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Knucklehead: Tall Tales And Almost True Stories About Growing Up Scieszka



Synopsis

Have you ever:  Had your brother try to sell you your own shirt?  Made a list of all the bad words you know  for your teacher who is a nun?  Believed one of those AMAZING! ads in the back of a comic book?  Broken your brother's collarbone playing football  for four times?  Tied your little brother into his bed with your dad's ties? Jon Scieszka has. Which is probably why Jon's dad used to call him and his five brothers KNUCKLEHEADS. Here is Jon's side of the story. And here, at last, is the memoir that might answer some of the questions of how the heck does someone think up a story of a little man made of very smelly cheese.

Book Information

Audio CD: 2 pages

Publisher: Brilliance Audio; Unabridged edition (August 20, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 9781423399742

ISBN-13: 978-1423399742

ASIN: 1423399749

Product Dimensions: 5 x 1.4 x 7 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 69 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #4,271,970 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #5 in [Books > Books on CD >](#)

[Authors, A-Z > \(S \) > Scieszka, Jon](#) #978 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies >](#)

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Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 6

Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Grade 3  6  • Just try to keep kids away from this collection. Inspired book design makes the volume look like an old-school comic. The front cover features an elementary-aged Scieszka popping up out of a military tank, surrounded by explosions and bombers, while the back advertises a "Treasure Chest of Fun" and displays chapter titles and excerpts along with nostalgic graphics. Scieszka answers the oft-asked question, "Where do you get your ideas?" with a slew of childhood anecdotes and his family's escapades that have given him plenty of material from which to draw. Born in 1954, the second of six brothers, he writes about

Catholic and military schools, buying gifts, chores, and hand-me-downs—all familiar experiences related with a specific Scieszka twist. His mother, a nurse, insisted that her sons use proper terms for anatomy ("rectum" rather than "butt") and bodily functions ("urinate" rather than "pee"), making way for several laugh-out-loud moments. Some stories are just amiably funny, such as wearing recycled Halloween costumes, while others help readers understand more about how the author developed his unique sense of humor. Although it includes the car trip story from *Guys Write for Guys Read* (Viking, 2005), *Knucklehead* is aimed at a younger audience. Family photographs and other period illustrations appear throughout. Entertaining and fast-moving, silly and sweet, this homage to family life is not to be missed.

Lucinda Snyder Whitehurst, St. Christopher's School, Richmond, VA Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In this arch, glib, unapologetically shame-free outing, Scieszka, who grew up as the second of six sons, has written an autobiography about boys, for boys and anyone else interested in baseball, fire, and peeing on stuff. The format of the book is perfectly suited to both casual and reluctant readers. The text is divided into two- to three-page nonsequential chapters and peppered with scrapbook snapshots and comic-book-ad reproductions. The accessibly irreverent language pushes the boundaries of moderation even as it reflects a sort of skewed wholesomeness. But the real testosterone payoff here is in the stories, which range from losing battles with fractious parochial-school nuns to taking turns "watching" little brothers (wherein the author watched brother number six eat a cigarette butt and charged neighborhood kids to watch him do it again). By themselves, the chapters entertain with abrupt, vulgar fun. Taken together, they offer a look at the makings of one very funny author—and a happy answer to the dreaded autobiography book report. Grades 4-7. --Thom Barthelmess --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is a memoir that I enjoyed more than I expected. Being a member of the author's generation, I could relate to some of the cultural references of his early childhood. Comic book titles that I loved to read back then and some TV programs that I watched were part of his early childhood. I couldn't help but laughing at many of his small anecdotes. One of my favorites is when he decides to order plastic soldiers that were often advertised in old DC comic books and his disappointment at the size of these soldiers. I thought it was funny because I always wanted to order these but never did. I

bought this book because I thought it would have been useful to the classroom when discussing memoirs. Although it is not as popular as *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, a fictional text, undoubtedly it has some space in a 4th to 6th grade classroom as long as you know how to adapt it.

Our nine year-old son read this and started asking my husband and me questions about our childhoods, so we each quickly read it as well. While we're significantly younger than the author and decidedly not Catholic, "Knucklehead" still provided a wonderful starting point for all of us to talk about stories from our childhoods, the nine year-old included. Accessible and heartwarming.

Do you find reading boring? Then you haven't read Jon Scieszka's *Knucklehead*! The award-winning author of *The Stinky Cheese Man*, *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs*, and *Squids Will Be Squids* brings us his version of a memoir. Jon Scieszka is hilarious as he takes us on the adventures of his childhood! Jon is one of six, that's right 6 boys in the Scieszka family. Scieszka vividly describes the crazy adventures he and his brothers get into. Their behavior was often so goofy, they were nicknamed "Knuckleheads" by their father. From babysitting gone wrong and ending in broken bones, to shared Halloween costumes, to setting model airplanes on fire these boys did it all! Filled with descriptions of their crazy antics and photos from Jon's past, this book is a quick read that will keep you hooked from page 1. This book is great for upper elementary students and older. Middle school and high school students will love the look into Scieszka's life too. When I read it, I was laughing out loud every chapter. Chapter 33, "Car Trip," made me laugh 'til I cried! Readers of all ages need to get their hands on a copy of *Knucklehead: Tall Tales & Mostly True Stories of Growing Up Scieszka* and laugh like they've never laughed before!

Pee swords, fried urine, and cat yak.....what more could a 7 year old kid want in a book? This is such a sweet and funny collection of stories about the author's experience growing up in a family of 6 brothers. Each story is only 2-3 pages long, which is perfect for kids, and most of them are about everyday things like chores and haircuts and summer time and Cub Scouts. Its funny, and endearing. I enjoyed it as much as the kids. We wished it were longer.

I think I would stick to 4th to 5th grade boys. As you can imagine with 6 brothers their is some potty humor. It would have appalled my prom and proper 10 year old self but, after living with my "pull my finger" husband I have loosened up and enjoyed the book to read with my tomboy and a group of boys.

These were great stories about the six Scieszka brothers' adventures, while they were growing up. I couldn't read them without laughing, and I felt a sense of nostalgia as I remembered my own childhood. My whole family enjoyed the book.

I have read many of the stories from this book to my middle school Language Arts classes. I appreciate them because they are short, sweet, and often gross. This has a special appeal to my boy students. Jon Scieszka has a way with words, as many of my students know when I reveal the fact that he has written some of their favorite picture books such as *The Stinky Cheese Man*. My students especially like the story about the Scieszka family road trip.

This is such a great book for boys! My sons love having this book read to them and listening to it on CD. I did have to remind my boys of how much trouble the Scieszka boys got themselves into with their antics and that they shouldn't try many of them themselves. This is a book that most any boy or parents of boys could identify with.

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