



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on March 25, 2011

Diary of a Wimpy Kid 2: Family-friendly Entertainment

Greg Heffley (Zachary Gordon) and his best friend Rowley Jefferson (Robert Capron) are thrilled to be seventh graders embarking on their second year of middle school and have perhaps optimistic expectations for what the year may bring. Once they return to the humdrum routine of school life, however, they quickly learn that not much has changed as Greg continues to find himself looking silly in front of his classmates, most notably in front of his attractive new classmate, Holly Hills (Peyton List).



Greg is the subject of another series of embarrassing scenarios and enlightening moments, all from which the audience can draw humor and life lessons.

As if Greg's difficulties at school weren't enough, at home he deals with yet another antagonist — his older brother Rodrick (Devon Bostick), with whom Greg constantly clashes.

Greg is already characterized by the need to prove himself and to garner a "cool" reputation. His desire to be better than others even impacts his friendship with Rowley at times. Having a bigger and cooler older brother like Rodrick just serves as an ever-present reminder to Greg that he is un-cool, further straining their relationship.

What's worse is that both Rodrick and Greg are forced to endure their parents' feeble attempts to have them bond. Their mother, Susan (Rachael Harris), an advice columnist for the local paper who fancies herself an expert on parenting, does not foresee the potentially harmful impact of forcing Rodrick and Greg to bond.

But that aspiring rocker Rodrick who performs in a band called Loded Diper could have a mildly bad influence on Greg. For example, when the boys' parents go out of town, the boys throw a party, but the antics at the party are innocent versions of bad behavior, such as drinking excessive amounts of soda. What ensues from this experience, however, is the bulk of the film. The two boys must collectively share a lie about the house party, and deal with the consequences, an experience that ultimately bonds them in the very way their mother had hoped.

And though Greg's misfortunes are enough to permanently scar any seventh grader, he somehow comes away having learned valuable lessons about the importance of self-confidence, honesty, and family.

The film has a depth that is masked by what appears to be an effortless plot and a well-designed script, making it appealing to the younger crowd while delivering a number of morals that will please parental audiences.

Surprisingly for a film about seventh graders and their antics, this film has minimal offensive humor. But it does include disgusting gags, including tricking an unknowing diner into eating pizza that had previously been discarded into the trash bin and smearing a melted candy bar on the pants of a clueless



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victim in the car on the way to church, prompting onlookers to perceive the melted candy as fecal matter. But there is much more to the film than that kind of humor, including in the aforementioned scene. Kudos to author Jeff Kinney for depicting a family that still regards Church as a non-negotiable!

The young stars of the film are charming and their performances let us feel their pain as we can relate to many of their experiences and cringe at their humiliations. They manage to reflect an innocence that is too often lost by middle school.

Overall, the film is very funny. The second installment of the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series proves to be even more entertaining and heartwarming than the first and serves as a perfect comedy for the younger to middle school-aged audience. Likewise, it has enough substance to keep parents engaged.



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