

# BLAST TO THE PAST

BY SCOTT NICKEL  
ILLUSTRATED BY  
STEVE HARPSTER

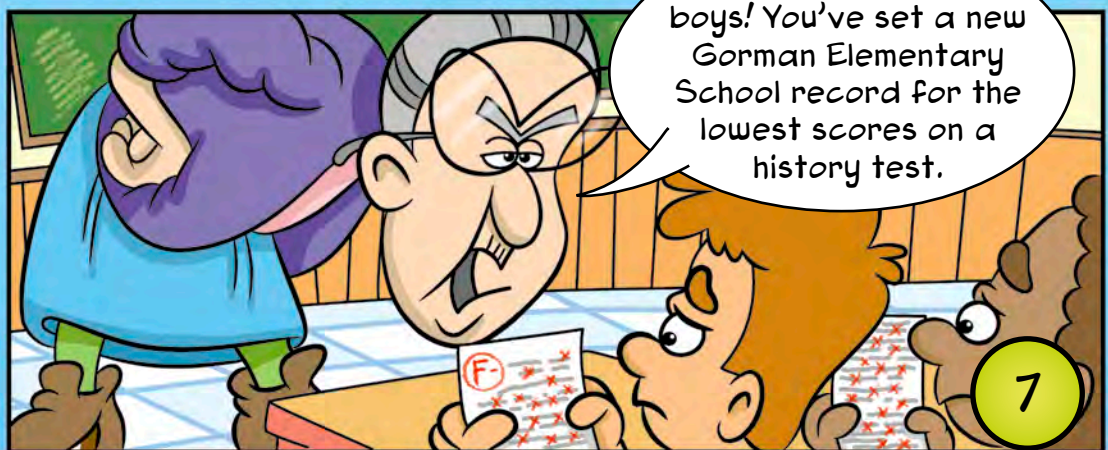
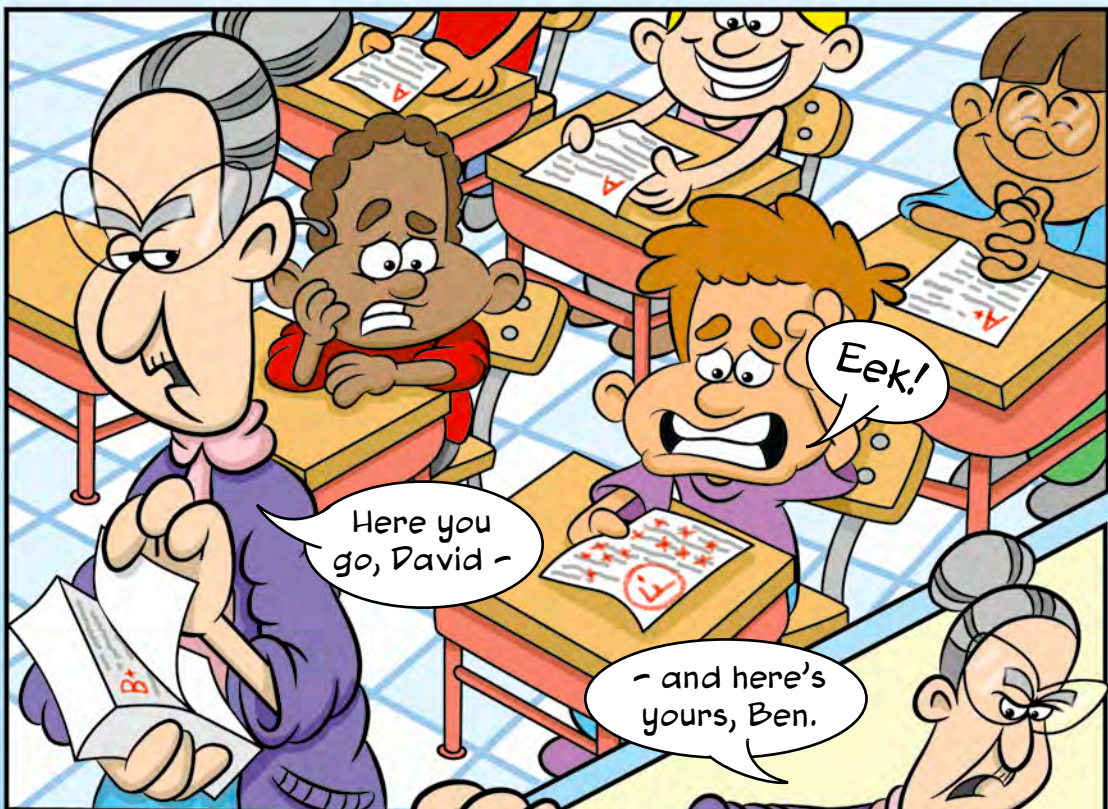
A CHOMPING,  
SLOBBERING  
T. REX!

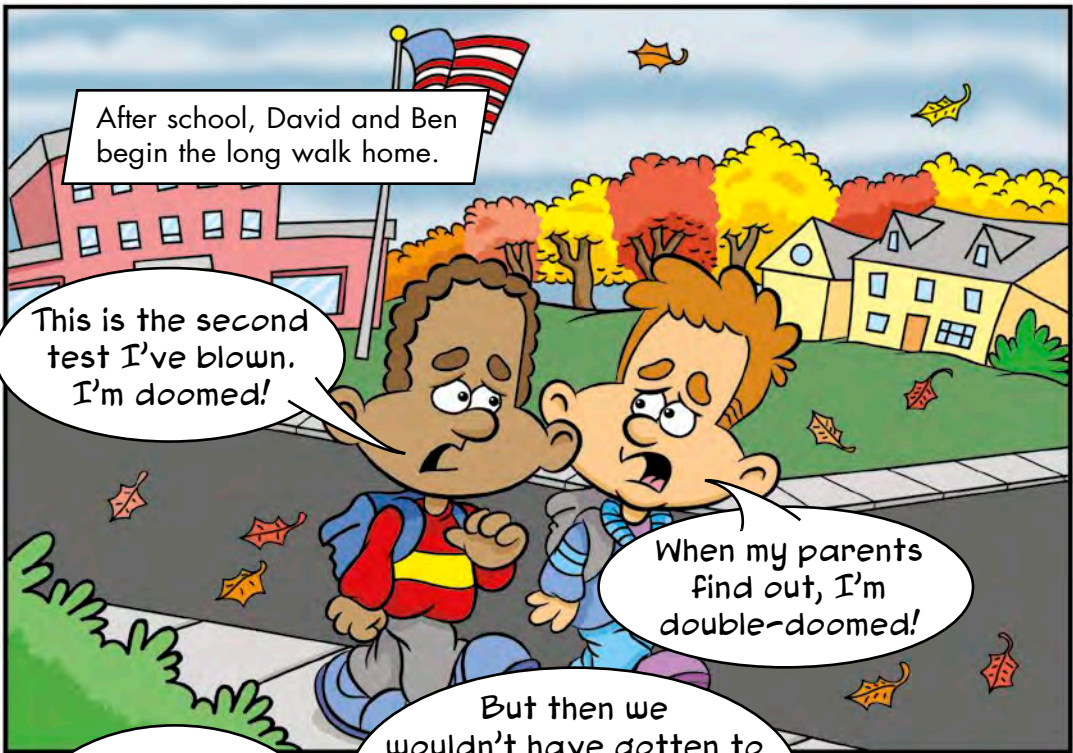
GRAPHIC  
NOVEL

Mrs. Franklin's fourth-grade class, disaster strikes.

Oh, no! More homework?

No, it's the history test from last week.





After school, David and Ben begin the long walk home.

This is the second test I've blown.  
I'm doomed!

When my parents find out, I'm double-doomed!

We should've studied instead of playing video games.

But then we wouldn't have gotten to the Ultra Galactic Master level on Space Slime Commandos!

Forget studying.  
What we need is a time machine, so we can go back, take the test, and get "A"s!

So where do we get this time machine, the mall?

Meanwhile, at David's house . . .



**BZWERPZAPT**






I'm home!

What's going on here?

Must be Darrin, the master geek, working on one of his nerdy projects.

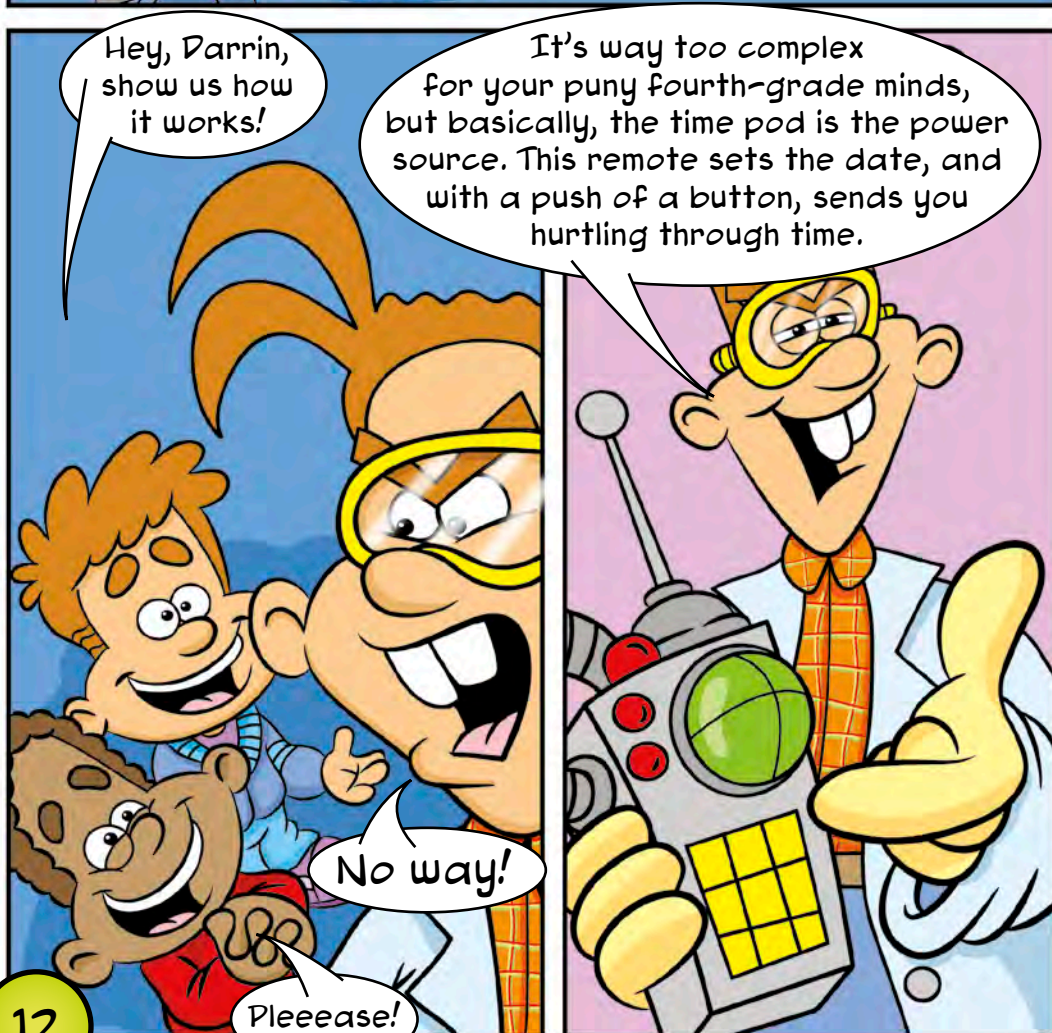
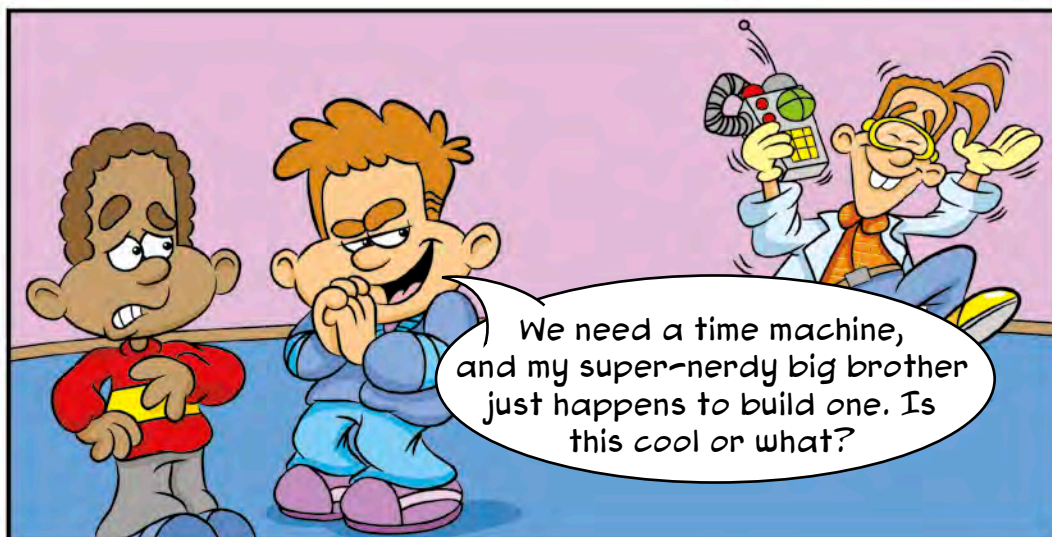
Ahhh, your brother's not so bad.

I've done it!!



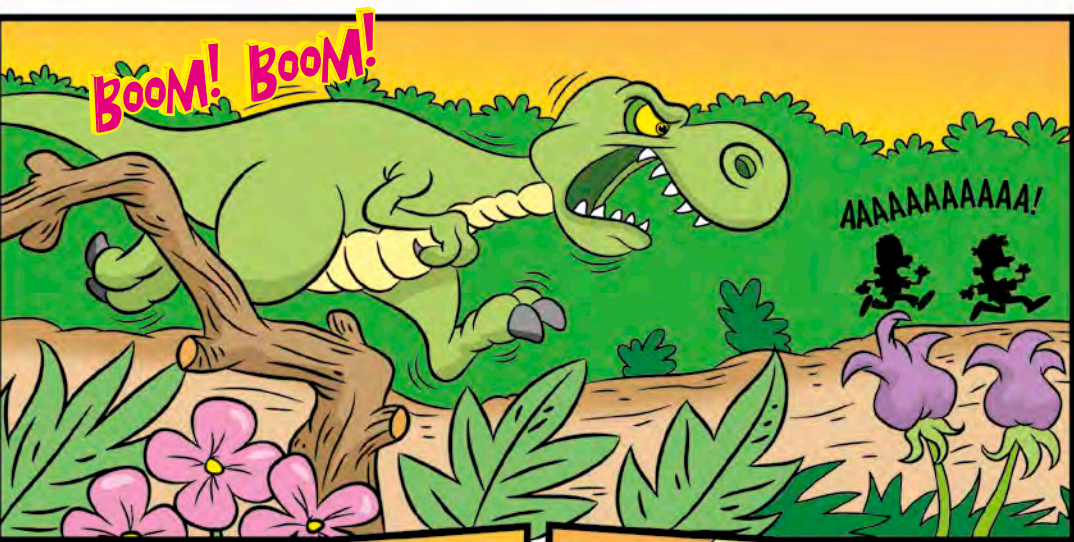
I've created  
a **time machine!** I'm sure  
to get an "A" and win the  
Science Fair!

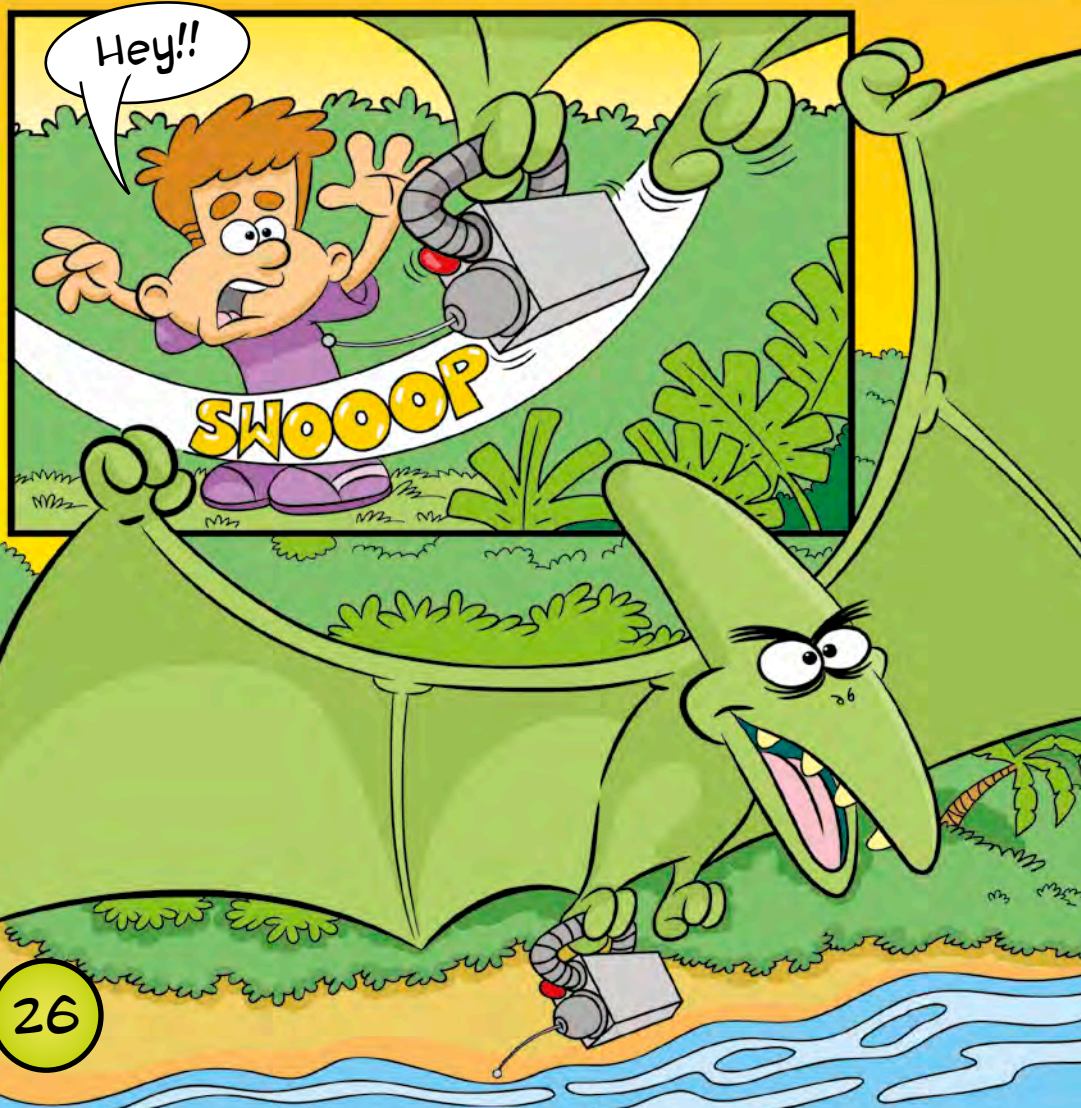
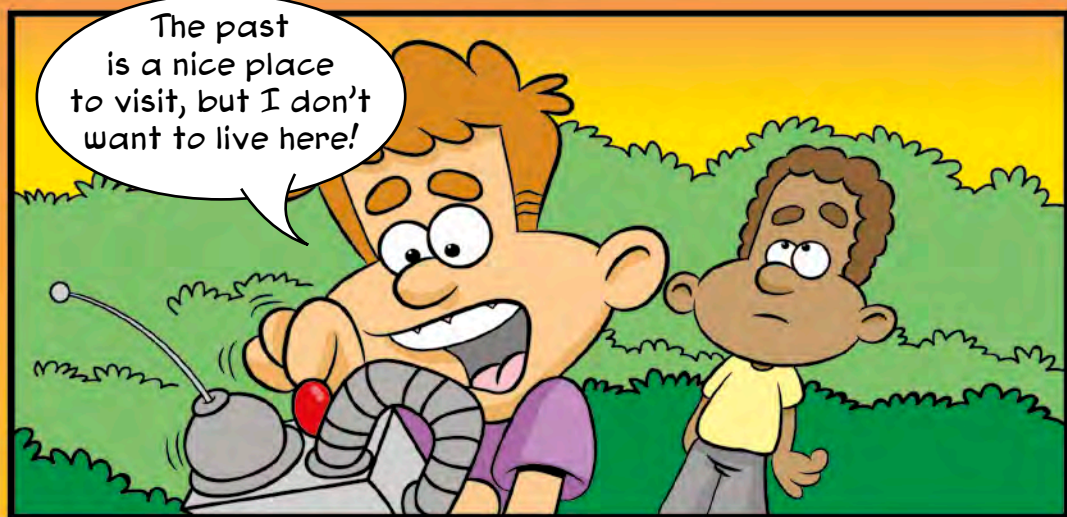
But you're gonna be  
sooo grounded when  
Mom sees this mess!

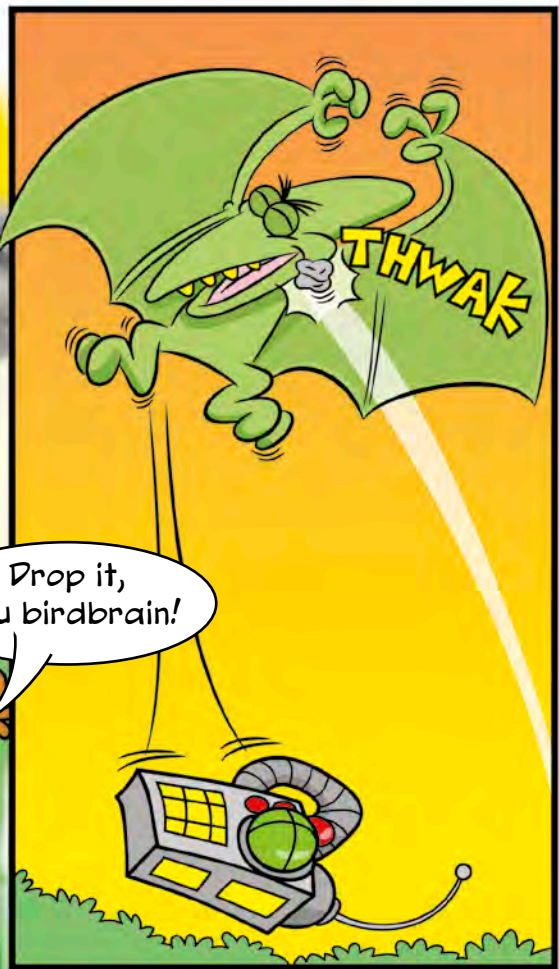




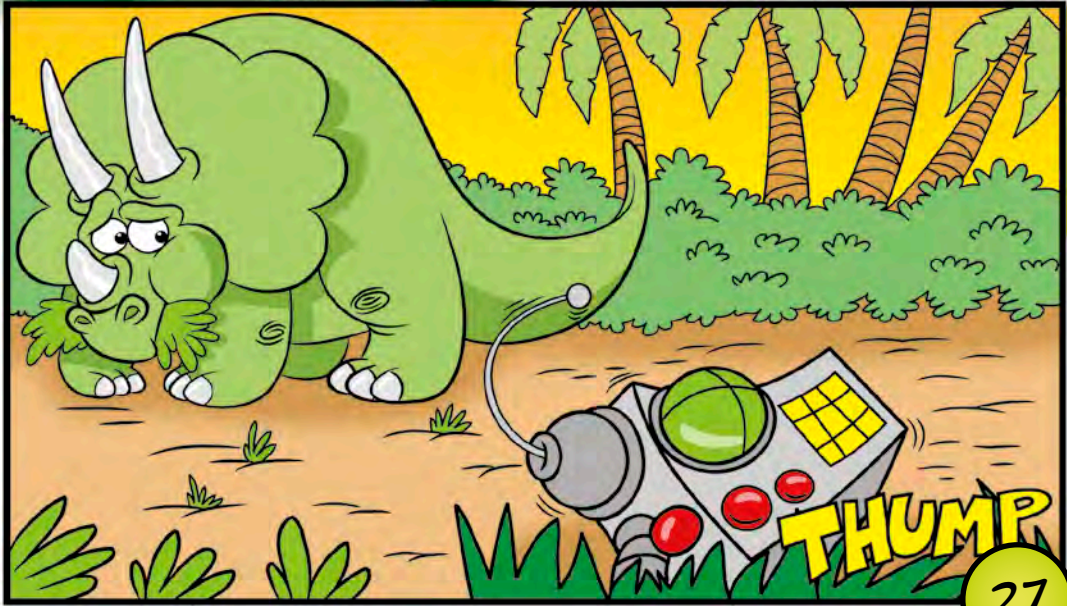
Aauuggghh!  
I don't want to  
end up as dino  
dinner!

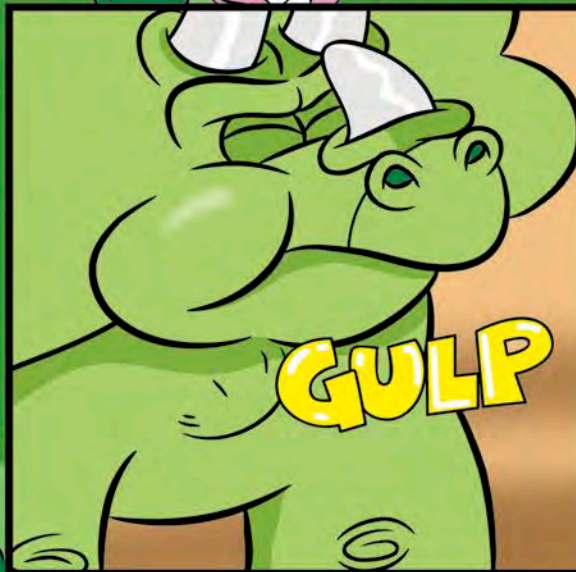
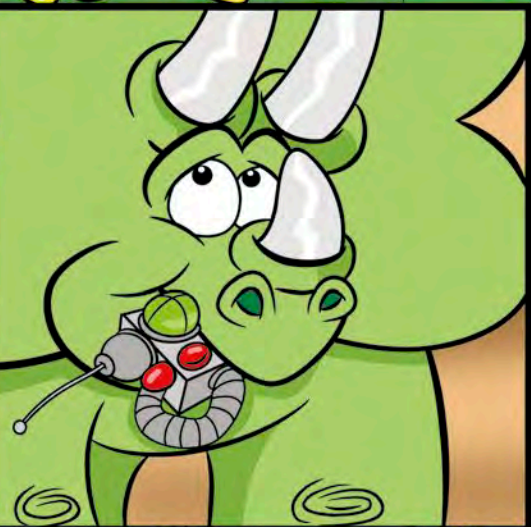
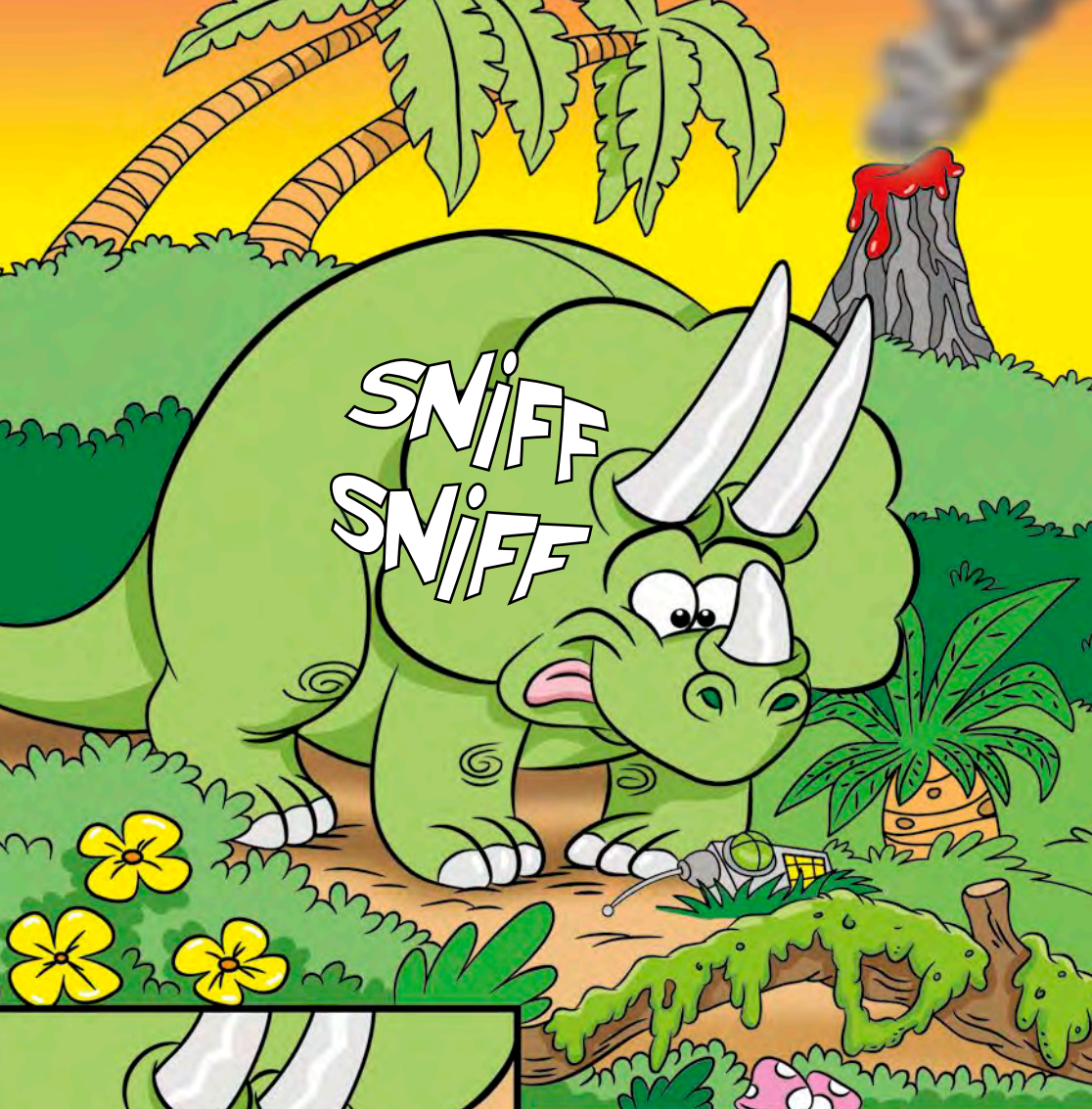






Drop it,  
you birdbrain!





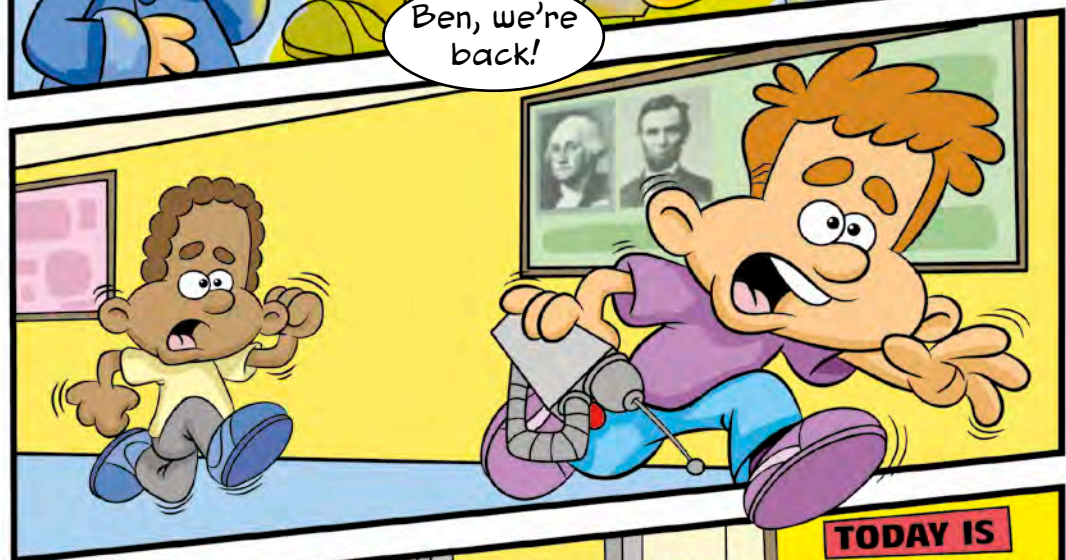
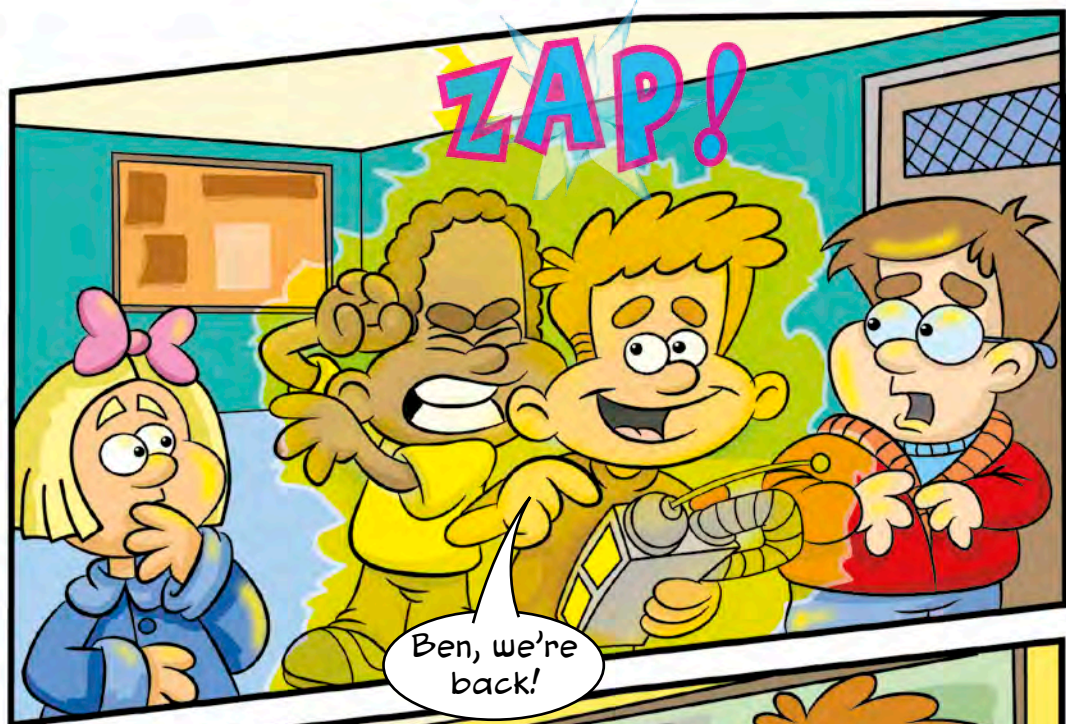


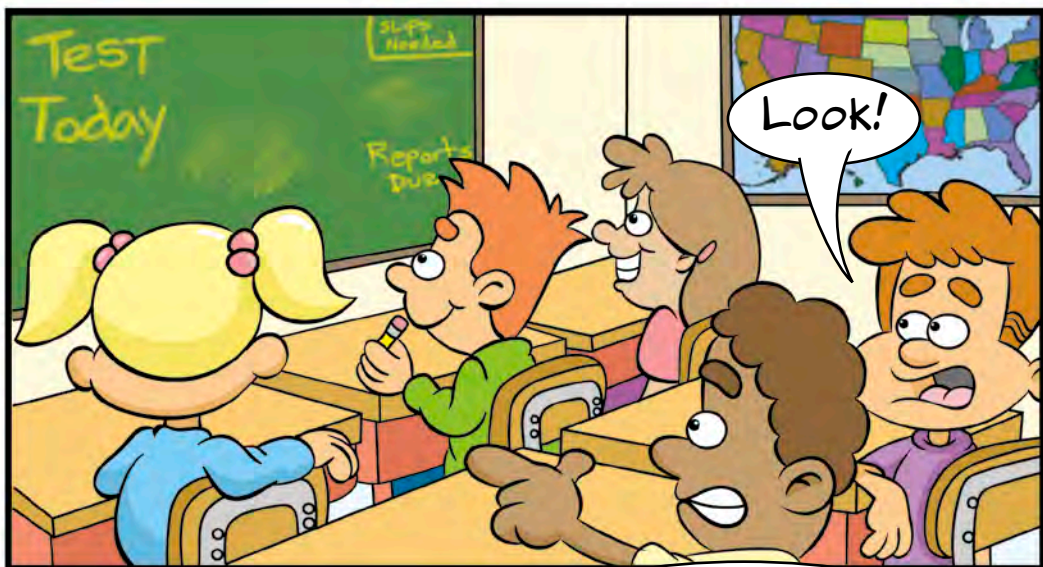


Get that remote!









END

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Scott Nickel has written children's books, short fiction for *Boys' Life Magazine*, humorous greeting cards, and lots of really funny knock-knock jokes. Scott is also the author of many Garfield books.

Currently, Scott lives in Indiana with his wife, two sons, four cats, a parakeet, and several sea monkeys.

# ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Steve Harpster has loved drawing funny cartoons, mean monsters, and goofy gadgets since he was able to pick up a pencil. In first grade, he was able to avoid his writing assignments by working on the pictures for stories instead.

Steve landed a job drawing funny pictures for books, and that's really what he's best at. Steve lives in Columbus, Ohio, with his wonderful wife, Karen, and their sheepdog, Doodle.

# GLOSSARY

**brachiosaur** (BRAK-ee-uh-sor) a long-necked, plant-eating dinosaur that lived more than 150 million years ago

**carnivore** (KAR-nuh-vor) a meat-eater, like a *T. rex* or your dog

**dino droppings** (DYE-noh DROP-ingz) prehistoric poop, also known to scientists as coprolites (KOP-ruh-lites)

**eek** (EEK) the proper sound to make when you are frightened by the grade on your history test; “ack” will also work.

**geek** (GEEK) anyone who knows more about computers and science than you do

**Ultra Galactic** (UHL-truh guh-LAK-tik) the master, or highest, level on the Space Slime Commandos video game

**zillionth** (ZIL-yuhnth) a lot! More than a jillion, but not as such as a gazillion.



# DINO BLASTS

## Weird facts about dinosaurs



You can tell a plant-eating dinosaur from a meat-eater by noting how many legs they walked on. Plant-eaters usually stomped around on all four legs. Swift and deadly meat-eaters hunted on two legs.

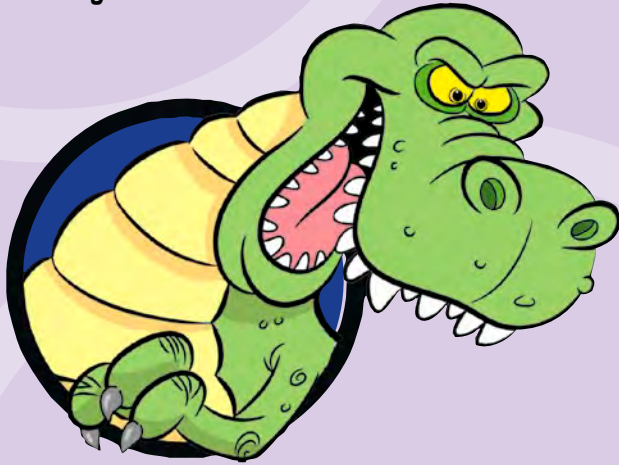


*Brachiosaurus* had nostrils on the top of its head. Some scientists think the placement of its schnozz, and its large nasal cavity, gave this plant-eater a strong sense of smell.



*Pteranodon* flew over the vast prehistoric oceans, diving into the water to snatch fish. Some scientists think that when this flying creature was tired, it sat on the waves, bobbing up and down like a cork or a duck. A big, **big** duck.

*Tyrannosaurus rex* had a mouthful of deadly teeth, which were shaped like bananas. But what's with those puny arms? Dino experts think the tiny paws meant that *T. rex* didn't fight for its food but ate creatures that were already dead. Yuck!



At least one *T. rex* has left its poop behind. Scientists examined the fossilized doo-doo and found bone fragments from a *Triceratops*. There's no word on whether this three-horned dino was alive or dead at the time of the meal.

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1.) If time machines really existed, would you use one to go back in time to retake a test? Do you think that would be fair?
- 2.) In books and movies, whenever humans and dinosaurs get together, the dinos attack the puny humans. Do you think this would really happen?
- 3.) If dinosaurs were available at the local pet store, which one would you want to take home, and why? How do you think your parents or friends would react to your new pet?

# WRITING PROMPTS

- 1.) Everyone makes mistakes. If you could go back in time to visit one of your past mistakes, which mistake would you choose? Write about how you would fix it.
- 2.) David's geeky brother, Darrin, celebrated the invention of his time pod by making a giant egg-salad sandwich. If you were famous for creating an invention, write about what it would be. How would you celebrate?
- 3.) At a nearby mall, a time pod will be set up for willing customers. You can travel back to prehistoric time and see dinosaurs up close and personal. You can take three items along on your trip, but only three. Write about which ones you would take and why.