

Wimpy Kid author Jeff Kinney: 'I've sold 300m books. What's next?'

Level 1: Elementary

Article summary: This article is an interview at a book signing event in the UK, with the bestselling author of the Wimpy Kid series of books for children – Jeff Kinney. His books have sold over 300 million copies.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Phrasal verbs

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. This activity aims to get students thinking about books and reading. Ask students if they have read, or have heard of, the Wimpy Kid series of books, and if so, what they thought about them. If possible, find a copy of one of the books online or in a library so you can show it to students. Explain that the Wimpy Kid franchise includes four live action films and three animated Disney films as well as other connected books.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to work individually to find words in bold in the article and to match them to the definitions. Remind them to read the sentences that come before or after the words in bold to help them work out the meaning of the words in context. For an extra challenge, you might like to ask students to try and work out the meaning of the words before they look at the different options. Allow a few minutes for students to check answers in pairs or groups before checking answers with the whole class.

Key:

1. *jokes*
2. *book signing*
3. *released*
4. *pressure*
5. *in print*
6. *depressed*
7. *screenplays*
8. *get the hang of*

- a. Ask students to work individually or in pairs to complete the sentences using words from the previous activity.

Key:

1. *book signing*
2. *get the hang of*
3. *released*
4. *depressed*
5. *pressure*
6. *screenplays*
7. *jokes*
8. *in print*

3. Comprehension check

- a. Students can work individually or in pairs to do this activity. Encourage them to highlight the section of the article where they found the answers to the questions. To extend the activity, ask students to rewrite the sentences that are false, so that they are true according to the information in the article.

Key:

1. *True*
2. *False (He says, "It's a nice place to be.")*
3. *False (He opened it in his hometown.)*
4. *False (He says he didn't get the hang of storytelling until book 12.)*
5. *True*

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4. Key language

- a. Students work individually to choose the correct definition of the phrasal verbs.

Key:

1. *b*
2. *a*
3. *a*
4. *b*
5. *a*

- b. Ask students to work individually or in pairs to complete the sentences with the phrasal verbs from task a.

Key:

1. *take off*
2. *branch out*
3. *move on*
4. *go on*
5. *put in*

5. Discussion

- a. Students discuss the questions in pairs or groups. Ask them to justify their opinions, referring to their own experiences whenever possible.

6. In your own words

- a. The aim of this task is to get students to think creatively about other literature for children or young adults. Have them work in pairs or groups and brainstorm ideas. Monitor closely as they prepare their presentations.
- b. Give students time to give their presentations to the class. Hold a short discussion about which book series sounds the most interesting.