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Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days

By Derek Zemrak

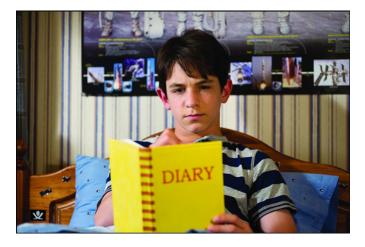


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Finally Hollywood has released a kid's film with a positive message - Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days. The only other kid film that I remember with such a positive message is "Kit Kittredge: An American Girl" in 2008.

Dog Days is the third movie for the #1 best selling series by author Jeff Kinney. The time is summer vacation and Greg (Zachary Gordon) is up to his old tricks and mischief with his best friend Rowley (Robert Capron). The film addresses teen issues such as awkward parent moments, " "sibling troubles, " "first crush, " "telling the truth" and "admitting to your mistakes."

I had the chance to contact Zachary Gordon and ask him a few questions about the movie. Thank you, Zachary, for taking time out of your press tour in New York and Chicago to answer the questions:

1) The film has a very good message for pre-teens & teens - if you make mistakes own up to them. Do you feel this was an important element of the film?

(Zachary Gordon): This message definitely was an important part of the film. My character, Greg, continually messes up and doesn't take responsibility for his mistakes. All his dad wants him to do is own up to what he does

wrong. Frank, Greg's dad, sums it up by telling Greg what his own father, Greg's grandfather, said, "A man who never made a mistake never made anything." I think that says it all.

2) Friendship is a key ingredient of the movie and the cast's interaction is so natural. Has the cast developed a friendship over the three Wimpy Kid movies?

(Zachary Gordon): Some of my best friends are part of my Wimpy family. We became so close and had so much fun throughout the course of filming the three movies. Although most of us live in different parts of the country, we try to stay in touch as much as possible through FaceTime - and as for the guys, we play Call of Duty on Play Station Live - that's the best way to stay connected. The friendships I have made these past few years are what I will remember most about filming these movies.

3) Did you have to really ride the Cranium Shaker? And if so how many times?

(Zachary Gordon): There wasn't a ride exactly like the Cranium Shaker (from the book) in Vancouver, so we had to settle for the next best thing. The amusement park's most terrifying ride was the Revelation, which spins its passengers at 62 miles per hour on either end of its 160-foot propeller-like arm. I love amusement park rides, but the build up to this ride was a bit intimidating. We were promised iPads if we went on the ride, so it made me think it must be horrific! On the day we filmed, Robert and I were strapped into the ride, while the crew was setting up cameras and doing other technical stuff (for about an hour) and the anticipation was awful. So by the time we began, I was more anxious than usual. Once we rode it, I went on eight more times! I loved it. For Robert, who doesn't like amusement rides, once was enough.

Zachary attended the one year anniversary of the New Rheem Theatre and, hopefully, we will see him again soon. But for now, parents, don't miss him on the big screen in Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days. You will be glad you saw the film. This is a good movie to enjoy with the whole family.

Derek Zemrak is a Film Critic, Film Producer and Founder of the California Independent Film Festival. You can follow Derek on Twitter @zemrak for the latest Hollywood news.

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