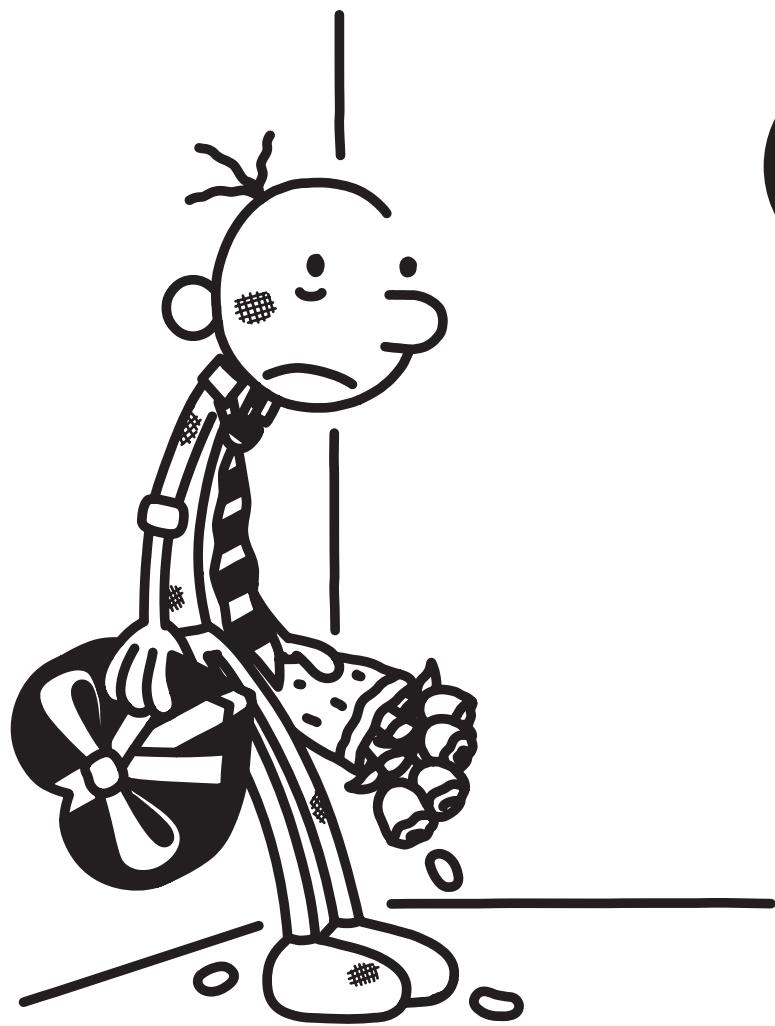


Diary of a Wimpy Kid

THE THIRD WHEEL



Book
7

Discussion Guide

to accompany Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Third Wheel by Jeff Kinney
(978-0-141-34574-1, £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.

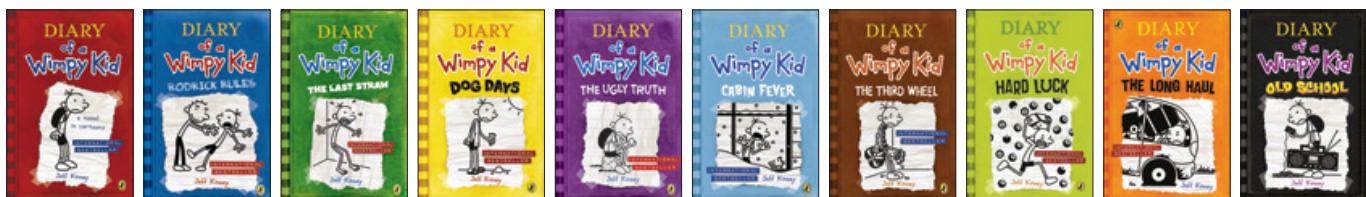
Jeff Kinney's cartoons, which reinforce the text, provide a visual reference, helping the children to understand what they are reading and adding to their enjoyment as they picture what Greg, his friends and family are up to. For many children, especially younger or more reluctant readers, the addition 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



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NOVEMBER 2015

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Diary of a Wimpy Kid

THE THIRD WHEEL

Introduction

This is the seventh book in Jeff Kinney's Diary of a Wimpy Kid series.

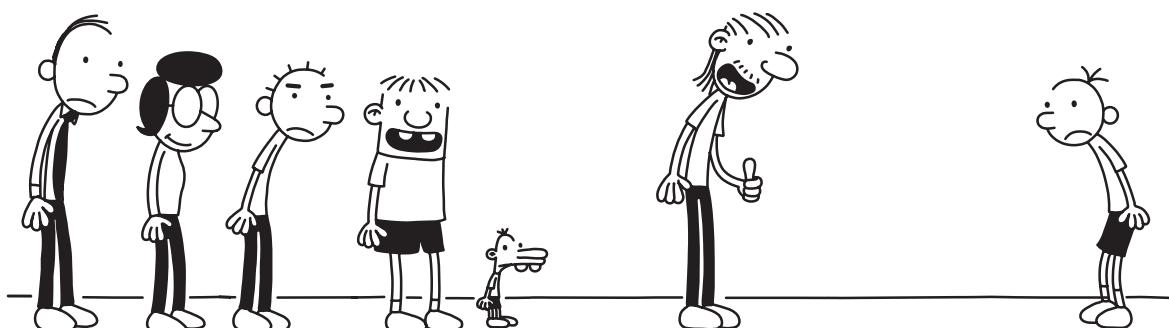
It's January and Greg is reminiscing about his earliest memories, which include floating around inside Mom and listening to both the music she played to him and the books she read before his birth. As a baby he was convinced he was an only child until he met older brother Rodrick and received a bit of a shock.

Family meals out are usually at Corny's Family-Style Restaurant, where any male wearing a tie has the offending article cut off and placed on the Wall of Shame. Eating in Corny's Children's Alley is no fun for Greg, especially when his younger brother, Manny gets, stuck in the plastic play tubes, and Greg is sent in to help him out - with disastrous results.

When Uncle Gary arrives for an extended visit, he is given the couch in the family room to sleep on. This inconveniences Greg and Rodrick, who want to watch the television when their uncle is sleeping.

Greg's biggest concern, however, is the forthcoming school dance. Which girl should he invite? Just how do you ask a girl out? What should he wear? How much of Uncle Gary's advice should he listen to? Greg fears that teacher-biting Ruby Bird is attracted to him and will ask him to go with her. He starts saying prayers to God not to let this happen but then worries he may use up all of his prayers and have none left for another occasion! Just when it looks as if Greg will be left without a date, best friend Rowley saves the day, with hilarious consequences.

As usual, Rowley seems to be on the losing end of each adventure, but an unexpected twist means that this time Greg is left out in the cold instead. And what of the dance itself? Well, it's not quite the success it was meant to be, especially when a group of pensioners make an unexpected appearance!



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Diary of a Wimpy Kid

THE THIRD WHEEL

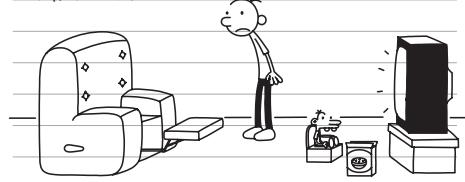
Understanding the text

- (Pages 1-9)** Greg tells us about some of his earliest memories. Ask the class to work in pairs and to talk to their partner about some of the things they remember from their early life. Do they have any funny memories of what they did as young children? Then ask the children to pair up with a new partner and to relay their memories again. Do this several times, then decide as a class who they think has the funniest memory. As an extension, the children could draw a funny picture of one of their memories and write a few sentences beneath it.
- (Page 30)** Manny has an imaginary friend called Johnny Cheddar. Ask the children if they've ever had an imaginary friend. Has anyone in their family had one? As a class discuss imaginary friends: why some children have them and why the children think the imaginary friends might eventually disappear.

Lately, Manny has been blaming things he does on his imaginary friends. The other day he smashed a plate on the floor and then told Mom it was Johnny Cheddar, who seems to be the troublemaker of the pack.



Instead of punishing Manny for breaking a plate and then lying about it, Mom gave a time-out to Johnny Cheddar. What really stinks is that the time-out chair is the brand-new recliner in the family room, so I couldn't sit in it to watch television.



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- (Page 30)** Manny blames his bad behaviour on his imaginary friend. Do the children think Mom should accept this or should he be taught to accept responsibility for his own actions from an early age? Encourage them to explain their answers.

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Diary of a Wimpy Kid

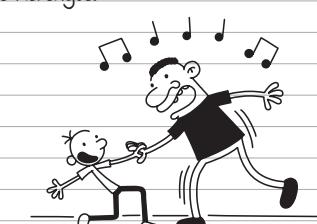
THE THIRD WHEEL

Understanding the text

4. (Page 66) A hypnotist called Amazing Andrew visits Greg's school during an assembly. Other assembly guests have included Strong Steve, a singer called Krisstina and a police officer. Split the children into groups and ask them to discuss who they would like to visit the school. Why do they think these people would make good guests?

Monday

Today at school, Phys Ed was canceled because we had a general assembly during fourth period. I have to admit I was a little disappointed when I found out, because believe it or not, me and Carlos have actually been getting the hang of the merengue.



Most people were pretty excited, though, because we haven't had a general assembly since November. That's when this hypnotist called the Amazing Andrew came to our school.

In the grand finale of his show, the Amazing Andrew hypnotized a line of eighth-graders into thinking their arms were superglued together.

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5. (Page 79) Greg convinces Rowley to campaign for a place on the student council. Ask the class to imagine that they have been granted a place on the student council. What would they like to change in the school? Why? How might they go about making the changes?

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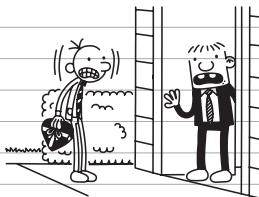
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THE THIRD WHEEL

Understanding the text

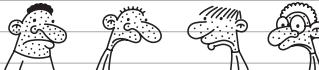
6. (Page 164) Greg thinks Rowley has chicken pox and persuades him to cover up his spots so they can still take Abigail to the school dance. Was this sensible? Encourage the children to give reasons for their answers.

When I went over to Rowley's house to get ready, I noticed he had little red bumps on his face that looked like mosquito bites. But then I realized what those spots were: CHICKEN POX.



Ever since Evan Whitehead showed up at school with chicken pox a few weeks ago, it's been spreading like wildfire in my class.

This past week four boys were sent home by the school nurse. I'm pretty sure one of those guys was the Mad Pantser, because there haven't been any pantsing incidents since Tuesday.



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Diary of a Wimpy Kid

THE THIRD WHEEL

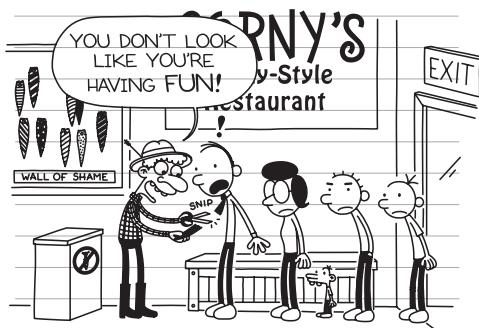
Understanding the text

7. (Page 32) Mom and Dad take the family to Corny's Family-Style Restaurant. Read the extract below to the class.

(Page 181) Greg and Rowley decide to take Abigail to Corny's before the school dance too.

I guess the idea is to get us to interact with one another more so it rubs off on Manny.

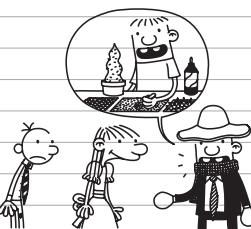
When we go out to dinner, we usually end up at this place called Corny's Family-Style Restaurant. They have a rule at Corny's that you're not allowed to wear a tie, and the first time we went there, Dad found that out the hard way.



There are a few different seating sections at Corny's, but since we always have Manny with us, they put our family in the section called "Children's Alley."

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The only other restaurant in the area was Corny's, and I told them there was no way I was going THERE. But Rowley said he really likes the dessert bar at Corny's, and Abigail said that sounded good to her.



I was really starting to regret having Rowley along on this date, because if all he was gonna do was take Abigail's side, I'd get outvoted every single time. But I didn't want to make a big deal about it in the middle of my date, so I just bit my lip and we walked three blocks to Corny's.

Luckily, I remembered about the tie issue before we walked in the front door, and I stuffed mine in my back pocket at the last second.

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Do the children think Corny's is a good name for this particular restaurant? In what ways does the name suit the restaurant?

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Diary of a Wimpy Kid

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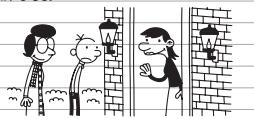
In-depth discussion points

- 1. (Pages 147-151)** Greg babysits for the Stringer family and it all goes horribly wrong. Have a class discussion on the rights and wrongs of asking a child as young as Greg to take responsibility for looking after a young child. Find out the legal age when young people can be left to babysit in this country. Do the children consider this to be a sensible age? Why (or why not)?

I don't want to get too far ahead of myself here, but I'm sure one day I'll be sitting around with the Stringers on Thanksgiving and we'll all be laughing about how I used to babysit my brother-in-law, Wesley, when I was in middle school.



Saturday
Tonight Mom dropped me off at the Stringers' house at 6:30.



Mrs. Stringer said Laurel had already gone to a friend's house, which kind of stunk, because I was hoping I might get to see her for a few minutes and talk to her about the dance.

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Mrs. Stringer said I should put Wesley to bed at 8:00 and that they'd be home around 9:00. She told me I could watch TV until they got home and to help myself to anything in the fridge.



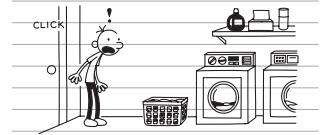
After Mr. and Mrs. Stringer left, it was just me and Wesley. I asked Wesley if he wanted to play a board game or something like that, but he said he wanted to go out in the garage and get his bike.



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I told him it was too cold to ride his bike outside, but he said he wanted to ride it INSIDE. The Stringers have a really nice house, and I was pretty sure they didn't want Wesley scratching up their hardwood floors. So I told him we needed to find something else to do.

Wesley had a huge fit. After he calmed down he told me he wanted to color instead. I asked him where his coloring stuff was, and he said it was in the laundry room. But when I went to get it, I heard the latch on the door lock behind me.



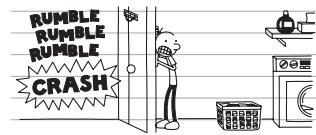
Then I heard the garage door open, and the next thing I knew Wesley was riding around the kitchen on his bike.

149

I pounded on the door for him to let me out, but he just ignored me.



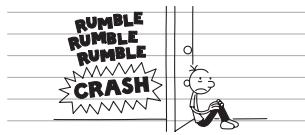
Next I heard the basement door open, and then a rumbling sound followed by a HUGE crash. I could hear Wesley crying at the bottom of the stairs, and I started to panic because it sounded like he was really hurt.



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But then Wesley calmed down, and I could hear him dragging his bike back up to the top of the stairs. Then he rode down the stairs and crashed at the bottom AGAIN, followed by MORE tears.

I am not exaggerating when I tell you this went on for an hour and a half. I thought Wesley would wear himself out, but he never did. I remembered that the Stringers said they couldn't find a babysitter for Wesley, and now that was starting to make a lot of sense.



I figured I was gonna have to punish Wesley for locking me in the laundry room once I got out of there. What he DESERVED was a good spanking, but I figured that probably wouldn't fly with the Stringers.

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In-depth discussion points

2. **(Pages 1-9)** Split the class into groups and ask them to discuss Greg's memories of life, both before and after he was born. Do they think he really remembers what he claims to recall? Make sure the children explain their answers, giving logical reasons.
3. Uncle Gary appears in several of the chapters throughout the book. Ask the children to work with a partner to list how Uncle Gary is involved in Greg's life and the ways in which he both interferes and attempts to help Greg. Uncle Gary is Dad's brother. The children could make a comparison of the two brothers, listing all the ways in which they are different. Are there any similarities?



GARY



DAD

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THE THIRD WHEEL

DON'T
ACTUALLY
START
SPYING ON
PEOPLE.

Main project

PLAN A DETECTIVE AGENCY

Objective:

To work in pairs to plan a detective agency.

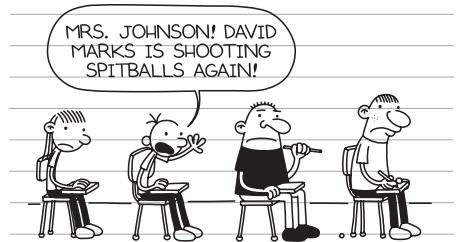
Curriculum areas:

Literacy.

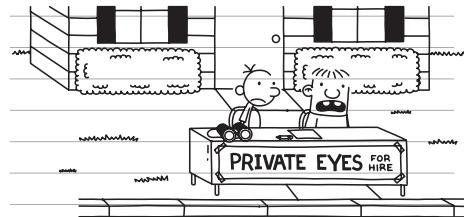
Starting point:

Read **pages 72-75**. After the visit from the undercover police officer, Greg and Rowley decide to set up their very own detective agency!

I thought that sounded like an AWESOME job. If I can get paid to go to school without doing homework or taking tests AND send all the jerks to jail, then that's the career for me.

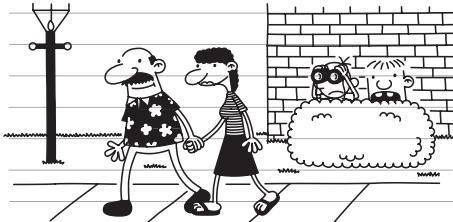


After the police officer came to our school, me and my friend Rowley decided to start our own detective agency.

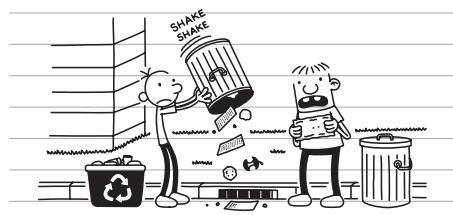


72

Unfortunately, there wasn't a lot of demand for private detectives in our neighborhood, and nobody wanted to hire us. But we decided to start spying on people ANYWAY.



It was actually a lot of fun. The great thing about being a private investigator is that you can poke around in other people's lives and it's just part of your job.



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We mostly focused our investigations on Mr. Millis, who lives a few doors up the street from me. It's not like he was doing anything suspicious. It's just that we knew he had all the movie channels on cable.



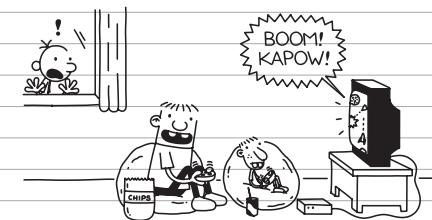
Our detective agency fell apart, though, after we started investigating Scotty Douglas. I'd let him borrow a video game over the summer and he said he lost it, but I knew he was lying. So I sent Rowley down to Scotty's house to get him to cough it up.

I taught Rowley how to act really tough and crack his knuckles a lot so Scotty would get the message that we weren't fooling around.

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But when Rowley didn't come back right away, I started to wonder what happened. I went down to Scotty's house myself to investigate, and I caught Rowley red-handed playing my video game with Scotty.



I had to fire Rowley on the spot, and if I ever start another detective agency, the first thing I'm gonna do is hire a more intimidating enforcer.

Anyway, like I said, everyone was excited to find out who the guest was for today's assembly.

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Main Activities

Split the class into pairs and ask them to work with their partner to plan their own detective agency.

- Greg and Rowley called their agency Private Eyes. Do the children consider this a good name? Why (or why not)? Ask them to think of a really good name for their agency, making a list of possible names, then choosing the one they think has the most impact and will get them the most customers. You could use Worksheet 1 for this.
- The children should consider the best logo for their detective agency. (see Worksheet 2) Explain to them that this should be distinctive, instantly recognizable and eye-catching. Discuss which logos they already know and recognize, e.g. Nike, McDonald's, Puffin. You might want to play a game with the class using flashcards to see how many they get right. What do they think makes the logos so recognizable and effective?

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Main project

PLAN A DETECTIVE AGENCY

- Still working in pairs, the children need to think of a catchy slogan for their agency. (see Worksheet 3) If they're not sure what this means, encourage them to look up 'slogan' in the dictionary. Ask them to think of adverts that have catchy slogans, e.g. 'Because you're worth it' (L'Oréal) or 'Finger Lickin' Good' (KFC).
- Next the children will need to create a TV advert storyboard and a poster to advertise their agency. Both should include the agency name, logo and slogan. Explain to them that they need to consider what sort of detective jobs they want to carry out, e.g. lost pets or belongings or suspicious occurrences in their neighbourhood/school. Make sure they include all relevant information, such as how they can be contacted. You might like to use Worksheet 4 for this.
- Tell the children that, if their agency becomes successful, they may need extra detectives to help with the workload. In their pairs, ask them to create a job advert for a new detective to join their business. Make sure they consider carefully the wording of their advert. Would any interested person be suitable or are they looking for particular qualities, e.g. good at hiding or very observant? Would they offer training to the successful applicants? Use Worksheet 5 to help here.
- Private detectives require special equipment, such as binoculars. Ask the children to make a list of all the equipment they will need for their detectives. They could draw a picture of each item, label the pictures and write why each is necessary.
- Encourage the children to plan and make a display of all their ideas, including the names of the different detective agencies, logos, slogans, advertising ideas, etc. The children could showcase their worksheets and should plan the display to be as eye-catching as possible – after all, they have worked very hard to create it!



It might be a good idea to tell students if they wanted to start a detective agency in real life they would need to go through training and become aware of laws protecting people's privacy(!)

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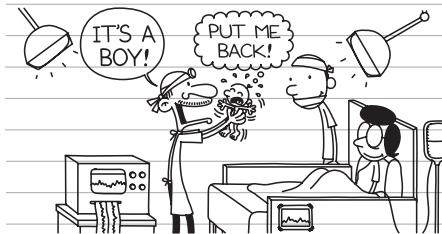
Diary of a Wimpy Kid

THE THIRD WHEEL

Other Project Ideas

1. **(Page 8)** Ask the children to bring in photos of themselves as babies and a current (or recent) photo too. These should all go into two separate boxes so that no one knows who brought in which picture (remember to number the photos and keep a note of who is who). Work together with your class to decide how these could be best displayed as a photo gallery. You could also ask the children to work in pairs to try to correctly match the baby and current photos. As an extension, the children could bring in a photo of a relative, e.g. parent or grandparent. Can the class match these up too?

After a few months of living like this, I had to get out of there, and that's why I was born three weeks early. But after being hit by the cold air and the blinding lights of the delivery room, I wished I'd just stayed put.



By the time I came into the world, I was totally sleep deprived and in a really lousy mood. So if you ever see a picture of a newborn, now you know why they always look ticked off.



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Diary of a Wimpy Kid

THE THIRD WHEEL

Other Project Ideas

- 2. (Pages 53-55)** Dad takes Greg to work for Bring Your Child to Work Day. Unfortunately he forgets to take him home again... Ask the children to write a short story about themselves or someone else who is left behind in a shop overnight. They may choose any type of shop they like, e.g. toyshop, clothes shop, camping shop, sweet shop. Make sure they include an explanation about how they were left behind, what they did in the shop and how it all ended. The funnier, the better! The children should first consider the criteria needed for their story, e.g. humour, suspense, drama, and ask a partner to proofread it when finished. They may wish to illustrate their work and display it for others to read and enjoy too.

But I don't think Uncle Gary is cut out for an office job, and I'm not so sure I am, either. Dad has to dress up for work every day in a shirt and tie, and he has to wear dress shoes and dress socks, too.

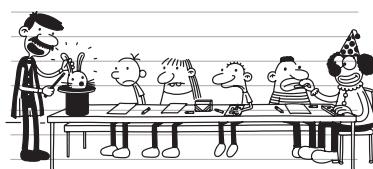
I've already decided that when I grow up, I'm gonna have to find a job where you don't need to wear those socks that go up to your knees.



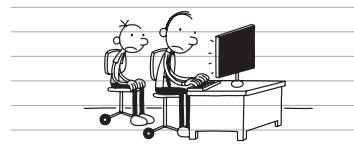
Last summer Dad brought me to "Bring Your Child to Work Day" at his office. But the people at Dad's work must've realized their jobs would be boring to their kids, so they brought in all sorts of entertainment.

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For most of the day, us kids stayed in the cafeteria while the grown-ups got some work done in their offices.



Toward the end of the day, Dad brought me into his office while he tried to finish up an important project, so I sat there next to him and waited. But I think it was hard for him to concentrate while someone was looking over his shoulder.

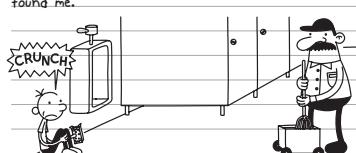


54

Dad gave me money to buy something from the vending machine. He was probably just trying to get rid of me for a little while, so he wasn't too happy when I came back a minute later with a box of jawbreakers.



Dad told me he really needed to finish what he was doing, so he asked me to find somewhere else to sit while he wrapped things up. He must've been really distracted that day, though, because he went home and left me behind. I might've been stuck there all night if the janitor hadn't found me.



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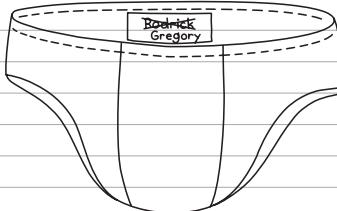
Other Project Ideas

- 3. (Page 128)** Greg is concerned that his wardrobe is holding him back and asks Mom for new clothes. Ask the children to list the things they do and the places they go on an average week, e.g. school, swimming, the park. Now explain that they are going to design a range of clothes for children their age for three different activities – a summer holiday, a family party and a school sports day. Encourage them to draw their ideas on A3 paper, making them detailed and colourful. The children should also include a description of each item of clothing and any special features they incorporate, e.g. hidden pockets to conceal food, a fan to cool them down, etc.

Monday

Uncle Gary told me if I really want to send the right signals to girls at school, I might consider updating my wardrobe. He said that wearing a new shirt or new shoes always makes him feel more confident, and it might work for me, too.

The thing is, I really don't HAVE a lot of new clothes. I'd say about 90% of everything I wear is a hand-me-down from Rodrick. Mom would say that's an exaggeration, but all you have to do is check the tags in my underwear for proof.



I never really cared much about what I wore, but now Uncle Gary has me wondering if my wardrobe is holding me back.

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Diary of a Wimpy Kid

THE THIRD WHEEL

List of Detective Agency Names

MAIN PROJECT WORKSHEET

1.

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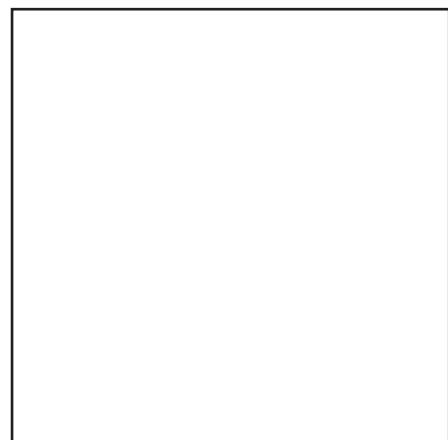
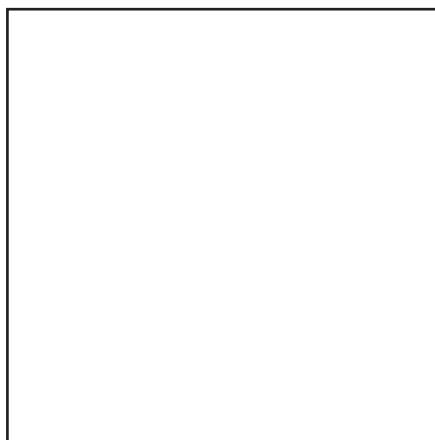
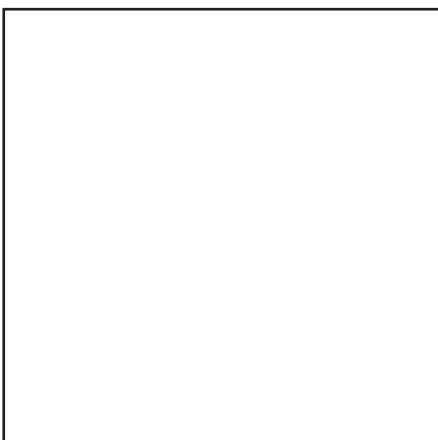
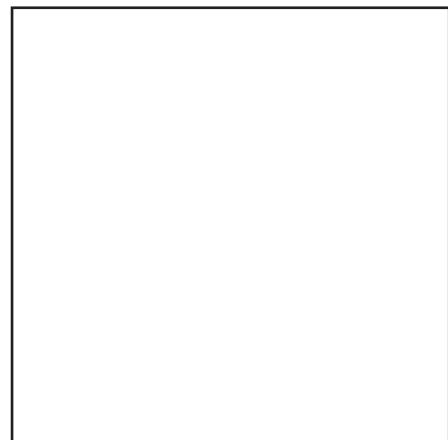
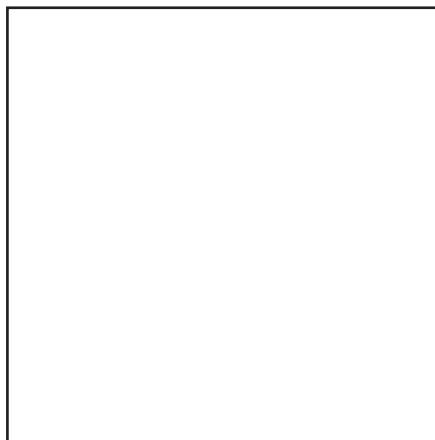
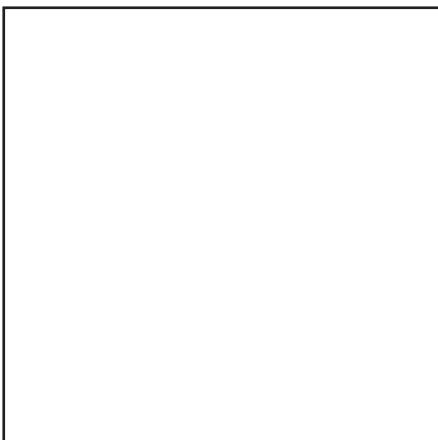
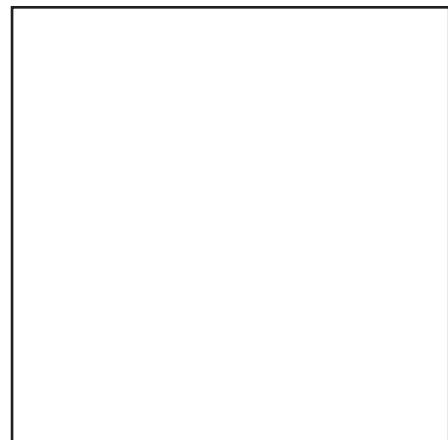
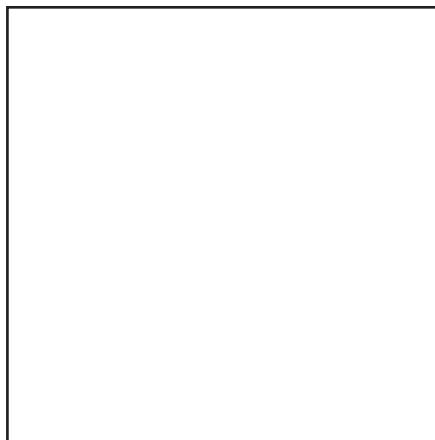
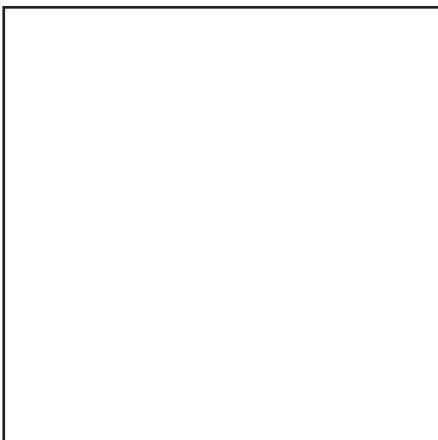


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THE THIRD WHEEL

MAIN
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2.

Logo ideas



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Diary of a Wimpy Kid

THE THIRD WHEEL

Slogan Ideas

MAIN
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WORKSHEET
3.

Our Logo

Slogans We Like

Our Slogan Ideas

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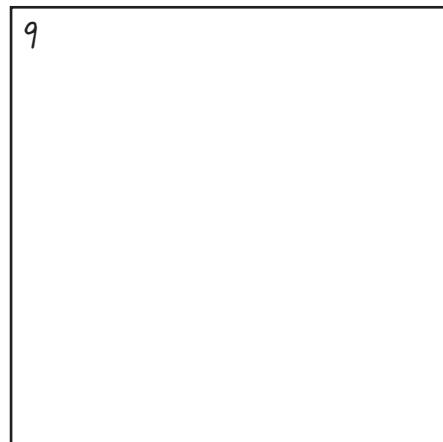
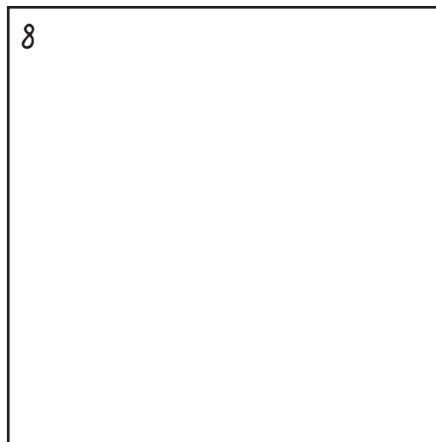
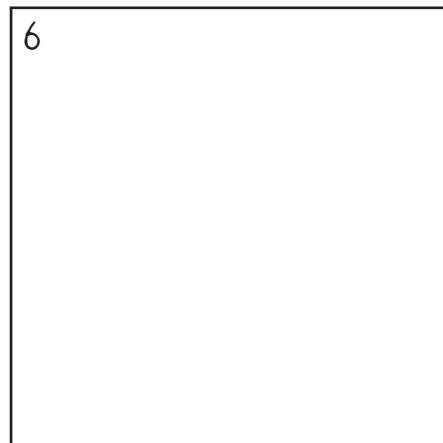
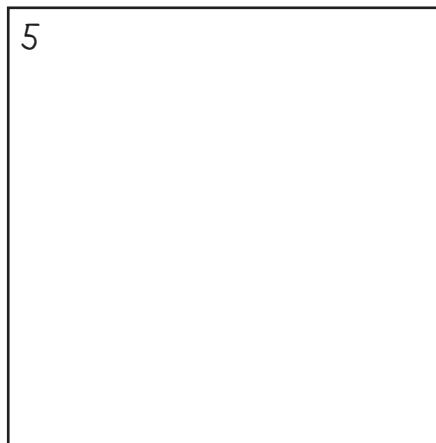
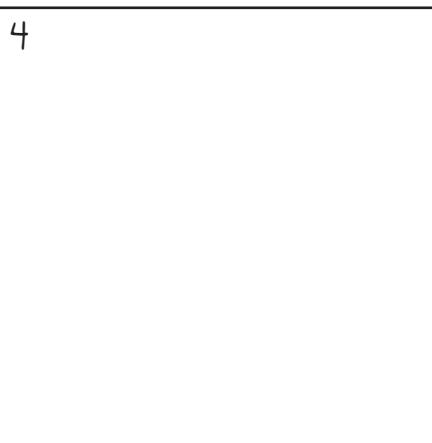
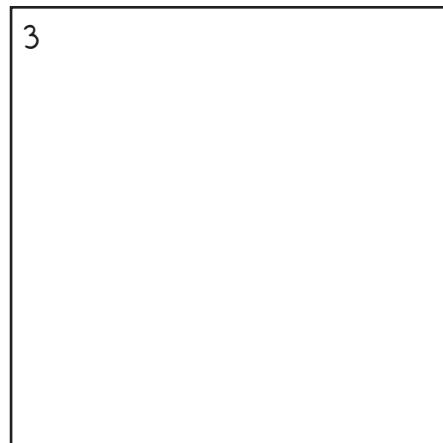
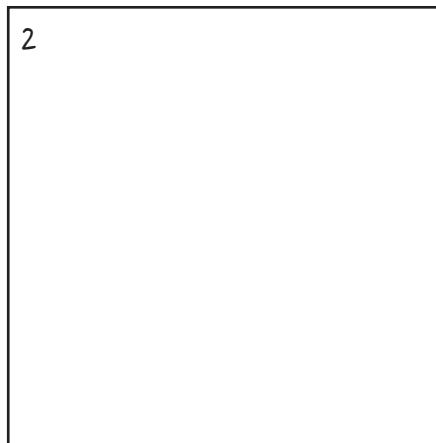
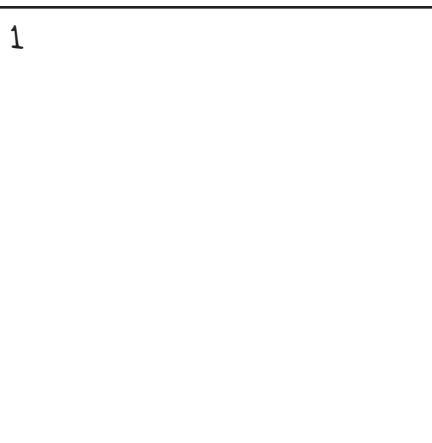


Diary of a Wimpy Kid

THE THIRD WHEEL

TV/Advert Storyboard

MAIN
PROJECT
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4.



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THE THIRD WHEEL

Our Job Advertisement

MAIN
PROJECT
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5.

Our Logo

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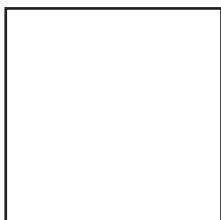


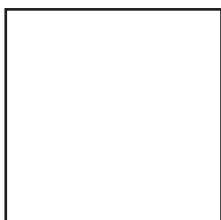
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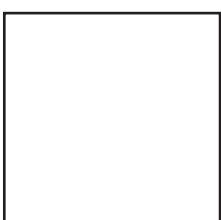
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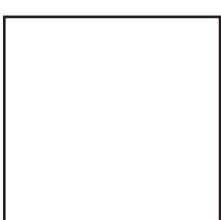
Special Equipment

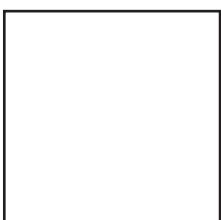
MAIN
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