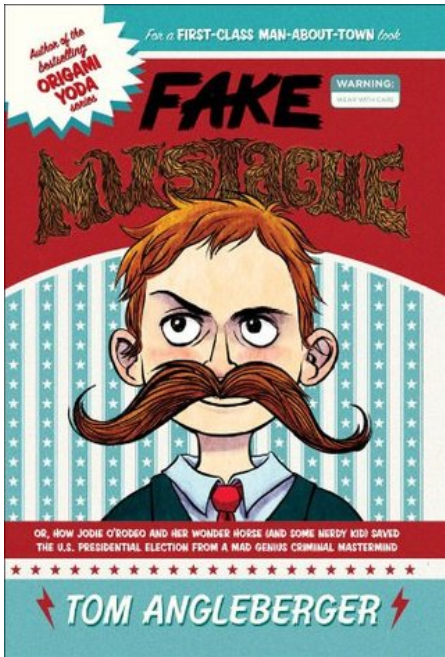




Fake Mustache

Tom Angleberger

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Award-winning author Tom Angleberger flexes his comic muscle in this hairy adventure story with twists at every turn. Regular kid Lenny Flem Jr. is the only one standing between his evil-genius best friend--Casper, a master of disguise and hypnosis--and world domination. It all begins when Casper spends money from his granny on a spectacularly convincing fake mustache, the Heidelberg Handlebar #7. With it he's able rob banks, amass a vast fortune, and run for president. Is Lenny the only one who can see through his disguise? And will he be able to stop Casper from taking over the world?

Fake Mustache Details

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From Reader Review Fake Mustache for online ebook

Betsy says

3.5 stars

It's hard not to compare this to Angleberger's "Origami Yoda" books, which are exceptionally clever and funny. I found this one enjoyable, but not as clever and funny as the "Origami Yoda"s.

Monica Edinger says

Yesterday a package of ARCs from Abrams arrived at my home, among them Tom Angleberger's forthcoming *Fake Mustache* and, needing a light read before bed, I decided to give it a try. Next thing I knew a couple of hours had passed and I'd gulped down the whole delightful confection. It isn't out till April so I hope this isn't a dreadful tease, but I thought *Origami Yoda* fans as well as others looking for good and funny middle grade books might like to know what they have in store.

So wacky this is (as another beloved Angleberger character might say) in the best way which is no easy feat. For funny is incredibly hard to pull off; what has me guffawing can just as easily leave another reader cold and vice versa. As someone who too often has been left cold by silliness I was wary when I started this one, but within pages I was completely won over.

So where to begin with this over-the-top story? The beginning, I guess. The first section is narrated by seventh grader Lenny Flem, Jr who tells what happens when classmate-and-supposedly-best-friend Casper Bengue gets his hands (or rather his upper lip) on a very pricey fake mustache, the Heidleberg Handlebar #7 to be exact. Somehow Casper knows of the remarkable properties of this mustache and while I don't want to give away too much I will say that they help him to begin taking over the world starting with state governor and moving on to president. And so Lenny along with a Hannah Montana-like television star called Jodie O'Rodeo (who narrates the second section of the book) alone have to save the day.

There are silly names (Casper and Lenny's town is called Hairsprinkle), pitch-perfect-for-kids grossness (boogers play a significant role), and some lighthearted pop culture baiting (e.g. Jodie's has-been status). There are wild and crazy chases and bad guys and much zaniness. One of my many favorite moments is when Casper in his new "I'm taking over the world" role changes Election Day to Monday so he can take over the US faster.

I will be eager to see what others think of this one, but for me it was a goofy froth of fun.

jv poore says

Based solely on the hilarious cover, my 3rd grade son purchased this book at a recent Book Fair. Together, we sat down and read it in one afternoon. What an outstanding tale! This story is fast-paced, funny,

entertaining and even a little bit sweet.

The cast of characters are individually and brightly colorful; together, they do not clash, but rather merge into an awesome kaleidoscope.

If you happen to be seeking a unique, page-turning, laugh out loud experience captured on paper for a nominal fee, well....this is for you.

Both The Boy & I excited to check out Mr. Angleberger's other creations.

Courtney Umlauf says

I found this book on a list of what to read if you like the Diary of a Wimpy Kid series. I *don't* like the Wimpy Kids series, but I'm always looking for books that are similar in style but with better execution. I don't mind a book that's silly, goofy, to be read purely for entertainment purposes; but I still expect it to be clever and well-put together. This book wasn't what I was looking for. The premise had me hopeful: a fake mustache that's so realistic it hypnotizes everyone who sees it on the face of Casper, putting him on the path to world domination. Everyone, that is, except his friend Lenny (who witnessed him buying the mustache) and Jodie O'Rodeo, "preteen,cowgirl queen". Lenny and Jodie team up to prevent Casper's global take-over.

Fake Mustache has a lot of funny tidbits, but a lot of times they don't make sense within the narrative. At the start of the story, we get a description of the town of Hairsprinkle.

Hairsprinkle still has its trolleys, and you can still ride them for ten cents. The people in Hairsprinkle won't elect anyone to be mayor unless he or she promises to never change a thing. My dad, Lenny Flem Sr., says that it costs a ton of money to keep the trolleys running and the ten-cent fair doesn't even begin to pay for it, and that's why his taxes are so high and he's sick of it.

This is a start for what could be a very interesting setting. But this aspect of the town never comes up again. To make matters worse, later on Lenny overhears a conversation (involving a Belgian character, repeatedly described as sounding "**not exactly French but sort of French**"). The Belgian asks

'By the way, is there a bicycle shop around here? I need a quick way to get around town without burning fossil fuels.'

'The bike shop closed when Walmart came'

You can't create a setting where nothing's changed in a hundred years and then casually mention the town Walmart just for a cheap laugh. Most of the jokes were similar - mildly funny when you look at it in the context of a few sentences or a paragraph. But in the context of the entire story they don't make sense.

Overall, I would still recommend this to a certain type of reluctant reader. If they enjoy Wimpy Kid they'll probably enjoy this. If you're trying to get a kid to love reading, there's not many books that I would say you should avoid if it will get them engaged, even if I dislike them personally. I do think this is a little better than Wimpy Kid. I saw a lot of interesting potential for a funny book, but you don't have to sacrifice narrative cohesion for a few laughs. Just check out the Franny K. Stein series by Jim Benton. That's still my benchmark for what a great kids story can be - funny (to both adults and kids), cleverly written with a great vocabulary, memorable characters (kids that aren't brats and adults that aren't stupid) and a narrative that

makes sense. Unfortunately, I've read all the Franny K. Stein books, I'll have to continue my search for more like it.

Kerry says

Tom Angleberger, the award-winning author of the popular Origami Yoda series, does not disappoint in Fake Mustache. His humorous, fast-paced storytelling and casual writing style are sure to appeal to the middle-grade reader.

Lenny Flem Jr. is just an average, slightly nerdy, 7th grade boy. He spends his days at school and his evenings in front of the TV watching old reruns of, once popular, pre-teen sensation Jodie O'Rodeo starring in The Jodie O'Rodeo Showdeo. It isn't until Lenny's best friend, Casper, decides to spend his birthday money on a man-about-town suit and fake mustache (the Heidelberg Handlebar #7, to be exact) that Lenny's run-of-the mill life becomes anything but. When Casper dons the Handlebar #7, he becomes Fako Mustacho, a bank-robbing, power-seeking maniac who pits a nation against Lenny, forcing him to go on the run in disguise while trying to halt Fako Mustacho's charge to presidency of the United States. The adventure that ensues is one that keeps the reader enthralled until the very end.

I would recommend this read to anyone looking for a hilariously funny adventure read. It's perfect for summer reading, but it also has some great middle grade classroom applications. This is the kind of book that is sure to create positive reading hype in the classroom. It makes for a fun read aloud and is a great pick for striving/reluctant readers. This is the type of book that kids will actually want to pick up—in addition to a great title, it has an engaging cover with labeled pictures of all types of mustaches in the inside cover pages.

This book is more than just fun though. If you're looking to fill your shelves with texts that are common core aligned, Fake Mustache would be a great addition to your classroom library. With his unique word choice, Tom Angleberger presents students with an opportunity to analyze word choice and how choices shape the meaning or tone in text, which aligns to ELA anchor standard 4. Likewise, the text connects to ELA anchor standard 6 as it is written from two points of view. We hear Lenny's voice as well as his side-kick, Jodie O'Rodeo, which allows students to assess how point of view shapes the content and style of the text. With these ties to common core, Fake Mustache makes for a very relevant pick for today's classrooms.

Emma says

REVIEW BY JACK 9:6

Fake Mustache, a children's comedy story, is American as is clear from the title. The novel takes place in a slightly bizarre version of modern day America, within the fictional state capital of Hairsprinkle. It is initially narrated by Lenny Flem Junior but later swaps to Jodie O'Rodeo. The action is spread through Lenny's house, the Heidelberg novelty company factory, Sven's Fair Price Store and the Hairsprinkle Municipal Stadium.

The plot is surprisingly complex, but basically Lenny Jr. saves the world from his best friend Casper and his fake mustache with the help of his favorite TV star, Jodie O'Rodeo and the mustaches inventor, Hank Heidelberg. Casper meanwhile has used the unknown powers of his mustache to raise vast amounts of

money and get himself elected/chosen for increasingly important governmental roles.

My favorite part of this tale is a short section narrated by Lenny where he meets Jodie while in fancy dress as her. It is one of the funniest parts of the book. The character I like best is Hank Heidelberg, who is wonderfully old-fashioned and quirky. He knows all sorts of things which he does not at all understand the implications of and he stubbornly insists on remaining in a near-suicidal situation in a classic hero/martyr manner.

Something that annoys me about this book is that the American title has not been translated into British English and consequently says “mustache” rather than “moustache”. However, this is just my problem. The only real issue is that, for a comedy book there is not that a huge amount of humor in it. This does not really detract, though, from an excellent and complicated story.

I thought this comedy might be a bit childish but it was actually great, even for me at age 14. I might get another book by this author if I saw it, but I have a feeling my friends would consider themselves too old for it.

I would give the story four out of five stars.

Tom Franklin says

First, let me say I love Tom Angleberger's Origami Yoda books. The two written thus far are so good that I continue to recommend them to people today.

Second, let me say that Fake Mustache is not an Origami Yoda book. Not even close.

The Origami Yoda books are written from multiple perspectives and feature a sympathetic main character who is trying to figure out whether a perplexing friend is psychic or channeling a fictitious movie character or just plain crazy. The characters are unique but have distinct personalities and seem real enough to care about.

The characters in Fake Mustache, imho, are more caricatures than characters. Despite a token (and unnecessary) multiple POV for the story (about 1/2 the way through the book) none of the characters seem believable enough for me to take seriously. This book seemed too filled with coincidences and monumental strokes of good luck to engage me as a reader.

Again, I'm a big, big fan of Angleberger's Origami Yoda/Darth Paper books. Not only was the first surprisingly good, but the sequel floored me even more in terms of writing a great follow-up to a mighty fine book. All that went right in the Origami books, however, was missing from Fake Mustache.

Sharni says

I didn't realise I was looking for a book about the ultimate fake mustache, brainwashed school librarians robbing banks, man-about-town suits, public transport that only costs 10 cents, electoral fraud, halloween costumes or a tv famous cowgirl who literally rides in to the rescue - but I was! The illustrations throughout add extra enjoyment and giggles.

Kelcy says

I like silly books (and really enjoyed the Origami Yoda series) but this was too unbelievable and I was just not feeling the authors writing style, it felt flat.

Betsy says

I said it about Laini Taylor. I said it about Jeff Kinney. Heck, I even said it about J.K. Rowling and now, my friends, I'm saying it about Tom Angleberger: I was into him before it was cool. Seriously, a show of hands, how many of you out there can say that you read his first middle grade novel *The Qwikpick Adventure Society* written under the pen name of Sam Riddleberger? See, that's what I thought. I did and it was hilarious, thank you very much. The kind of thing you read and love and wish more people knew (plus it involved a poop fountain. I kid you not). Years passed and at long last Tom got his due thanks to a little unassuming title by the name of *The Strange Case of Origami Yoda*. By the time *Darth Paper Strikes Back* came out, Mr. Angleberger was a certifiable hit with the 9-12 year old set. Fortunately for all of us he hasn't rested on his laurels quite yet. He's still willing to stretch a little and get seriously wacky when he wants to. Case in point, *Fake Mustache*. Just your average everyday twelve-year-old-takes-over-the-world title, Tom's desire for total and complete goofiness finds a home here. I was into Tom before everyone else was, but considering how much fun *Fake Mustache* is I guess I'm willing to share him a little.

If he hadn't lent Casper the measly ten bucks then it's pretty certain that Lenny Flem Jr. wouldn't have found himself pairing up with famous television star and singer Jodie O'Rodeo to defeat the evil genius Fako Mustacho. You see, Casper wanted to buy a mustache. And not just any mustache, mind you, but the extremely rare (and luxurious) Heidelberg Handlebar #7. A mustache so powerful, in fact, that when Casper puts it on he's capable of convincing anyone of anything. Now Casper, posing as Fako Mustacho, has set his sights on the U.S. presidency and only Lenny and Jodie are willing and able to defeat him.

To read this book, kid or adult, you need to have somewhere to safely place your disbelief. I recommend storing it in the rafters of your home. Failing that, launch it into the stratosphere because logic is not going to be your friend when you read this. Literal-minded children would do well to perhaps avoid this book. The ideal reader would be one who reads for pleasure and who enjoys a tale that knows how to have a bit of fun with its internal logic. Once that's taken care of you'll be able to really get into Angleberger's wordplay. He throws in just a ton of fun details that are worth repeating. Things like the fact that the state legislature tends to meet in the local Chinese buffet restaurant because "They used to meet in our fancy gold-domed capitol building, but they kept trashing the bathrooms and got kicked out." Or take the old man who uses a form of swearing worthy of Yosemite Sam himself: "Leave those hats alone, you FarDobbed Candy-Bar-Selling Punkler!" Silliness abounds.

There are books out there where siblings or parents turn out to be untrustworthy, and they do a good job of striking fear in the hearts of their little readers. Personally, though, I find the books where the villain is the hero's best friend to be a lot more interesting. After all, isn't that something that actually happens to a lot of kids around the age of twelve? One day your best friend is the person you've always known. The next they seem like some kind of supervillain, intent on ruining your life. Angleberger sort of takes this idea to its logical extreme, but he's not harping on the metaphor like I am. After all, this book is a comedy at its core.

One of the shockers of the book is that a little more than halfway through the point of view changes. One

minute you're happily following hapless Lenny and the next you're in the head of Jodie O'Rodeo herself. One of Mr. Angleberger's finer talents is writing books that are just as popular amongst girls as they are boys. I credit his ability to create female characters that are more than just talking creatures with long eyelashes. For example, in this book Jodie may at first appear to be no more than a combination of Taylor Swift and iCarly but in fact she probably has more in common with Annie Oakley than anyone else. The fact that we bust into her head at the 5/8ths mark suggests to me that Angleberger is being a sneaky pete. I think we've all encountered those boy readers who refuse to pick up a book if they see it stars a girl. Well imagine their faces when they're thoroughly enmeshed in Angleberger's story only to hit the old switcheroo at Chapter 37. With any luck they'll be too interested in the story to care all that much, and in the process they'll find themselves reading the thoughts and impressions of a gal willing to pull a rescue mission at the drop of a hat. Awesome.

The book uses a plethora of contemporary words, terms, and phrases that threaten its longevity. On the one hand, I really appreciated that Casper was capable of making use of the employees of Burger King and not some generic fast food enterprise that doesn't actually exist. On the other hand, I worry that some of the more recent phrases in the book will date it in a couple years. I say that, but there were some jokes in this book that I wouldn't remove for all the fake mustaches in the world. For example, at one point Casper appropriates the term "Rock the Vote" in such a hilarious manner that even if the folks of the future don't get it it's nice that we can now. Ditto the sentence, "We're too big to fail", as spoken by the villain asking for a government handout.

Not all books read aloud particularly well. This one would. As I read it to myself I kept resisting the urge to try out passages on my tongue (though considering that I read most of it on the New York public subway system, I doubt I would have stood out all that much). It's the rare title that's funny to kids and adults and reads just as well in the head of a ten-year-old as it does on the lips of a fifth grade teacher. I think he's got enough books out by this point that you can label this title "classic Angleberger" through and through. Definitely a book for the discerning first-class man-about-town slash girl-about town slash boy-about-town slash woman-about-town. Which is to say, fun for the whole family. Seriously.

For ages 9-12.

Donalyn says

Hilarious and bizarre. I laughed every single page. Tom Angleberger manages to combine several random elements--fake mustaches, child TV stars, clowns, and elections-- into an enjoyable story about fighting for what's right. I can't wait to share this with my students.

Kristi says

This was a great, short, fun book on CD for our latest road trip. Both boys (12 & 15 years old), my husband and I were entertained. The books alternative name: Or, How Jodie O'Rodeo and Her Wonder Horse (and Some Nerdy Kid) Saved the U.S. Presidential Election from a Mad Genius Criminal Mastermind - actually describes the book pretty well. Fun read.

Shannon says

Absolutely flawless. A fantastic read aloud; highly recommended.

Cameron G. says

I recently finished the book Fake Mustache by Tom Angleberger. This book is about a boy (named Casper) who buys a very expensive fake mustache and changes his identity on a quest to take over the world. Lenny Flem junior must go under cover and team up with some amazing friends including Jodie O Rodeo and her wonder horse. Lenny also has plenty of gags and gadgets from the Hairsprinkle Novelty Company. He has an amazing adventure full of laughs and suspense as he tries to take down the evil Casper! I can relate to Lenny because he is smart and has good ideas. This book will appeal to all audiences because it is funny, suspenseful, adventureous, and informational (about fake mustaches anyway). Overall this is one of the best books that I have ever read.

Axel_8D1 says

This book was fine I guess. I rated this book 3 stars because It had some babyish language again.

I did not choose this book.
