DEAR DUMB DIARY

ACTIVITY BOOK
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Jamie says, “My best friend is my dear, dumb, diary.” Who do you consider a friend? Write down what being a BFF (best friend forever) means to you.

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

In addition to her diary, Jamie’s “other” best friend is Isabella. Why do you think they are friends?

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

Name three qualities you think a friend should have.

1. ____________________________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________________________

Finding a best friend is fun, but can take some work. Do you know what to look for in a best friend?

Pretend you are interviewing someone to be your new best friend. You may want to know if they have similar interests, like sports, writing, or music. Does he or she like the same band that you do? Read the same kinds of books? What are some questions you would ask your almost-new bff?

1. _______________________________________________________________________
2. _______________________________________________________________________
3. _______________________________________________________________________
4. _______________________________________________________________________

Look at your answers. With a brand new school year ahead of you, what kind of clubs or after school activities could you join to meet people with similar interests to yours?
Aunt Carol tells Jamie that she’s got to focus on her greatest strength, but Jamie doesn’t know if she has one. Do you think Jamie has strengths? What are they?

Now think about yourself. You have some strengths, too! (Yes, you do. Everyone does.) Think about what you’re good at. Are you a great listener, someone everyone confides in? Do you like to write stories, poems, or songs? Can you draw or paint? Do you understand math easily or find science fascinating? Do you have an instinct for fashion or decorating? Do you love being on stage or making people laugh? Are you a fast runner? Do you like to grow plants or take care of animals?

Make a list of your strengths. Put a star by your greatest strength.

1. ____________________________     6. ____________________________
2. ____________________________     7. ____________________________
3. ____________________________     8. ____________________________
4. ____________________________     9. ____________________________
5. ____________________________    10. ____________________________

Draw a picture or comic strip of yourself using that strength. (For help creating a comic strip, you might want to try using an app such as Strip Designer. Always check with your parents before downloading apps.)

Hooray for you!!
In the movie, Jamie sings a song called “My Awesomeness is Awesome.” Awesome is one of those words that Jamie uses a lot—and so do we! Did you know that The American Heritage Dictionary definition of awesomeness is: “inspiring awe”? (And, if you want to know more, “awe” is defined as: “a mixed emotion of reverence, respect, dread, and wonder inspired as by authority genius, great beauty, or might.”)

How would you define awesome?

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

Surprise your friends and family by using some new words that mean awesome. Use an online or in-print thesaurus to find synonyms—words that mean the same thing.

List them here:

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

Try them out on your way to school or in class. Maybe you’ll start a word trend!
Do you already keep a diary or a journal? If you do, how often do you write in it—every day, every few days, every week? How long have you been writing in it?

If you have never kept a diary, start one now! You can use an ordinary notebook or buy a special diary with a lock. You can also make and print out a diary at the Scholastic Dear Dumb Diary site or use an app like iDiary. (Check with your parents before you download any apps.)

Use the diary to write about what happened to you each day and how you feel about yourself, your family, and your friends. Just as Jamie does, you can daydream about your future, express your hopes and frustrations, be funny, or be sad. Sometimes just writing about things help to make you feel better or inspire you to put plans into action.

Some people like to give their diary a name. What do you want to call yours (sorry, “Dumb Diary” is already taken.) Personalize your diary by decorating the cover.

If you want, expand your diary into a scrapbook. Paste ticket stubs, photos, magazine pictures of your favorite places or people, and more. Go wild! After all, you’re the only one who will be reading it—right?
Jamie has her share of awkward moments. In fact, everybody does (even Aunt Carol)! Although it may seem you’ll never be able to forget what happened, most people do manage to survive an awkward incident. Sometimes, you can even laugh about it.

A diary is a great place to write about those moments. Think about the most awkward thing that ever happened to you. Did you spill something in the cafeteria? Did your pants “talk” when they weren’t supposed to (see Dear Dumb Diary, My Pants Are Haunted!)? Did you laugh at a joke no one else thought was funny?

Write about it or draw a picture. Now, think about that moment. Was it really as bad as you imagined it? Do other people still remember it?

Now pretend you are your grown-up self. What do you think you’d say about the incident? Would you find it funny or not such a big deal?

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Ask an older brother or sister or a grown-up you know (yes, parents are perfect for this) about something awkward that happened to them. What happened? How did they feel about it? How do they feel about it now?

You might be feeling less awkward already!
The meatloaf in Mackerel Middle School is certainly terrible. Can you come up with a new recipe to make the meatloaf even more gross than it already is?

Write a recipe for your own Mystery Meatloaf. We’ve listed the first ingredient.

**INGREDIENTS:**

1. ____________________________  
2. ____________________________  
3. ____________________________  
4. ____________________________  
5. ____________________________  
6. ____________________________  
7. ____________________________  
8. ____________________________  
9. ____________________________  
10. ____________________________  

**DIRECTIONS:**
Is there a meal there that everyone dreads at your school? Or maybe a favorite dish everyone looks forward to?

Now imagine that you are in charge of your school’s cafeteria. Create a list of meals you’d like to see served in a week? (No fair just listing pizza and burgers. Be creative!)

Monday: _______________________________________________________
Tuesday: _______________________________________________________
Wednesday: ______________________________________________________
Thursday: _______________________________________________________
Friday: _______________________________________________________
Saturday: _______________________________________________________ 
Sunday: _______________________________________________________

Unfortunately, Jamie’s mom’s meals are also awful. How would you rate the food at your home? What is your most favorite and least favorite dish at home?

YUM! ______________________________________________________________________
YECH! ______________________________________________________________________

Lots of families have a special holiday tradition that involves food. Is there a dish or meal that you look forward to every year? Ask your mom, dad, or grandparents for a recipe of one dish you’d like to know how to make.
Do you know other kids who love the Dear Dumb Diary series? Organize your own Book & Movie Club to meet with other fans, talk about the series, and compare notes. Some of the questions you can discuss are:

• Who is your favorite character?
• If you could be any character in the book or movie, who would you be and why?
• If you met Jamie, what would you say to her?
• What was the funniest part of the movie or in the books?
• Which one was your favorite book? Why?
• What do you think should happen in the next Dear Dumb Diary book or movie?

Visit the Scholastic Dear Dumb Diary site to find out all about the book series. You can read an interview with Jamie by Jim Benton (the author of the series), play games, and download and print out character cards. There’s also a checklist of all of the books!

You’re not only a fan—you’re a critic. (Don’t worry. Everyone is.) That means you have opinions about what you like or don’t like. The movie version is based on the first two books, Let’s Pretend This Never Happened and My Pants Are Haunted! Compare the movie to the books. What’s the same? What’s different? With your Book & Movie Club pals, make two lists.

WHAT’S THE SAME?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

WHAT’S DIFFERENT?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

As a group, or individually, write a review about what you thought about seeing the books come to life on screen. You could talk about the actors, music, what was added or left out, and so on.
There’s always a lot going on at the Mackerel Middle School—romance, mystery, and even learning!

To keep track of it all, create a print or online school newspaper. First, take a look at your town’s newspaper. What kinds of columns (sections) does it have? Typical columns include:

- News
- Interviews
- Editorials
- Weather
- Sports
- Want Ads

Now think about some of the events at Mackerel Middle School: Miss Bruntford’s Tofuloaf, Aunt Carol’s date with Assistant Principal Devon, fundraising for the “Juvenile Optometry Federation” and the Jump-a-Thon, Angeline’s surprising confession, and so on.

On your own, with a friend, or a group of friends, write and illustrate articles for the newspaper. If you want, you can also design it and print it out! (You may want to use an online newspaper template)

Does your school have a newspaper or newsletter? You can share your talents! Find out about volunteering as a writer, photographer, or designer. You’ll soon find out why, as someone famous once said, “The pen is mightier than the sword
Use the Dear Dumb Diary (DDD) movie and series as an inspiration for your next party. Ask friends to come as their favorite DDD character. You’ll serve DDD-themed food and play some DDD games!

When will the party be? Who will you invite? What will you serve?

Ask your parents to help you make or buy the food….ideas might include:

- Isabella’s Chocolate Mint Cookies
- Jamie’s Peach Pie
- Angeline’s Perfect Party Chips and Dip
- Hudson’s Heavenly Ice Cream
- Aunt Carol’s Cupcakes

Finally, you’ll need to play some games, such as:

- **Karaoke**: Sing Along with Jamie. Choose a song from the movie or another popular song. Have the lyrics handy and ask everyone to sing along!
- **DDD Bingo**: Download and print out two copies of the character cards. Mix them up and place them face down. Have each player turn over the card and try to pick the matching card. If they don’t, turn the cards face down again. The person with the most pairs wins!
- **Who Am I?** Have your friends make Character Cards of themselves, but without using names. Pick cards and see if you can all guess who it is!
- **Glittifying**: Make fantastic signs, posters, or greeting cards using as much glitter as you can!
- **Jump-a-Thon**: See who can jump the longest! Vary it by choosing a different activity (Skip-a-Thon, Blink-a-Thon, Laugh-a-Thon) each time.

And don’t forget—make sure you have fun!!
In the “About the Author” section on the Scholastic DDD site, Jim Benton (the real author of the Dear Dumb Diary series) interviews Jamie (the fictional author of the diaries themselves).

Whew! Don’t be confused—it will all make sense when you read it. Now pretend you are a reporter for a magazine. You can conduct your own interview!

Who do you want to interview? You can ask Jamie or Jim questions. You can even interview Emily Alyn Lind (the actor who plays Jamie) or Mary-Charles Jones (the actor who plays Isabella).

What do you want to ask? See the list below for some sample questions. (By the way, you don’t have to use these. In fact, it’s probably better if you make up your own!)

**Jamie Kelly**
- Do you think you’ll ever learn to love bugs like Hudson does?
- Is your dog’s name really Stinker?

**Jim Benton**
- Why did you write the series?
- How many more books will be in the series?

**Emily Alyn Lind** (the actor who plays Jamie in the movie)
- When did you first start acting?
- What did you like best about playing the part of Jamie?

**Mary-Charles Jones** (the actor who plays Isabella in the movie)
- How did it feel to wear such big glasses?
- What was your favorite scene to do in the movie?

After you write your questions, send them to <Scholastic blog? Walden site? Give option for email or snail mail?>. Once you get a reply, write about it in your own “dear diary!”
The last scene in Dear Dumb Diary is a music video, “Thanks for Listening.” Want to show off your musical talents? Choose a song you love—or write one yourself—and make your own music video. You can use real actors (also known as your friends), stuffed animals, live pets...even your parents!

You may want to use an app to help you, such as Video Star. (Get permission from your parents before using any app.) If it’s a song you already know, you can lip-sync it (pretend you are singing). You’ll also need to decide:

- what technology you will need (video camera, smartphone, handheld device such as an iPad)
- how long the video will be (2–3 minutes is usually enough)
- what happens in it (will you perform your song concert-style? add a plot or story?)
- costumes (if you want them)
- choreography (dance moves)
- special effects (you may want to use an app like Video Star. It contains a lot of cool techniques to use, such as fade in and fade out, borders, and animation.)

Plan out your music video by writing down each scene or by using a “storyboard.” A storyboard is a set of sketches that shows what will happen in each scene. Movie and music video directors use storyboards before they start filming.

If you’re not into singing and dancing, you can still make a video! Choose a scene from your own life (or re-enact a scene from the Dear Dumb Diary movie or book series) and write your own script. You can act it out by yourself or use a cast of thousands (okay, maybe just a few others).

Hold a screening with family and friends. And don’t forget the popcorn!