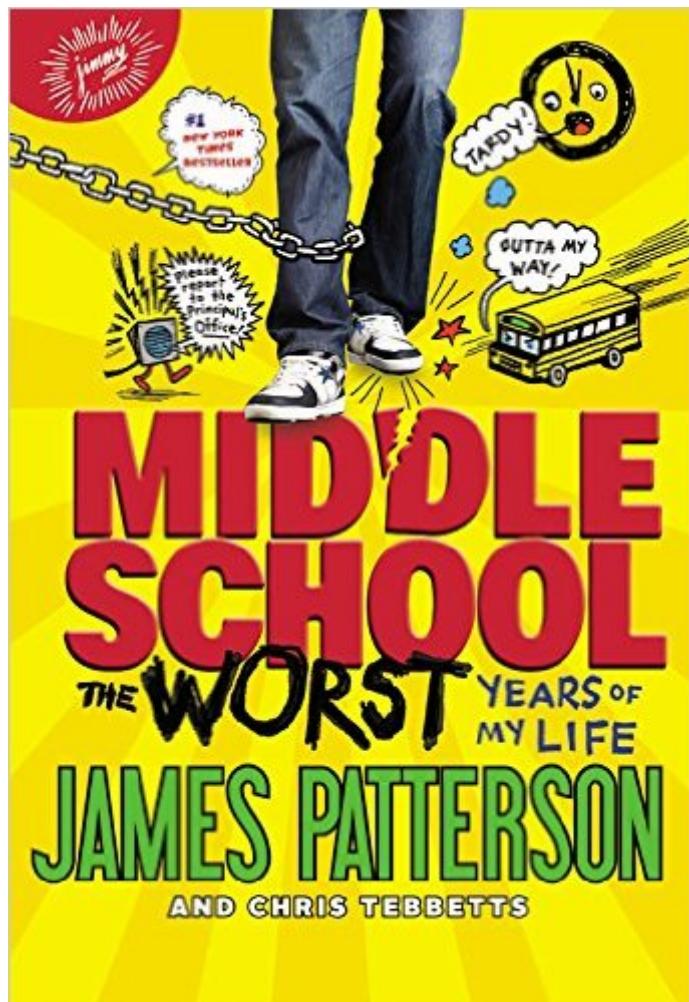


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Middle School, The Worst Years Of My Life



Synopsis

It's Rafe Khatchadorian's first day at Hills Village Middle School, and it's shaping up to be the worst year ever. He has enough problems at home without throwing his first year of middle school into the mix, but luckily he's got an ace plan for the best year ever--if only he can pull it off. With his best friend Leonardo the Silent awarding him points, Rafe tries to break every rule in his school's oppressive Code of Conduct. Chewing gum in class--5,000 points! Running in the hallway--10,000 points! Pulling the fire alarm--50,000 points! But not everyone thinks Rafe's plan is a good idea, especially not the teachers, parents, and bullies who keep getting in his way. Will Rafe decide that winning is the only thing that matters? Are things about to go from magic to tragic? Find out in this hilarious--and heartwarming--#1 New York Times bestselling hit! Includes a FREE POSTER, a teaser to the upcoming I Funny, and over 100 illustrations!

Book Information

Series: Middle School (Book 1)

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Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (2,784 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #465 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #2 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Bullies #4 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Social Skills #5 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Boys & Men

Age Range: 10 - 13 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

I am a mother of a 10 year old. I try to find books that will keep her interested in reading. Personally I love any book from James Patterson for myself. Then when I saw he was writing a child's book I had to get it. I pre-ordered it and got this book the day after it came out. My daughter can't put it

down. She is laughing while reading and can't stop telling me about what is happening in the book. As a parent this is what you want for your young child or pre-teen. This is a must have and your kids will thank you.

I'm a middle school teacher. When I saw this advertised I just had to get it to see things from a kids perspective. VERY fast read. Funny as heck. I could actually put some faces (teachers, students, bus drivers, lunch ladies, etc) on the characters in this book. My daughter (high school student) is reading it now and laughing and talking about it to her friends...now if she'd only read her A.P. summer reading assignments...

Starting middle school can be rough on anybody, but for Rafe Khatchadorian, the sixth grade escalates into an absolute nightmare. First of all, his middle school resembles an ancient, high security prison. Secondly, it's staffed with angry monsters, like the dragon lady who teaches English, the three witches in the cafeteria, the ogre gym teacher, and the principal named the Lizard King. Thirdly, there's a nine-foot-tall troll of a sixth grader called Miller the Killer who is out to get him. Things aren't much better at home, with a bratty younger sister, a mom who works all the time, and a soon-to-be stepfather who sits around the house hogging the TV and is as much of a bully as Miller the Killer. At least Rafe has his best friend, Leo, who doesn't say much but has a great imagination. In fact, Leo is the one who gave him the best idea ever. To spice things up, Rafe creates a game with the goal of breaking every rule in the middle school's code of conduct handbook. He assigns points to each rule, with bonus points available for creativity, getting laughs and being witnessed by the cutest girl in the class, Jeanne Galletta. Life definitely gets more exciting, but Rafe also starts spending a lot more time in detention, and his mom is very disappointed in him. Then the trouble and heartache start mounding up so heavily on Rafe's shoulders where even his best friend can't help much. When the police get called in, Rafe finally crumbles. Then he gets some help from a very unexpected someone, and life promises to continue being interesting, but in a different, more positive way. James Patterson and Chris Tebbetts team up for this amazing adventure about one boy's attempt at surviving middle school. The first thing that stands out is how absolutely hilarious the book is. Rafe is a very likable character, and readers will love laughing along with him. His rule-breaking game is incredibly imaginative and dives headfirst into the danger zone again and again. Rafe does have to face the consequences of his actions, though he does attract the attention of someone who helps him find a way to work through his issues. This unique and fast moving storyline also has a couple of surprise bombs dropped along the way that make it even

more compelling. Also noteworthy are the intensely detailed illustrations of Laura Park. They support the story line as they are the work of Rafe's friend, Leo, plus they add even more humor to the story. Patterson, Tebbetts and Park make a great team, and the proof is right here in MIDDLE SCHOOL, THE WORST YEARS OF MY LIFE. --- Reviewed by Chris Shanley-Dillman

I purchased this book based on great reviews - I was totally floored when I read this book after my 10 year old son finished it, as the book details countless inappropriate situations for a child that age. Let me say I'm a young parent and I don't consider myself a prude by any means - I'm not overly protective of the material my child reads (I've seen parents give books bad ratings for using the word "suck" - come on now). However, this book is THE ONLY book I've ever actually blushed while reading. The fact that Rafe calls his step father "Bear" because he's as mean as the animal was certainly disturbing to me at first. I was waiting for that "ah-ha!" moment when Rafe realizes Bear isn't such a bear after all, but that moment never comes. They depict the step father in this story as a jobless loser who is mean to his step children and sits on his behind all day watching TV while his saint of a wife (Rafe's mom) works double shifts at the local diner. And IF ONLY Bear would just get a job, poor mom wouldn't have to work so much. At one point in the book, Rafe's mom admits that she "doesn't always make the best decisions", referring to her relationship with Bear. Towards the end of the book, Rafe's mom and Bear get in an argument and he "accidentally pushes" her - he then leaves a message on their answering machine later that evening to let them know he's staying at a buddy's house and is thankfully Rafe's mom didn't press charges.

WHAT?! Beyond that - the premise of the book is that Rafe's imaginary friend Leo urges him to break all of the rules in this new middle school's Code of Conduct manual. Mischievous and not entirely offensive at first - but Rafe becomes obsessed with acting out and eventually gets expelled from school because of his behavior (the last straw was an act of vandalism). Still - I kept waiting for the "ah-ha!" moment when Rafe would realize breaking the rules and seeking negative attention wasn't the best use of his time and energy - but nope, no such moment ever comes. In fact, his mother seems to make excuses for his behavior by revealing that his imaginary friend Leo is a manifestation of his dead twin brother. Again- WHAT?! While reading the book I often felt as though I was reading a creative writing piece that a disturbed teenager wrote. There was no moral to the story. It was simply the rantings of an unhappy middle schooler and a chronology of his destructive behavior. I realize there are children in the world who live with step parents they don't like, or have parents who work so much they rarely see them; however, this book made no attempt to identify with the plight of those children and offer hope. It simply told a disturbing story with a very unhappy

ending. I would not recommend this book for a child under the age of 12 at least based on content - and even then a reader over age 12 would truly be wasting their time reading this.

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