

# SERIES FAVORITES

heroes, scamps, and sidekicks

## Dear Dumb Diary

by Jim Benton

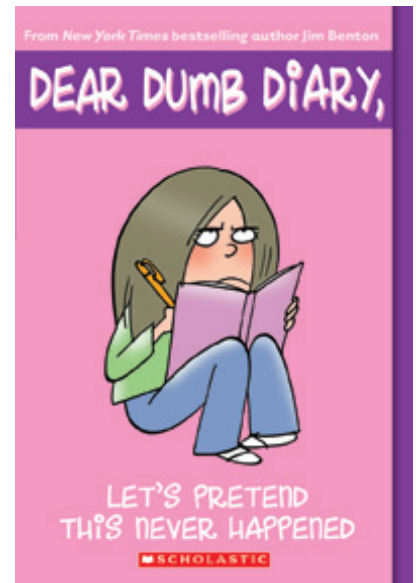
Your students are sure to relate to the hilarious trials and tribulations of Jamie Kelly's middle school experiences in Jim Benton's funny and endearing Dear Dumb Diary series!

### Questions to Ponder Before Reading Dear Dumb Diary

- Is it important to be popular? Why or why not?
- Do you dress the way you like, or the way you think others would like to see you? Why?
- How many friends does a person really need? Why?

### Questions to Ponder During and After Reading Dear Dumb Diary

- How would you describe the relationship between Jamie and Angeline?
- Is your best friend more like Angeline, Margaret, or Isabella? Explain.
- What do you believe is a current 'fad' in your school? Do you think it will last much longer? Why or why not?
- If you could ask Jamie Kelly three questions, what would they be?
- Think of a situation that happened in one of the Dear Dumb Diary books. Discuss how you may have handled the situation differently.



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### **Writing an Advice Column**

An anonymous advice column may be just the thing to help your students deal with those sticky school situations that are part of their everyday lives.

Clip advice columns from local newspapers to share with your students. Model letter writing and give students parameters for the types of problems that are appropriate to write about. Provide plain paper for students to write on and a large box for your students to drop their anonymous letters into. To protect students' privacy, it is best if the letters are typed, and signed with a clever signature, not a student's real name. Have interested students take turns answering the letters. Decide as a class how you will share the responses. You may wish to publish them as a column, or post them in class. You may wish to review letters before passing them on to the students for their advice.

### **Wanted: A Fantastic Friend**

Have students create classified ads for 'A Fantastic Friend'. They should list the characteristics they are looking for in a friend; as well as interests, hobbies, and other activities they hope to share with one another.

### **Start a Fad!**

Allow students to work together in small groups to create a list of past and present fads. Come together to compare lists. Encourage groups to start a few new fads! Keep track of which fads seem to be taking off in your school. Have students interview those who are on board with the new fads to see if they can gain some insight as to what makes one fad more successful than another.