



Tom Gates: Excellent Excuses (and Other Good Stuff)

By L Pichon

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Middle-school comedian, homework dodger, rock-star wannabe, master doodler—Tom Gates is back with two more episodes full of visual humor and kid appeal.

No school for two whole weeks! Now Tom has plenty of time for the good stuff, like finding new ways (so many!) to annoy his big sister, Delia. Or watching TV and eating caramel candy. Or most important, band practice for DOGZOMBIES in his best friend Derek's garage (while *not* encouraging Derek's '60s-music-crazed dad). All that stands between this band and rock greatness is, well, a song (besides "Delia's a Weirdo"). And finding a drummer. And landing a gig. Will Tom let a killer toothache and pesky overdue homework get in his way?

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 4–6—Tom Gates, a British lad in year five, can't wait for his two-week holiday from school. He and his best mate, Derek, have some grand plans: doing nothing; having sleepovers; practicing being rock stars in their band, Dogzombies; annoying Tom's snarky older sister, Delia; and watching lots of television. Unfortunately, a letter home from Tom's teacher Mr. Fullerman puts the brakes on the fun. Mr. Fullerman may or may not have fallen for Tom's "attacked by a vicious dog on the way to school" excuse regarding his missing homework. His mother insists that the homework be completed before anything else and throws in the demand for a clean room to boot. Faced with this task, Tom draws a total blank and ends up drawing cobwebs in his notebook instead. Hilariously unreflective and self-absorbed, Tom aspires to avoid schoolwork at all costs and become a rock star, even though he hasn't mastered the music part and his band lacks a drummer. Tom and Greg Heffley are kindred spirits, and Tom's notebook, filled with frenetic, free-wheeling attempts to avoid homework, responsibility, Marcus Melgrew, his uncle, and all things remotely unpleasant, should entertain, if not resonate. This is not the first in the series, but readers will have no problem jumping into the story. Many terms have been Americanized, such as Mom instead of Mum, but those Britishisms that were not, such as bodged or bogey, are explained in a short glossary at the end of the book. VERDICT Middle grade readers looking for more books with "Wimpy-appeal" should find a lot to enjoy in this UK import.—Brenda Kahn, Tenakill Middle School, Closter, NJ

Review

Tom's doodles are appealing ... particularly the unsmiling, sunglasses-clad face of sister Delia, repeated whenever her name appears throughout

—Kirkus Reviews

Middle grade readers looking for more books with "Wimpy-appeal" should find a lot to enjoy in this UK import.

—School Library Journal

Pichon hits the elementary-school-boy sweet spot by blending humor and tween embarrassments (parents, having to wear teddy bear swimming trunks) with Tom's hilarious doodles and insights...Ample white space and illustrations make this perfect for reluctant readers or those not quite ready for Tom Angleberger's Origami Yoda series.

—Booklist

Fans of *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* are a natural audience for this British import, the second in a series that will surely please budding Anglophiles; an illustrated glossary of Britishisms is included.

—Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

About the Author

L. Pichon says that when she was little, she loved to draw, and her mom said she was very good at making a mess (this is still true today). She kept drawing, went to art school, became a designer and art director in the music industry, and began to write and illustrate children's books. After its publication in the U.K., *The Brilliant World of Tom Gates* won several prestigious awards. L. Pichon lives in Brighton, England, with her family.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Geraldine Moreno:

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