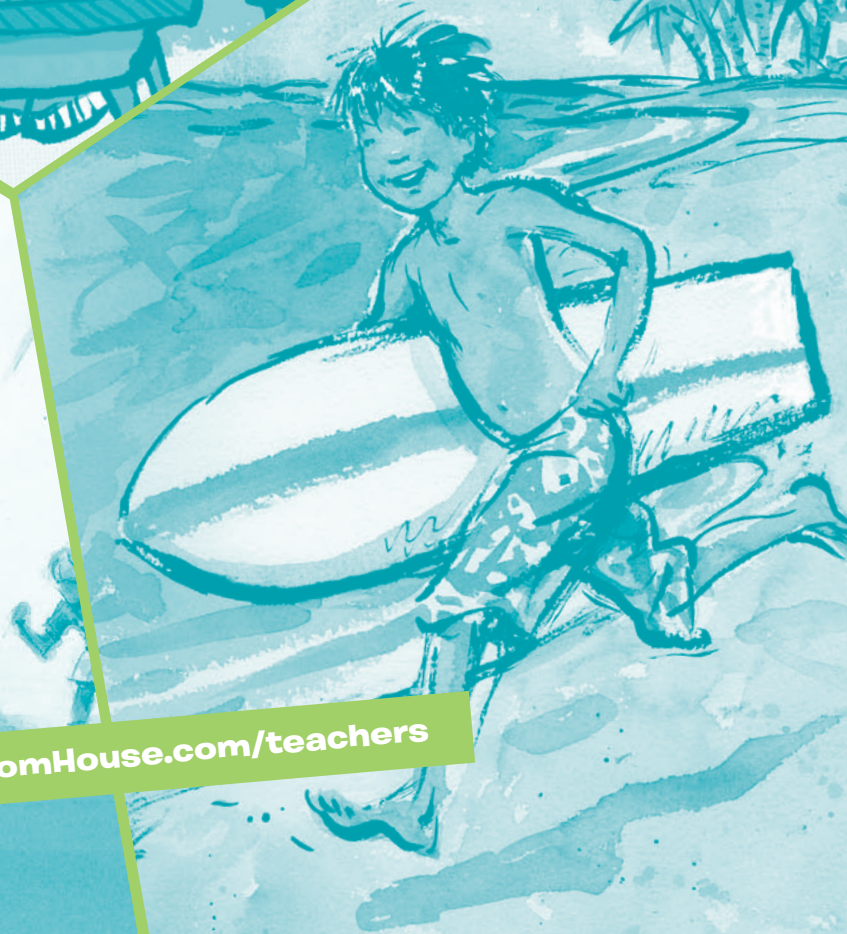


Boy, Oh BOY!

Great Book Series for Boys

Educators Guide

Grades
2-5



RandomHouse.com/teachers

A word from Rich Wallace, author of the Kickers series and SPORTS CAMP, on being a boy reader and getting boys to read . . .



Photo courtesy of the author.

I remember an evening back in 1968. I was sitting in my bedroom, gazing out the window toward the Empire State Building in the distance and watching a plane coming in for a landing down the hill at Teterboro Airport. My older brother, Jimmy, walked into the room, looking sort of agitated. He scanned my bookshelf and groaned. “Everything you read is escapist literature!”

Yeah. I was 11!

My brother was only five years older, but he fancied himself as some sort Joycean scholar. (I admit that he was well read, but at best he was a *Joiseyan* scholar. We grew up in the Garden State.) Anyway, he was right. The only books on my shelf were middle-grade sports novels and a couple of science fiction paperbacks. There was also an abundance of comic books, *Mad* magazines, and copies of *Sports Illustrated*.

These days, when educators ask me for ideas on how to get young boys to read more books, I often find myself at a loss for words. The only recreational reading I did for a long period of my youth was humor and sports. Most of my free time was spent running around playing basketball or stickball or hockey or anything else that didn’t involve turning pages.

Jumping ahead to about 15 years ago, I started missing the pleasure of reading to my own sons. When they were little, I’d read to them every night, often revisiting the same picture books I’d loved as a kid. In fact, the day Jonathan was born I ran out and bought *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel*, *Caps for Sale*, *Make Way for Ducklings*, and others I’d cherished as a preschooler. It had been a while since I’d curled up on the couch with my own boys and read.

They were 9 and 11 then. They preferred running around, too. But I had just read Jerry Spinelli’s novel *Crash*, and I thought they would enjoy it. They balked a bit. I said, “Give me two minutes. Let me read a couple of pages to you. If you don’t like it, you can go back to watching *The Simpsons*.”

It was a deal. I read the opening page in which Crash talks hilariously about his propensity for crashing headfirst into objects and people, with or without a football helmet. Jeremy stood up and said, “That’s me!” They were hooked. I read the whole book to them.

Humor. Action. Most boys can't resist that combination. I try to work as many laughs and as many tussles as I can into every novel I write, particularly when my audience is preteen. In my Kickers series, for example, Ben seems to be in conflict with somebody at every turn: teammates, classmates, even his older brother at times. But he's also involved in a fast-paced soccer league, and he gets plenty of laughs as well. He's the type of character I loved to read about when I was a boy.

In *Sports Camp*, Riley is the type of character I was as a boy. I drew heavily on my first sleepaway camp adventures in writing this novel, knowing full well what it's like to be the youngest, smallest, and most naïve kid among a group of full-of-themselves campers. Humor, sports action, and ghost stories got me through those somewhat painful two weeks at Camp Aheka, and Riley survives his weeks at Camp Olympia through many of the same tactics.



Photo courtesy of the author.

Rich Wallace with his little brother, Jeffrey, age 2, at Camp Aheka in the summer of 1968.

Getting young boys to read for pleasure involves a bit of negotiation.

You give me a bit of your valuable time, and I'll give you an exciting story. Skip a couple of TV programs one night and I'll provide you with some edge-of-the-seat sports action. Turn off the computer and I'll do my best to make you laugh.

It's not easy. There's a lot of competition for their time. Books aren't always a young boy's first choice for entertainment, but they can be won over, particularly if they see themselves in a character. The books featured in this educational kit offer a fighting chance, to say the least. They'll make more than a few boys stand up and say, "That's me!"

Cover art (clockwise) from top:

From Alvin Ho: *Allergic to Girls, School, and Other Scary Things* by Lenore Look. Illustration © 2008 by LeUyen Pham.

From Calvin Coconut: *Trouble Magnet* by Graham Salisbury. Illustration © 2009 by Jacqueline Rogers.

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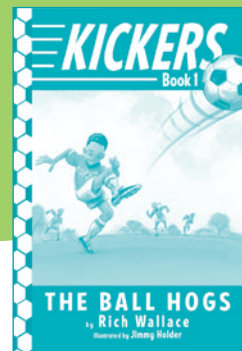
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KICKERS

BY RICH WALLACE



Excerpt from
THE BALL HOGS

CHAPTER ONE

Like a Real Player

"That kid is fast!" Ben said as a tall, thin boy ran across the soccer field.

"He sure is," said Erin. "I hope he's on our team."

"He must be," said Ben. "Why else would he be here?"

But Ben hoped that the kid was not on their team. He had seen him at recess during school. Ben knew the kid's name was Mark, and he was a pain, and bossy. Once he'd called Ben "brush head" after his mom had cut his hair.

But Ben liked his hair the new way. When it was longer, it would always get in his eyes.



Ben put his foot on top of his soccer ball and rolled it around. "Let's practice," he said. He gave the ball a kick and it rolled toward Erin.

Erin kicked at the ball, but it didn't go to Ben. It spun over to the side.

Ben ran toward the ball, but the tall kid got to it first. He stopped it with his foot and grinned at Ben. But Ben didn't like the way he was smiling. He looked tough. He was big for nine.

"Are you one of the Bobcats?" Mark asked.

"Yes," Ben said. "So is she." Ben nodded toward Erin, who was walking over.

"I hope you're good at dribbling," Mark said. "You're both kind of short. Especially her." Mark

pointed at Erin. She was a few inches shorter than Mark, but she was a good athlete.

Ben stepped between Mark and Erin. "This is our first time playing on a soccer team," he said. "We don't know if we're good at it or not."

"Well, I'm good," Mark said. "I'll be the star of this team."

Ben looked at Erin and smiled. He felt nervous and didn't know what else to do. Practice hadn't even started yet, and Mark was already acting like a big shot.

A woman in a green T-shirt blew a whistle. "Over here, Bobcats," she said. "I'm your coach."

Eight kids ran toward the woman, who was carrying a net bag filled with soccer balls. "Have any of you ever played soccer?" she asked.

Several of the kids raised their hands.

"On a real team?" she asked.

Most of the kids put their hands down.

"That's okay," she said. "I've never coached a real team, either."

Mark's hand shot up again. "I was on a baseball team last summer," he said. "I was the best player."

"That's good," the woman said. "My name is Patty. I played soccer in high school, but that was a long time ago. We'll all have fun learning about the game together."

The Kickers League would include kids from all over town. Ben knew most of the players on his team from Kennedy Elementary School, but some of them went to Washington Elementary, on the other side of town.

Coach Patty opened the bag and handed out balls. Ben kept his own ball, which had been a present for his ninth birthday.

"Let's have a race," Coach said. "See that white line on the far end of the field? When I blow my whistle, we'll all run to that line. The winner is the one who gets there first, but you have to have your ball with you. And the only way you can move the ball is with your feet."

They set their soccer balls on the ground.

"I'll win by a mile," said Mark.

Patty blew the whistle. Ben kicked his ball and ran after it, trying to keep it in a straight line. It wasn't easy. He kicked it a little more softly, then ran to it and kicked it again.

Mark was way ahead of the others. He had kicked his ball far up the field and was running after it at full speed.

Ben kept moving, kicking his ball a little at a time and then catching up to it. He knew he could run a lot faster, but it was tricky to keep the ball close to him.

Ben's last kick left the ball just over the line. He pulled it back with one foot and stood on the line as the others came running up.

"Looks like you're the winner," Coach Patty said to Ben.

"He is not!" said Mark. "I was much faster than he was."

"But your ball went so far past the line that you had to chase after it," Patty said. "The point was to keep the ball with you."

Mark made a sour face and stared at Ben. "If it had been a real race, I would have won easily."

"Well, we're not here for a track meet," Coach said. "We're here to play soccer."

"I know that," Mark said. "You'll see. I'll be way better than that kid." He pointed at Ben.

Ben looked away. He wished more than ever that Mark was not on this team.

Ben wiped his forehead with his hand. He was starting to sweat from that running, and his heart was beating faster. That was a good feeling; it made him feel like an athlete. He took a deep breath and smelled the freshly cut grass.

There was a lot to like about soccer already. Everything except Mark.

For the rest of the afternoon, Coach had them work mostly on controlling the ball and passing. After practice, Ben and Erin started to walk home. They lived on the same block, just a few houses away from each other.

"Wait up!" yelled Mark.

Ben turned with a scowl. "What do you want?" he asked.

"I told you I'd be the best," Mark said.

"You weren't the best. There were a lot of good players here."

"Well, I was better than you," Mark said.

A car horn beeped, and Mark turned to look.

"That's my mom," he said. "I'll see you twerps next time." And he ran off.

"He acts tough, doesn't he?" Erin said.

Ben just nodded. A guy like that could spoil all the fun this season.

Erin stopped walking and undid her shin guards. "These are a little uncomfortable," she said.

"I'm leaving mine on," Ben said. If anyone saw him walking home, he wanted them to know he was a soccer player. Of course, he was carrying his ball, too, but lots of kids had soccer balls. The shin guards made him look like a real player.

"You'll get used to them," Ben said.

"I hope so," said Erin. "I barely noticed them during practice, but they did start poking my skin after a while."

"Soccer players are *tough*," Ben said with a smile. "Can't let a little thing like a stinging shin stop us."

"Oh, sure, you're real tough," Erin said, teasing. "Remember the other day when a spider was spinning a web from your bicycle to the fence? You had to get your brother to chase it off."

"It was a big spider," Ben said. He was a little embarrassed, but he laughed at himself anyway. "Maybe it was poisonous."

"It wasn't poisonous."

"Well, it was *big*," Ben said. "I thought Larry might want to study it. That's why I had him come out."

"Sure you did, Mr. Tough Guy."

"Larry wants to be a scientist."

"I'm sure he could find his own spiders to study if he wanted."

They were nearly home. Ben stopped walking and tossed his soccer ball into the air. As it came down, he tried to catch it on his thigh and bounce it again, but it fell off to the side. Ben had seen some high school kids practicing that type of juggling. Some of them could keep the ball in the air for several minutes at a time. That was a skill he was eager to learn, but it certainly wasn't easy.

They'd reached Erin's house. "I'll see you tomorrow at school," she said. "Don't let the spiders bite."

"Bye."

Spiders didn't really bother Ben very much. He *was* tough. At least he thought he was. Being around Mark today had made him feel sort of weak and puny. But he wouldn't let that get to him. He'd show Mark who was the better player.



KICKERS

BY RICH WALLACE

ABOUT THE BOOKS

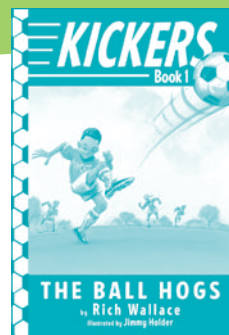
Ben and the Bobcats have started their first season in the Kickers Soccer League. They have lots to learn about the game of soccer like rules, maneuvers, and different positions, but they also have a lot to learn about themselves. Teamwork, good sportsmanship, and persistence are important qualities of any athlete, and Ben and the Bobcats quickly learn that mastering these skills is the only way to the league championship.

IN THE CLASSROOM

Teamwork: Skills and Drills

Teamwork is an essential part of playing soccer successfully, and it is also an essential part of running a classroom successfully. How can your students work better as a team? Try these teamwork drills and watch your students grow and learn together into a stellar team!

- Ask students to form a line based on their birthdays—youngest to oldest using month, day, and year. But they must complete this task without talking. Encourage them to use hand gestures and body language to convey information to their classmates. Once their line is formed, ask each student to announce their birthdays and see how accurate their communication really was.
- Arrange students in a circle. Ask them to reach their hands into the circle and grab the hand of someone on the other side of the circle so that they make a giant knot of hands. Now ask the students to untangle themselves without releasing their hands. Once untangled, they should form one line of students holding hands, proving that teamwork works!
- Place students in a line in the front of the room. Ask them to create and tell a story one word at a time. The first student in the line begins by saying one word, then the next student adds a word, and so on until a complete and logical sentence is formed. Continue in this way until a story is told!



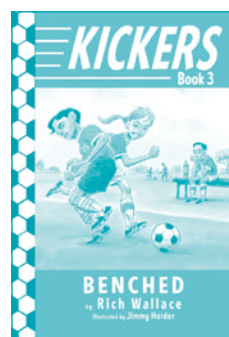
The Ball Hogs

PB: 978-0-375-85092-9
HC: 978-0-375-85754-6
GLB: 978-0-375-95754-3
EL: 978-0-375-89632-3



Fake Out

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Benched

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GLB: 978-0-375-95756-7
EL: 978-0-375-89709-2



Game-Day Jitters

HC: 978-0-375-85757-7
GLB: 978-0-375-95757-4
EL: 978-0-375-89710-8

Also by Rich Wallace:



Sports Camp

HC: 978-0-375-84059-3
GLB: 978-0-375-94059-0
EL: 978-0-375-89535-7

Author's Writing Style

The author uses a unique style of writing that can be seen in each of the Kickers books. Can you write like Rich Wallace? Ask your students to choose one of the following styles to write their own story. They can then illustrate and “publish” their finished products and invite friends and family to a reading of their masterpiece!

- The author writes about the Kickers soccer games in a play-by-play fashion, making the reader feel like they are actually watching the game. Students can choose to write a play-by-play version of an exciting game they participated in, and put the reader in the field!
- The author shares Ben's internal thoughts to help the reader understand how he is feeling and what he is thinking at specific times during the stories. He uses italics to emphasize these thoughts. Students can choose to write a story about an exciting sports game they participated in, and share their internal thoughts using italics to reveal their true feelings throughout the game.

Get in the Game!

At the end of each Kickers book, there is a list of important soccer tips that Ben has collected throughout his experiences with the Bobcats. Can these tips help you improve your soccer game? Review these tips with your students and conduct practice drills that focus on each one—such as warming up before play, passing the ball, and switching feet. Then create your own class soccer league by dividing students into small teams. Post a scoreboard in the classroom and pair up teams for matches. See which team has what it takes to make it to the playoffs!

Conflict Resolution: How Do You Feel?

Throughout the series, many issues come to light that are important to discuss and understand. Conflict resolution is something that Ben struggled with—can you learn from his experiences? Write each of the following scenarios found in the books on pieces of paper and place them in a hat. Then put students in small groups and have them select one piece of paper. They should discuss the scenario and determine an appropriate conflict resolution strategy. Ask each group to role-play their scenario, making sure to highlight the conflict resolution strategy they discussed. Open the floor for comments and questions, and encourage students to share personal experiences.



- Feeling left out/being excluded
- Dealing with a “big shot”
- Being a good loser
- Losing your cool
- Hearing “trash talk”
- Being confident, not overconfident
- Standing up for a friend
- Friendly rivalry

Larry and Ben: Brothers and Friends

Larry plays a role in each of the Kickers books, both as an annoying brother and a helpful friend to Ben. While the boys have many differences, they also have a lot in common. How do their similarities and differences strengthen their relationship? Post a large piece of butcher paper on the wall, and draw a line down the middle. Label one side SIMILARITIES and the other side DIFFERENCES. Conduct a brainstorming session with your students and fill in the chart with things that are similar and different about Larry and Ben. Be sure to focus not only on their personalities, but also their involvement in sports (team sports vs. individual sports). Then ask students which character they relate to the most and why. How many Bens and how many Larrys do you have in your classroom?

ALVIN HO

by Lenore LOOK



Excerpt from **ALLERGIC TO GIRLS, SCHOOL, AND OTHER SCARY THINGS**

CHAPTER ONE

Once Upon a Time

the first thing you should know about me is that my name is Alvin Ho.

I am afraid of many things.

Elevators.

Tunnels.

Bridges.

Airplanes.

Thunder.

Substitute teachers.

Kimchi.

Wasabi.

The dark.

Heights.

Scary movies.

Scary dreams.

Shots.

School.

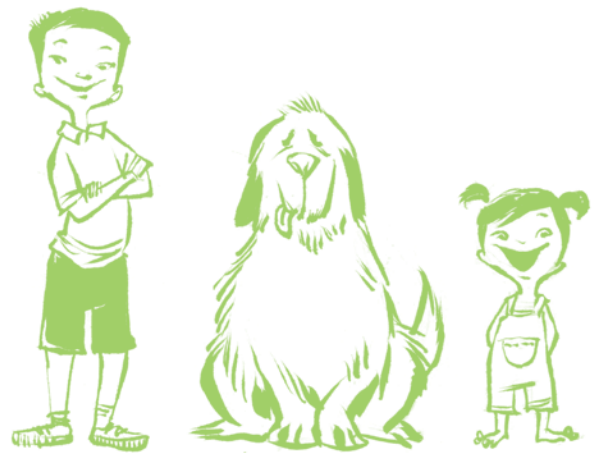
If there were no school, my troubles would blast away, just like that. I would dig holes all day. I would play catch with my gunggung. I would watch cooking shows. I would keep an eye on things. It would be fantastic!

The second thing you should know about me is that even though I am afraid of many things, I am not afraid of anything that explodes. I love explosions. I was practically born with gunpowder in my blood! This is on account of I live in Concord, Massachusetts, which is hard to spell, but where there were explosions all over the place, when the American Revolutionary War started way before I was born.

The third thing you should know about me is that I have a dog named Lucy and a brother named Calvin and a sister named Anibelly, who messes with my sticks and toys, eats my food, drinks my chocolate milk and gets in my way.

I am not as big as Calvin, but I am bigger than

Anibelly, who isn't a baby anymore but doesn't go to school yet. I am sort of nearly almost medium . . . when I stand on tiptoe and stretch at the same time, I am finally almost visible in my class picture!



The fourth thing you should know about me is that I love Plastic Man, Wonder Woman, the Green Lantern, Concrete Man, Aquaman, King Henry V and all the superheroes in the world. I know them from reading with my dad every night while my mom runs on the treadmill like a hamster on a wheel. My dad is a great reader for his age, which could be fifty or one hundred, it's hard to tell. He wears reading glasses and always puts one arm around me and his other arm around Anibelly and Calvin for support, on account of when you get to be that old, it is hard to do anything by yourself.



The fifth thing you should know about me is that once upon a time, before I went to school, I was a superhero. I was Firecracker Man! I ran around our house, full speed ahead, screaming at the top of my lungs

while beating on a garbage can lid. I was as noisy as

a firecracker on Chinese New Year! My costume was great (my gunggung made it).

But now I am Firecracker Man only on weekends and holidays. There's just no time for it.

Being a superhero is hard work. You have to save the world. But going to school is even harder. You have to save yourself. Most days I can hardly even make it to the school bus. And when I arrive at school, I can't think. I can't read. I can't smile. I can't sing. I can't scream.

I can't even talk.

The sixth thing you should know about me is that I have never spoken a word in school. Even when I try with all my might, I always manage to say nothing at all. My voice works at home. It works in the car. It even works on the school bus. But as soon as I get to school . . . I am as silent as a side of beef.

"You're like a piece of frozen sausage fallen off the truck," my brother, Calvin, likes to say. It is true. I am something like that.

No one really knows why I lose my voice at school, since I come from a long line of farmer-warriors who haven't had a scaredy bone in their bodies since 714 AD. In China my ancient grandpas and grandmas and aunts and uncles fought off leopards and tigers in their gardens the way Calvin and Anibelly and I fight off mosquitoes at Walden Pond. They weren't afraid of anything. I am afraid of everything.

CHAPTER TWO

Getting-Gulp-Ready for School

It was the last day of summer vacation and Calvin and I were in our room getting ready for the first day of school. He was going into the fourth grade and I was heading into second. Calvin was on the computer and I was sitting on my bed going over my PDK—Personal Disaster Kit.



When you're afraid of everything, it's very important to carry a PDK. It's like a PFD, a Personal Flotation Device, only heavier and with more parts. A PDK begins with the right box. It must not be too big, like a shoe box, or too small, like a Band-Aid tin. A handle on it is good, but a lock is bad on account of it will keep you out when you need to get in. I use a waterproof fly box with compartments, which is just perfect.

You can put anything in a PDK, but mostly it should be things that are useful in a disaster, such as:



A whistle. If I lose my voice, a whistle is very handy.



A three-leaf clover (because I couldn't find a four-leaf one).



Garlic. For fending off vampires and teachers.



Dental floss. Handy for trapping, wrapping, tying and hanging things (out of Anibelly's reach).



Band-Aids.



A magnifying glass. For general curiosity, but can also be used to start a fire.



A mirror. For sending signals, in case you can't start a fire.



A bandana. For preventing smoke inhalation, in case you start the above fire, but can also be used as a sling or a tourniquet.



A scary mask. For keeping girls away.



Escape routes.

The problem with PDKs, as everyone knows, is that they need to be updated every year on account of you never know what you'll need in the next grade.

ALVIN HO

by Lenore LOOK

ABOUT THE BOOKS

Alvin Ho is scared of everything, including school. And when he gets scared, he cannot speak. Luckily, he has friends and family to help him navigate these scary times. Adventures and mishaps follow Alvin at every turn, as he tries to survive the second grade, camping trips, birthday parties, and even funerals. Get ready to laugh as you experience what life is like in Alvin Ho's shoes!

IN THE CLASSROOM

Without a Voice?

When Alvin is scared, he loses his ability to speak. This happens every day in school, and often in surprising or uncomfortable situations. Alvin has to use alternate forms of communication in these situations. How would you communicate if you were not able to speak? Introduce the game of Charades to your students and discuss ways of communicating that do not involve speaking—using eyes, mouth, hands, body movements, etc. After playing the game, engage students in a discussion about the difficulty and frustration that they experienced in trying to communicate to their friends without speaking. Ask them how they think Alvin feels every time he wants to say something but cannot.

Become a Superhero

When Alvin needs confidence, he becomes Firecracker Man complete with costume, sound effects, and special powers. This alternate persona helps him feel more capable in unknown situations. What kind of superhero would you be? Ask students to brainstorm ideas for their own superhero persona. They should sketch a costume and outline any special powers. Then have students compile their actual costumes and any props necessary, and introduce themselves as their superhero to the class. Allow time for the class to ask questions about their special powers and achievements. Conclude this activity with a discussion about how it feels to be “disguised” as a superhero.



Allergic to Girls, School, and Other Scary Things

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EL: 978-0-375-84965-7



Allergic to Camping, Hiking, and Other Natural Disasters

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HC: 978-0-375-85705-8
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PDKs

Alvin always has his PDK (Personal Disaster Kit) with him in case there is an emergency. What would be in your PDK? Assign your students the task of compiling a PDK filled with things they think they would need to survive a day at school. Arrange the classroom desks in a large circle and ask students to display their PDK items on a desk. Then lead students to each desk around the inside of the circle and have each student present their PDK to the class by explaining each item, why they selected it, and why it is important to surviving a day at school.

Dead Authors Come Alive

Alvin and his classmates meet a variety of authors that died long ago. They still “live” in their homes in Concord, Massachusetts, and give tours of their homes. Who are these authors and why are they famous? Divide your class into three groups and assign one author to each group—Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Louisa May Alcott. Have them research their author and put together a presentation that includes details of their life, what made them famous, as well as examples of their writing. As an additional challenge, students can model their author’s style of writing by creating their own original journal, story, or poem.



Henry David
Thoreau

From a Different Point of View

The Alvin Ho books are told from Alvin’s point of view, but there are many other characters in these books that play an important role in Alvin’s life—his brother, Calvin; his sister, Anibelly; his mom and dad; and his friend Flea. What is going through their minds as they witness the comedic happenings of Alvin’s daily life? Ask students to select one of these characters and imagine that they can glimpse into that character’s diary. Have them write samples of those diary entries based on one book in the Alvin Ho series. Once finished, help them create covers and bind the diaries together with string. Display the finished diaries in the room so that students can read them in their free time!



Calvin Coconut

by Graham Salisbury



Excerpt from
TROUBLE MAGNET

Prob'ly an Idiot

Maybe you know the feeling of how junk it is when summer ends. The good times are over. You start thinking about school, homework. Getting up early again.

And there's *nothing* you can do about it.

But I say, forget that. Get out there and squeeze the last drop of fun out of summer.

Which is why I was down at the beach with my friends Julio Reyes and Maya Medeiros. We were watching a kiteboarder zip over the ocean. I couldn't believe how fast he was going. "Ho, man, look at that guy go!"

Julio whistled. "Like a rocket."

The hot sun sparkled on the blue-green bay. The kiteboarder topped a small wave and let his kite pull him high into the sky. He did a flip and came back down. Perfect.

"Holy moley," I whispered.

All three of us lived a couple blocks from the beach on the same dead-end street, in a town called Kailua, on the Hawaiian island of Oahu. Across from our small one-story houses, patches of jungle blocked our neighborhood from a fancy golf course. High above the jungle, green mountains sat under hats of white clouds.

Julio elbowed me. "That guy's a famous kiteboarder."

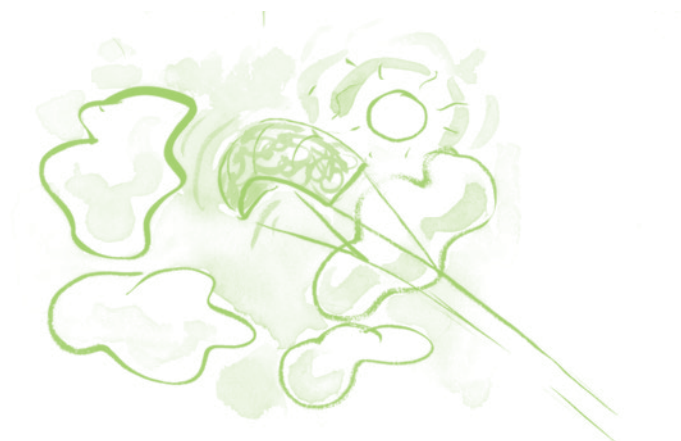
"No joke? What's his name?"

Julio pinched his chin. "I forget. Something."

Maya laughed. She was cool, and really good at sports. Better than me and Julio. She had a skateboard and a brown belt in tae kwon do. She was born somewhere in China. The Medeiros family adopted her.

We were sitting on a sandy rise under a stand of ironwood trees just above the beach. It was a breezy Thursday morning, and we pretty much had the place to ourselves.

The kiteboarder swung around and raced toward



shore. When he got as close as he could before hitting sand, he slowed and sank to his knees. His kite settled down onto the water like a small parachute. He stepped out of his wakeboard and pulled his kite in, then spread it out on the sand.

"Hey," he said. "You kids mind watching my gear? I need to run over to the pavilion."

"Sure!" I sprang to my feet.

"Thanks. Be right back."

The guy dropped his wakeboard, harness, and control bar and headed up over the rise.

The wakeboard was black with red stripes. It had foot grips and looked new. Nice. I glanced over my shoulder to see if the guy was coming back. Nope. I waggled my eyebrows at Julio and Maya. "Watch this."

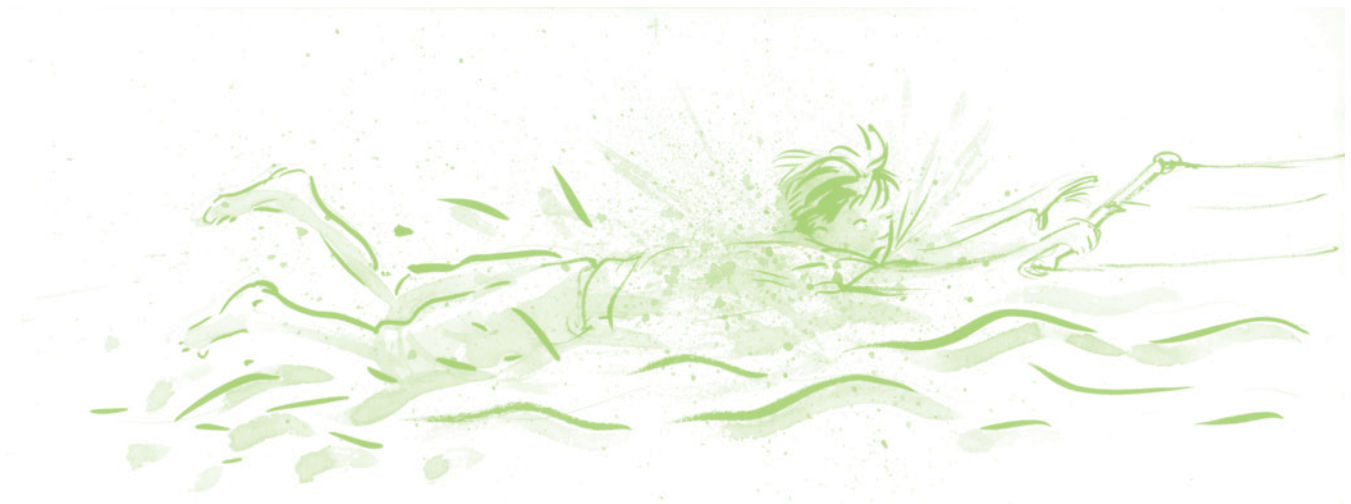
I stepped into the foot straps. "Bring on the wind!"

"You better get off that, Calvin," Maya said.

I picked up the control bar, which was attached by cables to the kite spread out on the beach. "Yee-hah!" I gave the cables a flip. The kite caught a puff of wind, rose a foot, and settled back down. Ho, man, this was so cool!

I grinned at Maya and Julio.

Just then a strong gust whooshed down the beach and caught the kite. The kite blossomed and snapped up off the sand.



"Calvin!" Maya pointed.

I was still grinning at them when the wind grabbed the kite and whoomped it out like a sail. It shot down the beach, ripping the control bar right out of my hands.

"Grab it!" Julio shouted.

I leaped off the wakeboard and stumbled after it, Maya yelling, "Get it! Get it! It's flying away!"

The control bar bounced along the sand, just out of reach. It skipped out over the water, came back over the sand, and skipped out again. I dove for it and landed on my belly. But I managed to grab the bar and hang on.

The wind was strong! I couldn't slow the escaping kite. It dragged me over the shallow water on my stomach. It fishtailed me up onto the sand, then back into the water again.

"Calvin!" Maya shouted, racing down the beach with Julio.

I bounced and banged over the water, swallowing salty gulps of ocean.

"Calvin! Let go!" Julio called. "You'll drown!"

But I would never let go.

A quarter mile down the beach the wind finally let up. The kite sank onto the sand. I sank into the water, gripping the control bar with white knuckles.

Julio grabbed the kite. Maya waded into the waves. "You all right?"

I staggered up, coughing.

Maya grinned when she saw that I was okay. Just soaked, bruised, scratched, and covered with sand. "You look like you fell into a cement mixer."

"Uh-oh." Julio nodded toward the pavilion.

The kiteboard guy was racing toward us, shouting, "Hey! What's going on?"

He ran up, breathing hard.

"The wind grabbed your kite, mister." I handed him the control bar. "We, uh . . . we saved it."

The guy looked at me, then at Julio with the kite bunched and overflowing in his arms. "I must have been careless. Hey, thanks for running it down for me."

"Yeah, no problem."

He laughed. "No problem? You look like roadkill."

He gathered up his equipment and started back up the beach.

"Hey!" I called.

The guy stopped and turned back.

"Are you a famous kiteboarder?"

"Pshh. I wish."

I frowned at Julio. "You idiot."

Julio shrugged.

Maya pointed at my arms and chest. "Yikes! Blood."

I looked down. Cuts and scratches ran across me like spiderwebs. "Cool."

Maya stared at me. "I think *you* might be the idiot, Calvin."

"And I think you're prob'ly right." I grinned.

Julio slapped my back. "You sure know how to end summer with a bang, bro."

Calvin Coconut

by Graham Salisbury

ABOUT THE BOOKS

Calvin Coconut may seem like an average boy, but trouble is always waiting for him just around the corner. From natural disasters to animal escapades, Calvin and his friends live quite an exciting life.

Throughout this series, Calvin learns how to be a responsible son, brother, friend, and student.

Travel to Hawaii and join Calvin on his adventures!

IN THE CLASSROOM

Bullyproof Your Classroom

In the Calvin Coconut books, Tito and his friends seek out Calvin and bully him in various ways. Sometimes they tease, sometimes they steal, and sometimes they even threaten. Calvin tries to avoid these bullies and stay out of their way, but there are many other ways to deal with bullies. Bullyproof your classroom by role-playing the following scenarios from the books and discuss additional methods for dealing with bullies:

- In *Trouble Magnet*, Calvin spills grape juice all over Tito's shirt and Tito swears that he will come looking for Calvin after school. Calvin runs and hides from Tito in order to avoid getting beat up.
- In the *Zippy Fix*, Tito steals cans from Calvin and exchanges them for money. Tito also takes advantage of Calvin while he works at Uncle Scoop's lunch truck by not paying for his shave ice.
- In *Dog Heaven*, Calvin and his friends get teased about having 'ukus (head lice). This time they are brave enough to tease Tito back!



Trouble Magnet

PB: 978-0-375-84600-7
HC: 978-0-385-73701-2
GLB: 978-0-385-90639-5
EL: 978-0-375-89393-3



The Zippy Fix

PB: 978-0-375-84601-4
HC: 978-0-385-73702-9
GLB: 978-0-385-90640-1
EL: 978-0-375-89394-0



Dog Heaven

PB: 978-0-375-84602-1
HC: 978-0-385-73703-6
GLB: 978-0-385-90641-8
EL: 978-0-375-89541-8



Zoo Breath

PB: 978-0-375-84603-8
HC: 978-0-385-73704-3
GLB: 978-0-385-90642-5
EL: 978-0-375-89739-9



Hero of Hawaii

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GLB: 978-0-385-90796-5
EL: 978-0-375-89795-5



Kung Fooey

HC: 978-0-385-73963-4
GLB: 978-0-385-90797-2
EL: 978-0-375-89796-2





Hawaiian Geography and Climate

Hawaii consists of a string of islands in the Pacific Ocean. This book series takes place on the island of Oahu, in a town called Kailua on the southeast coast. Use reference books and maps to acquaint your students with the geography and climate of the Hawaiian Islands and then have them choose one of the following activities to illustrate what they learned:

- Make a relief map that shows the islands, ocean, volcanoes, and other geographic landmarks of Hawaii.
- Play Jeopardy! using key facts about Hawaii such as the capital, population, and major industries.
- Build a tropical climate diorama that features native plants and animals.

Mr. Purdy's Writing Projects

Mr. Purdy is Calvin's fourth-grade teacher. He is tough on the kids, but knows how to have fun too. Mr. Purdy assigns his class various writing projects to stimulate their imaginations and teach them important writing strategies. Assign these same projects to your students and see how they stack up against Calvin and his friends!

- As in *Dog Heaven*, what do you want so badly you can taste it? Write a persuasive paragraph or essay that answers this question. Then revise your writing and include an interesting "pretzel." (p. 56)
- As in *Zoo Breath*, conduct a discovery project based on primary research. Students can select their research topic and then present their findings to the class along with appropriate props.

Problem and Solution: A Road Map

While the plot of each Calvin Coconut story is unique, the basic structure of each story is the same—there is a problem and a solution. Yet there are various steps that are taken to get from point A, the problem, to point B, the solution. Draw a road map that shows the path each story takes from point A to point B. Start by illustrating and describing the problem, and then illustrate and describe the things that happen along the way until you get to the solution. Illustrate and describe the solution as the final destination point on your map.

Creative Collages: Guess the Book

Ask students to pick their favorite book in the Calvin Coconut series and create a collage that represents it. They should keep their book choice a secret until all of the collages are finished. Then post them around the classroom and have students guess which books match each collage!



ZIGZAG KIDS

BY PATRICIA REILLY GIFF

Follow the author's
TeacherTalk blog at
PatriciaReillyGiff.com

ABOUT THE BOOKS

In this delightful series, award-winning author Patricia Reilly Giff introduces readers to a quirky, lovable group of kids, capturing all the excitement and surprises of new friends and after-school fun.

IN THE CLASSROOM

Presenting the Rules

Challenge students to make a list of rules for the Afternoon Center that doesn't include the word *don't* (e.g., instead of saying "Don't run," say "Walk"). Divide the class into groups and assign each group one rule. Ask them to find a creative way to present the rule to the class. They may sing it, act it, or draw it.

Cast of Characters

Take a look at the cast of the Zigzag Kids. Write one sentence that each character might write that best describes them.

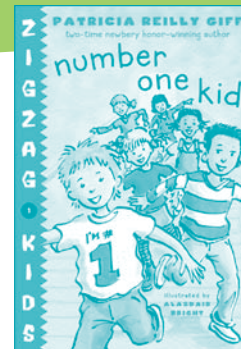
Simile Study

Writers like to use language to make readers think about things in a different way. For example, Patricia Reilly Giff likes to use similes to help readers better know her characters, and their actions: "Gina was as strong as a coyote." (*Big Whopper*, p. 27) Have students think of other similes that might describe Gina's strength. Then, have students look for other examples of simile in *Number One Kid*, *Big Whopper*, *Flying Feet*, and *Star Time*.

Being Bilingual

Sumiko is a student at the Zelda A. Zigzag School. In *Number One Kid*, she is learning Japanese from her parents. Ramón is a college helper in the Afternoon Center. What other language might he speak? Ask if there are students in the classroom that speak other languages. If so, have them teach their classmates how to say "friend" in the other language. Have students learn to say "hello" and "goodbye" in three other languages. They can visit www.ipl.org/div/hello. Display a world map. Point to the countries where these languages are spoken.

Activities prepared by Pat Scales, Children's Literature Consultant.



Number One Kid

PB: 978-0-553-49468-6
HC: 978-0-385-74687-8
GLB: 978-0-385-90925-9
EL: 978-0-375-89635-4



Big Whopper

PB: 978-0-553-49469-3
HC: 978-0-385-74688-5
GLB: 978-0-385-90926-6
EL: 978-0-375-89636-1



Flying Feet

PB: 978-0-375-85911-3
HC: 978-0-385-73887-3
GLB: 978-0-385-90754-5
EL: 978-0-375-89637-8



Star Time

PB: 978-0-375-85912-0
HC: 978-0-385-73888-0
GLB: 978-0-385-90755-2
EL: 978-0-375-89638-5

Also available on audio from Listening Library



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Roland Wright

by Tony Davis



Future Knight

PB: 978-0-385-73801-9
GLB: 978-0-385-90706-4
EL: 978-0-375-89403-9



Brand-New Page

PB: 978-0-385-73803-3
HC: 978-0-385-73802-6
GLB: 978-0-385-90707-1
EL: 978-0-375-89406-0



At the Joust

PB: 978-0-375-87328-7
GLB: 978-0-385-90706-4
EL: 978-0-375-98925-4

ABOUT THE BOOKS

Roland Wright dreams of becoming a knight. And luckily, those dreams come true when he is invited to live in the King's castle and train as a page. But the road to knighthood is no easy task—his will, strength, and heart are tested and Roland proves to himself and the rest of the castle that he is destined to join the highest order of knights.

IN THE CLASSROOM

Middle Ages Extravaganza

The Roland Wright books take place during the medieval period and Roland's life was quite different than it is for us today. What was it like to live during this time in history? Have your students select and research one element of medieval culture: castles, nobility, commoners, clothing, the road to knighthood, weapons, armor, jousts and tournaments, food and feasts, trades and the marketplace, etc. They can present what they learn in any of the following ways:

- Create a diorama
- Compile a display board
- Design a cartoon
- Paint a mural
- Shoot a video
- Develop a website
- Build a model

As a conclusion, host a "Medieval Day" in your classroom. Have students dress in costume, prepare special food for lunch, hold a tournament outside, and turn your classroom into a village marketplace.

A Knight's Tale

Roland is determined to become the most gallant knight to grace the King's castle. What kind of knight do you think Roland would be? Ask your students to write a fairy tale starring Roland the Knight. The fairy tale can include battles, fair maidens, fire-breathing dragons, and other exciting adventures. Let their imaginations run wild! When all the fairy tales are complete, have each student read theirs aloud to the class. Gather students on the floor at the end of the day, turn off the lights, and let the reader take everyone to a far-away land.



Illustration © 2011 by Gregory Rogers.

Activities prepared by Jamie Simon, who has been involved in education for 10 years as both a teacher and an administrator.

THE GECKO & STICKY

BY WENDELIN VAN DRAANEN

ABOUT THE BOOKS

The Gecko and Sticky is an original superhero story from the super-talented Wendelin Van Draanen. Dave Sanchez is given a magical Aztec wristband by his sidekick, Sticky—a kleptomaniac talking gecko. Whoever wears the wristband with a special power ingot attains powers like flight or invisibility. But the evil treasure hunter Damien Black has the ingots while Dave has the wristband—and they'd both do anything to get what the other has.

IN THE CLASSROOM

What Will Happen Next?

Van Draanen is a master of suspenseful chapter endings. At the end of each chapter, have students make a prediction about what they think will happen next, and why. Remember that predictions are based on evidence from the story and what you know about stories in general.

Cause and Effect

Have students create a story map or cause and effect chart for one of the Gecko and Sticky books as they read it. Encourage them to study how Van Draanen creates tension and write a journal on how to use what they learned in their next piece of narrative writing.

Animal Adaptations

Have the class create posters or pamphlets about an unusual animal and its amazing adaptations (such as the gecko's sticky fingers or the Komodo dragon's tongue).

Book Talk!

Tap your students' creative juices! Have them create a video commercial (live or taped) or print advertisement (magazine or poster size) about the Gecko and Sticky series and who should read it. Remind them to explain why the series is exciting—but remember not to give too much away!



Villain's Lair

PB: 978-0-440-42242-6
HC: 978-0-375-84376-1
EL: 978-0-375-85362-3



The Greatest Power

PB: 978-0-440-42243-3
HC: 978-0-375-84377-8
EL: 978-0-375-85382-1



Sinister Substitute

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EL: 978-0-375-89492-3



The Power Potion

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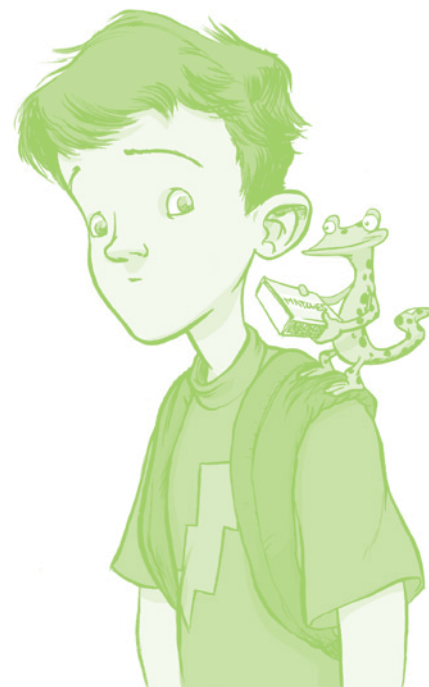


Illustration © 2011 by Stephen Gilpin.

MELONHEAD

BY KATY KELLY



Melonhead

PB: 978-0-440-42187-0
HC: 978-0-385-73409-7
GLB: 978-0-385-90426-1
EL: 978-0-375-89192-2



Melonhead and the Big Stink

PB: 978-0-375-84527-7
HC: 978-0-385-73658-9
GLB: 978-0-385-90617-3
EL: 978-0-375-89656-9



Melonhead and the Undercover Operation

HC: 978-0-385-73659-6
GLB: 978-0-385-90618-0
EL: 978-0-375-98292-7

ABOUT THE BOOKS

Lucy Rose, one of Adam Melon's good friends, gave him his preferred nickname: Melonhead. And while Melonhead's mom is not thrilled about it, he certainly is! Melonhead loves shortcuts, snakes, and inventing, though all three get him into some interesting situations, and maybe a wee bit of trouble, too.

IN THE CLASSROOM

Pre-Reading Activity

Ask the class: Have you ever tried to invent something? What do you think are the steps to making an invention?

Comprehension

Encourage students to complete these activities as they read:

- Readers get to know characters by studying what they say, what they do, how others react or talk to them, and what they look like.
- Create a diagram or chart that lists the experiments and what Sam and Melonhead learned from each attempt for the Challenge America contest.
- Since good readers make predictions about what is going to happen next, write a question at the end of each chapter about what you hope will be answered. For example, "I wonder if and how Melonhead will get out of the tree?"

Post-Reading Activities

- Encourage students to try a Challenge America invention—for themselves, of course! Remind them what Mr. Santalices said: Try to create something new, original, and useful.
- Melonhead wants to keep the snake he found, but he's not even sure what it needs at first to survive. Have students research the needs of their dream pet and calculate how much it would cost to not only purchase the pet, but also to provide for him for one year.
- Diaper science! Get a variety of diaper brands and reenact the experiment that Sam and Melonhead conduct in the bathroom. What are your class's findings?

Activities prepared by Tracie Vaughn Zimmer, a reading specialist.



Boy, Oh BOY!

Great Book Series for Boys

Educators Guide



schwartz & wade books



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