

CLASSROOM GUIDE

Grades
2 & Up

THE WORLD OF **CAPTAIN UNDERPANTS** BY **DAV PILKEY**



 **SCHOLASTIC**

Meets Common Core State Standards—SEE INSIDE

THE WORLD OF CAPTAIN UNDERPANTS

“Call Pilkey...the savior of the ‘reluctant reader.’”—*USA Today*



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ABOUT THE BOOKS

George Beard and Harold Hutchins are two clever comic-book-writing fourth graders who attend Jerome Horwitz Elementary School. These best buddies delight in planning and carrying out practical jokes in their school and neighborhood, unintentionally creating havoc everywhere they go and getting into trouble with their active imaginations. Together, they transform their school principal, Mr. Krupp, into Captain Underpants, the superhero of their original comic book series. But Captain Underpants's true identity is so secret, even he doesn't know who he is!

Throughout the Captain Underpants series, George, Harold, and Captain Underpants must work together to safeguard the world from danger. They tangle with talking toilets, zombie nerds, mad scientists, and a wide range of riotously evil robots.

George and Harold wrote their first full-length graphic novel in response to an assignment from Mr. Krupp to write 100 pages on "good citizenship." Their resulting work, *The Adventures of Super Diaper Baby*, is an epic graphic novel about a diapered superhero who, along with his trusty sidekick, Diaper Dog, falls into a tub of Extra-

Strength Super Power Juice and now has to battle his archenemy, Deputy Dangerous. In its sequel, *Super Diaper Baby 2: The Invasion of the Potty Snatchers*, Super Diaper Baby and Diaper Dog join forces once again to fight crime, battle robots, and solve out-of-this-world problems!

George and Harold's third graphic novel, *The Adventures of Ook and Gluk, Kung-Fu Cavemen from the Future*, gives readers a glimpse into the future. It looks pretty bleak until Ook and Gluk step through a time machine to defeat J.P. Goppennopper, CEO of the world's most evil corporation! With a little help from their good friend Master Wong, they come to realize that the mind is a mighty warrior in the battle for truth and justice.

Dav Pilkey's books offer the reader an opportunity to make meaningful connections with characters and to interact with the text. It is best to allow students to read an entire text before engaging in a detailed study of the work, though it is not necessary to read the series in order. Readers will come away with an awareness of how characters work together to solve problems and how humor enriches the reading experience whether they read one or all of the books in these series.

ABOUT DAV PILKEY



PHOTO BY KAI SUZUKI

When Dav Pilkey was a kid, he suffered from ADHD, reading challenges, and behavioral problems. Dav was so disruptive in class that his teachers made him sit out in the hallway every day. Dav loved to draw and make up stories, so he spent this time creating his own original comic books.

In second grade, Dav created a comic book about a superhero named Captain Underpants. His teacher ripped it up and told him he couldn't spend the rest of his life making silly books.

Fortunately, Dav was not a very good listener.

Dav has written and illustrated many bestselling books for children, including the Captain Underpants series, the Ricky Ricotta series, and *The Paperboy*, a Caldecott Honor Book.

Dav grew up in Ohio and now lives with his wife in the Pacific Northwest. You can learn more about him at www.pilkey.com.

“Encourage kids to be creative without worrying about being perfect.”

Dear Teachers,

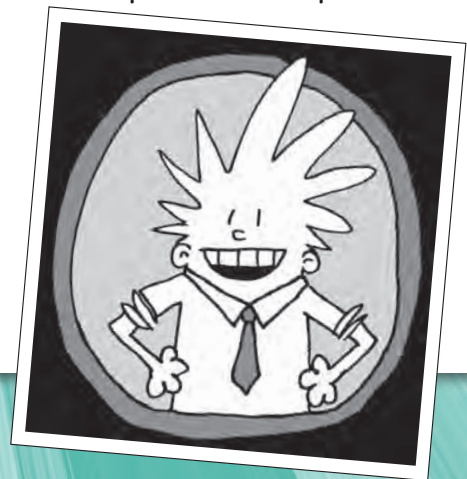
When I was a kid, I loved to draw and make up stories. I didn't worry about drawing things perfectly or spelling things correctly. I just wanted to get my ideas and stories on paper. I loved the freedom that came with creating stories just for fun.

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

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

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

And isn't that what creativity is all about?



ABOUT THIS GUIDE AND THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

ATTENTION TEACHERS EVERYWHERE! Grab your superhero capes and move your students toward meeting Common Core State Standards with the help of the outrageously funny Captain Underpants books by Dav Pilkey! This guide has been created to help you provide students with opportunities to become careful, thoughtful readers as they belly laugh their way through this well-loved series.

Included in this guide are Thematic and Curriculum Connections that will invite students to engage with the text and to explore important topics such as friendship, citizenship, and heroism. These ideas are designed to enrich your curriculum, address Common Core State Standards, and create serious amounts of fun and learning along the way!

Though the questions and activities in this guide correlate with the Common Core State Standards for grade 3, the exciting storylines and appealing qualities in these books will capture the interest of readers grades 2 and up, and equivalent standards in other grades may equally be referenced. For more detailed information, see below.

GUIDE TO THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS CITED IN THIS GUIDE

Reading Literature

Key Ideas and Details

- RL. 3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text.
- RL. 3.2 Recount stories; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.
- RL. 3.3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

Craft and Structure

- RL. 3.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- RL. 3.9 Compare and contrast the themes, settings, and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters (e.g., in books from a series).

Reading Foundational Skills

Phonics and Word Recognition

- RF. 3.3 Know and apply grade level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.

Reading Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details

- RI. 3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text.

Craft and Structure

- RI. 3.6 Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text.

Language

Conventions of Standard English

- L. 3.2e Use conventional spelling for high frequency and other studied words and for adding suffixes to base words.
- L. 3.2f Use spelling patterns and generalizations in writing words.
- L. 3.2g Consult reference material, including beginning dictionaries, as needed to check and correct spelling.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- L. 3.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple meaning words and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibility from a range of strategies.
- L. 3.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

Speaking and Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration

- SL. 3.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- SL. 3.1a Come to discussions prepared having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
- SL. 3.1b Follow agreed upon rules for discussions.
- SL. 3.3 Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- SL. 3.4 Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.
- SL. 3.6 Speak in complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.

Writing

Text Types and Purposes

- W. 3.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.
- W. 3.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequence.

Production and Distribution of Writing

- W. 3.4 With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.
- W. 3.5 With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- W. 3.7 Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

CAPTAIN UNDERPANTS

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Engage students in a discussion that challenges them to explore the qualities that define a superhero. Lead with a few examples, such as *brave*, *confident*, *daring*, *imaginative*, *strong*, etc. Have students work with a partner to draft a list of character traits they feel would be essential for a superhero to possess. Create an anchor chart of the traits to display in class. Encourage students to add to the chart as they read through the Captain Underpants series and discover additional traits they would use to describe the main characters of the series (Captain Underpants, Mr. Krupp, George, and Harold).

Consider doing the following when students are working in partnerships:

- Provide students with a thesaurus to explore word choice when describing character traits
- Supply students with dictionaries and sticky notes for use in vocabulary research

Create a separate chart for new vocabulary discovered by students in their partnerships; post the chart in the classroom and encourage students to utilize new vocabulary when writing across the curriculum.

Correlates to Common Core State Standards in Speaking & Listening-Comprehension and Collaboration SL. 3.1a, SL. 3.1b, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas SL. 3.4, SL. 3.6; Language-Vocabulary Acquisition and Use L. 3.4d, L. 3.5a, L. 3.5b, Conventions of Standard English L. 3.2g

THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

FRIENDSHIP

What does it really take to be a good friend? George and Harold have been best friends ever since they were in kindergarten. Encourage students to consider the following questions and engage in a “turn and talk” discussion with a partner.

Do friends always have similar interests? Are they loyal? How might they show their loyalty? Do they stand by one another when faced with a difficult situation?

Have students cite passages in the Captain Underpants texts where George and Harold demonstrate the qualities valued in a true friend. For example, in *The Adventures of Captain Underpants* we learn that George and Harold love to draw and write together. They engage in this activity for hours on end, evidence that they share a common interest (*The Adventures of Captain Underpants*, chapter 2). Encourage students to find other examples in the series which provide confirmation of George and Harold’s friendship.

GOOD VS. EVIL

Good and evil dwell side by side in many fictional characters. Have your students work together to define *good* and *evil*. Discuss the merits of George, Harold, Mr. Krupp, and Captain Underpants. Analyze George and Harold from Mr. Krupp’s point of view. Would Mr. Krupp describe George and Harold as good or evil? Ask students to revisit the text to find evidence that supports their ideas. How would George and Harold describe Mr. Krupp? Would they say that he is good or evil? How might the fact that Mr. Krupp is able to transform into Captain Underpants make a difference in the way he is perceived by George and Harold? Divide students into groups. Debate whether Mr. Krupp is good or evil from their point of view. Have them support their ideas with evidence from the text.



CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

IMAGINATION

Throughout the series George and Harold often find themselves in trouble as a result of their riotous imaginations. Their ability to think “outside the box” often saves them, as well as others, from dire consequences.

Explore whether George and Harold’s imaginations are an asset or a liability. Consider this from George and Harold’s standpoint as well as from Mr. Krupp’s perspective. Have students identify passages in each story where the boys’ imagination could be considered an asset or a liability.

All Thematic Connections correlate to Common Core State Standards in Reading Literature-Key Ideas and Details RL. 3.1, RL. 3.2, RL. 3.3; Speaking and Listening-Comprehension and Collaboration SL. 3.1, SL. 3.3

LANGUAGE ARTS

George and Harold combine their talents to draft and publish the original Captain Underpants comic books. Motivate your students to explore their own creative writing talents by having students revisit the list of character traits created in the Pre-Reading Activity. Using the list, have them invent an original superhero, being certain to assign specific character traits to their superhero. Encourage students to write and illustrate a comic strip which clearly shows evidence of the traits their superhero possesses.

Instruct students to create a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting the characteristic traits of Captain Underpants and the superhero they have created. Have students present completed Venn diagrams to the class and discuss similarities and differences. When presenting their Venn diagrams, instruct students to cite specific examples from the Captain Underpants series and their newly created comic strip to support their points.

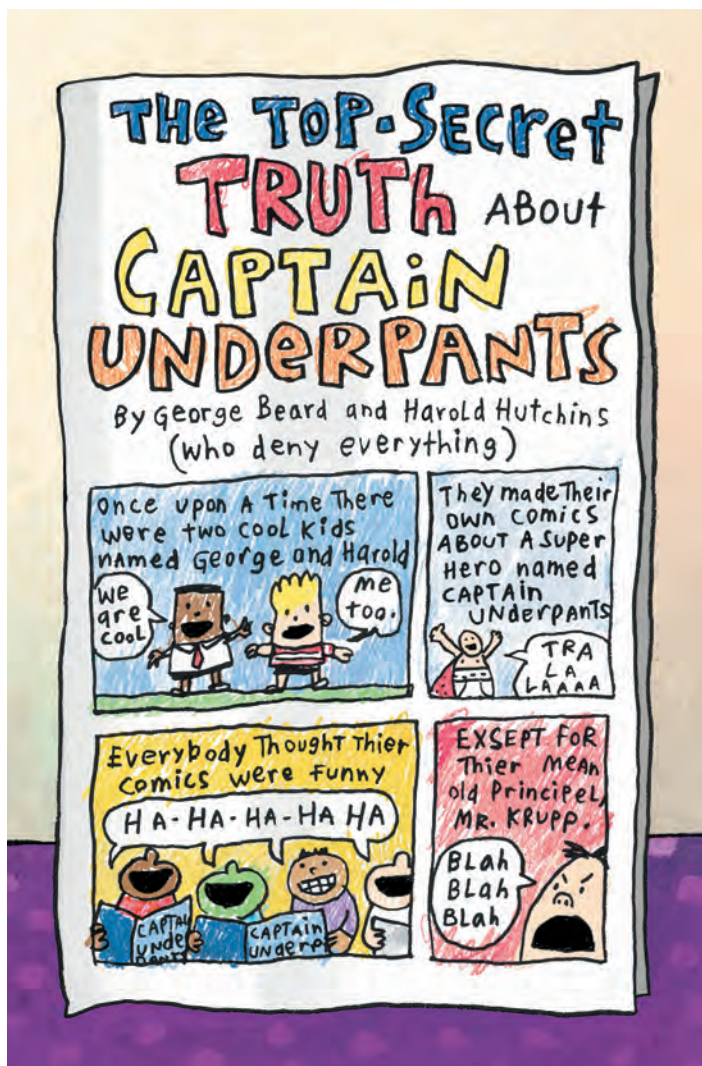
Correlates to Common Core State Standards in Reading Literature-Key Ideas and Details RL. 3.3, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas RL. 3.9; Speaking and Listening-Comprehension and Collaboration SL. 3.1, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas SL. 3.4

SPELLING

George and Harold have wonderful imaginations, but their spelling skills could use some improvement. Have your students write a letter to George and Harold with advice on how to become better spellers. Encourage your students to include a list of misspelled words found throughout George and Harold’s comics, along with a list of corrections to assist them with their future writing endeavors! Provide students with dictionaries, grade level word lists, and access to the Merriam-Webster website for students

<http://wordcentral.com/> so they can correct as many misspelled words as possible. Encourage peer editing for clarity, spelling, and grammar.

Correlates to Common Core State Standards in Writing-Text Types and Purposes W. 3.1; Reading Foundational Skills-Phonics and Word Recognition RF. 3.3; Language-Conventions of Standard English L. 3.2e, L. 3.2f, L. 3.2g



THE ADVENTURES OF SUPER DIAPER BABY AND SUPER DIAPER BABY 2: THE INVASION OF THE POTTY SNATCHERS

THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

CITIZENSHIP

Ask students to share the qualities a good citizen should embody. Have students compare and contrast how Super Diaper Baby and Captain Underpants demonstrate good citizenship. Which character is a better role model for good citizenship? Debate whether Diaper Dog is a good citizen. How does Diaper Dog change in the story? Discuss the choices he makes that cause him to become a better citizen. Cite evidence from the text.

Correlates to Common Core State Standards in Reading Literature-Key Ideas and Details RL. 3.1; Integration of Knowledge and Ideas RL. 3.9; Speaking and Listening-Comprehension and Collaboration SL. 3.1, SL. 3.3

HEROES

Identify the acts of heroism performed by Super Diaper Baby, Diaper Dog, and Mr. Hoskins (Super Diaper Baby's dad) in the two books. When does each character begin to demonstrate bravery? Discuss points in the story where they act fearless. Which character seems to change the most from the beginning to the end of the series? Explain the changes and what seems to cause them.

Correlates to Common Core State Standards in Reading Literature-Key Ideas and Details RL. 3.1; Speaking and Listening-Comprehension and Collaboration SL. 3.1, SL. 3.3



CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

LANGUAGE ARTS

After Super Diaper Baby's dad helps save planet Earth from Rip Van Tinkle, *The Daily Stuff* decides to run a feature article about him. Have your students take on the role of a newspaper reporter and write an article detailing the problem Rip Van Tinkle presented for planet Earth, along with how Super Diaper Baby and his family worked together to defeat this nemesis! Remind students to include the Five W's and One H in their article: Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How. Have them create a clever title for the article. Encourage peer editing for clarity, spelling, and grammar.

Correlates to Common Core State Standards in Writing-Text Types and Purposes W. 3.3, Production and Distribution of Writing W. 3.4, W. 3.5

Compare and contrast graphic novels and comic strips. For example, they are both read from left to right and have images as well as text. One main difference is that graphic novels have more complex plots and they generally have a complete story, whereas comic strips usually provide episodes of a longer story. Using the text from *The Adventures of Super Diaper Baby*, point out the following elements found on the pages of a graphic novel:

- Panels: the squares that contain the illustrations
- Thought balloons: contain the characters' thoughts
- Dialogue balloons: contain the communication between characters
- Captions: provide information about the scene, or a character
- Sound effects: provide visual interpretation of sounds

Encourage students to use different colored highlighters to identify these elements on an assigned page of text from *The Adventures of Super Diaper Baby* or *Super Diaper Baby 2: The Invasion of the Potty Snatchers*. Have students compare and contrast text features of graphic novels and comic strips.

Correlates to Common Core State Standards in Writing-Text Types and Purposes W. 3.1, Research to Build and Present Knowledge W. 3.7

THE ADVENTURES OF OOK AND GLUK, KUNG-FU CAVEMEN FROM THE FUTURE

THEMATIC CONNECTION

PEACE

Discuss what Master Wong means when he tells Ook and Gluk that “violence has no mind. If you truly want to set things right, you must walk the path of peace.” Cite examples from the text where Ook and Gluk choose to walk the path of peace. At what point in the story do Ook and Gluk realize the wisdom of Master Wong’s words? Debate whether or not this was the best advice for the cave boys to follow. Engage students in a discussion of Master Wong’s teachings and how these teachings might apply to their current life experiences.

Correlates to Common Core State Standards in Speaking & Listening-Comprehension and Collaboration SL. 3.1, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas SL. 3.4, SL. 3.6; Reading and Literature-Key Ideas and Details RL. 3.1, RL. 3.4

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

DRAMA/LANGUAGE ARTS

Have students work in groups to create a short play demonstrating how intelligence, not might, can be used to peacefully solve contemporary problems. When writing, have students assume the role of one of the main characters from *The Adventures of Ook and Gluk, Kung-Fu Cavemen from the Future*: Ook, Gluk, Master Wong, or Chief Goppennopper. Encourage students to “stay in character” as they create their plays. Be prepared for plenty of *cavemonics* (the author’s word for “caveman language”)! When students have finished their writing pieces, have them perform for one another. Consider inviting additional classes to view the performances so they can learn how conflicts can be resolved peacefully! You may wish to provide the following scenarios as a starting point:

- At recess your friend has told you that you cannot join in the game because you are not “cool” enough to play.
- You have arrived at the playground to play basketball with a group of friends. You take a shot at the basket and miss. Someone starts to make fun of you.
- Your favorite toy is missing from your backpack. You notice a classmate appears to have one just like it.
- A classmate has invited you to sit with him/her at lunch, but only if you promise to permanently abandon the friend you usually sit near.

Make copies of the students’ plays. Have each group translate one of the plays from cavemonics to modern-day English. Encourage students to edit for grammar, paying particular attention to pronouns and contractions. For a closer look at cavemonics, students should refer to pages 171-174 in *The Adventures of Ook and Gluk, Kung-Fu Cavemen from the Future*. Be sure to provide students with editing checklists and dictionaries. Encourage peer editing for clarity, spelling, and grammar.

Correlates to Common Core State Standards in Writing-Text Types and Purposes W. 3.3; Speaking & Listening-Comprehension and Collaboration SL. 3.1, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas SL. 3.4, SL. 3.6

SCIENCE/LANGUAGE ARTS

Have partners work together to explore books in the library or visit the following website: <http://www.kidrex.org/> to conduct research on the following dinosaurs: Tyrannosaurus Rex, Albertosaurus, and the Velociraptor. Have students work cooperatively to write a short paragraph about each dinosaur. Encourage students to include facts about the diet, adaptations, predators, time period, and appearance of each dinosaur. Have partnerships illustrate and label a diagram of each dinosaur. Although dinosaurs and cavemen did not coexist in real life, the author modeled Lily after real dinosaurs—guide students to use what they have learned in their research to identify what type of dinosaur she might actually have been! Students should support their opinions with facts from their research, and present their findings to the class.

Correlates to Common Core State Standards in Writing-Text Types and Purposes W. 3.1, Research to Build and Present Knowledge W. 3.7; Reading Informational Text-Key Ideas and Details RI. 3.1, Craft and Structure RI. 3.6

