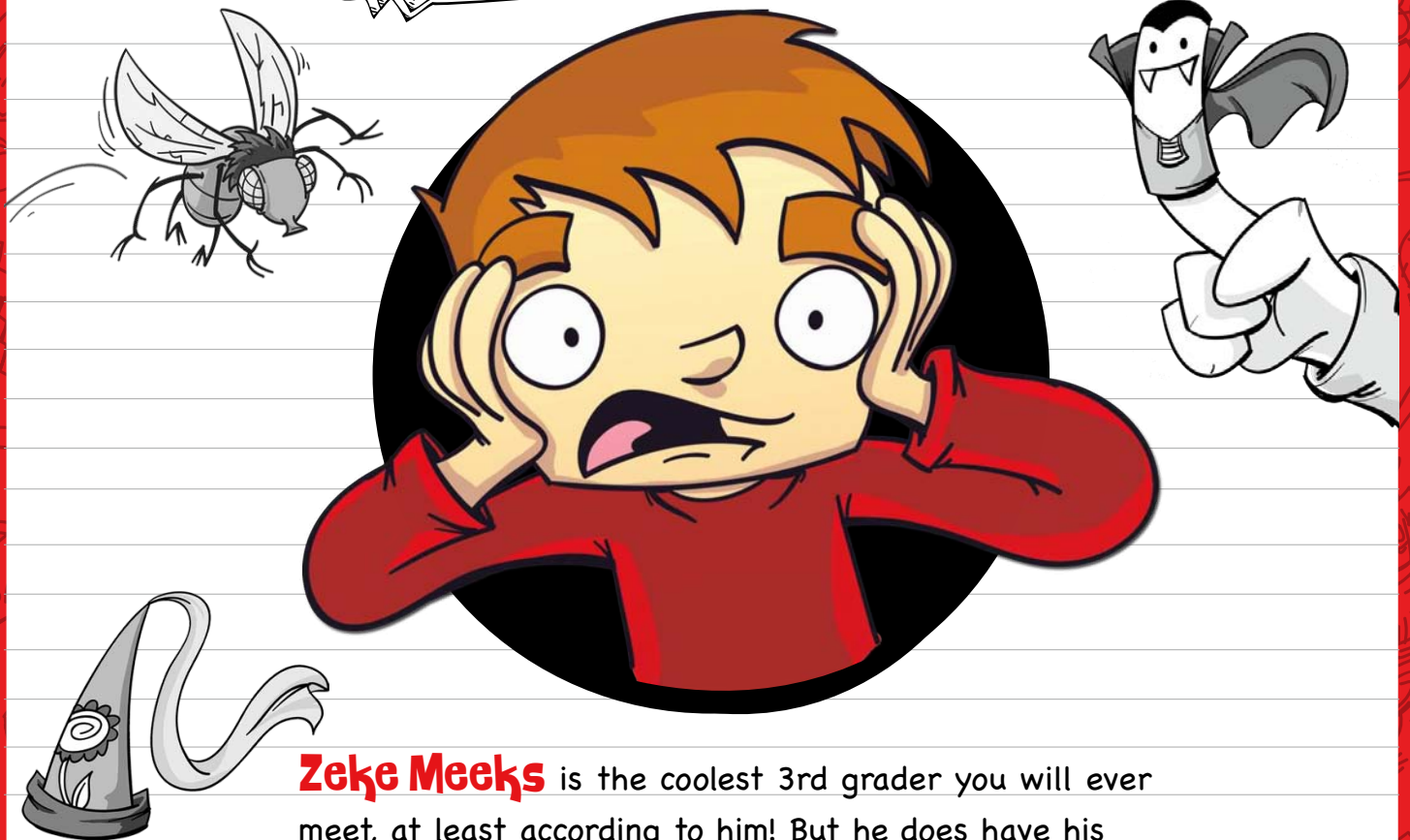


Zeke Meeks

ACTIVITY KIT



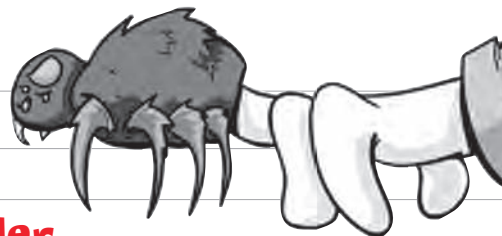
Zeke Meeks is the coolest 3rd grader you will ever meet, at least according to him! But he does have his fair share of problems. His little sister sings embarrassing princess songs around his friends. He has a deep, dark secret that no one can find out about. And his biggest enemy is a tiny, evil girl with razor-sharp fingernails.

It's Zeke Meeks versus the world in this new book series!

PICTURE WINDOW BOOKS
a capstone imprint



Zeke Meeks



Dear Reader,

Want to have some fun?

I've learned some pretty cool things in the third grade and I want to share them with you!

Check out my activity kit! It's full of games and stuff for you to do. Plus it will make you laugh a lot (and you don't have to share it with your sisters).

Enjoy!

Zeke Meeks

(and my friends at Picture Window Books)



PICTURE WINDOW BOOKS
a capstone imprint

Zeke Meeks

ICE CREAM IN A JAR



WHAT YOU NEED:

- ☐ **1 gallon** plastic jar or large coffee can with tight fitting lid
- ☐ Crushed ice or snow
- ☐ **6 tablespoons** rock salt
- ☐ **2 quart-size** zip-lock bags
- ☐ **½ cup** half & half
- ☐ **1 tablespoon** sugar
- ☐ **½ teaspoon** vanilla extract
- ☐ Winter gloves

(Makes one serving)

WHAT YOU DO:

- 1** Fill the jar about half full with ice or snow.
- 2** Add rock salt to ice. Seal the plastic jar and shake it for five minutes. Wear gloves during this step because the jar will get very cold.
- 3** Mix the half & half, sugar, and vanilla in one of the quart bags. Squeeze as much air out as possible and seal tightly.
- 4** Place the bag inside the other quart bag, again squeezing out as much air as possible. Seal tightly. Double bagging the ingredients minimizes the risk of salt and water leaking into the ice cream.
- 5** Place the bags inside the jar and seal the jar. Put your gloves back on and start shaking that jar! You can also roll it back and forth. In about 15-20 minutes, your ice cream will be made.
- 6** Remove the plastic bags and rinse well with cold water. Open bag and enjoy! You can even eat it right out of the bag, if you'd like.



Picture Window Books®
a capstone imprint

Zeke Meeks

Checklist:

- Colored pencils, markers or crayons
- Glue or Tape
- Scissors
- Pipe Cleaner

Make your own PIRATE PUPPET PAL!

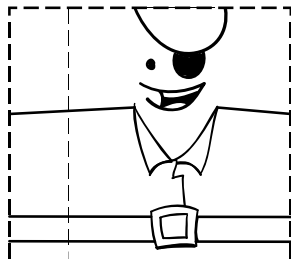


STEP 1

Print out this page and color the pirate pieces. Then cut them out.

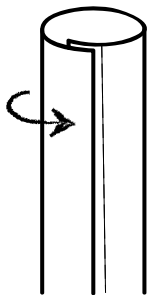
STEP 2

Draw the pirate's face on the body piece.



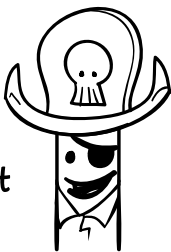
STEP 3

Create a tube for your finger by gluing or taping the right and left sides together. Use the thin dotted line as a guide.



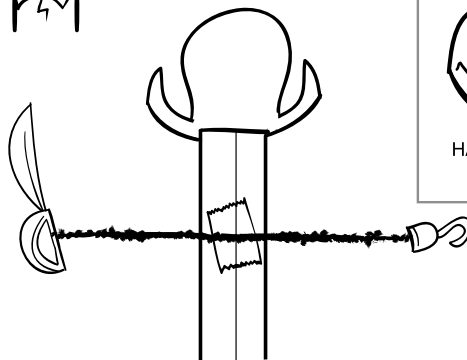
STEP 4

Glue or tape the hat onto the body.



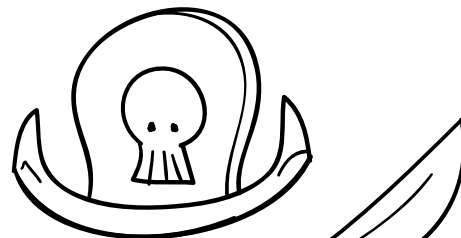
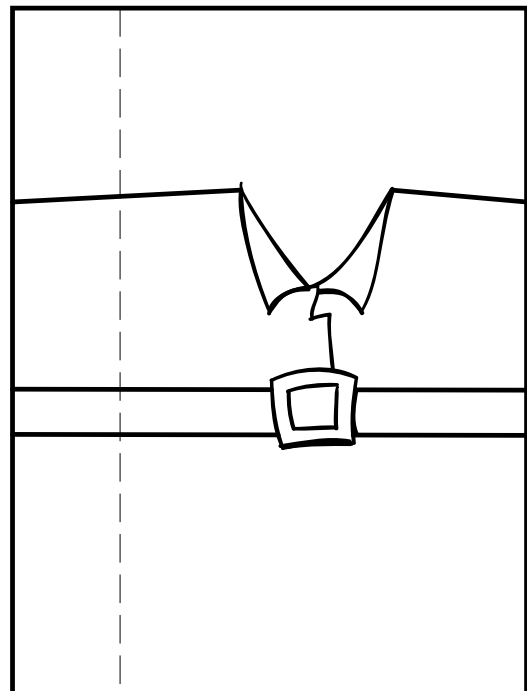
STEP 5

Glue or tape the hook and sword to the ends of the pipe cleaner. Then tape the pipe cleaner to the back of the puppet!



Pirate Pieces:

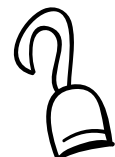
BODY



HAT



SWORD



HOOK

Zeke Meeks

Checklist:

- Colored pencils, markers or crayons
- Glue or Tape
- Scissors
- Pipe Cleaner

Make your own SUPER HERO PUPPET PAL!

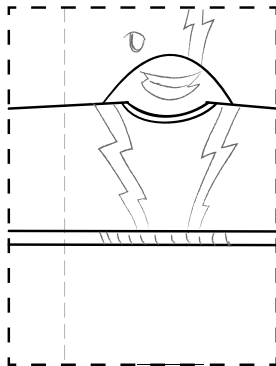


STEP 1

Print out this page and color the superhero pieces. Then cut them out.

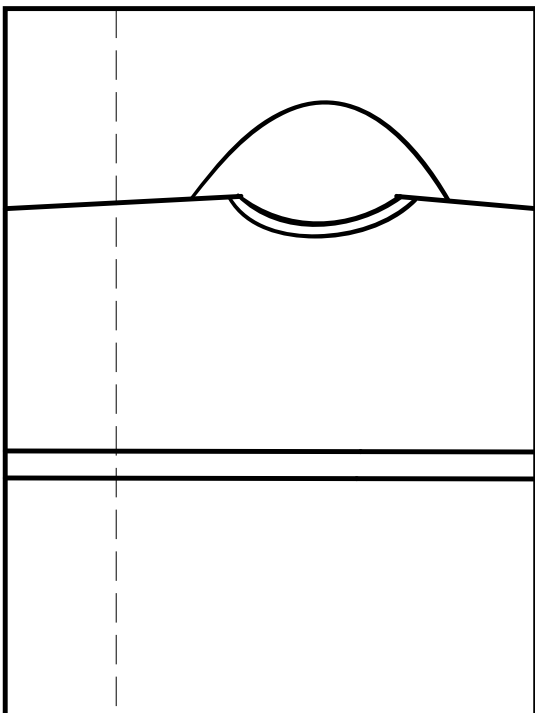
STEP 2

Draw the superhero's face and design the costume on the body piece.



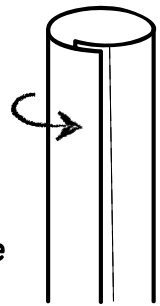
Superhero Pieces:

BODY



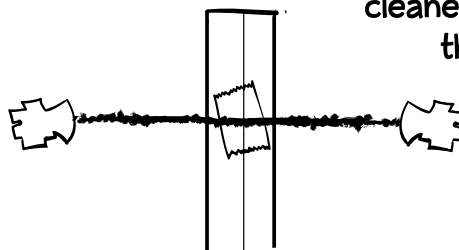
STEP 3

Create a tube for your finger by gluing or taping the right and left sides together. Use the thin dotted line as a guide.



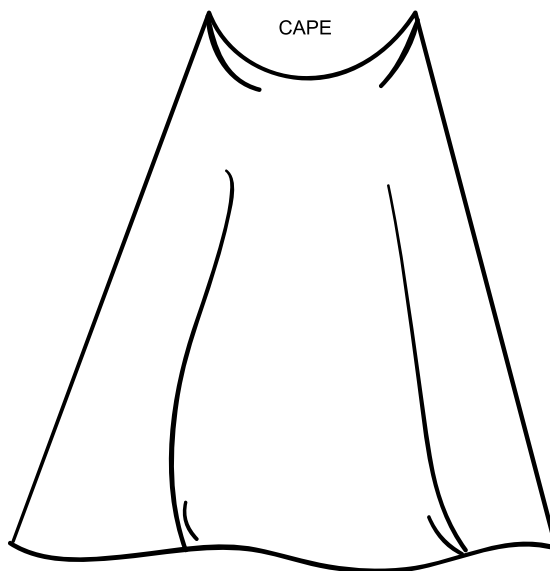
STEP 4

Glue or tape the hands you want to the ends of the pipe cleaner. Then tape the pipe cleaner to the back of the puppet!

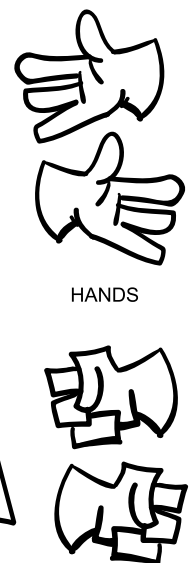


LAST, Glue or tape the cape to the back!

CAPE



HANDS



Zeke Meeks

MADLIBS

A Funny Fieldtrip

Create your list of words.

- ① Name of teacher: _____
- ② A place: _____
- ③ A noun: _____
- ④ A noun: _____
- ⑤ A time of day: _____
- ⑥ An adjective: _____
- ⑦ A past-tense verb: _____
- ⑧ A past-tense verb: _____
- ⑨ A noun: _____
- ⑩ A noun: _____
- ⑪ A verb: _____
- ⑫ Form of transportation: _____
- ⑬ A noun: _____
- ⑭ A noun: _____
- ⑮ An adjective: _____



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Zeke Meeks

MADLIBS

A Funny Fieldtrip

Match the words from side 1 with the numbers below.

At school today, ① _____ had an announcement, "We are going on a field trip to ② _____. There we will see ③ _____ and ④ _____. We leave tomorrow at ⑤ _____." Everyone was ⑥ _____. They ⑦ _____ and ⑧ _____. I made a list of what to bring. I needed ⑨ _____, and I did not want to forget ⑩ _____. I wondered who I would ⑪ _____ by on the ⑫ _____. I hope I see a ⑬ _____. Maybe I will even hold a ⑭ _____. One thing is for sure. Our field trip will be ⑮ _____!



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Zeke Meeks

MADLIBS

Don't Miss This Game!

Create your list of words.

- ① Name for a game: _____
- ② An adjective: _____
- ③ Name of a person/superhero: _____
- ④ A body part: _____
- ⑤ Another body part: _____
- ⑥ An adjective: _____
- ⑦ A plural noun: _____
- ⑧ An adverb _____
- ⑨ A type of food: _____
- ⑩ The name used in #3: _____
- ⑪ A verb: _____
- ⑫ A number: _____
- ⑬ A noun: _____
- ⑭ A noun: _____
- ⑮ A number: _____
- ⑯ An animal: _____



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Zeke Meeks

MADLIBS

Don't Miss This Game!

Match the words from side 1 with the numbers below.

Have you heard about the new video game ① _____? It is so
② _____.! The hero of the game is ③ _____.
He/she had huge ④ _____ and ⑤ _____. First
⑥ _____ ⑦ _____ attack ⑧ _____
from the air. Then land rovers launch ⑨ _____ at him/her. Once he escapes
the land rovers, ⑩ _____ must ⑪ _____ over
⑫ _____ ⑬ _____. If he fails, he will turn into a
⑭ _____. If that happens, there is only one way to win the game.
Our hero needs to find ⑮ _____ ① _____ and kiss them
all on the lips! How horrible!



Zeke Meeks

MADLIBS

Dear Teacher...

Create your list of words.

- ① Name of teacher: _____
- ② Your name: _____
- ③ Time of day: _____
- ④ Place: _____
- ⑤ Body part: _____
- ⑥ Type of community helper (doctor, police officer, etc.): _____
- ⑦ A verb: _____
- ⑧ Body part from #5: _____
- ⑨ A number: _____
- ⑩ Your name: _____
- ⑪ A verb: _____
- ⑫ A verb: _____
- ⑬ A verb: _____
- ⑭ Name of a food: _____
- ⑮ A day of the week: _____
- ⑯ A number: _____
- ⑰ A unit of time (minute, hour, month, etc.): _____
- ⑱ Your parent's name: _____



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Zeke Meeks

MADLIBS

Dear Teacher...

Match the words from side 1 with the numbers below.

Dear ① _____,

Please excuse ② _____ from class at ③ _____. I will be picking him/her up to take her to the ④ _____. He/She is suffering from a swollen ⑤ _____. I think the ⑥ _____ plans to ⑦ _____ on the ⑧ _____ until it breaks off. Recovery may take ⑨ _____ days. During that time, ⑩ _____ will not be allowed to ⑪ _____, ⑫ _____, or ⑬ _____. He/she will be on a ⑭ _____-only diet. I will collect his/her homework on ⑮ _____. And I will see to it that he/she devotes at least ⑯ _____ ⑰ _____ to it.

Thank you, ⑱ _____



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Q&A with D.L. Green *Author of the Zeke Meeks series*

Q: How does a bankruptcy lawyer become a children's/young adult writer? There's got to be a story here.

A: I've always loved creative writing, but I was poor as a child and wanted to make sure I could make a good living. So I majored in economics in college, went to law school, and worked as a lawyer for nine years. At my job, I wrote a lot of memoranda and legal decisions for an appellate bankruptcy judge. I liked that kind of writing, but fiction writing has always been what I most loved. I quit my job to spend more time with my children. The day after I stopped working as a lawyer, I happily started writing fiction again.

Though I include a few things to ponder here and there, my main goal in writing for children is to make reading fun. I'd love kids to enjoy reading as much as I do.

Q: Humor plays an important role in the Zeke Meeks stories, as well as in your previously published *Supernatural Rubber Chicken* series. What's the secret to writing funny stories?

A: I'm pretty immature, so I try to make myself laugh and figure that kids will laugh too. Although I'm fond of Zeke, there's humor when things go wrong for him, like when his dog eats his science project or when Zeke's mom sets up a carpool with his enemy. I use a lot of humor writing tips (such as the Rule of Three, putting the funniest word at the end of the sentence, and using creative names), and often teach people at schools and libraries how to write humor.

Q: Zeke Meeks is a pretty typical 3rd grade boy, other than his extreme fear of insects. Where did the idea for Zeke come from? Was he inspired by your own kids?

A: Zeke is very much inspired by my middle child, who loves video games and TV and isn't very interested in reading or homework. My children aren't afraid of insects, but I am. Once, when my husband was out of town and my children were very young, a giant bug flew around our kitchen. I was terrified! I called my neighbor over to get it out of my house.

Q: Why did you choose to write the books from Zeke's point of view?

A: I thought kids would be interested in a kid's take on things. I've always been kind of a tomboy, so I find it pretty easy to write from a boy's perspective.

Q: Grace Chang is Zeke's arch nemesis. We don't often see a female character depicted as bully.

A: I thought an unusual bully would be more interesting to read about. I tried to make her the opposite of the stereotypical bully in books. She's not only a girl, but she's short and thin and wears frilly dresses.

Q: Bullies usually overpower their victims with their size - Grace Chang has her long, razor-sharp fingernails. Where did this idea come from?

A: I get along with my older sister very well now. But when we were children, she used to threaten me with her long, sharp nails. Sometimes she scratched me with them. It hurt! I was helpless because I bit my fingernails. But I was good at making up mean names to call her.

Q: Zeke's younger sister Mia loves the *Princess Sing-Along* tv show, and I have to admit that those songs are pretty hilarious!

A: I made up all the songs for the books. I had a great time doing so. Now I like to sing them to my family to annoy them.

Q: Zeke Meeks overcame the science fair, the puppet pals, a ban on tv, and even became friends with [gasp] a girl, so what's next for Zeke?

A: I'm not sure, but I really enjoy writing about Zeke and his family and friends. I'm a huge dog lover, so I'd like to feature Zeke's goofy mutt Waggles more. It also would be fun to write about out-of-control birthday parties.

Q: Did you like to read as a kid?

A: I loved to read as a kid. I went to the school library and public library all the time. I read so much that I'd often bump into walls and poles because I'd read while I was walking. I still love to read.

Q: What advice would you give kids interested in being writers?

A: Reading is good practice for writing, because things like plot and characterization sink in naturally when you read. Also, it's useful to try all kinds of writing. Writing lots of poems as a child helped me when I wrote the songs for the Zeke Meeks books. Drafting legal appellate decisions was good practice for writing clearly and prolifically and meeting book deadlines.



Q&A with Josh Alves

Illustrator of the Zeke Meeks series

Q: Have you always been a doodler?

A: YES! Ever since I can remember I've doodled. I doodled all through school, on notebooks, homework and tests. I used to illustrate the word problems in math class. When I didn't know the answer, I'd make it up and illustrate and show how I figured out the solution. One teacher in high school gave me points for creativity.

Q: Do you keep a sketchbook? If so, what would we see in it?

A: I do! You'll find everything from artist studies (where I try to mimic artist I like, learning how to break-down drawings) to brainstorming ideas for my own comics and stories.

Q: How would you describe your art style?

A: I guess I'd describe it as "Saturday Morning Cartoon." I've been inspired by a love for comics and cartoons and I'd like to think my work has an animated feel to it.

Q: What was your vision for Zeke Meeks? How did you create this character?

A: When I read the first book, I immediately connected with the character (Zeke and I have few similarities). Using how D.L. Green described him and the direction I was given, I drew four versions of the character and then worked with Kay (my Art Director) to finalize his design.

Q: What's your favorite part of illustrating Zeke Meeks?

A: Do I need to pick just one thing? I would say my most favorite part getting to watch it all come together. Collaborating with my Art Director and Designer is one of the greatest things ever. Brainstorming and bouncing ideas back and forth – it's awesome. The other part I had fun with, since I got to read all the books together, I tried to include elements from the other books in each one. The pages in the book that are covered in doodles include something from each of the books.

Q: Who inspires you? What artists have had the greatest influence on your work?

A: Oooh - good question. The list is long - I find inspiration from people like my wife and kids to other artists and writers. One of my favorite things about the internet is how often I can come across artists from different parts of the world that spark my desire to continue to learn and try new things with what I create. Specific artists include cartoonists like Charles Schulz, Bill Watterson, Gary Larson and Jim Davis. Animators like Chuck Jones, Don Bluth, Tex Avery and anything Disney/Pixar. Again, the internet has allowed for other modern artist to influence my work. My friends Eric Merced, Jamie Cosley and Mike Maihack. Current artists including Skottie Young, Dave Guertin, Greg Baldwin and Mike Henry. And last but not least, other Capstone artists Art Baltazar and Dan Schoening.

Q: You have a variety of experiences in design, from print and web design to illustrating comics and even creating imagery for a farm's corn maze. How did illustrating children's books come about?

A: My wife! I had been creating newspaper comic strips and comic books and pursuing syndication for a while. We were looking through our kids' books one day when we had a "Wouldn't it be cool if..." moment. From there we started looking at children's publishing. I joined the Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators, and started passing my portfolio around and querying my own projects.

Q: Do you have any advice for kids who want to pursue a career in illustration/design?

A: My grandfather used to tell me to find out what I like to do and then figure out a way to make a living doing it. My best advice is to go for it. Draw all the time and be constantly learning (other subjects, not just art). An art quote I've heard is "We all have at least 100,000 bad drawings inside of us. The sooner we get them out and onto paper, the sooner we'll get to the good ones buried deep within."

Also, when you create something, post it where someone can see it. Not only is it a chance to get feedback, but you never know who might come across it. I've had cartoons published in a kid's magazine in Malaysia because the editor came across the work on my website.