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# New Kid Catastrophes (TJ And The Time Stumblers)



## Synopsis

This six-book series centers around two 23rd century goofballs, Tuna and Herby, who travel back in time to study TJ Finkelstein for their history project. TJ will someday become a great leader who demonstrates honesty, integrity, thoughtfulness, self-sacrifice, respect for others—all traits she hones and grasps through her adventures in this series. Unfortunately, Tuna and Herby get stuck in TJ's time (modern day), so she has to deal with their schemes while juggling the normal issues of a seventh grader who has moved to a new city, is trying to fit in, and is coping with her mother's death and her family's new life. In *New Kid Catastrophes*, TJ accidentally makes an enemy of Hesper Breakahart, the superstar who attends their school. And Tuna and Herby's attempts to help just lead to one disaster after another. In the end, TJ is still very unpopular, but she learns the value of looking past appearances and gains a few friends and the attention of the most popular boy in school.

## Book Information

Series: TJ and the Time Stumblers (Book 1)

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

TJ Finkelstein is your average seventh grader trying to survive junior high. Average except for . . . Just moving from the Midwest to crazy, money-is-no-object Malibu, California Becoming mortal enemies with the school's most popular girl, who stars on the Dizzy Channel Oh yeah, and

being followed around by two goofball boys from the 23rd century!!! That's right! Herby and Tuna have traveled back in time to study TJ for a class project. Unfortunately, she is the only one who can see them. And unfortunately (don't try that word on your English teacher), their "help," which involves using whacked-out 23rd-century gadgets, only leads to more mayhem and plenty of side-splitting laughter. Join this unlikely trio as they stumble into one hilarious catastrophe after another . . . while accidentally learning the importance of such core values as love, honesty, patience, and kindness.

I read this book to verify it would be fitting for my oldest nephew. While he may need to grow into the book a little (i.e. start by reading it with a parent), it should be a good series for him. There are lots of onomatopoeias for sound effects, although the "futuristic" (i.e. made up) words may be a bit difficult to grasp. All-in-all, a decent book.

Middle grade readers will love this book. It should appeal to both boys and girls because it is a basic adventure book. Its primary theme is new kid on the block meets time travelers from the future. Make that bumbling time travelers on a school assignment. There are plenty of laughs to go around--good clean non-crude humor. Meet Herby and Tuna, traveling from the future to invisibly observe their target historical figure for a school assignment. Since their arrival, everything seems to go wrong for them from hitting the dinosaur age to crash landing in the Pacific Ocean, to major malfunctions of their equipment. Their goal: Malibu, California. Their target: Thelma Jean Finkelstein, otherwise known as TJ to her family and friends back in Missouri. But here in California? That's another matter entirely. And the piano that escaped the movers, rolled across the yard scooping up TJ in its path, crashing through the neighbor's fence making a big splash in their swimming pool in front of a dozen or so 13-year-old classmates, including TJ's new neighbor Chad Steel, was TJ's introduction into the new school year. Could it get any worse than that? It could and it did, no thanks to Herby and Tuna who attempted to "help" TJ through her first days at school. With that "help" came alienation of nearly the rest of her classmates, especially those who prostrated themselves before Hesper Breakahart; she was the star in her own TV series. Somehow, in Physical Education class (TJ thought it would be better termed Physical Embarrassment), a ball hit Hesper square in the nose. Everyone blamed TJ while Hesper was dramatically wheeled out by paramedics and taken to the hospital. How could it get any worse than that? It could and it did. But you'll have to read the book to discover what happens next. Besides the side-splitting humor in this short book, there are family dynamics to explore (TJ's mom died of cancer recently) and social

dynamics to learn from. This book, like the many others written by this author is not just a fluff piece. There are valuable lessons taught within the humorous events, just enough to prompt young readers to think. Parents will love this. Books like this were something I searched for when my children were the age this book is written for. If you are looking for a hilarious, fast-paced adventure for your children to read, this is one I highly recommend. I am reading and reviewing this book for the Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. summer reading program. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255: "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising."

I will start my review off by saying that New Kid Catastrophes is a wonderfully written book. Author Bill Myers in my opinion has captured the reading audience of middle graders and possibly some a little younger depending on the reading level. I know I have a couple of younger readers that would like this. I myself would love to read the rest of the series. The book kept my attention, and was pretty easy to read. The story line and characters take you on a neat ride to learn some very interesting things. I need watch and not give away any thing. Which is a little bit hard. Why you might ask, well the plot is some what simple. But it deals with things that kids really go through and deal with on a daily bases. I will be on the look out for more from author Bill Myers. And for the reasons above I will be giving New Kid Catastrophes by Author Bill Myers a big Breath of Life rating of: Five Clock Rating!! Disclosure: I did receive the above book in exchange for my honest opinion and or review. But the Opinions are my own and yours may differ.

Bill Myers does a great job of writing for different age groups. This is a great book for kids. It has characters that you can relate to. It has a great story. Fun clean book.

"Tuna cleared his throat and quoted: " 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' But if you favor some people over others, you are committing a sin." While Thelma Jean "TJ" Finkelstein is moving into her new home, she makes a big splash - literally - into her new neighbor's life. She meets the gorgeous Chad Steel after riding, yes riding, her piano into his pool. On TJ's first day at her new school, one catastrophe after another follows her. She has an unfortunate involvement with school sweetheart and TV sensation Hesper Breakahart breaking her nose. Of course, after that, the whole school hates her, except for "geeks" Naomi Simpletwirp and Doug Claudlooper ... and maybe Chad! TJ meets two strangers, Herby and Tuna, who have come to visit (and "help") her from the

23rd century. They tell TJ they are doing a history report on her since one day she will grow up to be a great leader. These two crazy characters, with their own vocabulary like "torked," "zworked" and "smoot," help TJ learn that we must look beyond the outside of people, and look at what is on the inside ... and a great person doesn't show favoritism. "New Kid Catastrophes" by Bill Myers is a silly, goofy, tongue-in-cheek kind of read, but it teaches a great lesson that kids of all ages need to hear. Four out of five stars.

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