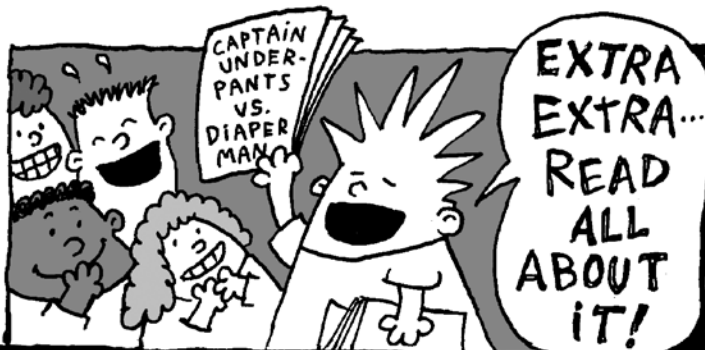


...WITH DRAWING SUPPLIES!

IT WAS IN THE HALLWAY THAT DAV HAD HIS FIRST
EXPERIENCES MAKING UP STORIES AND
ILLUSTRATING THEM!



SCRIBBLE
SCRIBBLE
SCRIBBLE

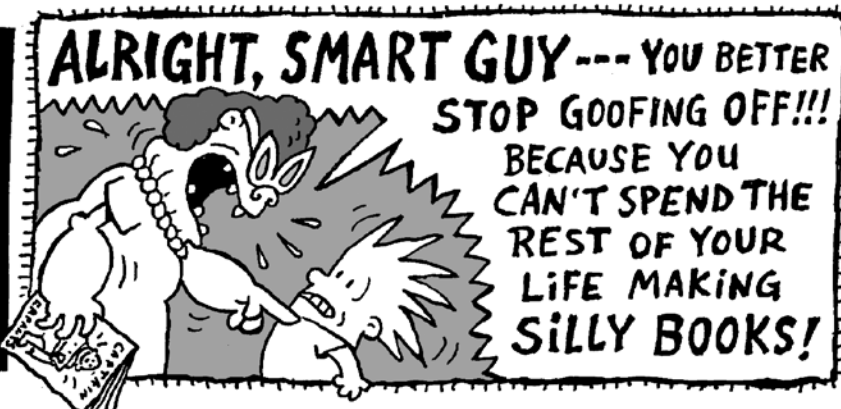


EXTRA
EXTRA...
READ
ALL
ABOUT
IT!

EVERYBODY IN DAV'S CLASS THOUGHT
HIS STORIES WERE REALLY FUNNY.....EXCEPT FOR ONE PERSON!!!



DAV'S TEACHER
CALMLY TOOK
HIM ASIDE
AND GENTLY
SPOKE TO HIM
ABOUT HIS
NEWFOUND
TALENTS...



ALRIGHT, SMART GUY --- YOU BETTER
STOP GOOFING OFF!!!
BECAUSE YOU
CAN'T SPEND THE
REST OF YOUR
LIFE MAKING
SILLY BOOKS!

...SO MUCH
FOR THAT
THEORY!

DON'T MISS
PART 3
OF OUR
ADVENTURE

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THE ALMOST COMPLETELY TRUE ADVENTURES OF DAV PILKEY

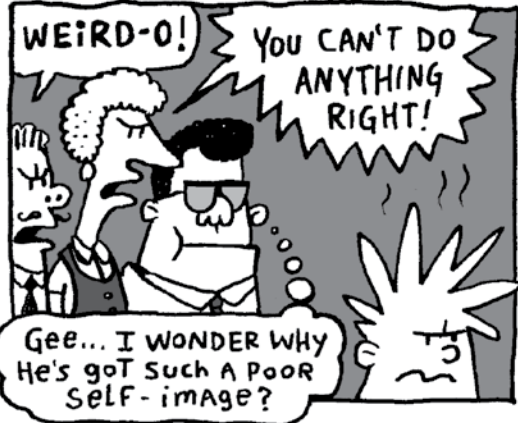
PART 3: THE NOT QUITE AS EARLY AS THE "NOT QUITE AS EARLY AS BEFORE" YEARS

FOR HIS CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY, DAV PILKEY WAS SENTENCED TO FOUR YEARS OF **HIGH SCHOOL**

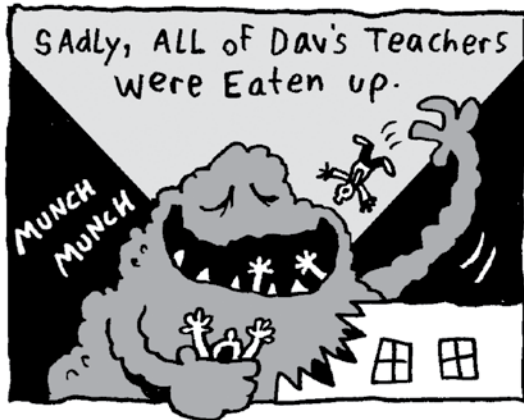
YOU'RE A **BAD INFLUENCE!**

YOU'LL NEVER AMOUNT TO ANYTHING, ART-BOY!

...WHERE UNFORTUNATELY, MANY OF DAV'S TEACHERS EXCELLED IN THE ART OF CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM!

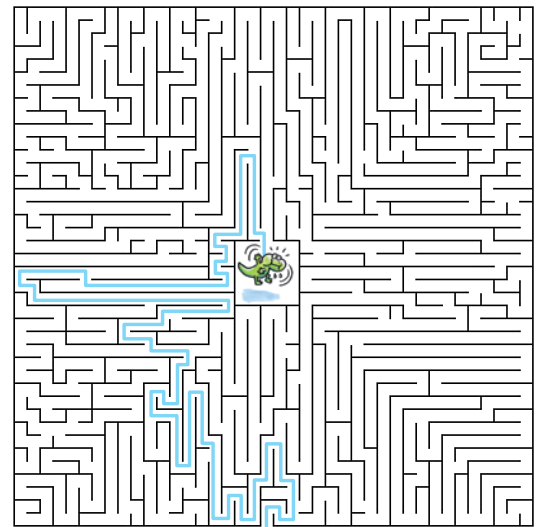


FOUR LONG YEARS OF DISCOURAGEMENT AND HUMILIATION ENDED ABRUPTLY ONE DAY WHEN A BIG MONSTER ROSE FROM THE DEPTHS OF A NEARBY SWAMP, AND ATTACKED DAV'S HIGH SCHOOL...



ANSWER KEY

S	L	Y	Y	M	E	D	W	Y	I	X	N	E	E	T
U	C	Z	M	I	E	E	I	K	W	O	F	C	G	R
L	B	S	G	P	Y	L	H	Z	R	R	M	I	R	A
U	W	D	R	X	U	I	V	T	O	V	R	U	O	L
T	E	D	V	E	Z	R	O	I	P	P	A	J	E	A
W	E	A	Z	D	K	E	P	V	N	N	T	R	G	L
B	M	L	L	U	N	C	H	A	D	I	E	S	A	
U	R	P	I	I	D	C	A	G	E	O	S	W	K	A
I	O	D	B	O	Y	U	J	R	L	P	F	O	N	A
Q	N	M	M	N	T	P	X	Y	C	N	O	P	M	A
C	O	M	I	C	B	O	O	K	T	W	N	T	Q	A
C	S	R	E	G	O	O	B	O	B	O	R	J	T	H
U	K	O	M	D	G	N	I	R	O	N	P	Y	H	Y
H	A	R	O	L	D	S	Q	K	U	I	R	J	K	S
L	M	J	J	H	Z	W	Z	E	F	T	T	S	F	W

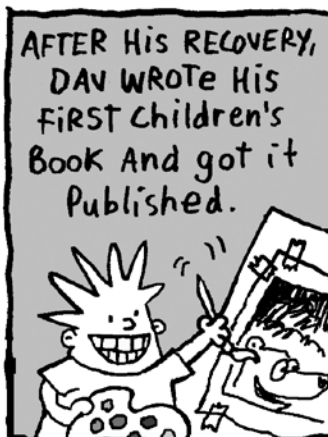


THE ALMOST COMPLETELY TRUE ADVENTURES OF DAV PILKEY

PART 4: THE NOT QUITE AS EARLY AS THE NOT QUITE AS EARLY AS THE "NOT QUITE AS EARLY AS BEFORE" YEARS

DAV WENT TO College in 1984, where his Life WAS FOREVER CHANGED IN A FRESHMAN ENGLISH CLASS

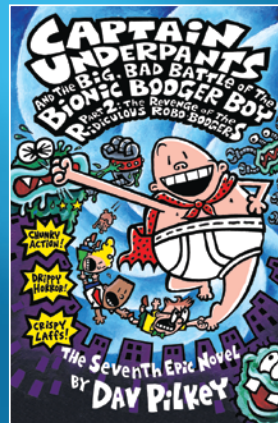
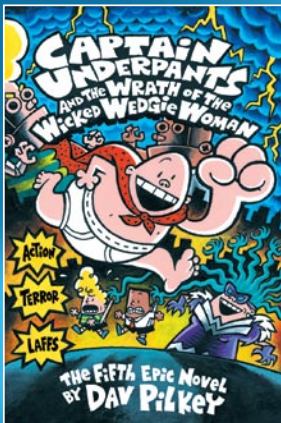
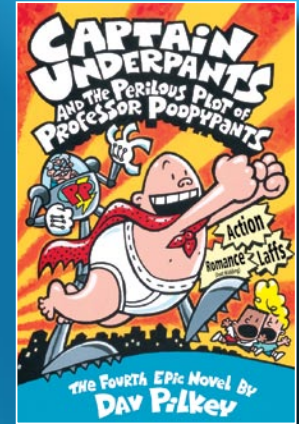
DURING THIS CLASS ONE DAY, DAV WAS busy drawing CARTOONS IN HIS NOTEBOOK...



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READ ALL OF GEORGE AND HAROLD'S ADVENTURES BY DAV PILKEY



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Discussion guide written by
Kathy Casey, Third Grade Teacher,
New Jersey Teacher of the Year.

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