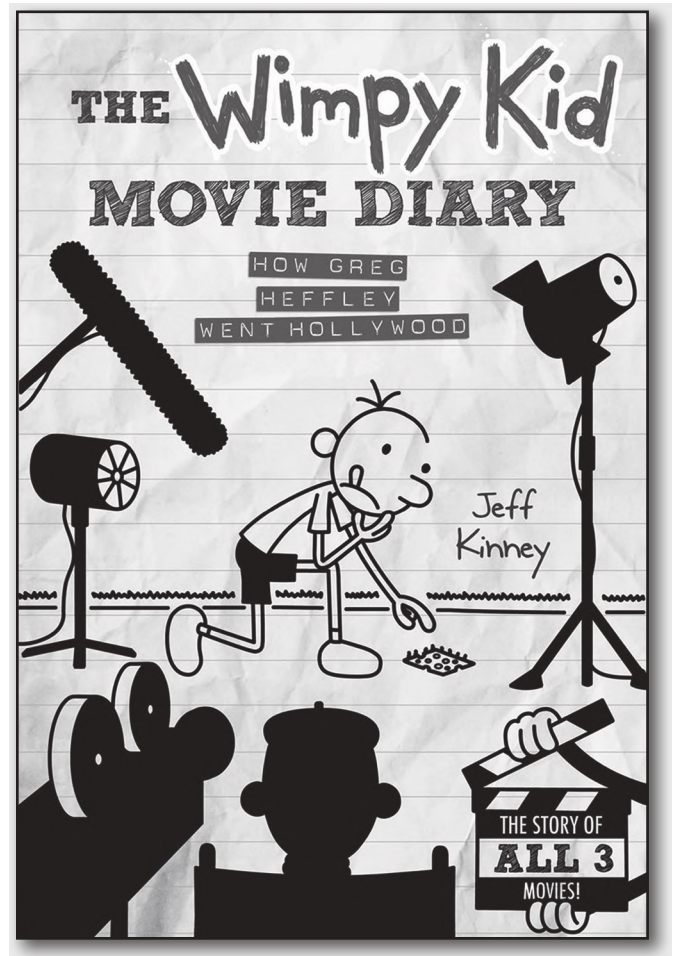# THE Wimpy Kid MOVIE DIARY Party Kit

Kids love movie-themed parties. Whether it's a birthday party, a slumber party, a graduation party, or a no-reason-at-all party, this kit has everything you need to make your celebration a hit—including ideas for invitations and decorations, improv and role-play activities, games, and arts-and-crafts projects!

THE Wimpy Kid MOVIE DIARY

HOW GREG HEFFLEY WENT HOLLYWOOD

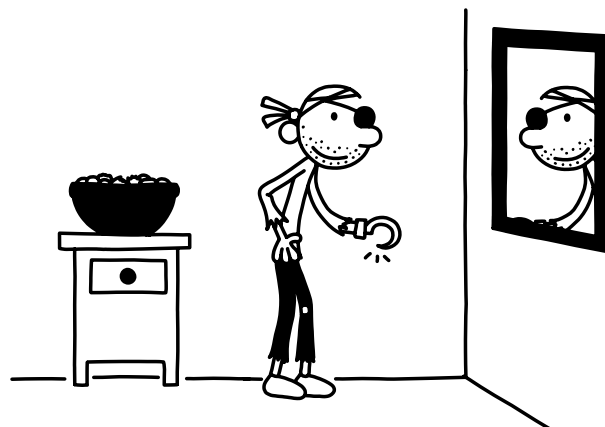Jeff Kinney

THE STORY OF ALL 3 MOVIES!

Getting Started

Inviting Invitations

Embellish your invitations with clip art (or other low- or no-cost images) showing typical movie-related elements and icons—director's chairs, arc lights, cameras, filmstrips, a silhouette of an audience in a darkened theater, and so on. Or, if you have access to a scanner, have kids draw pictures of such items and paste them into your electronic file. In the invite itself, consider having guests show up in costume (see below) and/or bring a DVD or Blu-ray disc of their choice, with the "in" and "out" times labeled for a clip they'd like to share with the other partygoers (see "Time Line" on page 3 of this Guide).

To Costume or Not to Costume?

The option of having kids arrive in costume as characters from their favorite movie is one you'll probably want to give guests and their caregivers. It'll certainly add to the festiveness, but it'll also entail a bit more prep on the part of guests. With this in mind, suggest to folks that Halloween costumes can often be repurposed for this kind of party and that such costumes exist for many popular movie franchises. Also, more "everyday"-type characters, such as those from the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* movies, are pretty easy to simulate using regular clothing complemented by creative makeup or hairstyling.
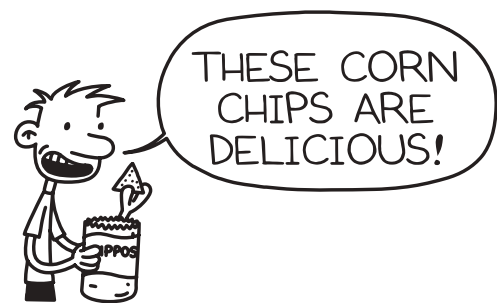
Designing Your "Set"

Decorating the party space should be a breeze. After all, "movie stuff" is pretty easy to find—your local party-supply or greeting-card store probably carries streamers and other decorations with licensed movie characters. Also, you might want to head to the official Web sites of your child's favorite movies and explore the "downloads" page. Chances are, there are logos and images that you can freely print for private home use. Finally, consider organizing your house or apartment as a series of stations that you can lead guests through in the order of the activities you select from this kit. For example, you might create a "screening room," an "art studio," and a "rehearsal space." This approach will eliminate the need for a lot of setup and cleanup time while the party is in progress.

Movie Food

One of the nice things about this kind of party is that many popular movie characters often appear on turnkey "theme cakes"—ask your bakery or ice cream shop to combine a few of these, so that kids might be greeted by several of their favorite film characters all atop the same cake. Other simple shapes that can be added by hand are a clapboard, a bullhorn, a filmstrip, and stars. If you want to get really creative, you could have the decorations on your cake or other desserts mimic colored marquee lights, thus putting the birthday girl or boy's "name in lights." And for dispensing smaller treats, think about purchasing some popcorn buckets from your local theater.
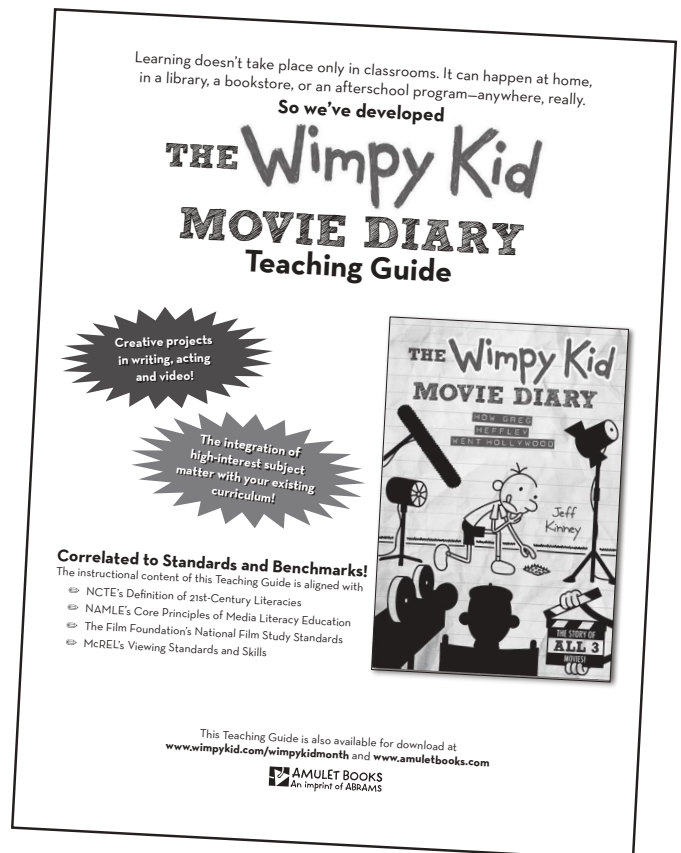
Time Line

The activities and games in this Party Kit can take anywhere from fifteen to thirty minutes or more, depending on the size and age of your group. For a typical two-hour party, we recommend selecting three to four of the activities, so that you'll still have time for a relaxed arrival period, to enjoy food and snacks, and so on. For a closing "cool down" activity, consider having kids screen clips from their favorite movies after first "setting up" the clip for their friends by summarizing the story to that point.

THESE CORN CHIPS ARE DELICIOUS!

More Resources and Ideas

At **https://wimpykid.com/downloadables** you'll find a range of free, downloadable resources. For starters, *The Wimpy Kid Movie Diary* Teaching Guide has several projects and activities that are actually fun enough for a party. And there's also another full Party Kit that's based upon the book series as well as an Activity Packet and other goodies.

Learning doesn't take place only in classrooms. It can happen at home, in a library, a bookstore, or an afterschool program—anywhere, really.

So we've developed

THE Wimpy Kid
MOVIE DIARY
Teaching Guide

Creative projects in writing, acting and video!

The integration of high-interest subject matter with your existing curriculum!

THE Wimpy Kid
MOVIE DIARY
HOW GREG HEFFLEY WENT HOLLYWOOD

Jeff Kinney

Correlated to Standards and Benchmarks!
The instructional content of this Teaching Guide is aligned with
- NCTE's Definition of 21st-Century Literacies
- NAMLE's Core Principles of Media Literacy Education
- The Film Foundation's National Film Study Standards
- McREL's Viewing Standards and Skills

This Teaching Guide is also available for download at
www.wimpykid.com/wimpykidmonth and www.amuletbooks.com

AMULET BOOKS
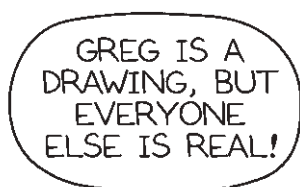An imprint of ABRAMS

Ham It Up!

Ever play charades or similar games at parties? Well, to some extent, they all involve the ability to improvise, a skill that all actors develop as part of their training. Here are some movie-based ways to incorporate the unpredictable fun of "improv" into your party.
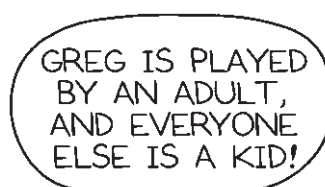
"What's My Motivation?"

Invite small groups to rehearse and then perform a scene from a favorite flick—but with a twist: they should reverse the roles of the good guys and bad guys. That is, kids should ad lib dialogue that makes the villains sympathetic and the heroes unappealing while keeping the same dramatic premise . . . an exercise that should prove both hilarious and eye-opening.
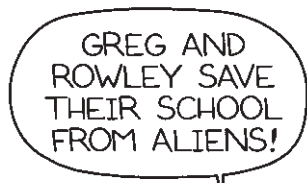
Pitch and Catch

Distribute a set amount of "play money" to guests, who will act as movie producers when they're not themselves pitching ideas to the group. Then have kids spend a minute or two thinking about a movie they'd like the producers to fund and write down the "budget" for this movie on a slip of paper. Remind the group that big-budget movie ideas may capture the imaginations of the producers but will require more money and be in tough competition with other big-budget proposals; smaller movies, by contrast, may be easier on the wallet but may not generate that much excitement—remember, the producers want a box office hit. With this in mind, each guest should spend a minute or less delivering an "elevator pitch" for the project. When everyone has pitched, the producers then decide how much money they will give to each project. The winners are those who raise enough money to support their budget forecasts.

GREG IS A DRAWING, BUT EVERYONE ELSE IS REAL!

GREG IS PLAYED BY AN ADULT, AND EVERYONE ELSE IS A KID!

GREG AND ROWLEY SAVE THEIR SCHOOL FROM ALIENS!

ONE WORD: PUPPETS!

Messed-up Monologue

Stage a mock audition for a Hollywood movie, emphasizing that each actor must demonstrate energy, creativity, and, most of all, passion when delivering a monologue for the group. But then surprise your guests by giving them "lines" from the most flavorless text you can find—a page from the telephone directory, a nutritional side panel from a cereal box, numerical box scores from an obscure sporting event, and so on. Then come up with a variety of characters and place these into a hat or bag from which kids can draw their assignments. Here are some ideas:

✏ **pompous politician**

✏ **dying supervillain**

✏ **obnoxious coach or drill sergeant**

✏ **self-centered diva**

For the actual audition, hand out large scorecards numbered 1 to 5 (with 5 being the highest rank) to each guest. After each monologue, the audience members display the card that reflects their opinion while a scorekeeper adds up the numbers and keeps track of how each actor/contestant is doing.

Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down

Screen a clip from a movie—and to make things more interesting, choose one that kids are not apt to have seen. Take a quick a show of hands to learn who liked and who didn't like it: does it get a thumbs up or thumbs down? Use this info to form opposing duos regarding the movie's apparent merit. Then coach kids to use their knowledge of moviemaking and evidence from the clip (rather than personal put-downs) as they role-play debating TV film critics in front of the group.
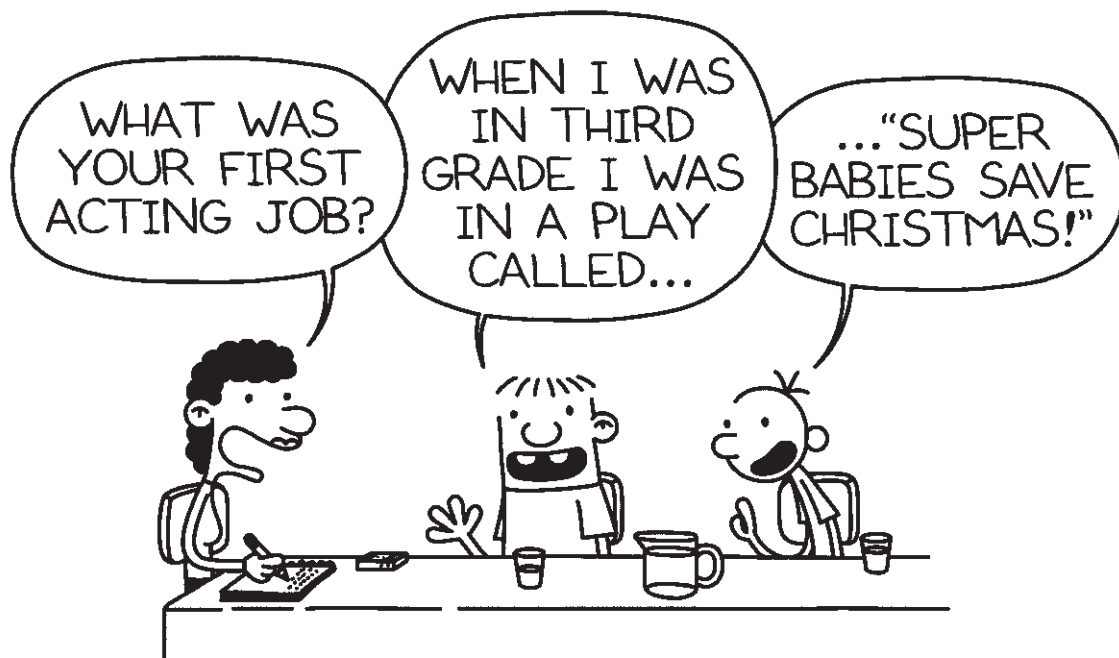
"If My Life Were a Movie"

Remember the old *Newlywed Game*? Well, here's a variation in which friends must use their knowledge of one another to predict how their lives might be adapted to the big screen. After partnering everyone up, provide paper on which kids can write their answers/predictions. Then read the questions and have both sets of answers revealed, awarding points when the two sets correspond. Here are some sample questions:

- ✏ Which famous actor would portray your friend?
- ✏ Would the film be live-action or animated (or a mixture)?
- ✏ Which would be the better tagline for ads and posters: "You won't stop laughing" or "The most terrifying time you'll have in a theater this year"?
- ✏ Where would the biggest action scene take place?
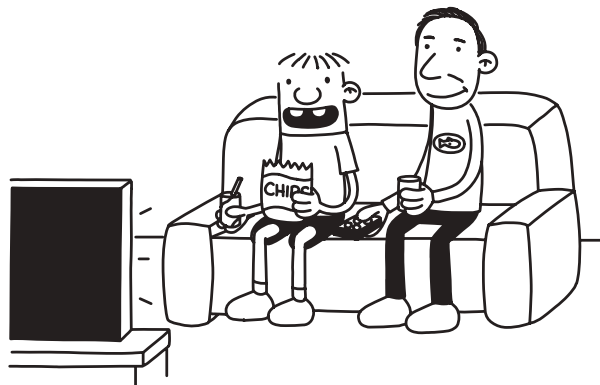- ✏ What would the movie be rated?

"Are You Gonna Finish That?"

Pretend to be a journalist interviewing partygoers in tandem, ideally pairing close friends with each other. Read from a prepared list of questions—such as "What's your earliest memory?" and "What's your favorite movie scene?"—with the goal of having the kids finish each other's sentences. These questions should not repeat, however, since that would give time for teams to confer in advance. Challenge kids by saying that the fewer words used by the partner who speaks first, the better—after all, it's easy to complete a sentence with a word or two if your partner provides all the obvious background information upfront.

If there are partygoers who don't really know the others that well, pair them based upon similar pop culture interests and have them do the interview "in character." For example, they can pretend to be members of a musical group or teammates on a pro sports team—or, of course, characters from books and movies such as Greg and Rowley.

Guess That Clip

Grab a stack of DVDs (or use ones that kids bring; see page 2), and have guests face away from the screen as you play a ten- or twenty-second clip that they must identify from audio cues alone. After they guess, allow them to turn and watch the clip for a few moments. For this activity you can sort kids into teams or have them compete as individuals. And here's a variation you can try: play a Name That Tune-style game by using CDs of soundtracks. If you don't have a bunch of these yourself, remember that guests can supply them, or you can find a nice selection at most public libraries.

"I'd Like to Thank the Academy . . ."

Challenge guests to role-play that they've just won a major movie award and must give an acceptance speech profusely thanking everyone who contributed to their success and stating what they specifically did. You should probably act as timekeeper, but you can ask a volunteer to be the scorekeeper, using a flip chart to tally the number of people the "award-winner" can thank in one minute. Instruct everyone to listen carefully because the same person cannot be thanked twice, and the same thing that speaker is grateful for can't be mentioned twice. Have another volunteer turn on some music after thirty seconds have passed, and then crank up the volume when only ten seconds remain. Provide ground rules as necessary. For example, the item for which thanks are being expressed, even if far-fetched, must be realistic—one can't say "I thank my grandma for the genes that made me superhuman." Instead, all the "thankees" must be real people with semireal contributions, even if that means thanking "Helen the lunch lady, whose meatloaf every Tuesday gives me the strength I need to act."

Lip Synch Theater

Here's a way to inject the unpredictability of sketch comedy into your party with no writing, no line-learning, no rehearsals. Just screen a clip (or clips!) from one of the Wimpy Kid movies once or twice, refreshing memories or introducing it, as the case may be. Then call on a small cast of volunteers to act it out in synch with playback, using only the audio track from the film (you can dim the picture on your TV set or simply turn its screen away from audience). Challenge guests to improvise actions and facial expressions that are different from what the professional actors did, exaggerating things with the sense of freedom that comes from knowing that there can be no "bad" version of this scene, only wild ones.

Tip #1: You can select your clip(s) as part of your party prep or let guests have a say in the matter, using the chapter titles to help find any given scene. Just try to stick to one movie and then, maybe, a second one as you'll not want to waste time popping discs in and out and waiting for them to load.

Tip #2: Cast against type—have a cool person play the "uncool" Rowley, or a shy and polite guest play Rodrick, and so on. The contrast between voice and actor should be a hit.

Games

The You-Think-You-Know-Movies? Quiz Game

Now here's a game that never fails to liven things up. Just divide partygoers into two teams, "Producers" and "Directors," "Gregs" and "Rowleys," "Vampires" and "Zombies"—whatever best fits your group. Then appoint a team spokesperson (or captain), and explain that it's his or her job to provide the official answer for each team.

Before playing, you'll need to prep. Start by hanging the large sheet of paper or poster board on a wall. Add the sticky notes, which should have the values of 100 to 500 written on them. There should be four of each value; each value should have its own row; and each column should increase in value from 100 to 500, from top to bottom. Each column has a corresponding category (see the sample game on the next page), and each number value corresponds to an appropriately leveled question within that category.

Each team takes turns picking a question from one of the categories. When a team answers correctly, it gets that sticky note and at the end the winner is determined by adding up the value of all the notes. When a team answers incorrectly, you can penalize it by taking a note of the same value—or not, if you want to encourage guessing. After an incorrect answer, the other team gets a shot at the same question; that's why it's important for each team to confer quietly, so that other possible answers can't be overheard by its rivals.

What You'll Need

- ✏ **Clear wall space**
- ✏ **Printout of questions and answers**
- ✏ **Large sheet of construction paper or poster board**
- ✏ **Sticky notes** (a variety of colors would be nice, but is not necessary)

Sample Game

Movie Jobs

100 **What's the name of the text that a screenwriter creates?**
(Screenplay)

200 **Who's in charge of both the performances and how the film is shot?**
(Director)

300 **Whose job is it to make sure young actors arrive prepared on the set every day?**
(Acting coach)

400 **Who's more likely to use a "wireframe"—an actor, stunt double, or animator?**
(Animator)

500 **Whose job is it to coordinate the often highly complex order in a shooting schedule?**
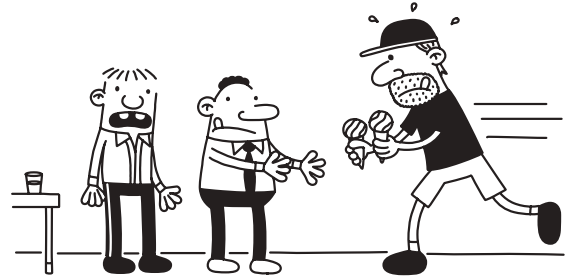(Line producer)

Famous Movies

100   **Peter Parker is the main character in what movie franchise?**
(*Spider-Man/The Amazing Spider-Man*)

200   **What movie series has made more money at the box office than any other?**
(*Harry Potter*)

300   **What famous trilogy features a character named Gollum?**
(*The Lord of the Rings*)

400   **Name two (or three) blockbusters directed by James Cameron.**
(*Avatar, Titanic, True Lies, Aliens, The Terminator, T2*)

500   **Name the main heroes in *Toy Story, Cars,* and *Frozen*.**
(Woody/Buzz Lightyear, Lightning McQueen, Anna)

On the Set

100   **T or F: It's nearly impossible to shoot "nighttime" scenes during the day, so it's rarely done.**
(False)

200   **Explain why a lot of ice cream might be thrown out if a scene needs many takes.**
(It keeps melting.)

300   **What does Craft Services provide?**
(Food and drink)

400   **Soundstages are sometimes easier to use than real locations because the sets have removable ——————————— .**
(Walls)

500   **How is makeup sometimes used to simulate cold weather?**
(Red adds rosiness to actors' cheeks.)

Diary of a Wimpy Kid Movie Trivia

100   **Who wrote *The Wimpy Kid Movie Diary*?**
(Jeff Kinney)

200   **What dairy product required special attention from the filmmakers?**
(Cheese)

300   **Do the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* movies feature any animation?**
(Yes)

400   **Twins were used to play what character?**
(Manny)

500   **Name the two directors that worked on the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* movies.**
(Thor Freudenthal and David Bowers)

Sequel Mania

Unfortunate Film Follow-ups

Although *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules* and *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days are based* on the bestselling books, kids may be aware that some sequels seem completely random—events conspire to have the heroes reunite, characters are brought back from the dead, and the plots sometimes seem like excuses to indulge in onscreen explosions. Well, here's an activity that allows partygoers to take that idea and run with it.

"Fortunately/Unfortunately"?

In this game, which is great for road trips and waiting rooms, players add one or two sentences to a story that's made up as it travels around the group. The fortunes of the main characters swing to wild extremes as players must begin their additions by using, alternately, the words "fortunately" or "unfortunately." **Example:**

Kid 1: "*Fortunately*, Captain Frost arrived on the scene to blow out the flames . . ."

Kid 2: ". . . *unfortunately*, he had a bad cold that day and his freeze-breath didn't work."

After explaining the rules, challenge kids to devise their own crazy sequel to a popular movie—and watch the fun begin.
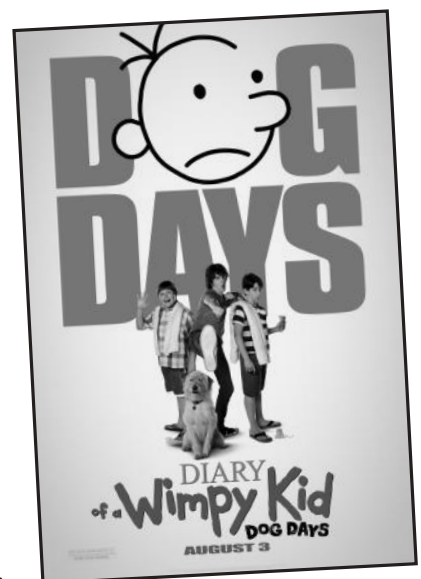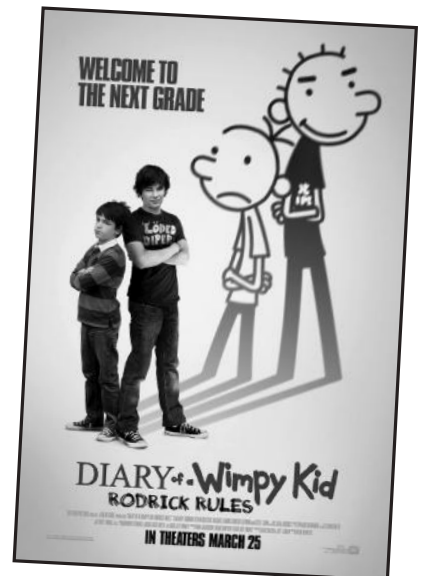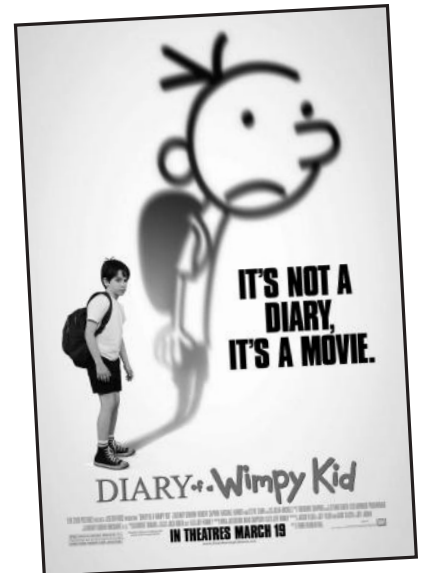
Revenge of the Sequel: The Rise of the Bad Movie Titles

Some movie sequels have very unimaginative titles: they simply add a number, or Roman numeral, after the title of the first film in the series. Others are barely more creative, using phrases such as "The Return of . . ." or "The Revenge of . . ."

Have kids share some of the best—and worst—sequel titles that they can recall. Then invite them to brainstorm titles to movies that are not likely to have sequels, or for titles to sequels that imply an improbable, or flat-out absurd, storyline. **Examples:**

- ✏ *Titanic II: Water Zombie Jack*
- ✏ *The Karate Kid 10: The Karate Kid Has Kids*
- ✏ *It's a Wonderful Life 2: Clarence Strikes Back!*

Write down some of the more inspired titles that your guests come up with—they might suggest ideas that can be used for one of the art projects or other activities in this Party Kit.
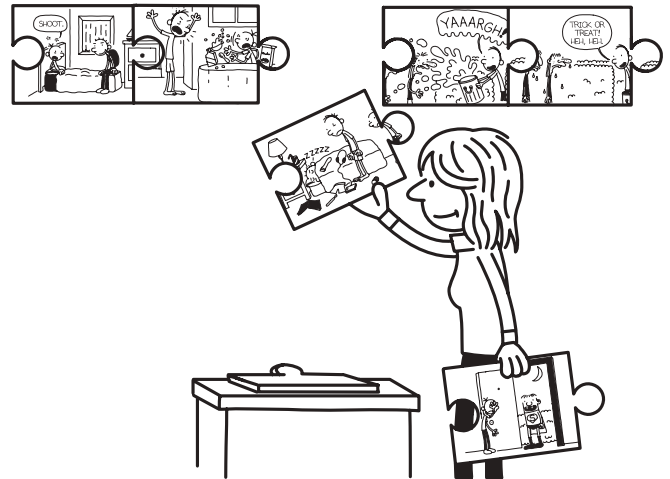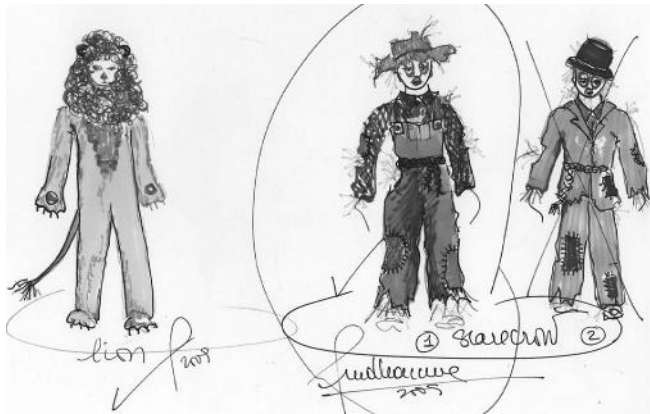
Art Break

Kids' parties often feature an arts-and-crafts project because it's a good way to keep the fun going while also taking the intensity (and noise) level down a notch. Here are some movie-related ideas to consider.

Adventures in Storyboarding

Provide a few options for exciting but kid-friendly movie scenes, such as a scoring drive in a football game, a dog chasing a cat through a suburban neighborhood, or a family taking shelter from a sudden storm. Then, working together or individually, kids can use index cards to sketch storyboards for the scene, with one card for each shot. As they work, circulate, encouraging them to use a variety of camera angles and distances, and reassuring them that draftsmanship isn't what's important with storyboards—rather, an overall sense of how to tell a story visually is what's needed. When they're done, they can narrate the scene for the group—who can heighten the fun by adding sound effects as needed.

Character Design Workshop

Even those who don't consider themselves artists can lose themselves in creating a movie character. Just supply paper, some markers or colored pencils, and a few archetypal ideas—such as a super hero, monster, or secret agent—to get the creative juices flowing. Have kids label their designs if they want, and then share the finished products. You might want to recognize their work by awarding pre-made certificates of achievement for categories such as the most imaginative, original, humorous, "amazingly detailed," and so on.

Posters by Committee

The posters can be for an upcoming release, a sequel to a popular movie, or a movie that's completely made up. Try to avoid variations on posters that already exist. You can display the finished posters in the family/TV room or allow them to travel to someone else's home to serve as decorations for a future movie-themed party.

Developed by Peter Gutiérrez.