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## WRITE THE SUMMER AWAY WGBH, BoomWriter Media Launch Online *Storytellers Camp*

*Camp Features Prompt Written by 'Wimpy Kid' Author Jeff Kinney*

**BOSTON, Mass. (April 25, 2013)** – This summer, students across New England will have an opportunity to come together online to write, edit and publish their own books inspired by *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* author and Massachusetts resident Jeff Kinney. Boston public broadcaster WGBH and the digital education company BoomWriter Media have teamed up to launch the BoomWriter Storytellers Camp to help middle school students maintain and improve writing skills during summer vacation. Through the collaboration, WGBH and BoomWriter Media are offering four separate one-week, online, curriculum-based and educator-supported camps that foster creativity and expressive writing.

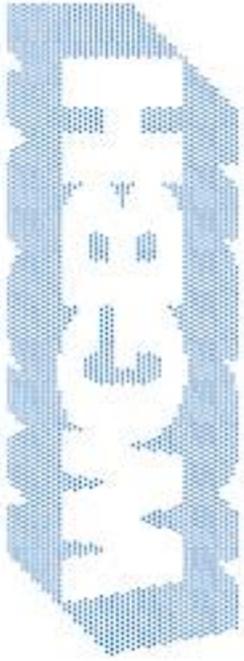
"Students can lose critical writing skills over the summer months, so we are delighted to collaborate with BoomWriter Media to launch an innovative program to help kids hone writing and literacy skills," said Hillary Wells, WGBH children's media executive producer. "This collaborative, web-based, curriculum-driven approach inspires creativity and develops writing skills that are necessary for success in the classroom and in a career."

A recent study from the [National Center for Education Statistics](http://www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/data/ipeds_datacenter/ipeds_datacenter.asp) found that only a quarter of American high school students scored proficient or higher on writing assessments, and one out of five scored below basic. The BoomWriter Storytellers Camp is designed to nurture an interest in writing and equip middle school students with valuable and engaging tutorials to continue to develop and hone their skills.

"We are excited to work in association with WGBH," said Chris Twyman, co-founder and CEO of BoomWriter Media. "They are the best of public broadcasting and are in the hearts of children everywhere. Together, we can inspire a love of writing, storytelling and learning, while also facilitating critical thought and creativity for a new generation of learners. The BoomWriter platform provides 21<sup>st</sup> century students with a means of self-expression through writing that is both accessible and familiar and provides teachers with the tools for success."

The new BoomWriter Storytellers Camp builds on BoomWriter's existing web-based platform and provides students with daily lessons and workshops before challenging campers with a daily writing assignment. On the first day of the camp, participating campers are presented with a prompt, or 'story start,' written by Kinney.

The prompt serves as the first chapter of a collaboratively written novel. After reading the prompt, campers individually write the next chapter. After writing, teachers and trained counselors review the campers' writing and provide interactive feedback. When the daily writing period ends, campers are given the opportunity to read select and approved submissions from other campers and vote on their favorite additions to the story. The submission with the most votes is accepted as the next chapter of the novel and serves as the next day's writing prompt.



In all, WGBH and BoomWriter aim to reach 2,000 campers this summer. Students will be broken up into groups of up to 50, with each 'mini camp' receiving support and guidance from educators. The first of the four one-week sessions begins on July 22.

Registration information is available at [www.boomwriter.com/summercamps](http://www.boomwriter.com/summercamps).

### **About WGBH**

WGBH Boston is America's preeminent public broadcaster and the largest producer of PBS content for TV and the Web, including *Masterpiece*, *Antiques Roadshow*, *Frontline*, *Nova*, *American Experience*, *Arthur*, *Curious George*, and more than a dozen other prime-time, lifestyle, and children's series. WGBH's television channels include WGBH 2, WGBH 44, and the digital channels World and Create. WGBH TV productions focusing on the region's diverse community include *Greater Boston*, *Basic Black*, *High School Quiz Show*, and *Neighborhood Kitchens*. WGBH Radio serves listeners across New England with 89.7 WGBH, Boston Public Radio; Classical New England; and WCAI, the Cape and Islands NPR® Station. WGBH also is a major source of programs for public radio (among them, *PRI's The World*®), a leader in educational multimedia (including PBS LearningMedia™, providing the nation's educators with free, curriculum-based digital content), and a pioneer in technologies and services that make media accessible to deaf, hard of hearing, blind, and visually impaired audiences. WGBH has been recognized with hundreds of honors: Emmys, Peabodys, duPont-Columbia Awards and Oscars. Find more information at [wgbh.org](http://wgbh.org).

### **About BoomWriter Media**

Based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, BoomWriter Media is a digital education company that engages children and educators in collaborative storytelling. This innovative Web-based publishing platform brings passionate educators, technology experts, corporate sponsors, enthusiastic parents, and students together to promote and develop creativity, writing, reading, and other essential 21st Century skills. BoomWriter partners with authors, celebrities, and educators to provide first chapters, also known as story starts, that spark kids' imaginations and inspire story collaboration with classmates and children worldwide in competition for publication. Teachers and students from more than 3500 schools in 67 countries have already joined the BoomWriter community. For more information please visit <http://www.BoomWriter.com>. Become a fan at [www.Facebook.com/BoomWriter](http://www.Facebook.com/BoomWriter) or follow us [@BoomWriter](https://www.instagram.com/BoomWriter).

### **About Jeff Kinney**

Jeff Kinney is an online game developer and designer, and a #1 New York Times bestselling author. He spent his childhood in the Washington, D.C. area and moved to New England in 1995. Published by Amulet Books, an imprint of ABRAMS, Kinney's books has been widely praised for its ability to turn reluctant readers on to books. More than 85 million *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* books are in print around the world. The books have been sold in more than 44 territories in 42 languages. Jeff Kinney was named one of Time magazine's most influential people in the world. Three movies based on the book series have grossed more than \$250 million internationally. The book series won Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards in 2010, 2011, and 2012, and Jeff Kinney won a Children's Choice Book Award in 2012. The books have won numerous awards voted on by students and teachers around the globe. The Wimpy Kid Island on [poptropica.com](http://poptropica.com), a virtual world for kids, remains one of the most visited on the site. Jeff lives in southern Massachusetts with his wife and their two sons.

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