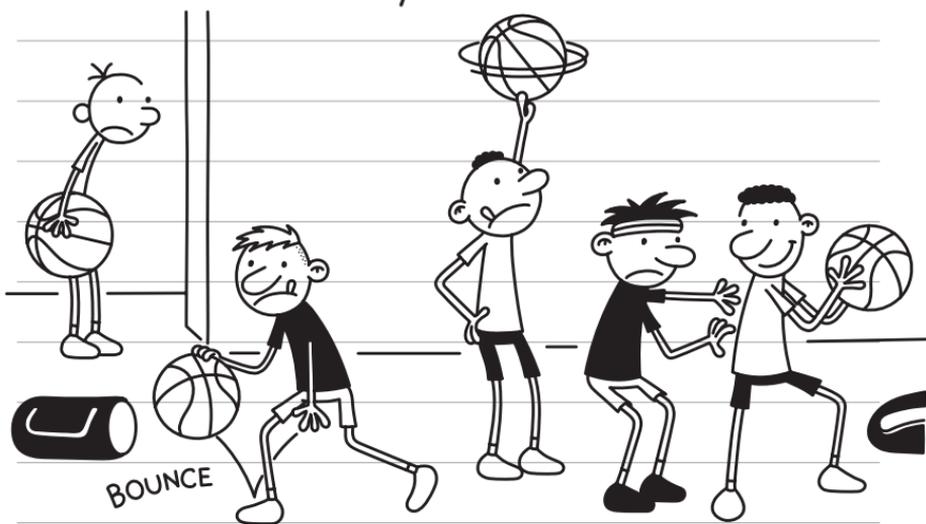


Sunday

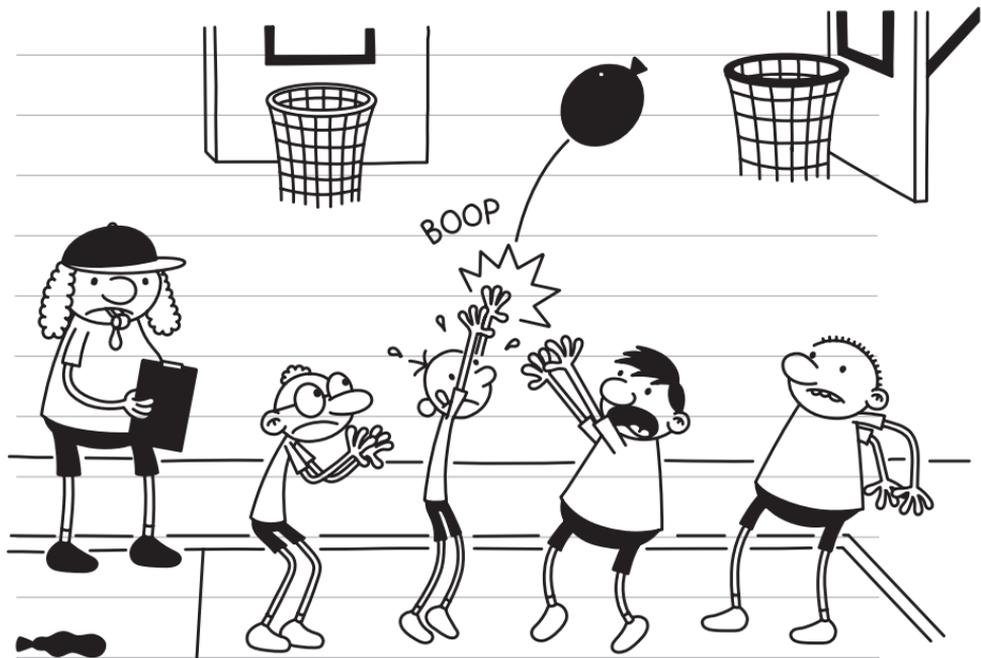
When I got to the gym for basketball tryouts tonight, I counted twenty-eight kids. That meant twenty kids would make one of the two teams, and everyone else would get cut. So I liked my odds.

Plus, most of the kids looked WAY better than me. A lot of these guys have been playing since kindergarten, and they could dribble between their legs and do other crazy stuff with the ball.



The only real experience I've had with basketball was when we did a basketball unit in Phys Ed last year. And that only lasted two days.

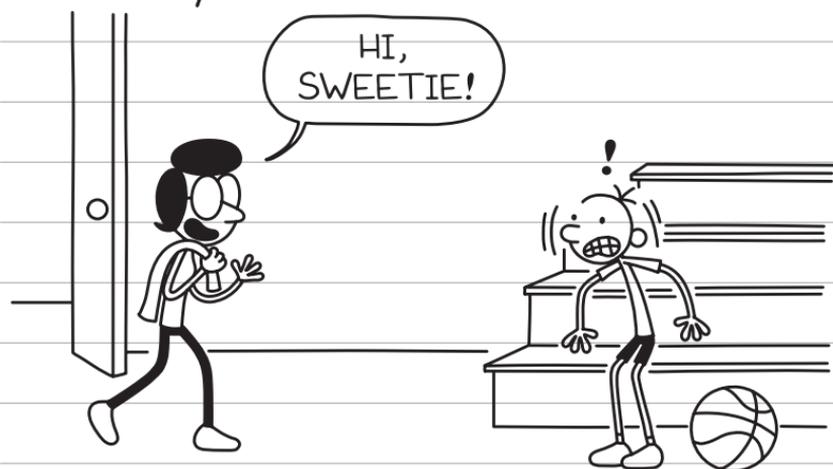
On top of that, the school's only basketball was deflated, and the Phys Ed teacher couldn't find the needle that went with the pump. So we had to use balloons instead.



There were a handful of kids at tryouts tonight who didn't look like they were that good, which made me a little nervous.

I was worried I could end up making one of the teams by accident, and then I'd have to play a whole season. So I thought about actually doing badly on PURPOSE, just in case.

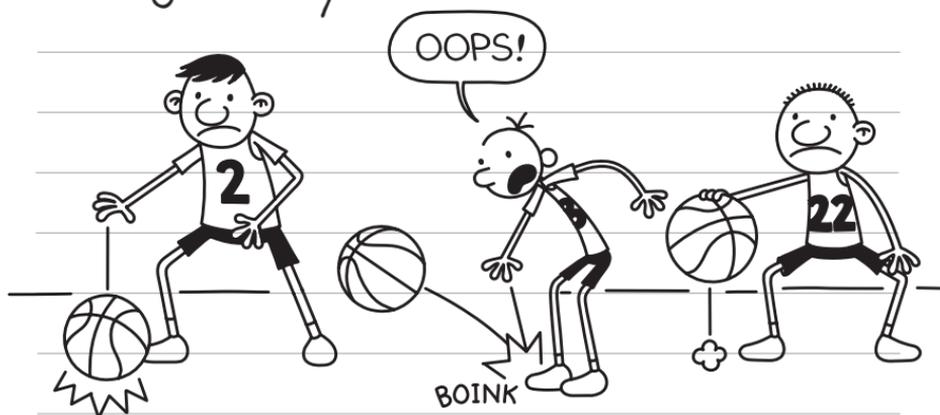
But my plan went out the window when Mom came to watch tryouts. Because now I knew I'd have to give it my best effort.



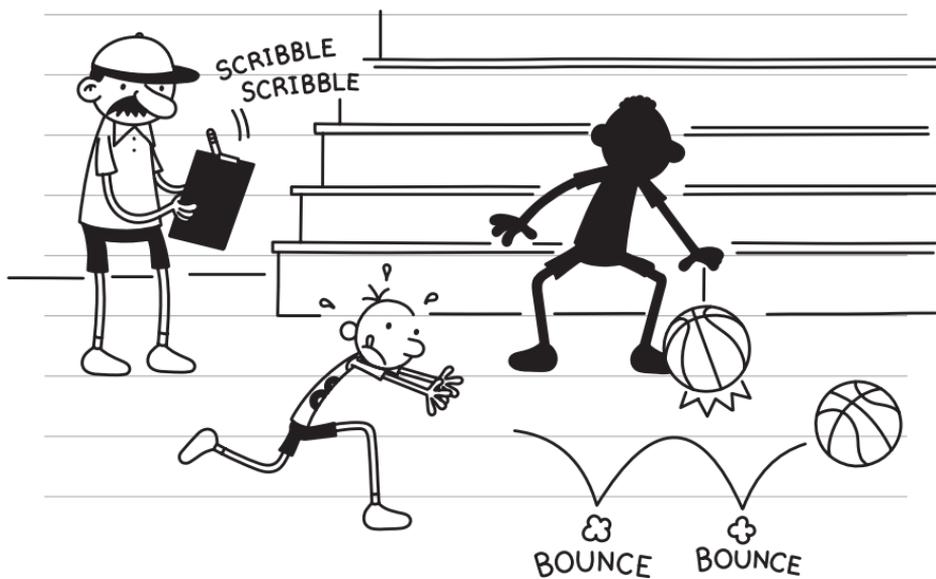
Tryouts started at 7:00 p.m., and they handed each kid a practice jersey with a big number on the front and back. And from the way those things smelled, I'm guessing they've never been WASHED.



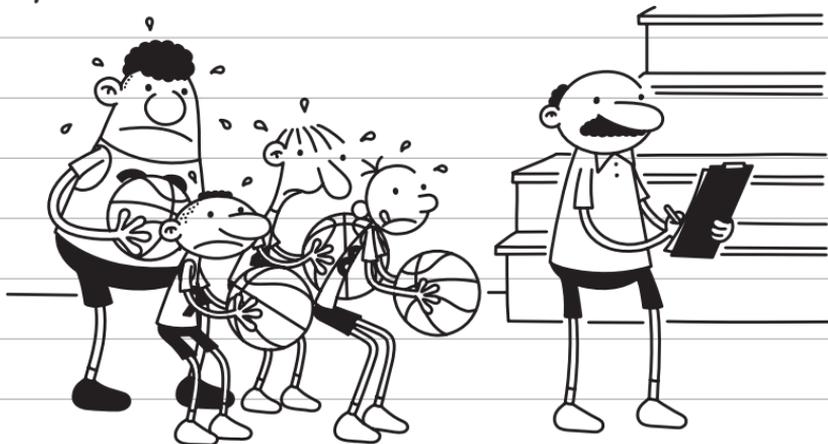
They split us up into four groups to do drills in different areas of the gym, and my group started off with dribbling. I was having a little trouble with the hand-eye coordination thing, so I kept dribbling it off my shoe.



I noticed that every time I messed up, some guy with a clipboard would write down my number.



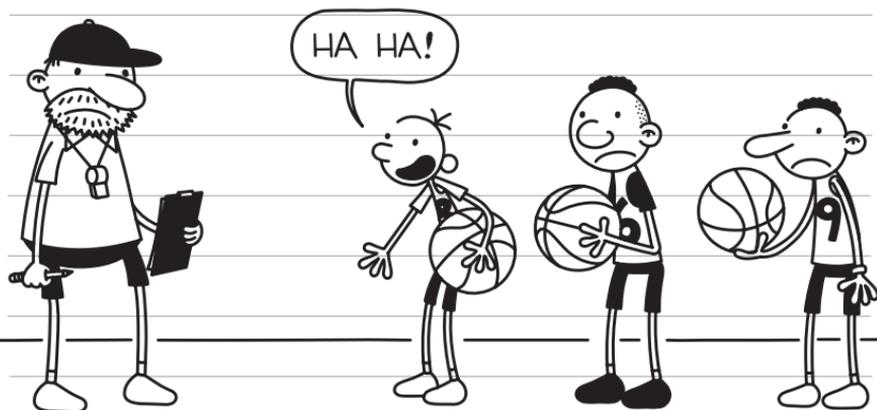
So I tried to stay behind the guys with the clipboards, and the other kids who stunk started copying me.



Every once in a while I'd dribble five or six times in a row, and of course no one was watching THEN. But Mom made sure to let the guys with the clipboards know when I was doing well.



After we dribbled with our right hands for a few minutes, the guy in charge of our group said it was time to switch to our LEFT hands. I thought he was joking, and I actually LAUGHED.



But I probably shouldn't have, because that just made him write down my number.

I guess some people can do things with both hands, but not me. In fact, my left hand is practically USELESS.

One time I sprained my right wrist and I had to take a test at school using my left hand. And I think I would've done better if I'd held the pencil in my MOUTH.

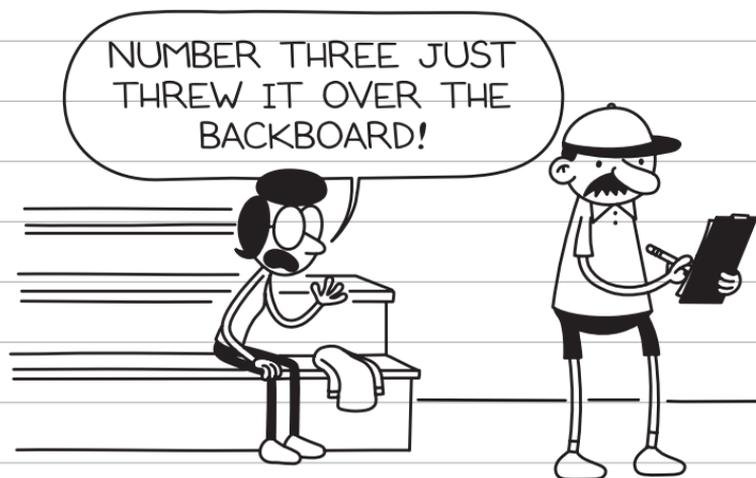
7. Who developed the theory of gravity?

ISAAC NEWTON

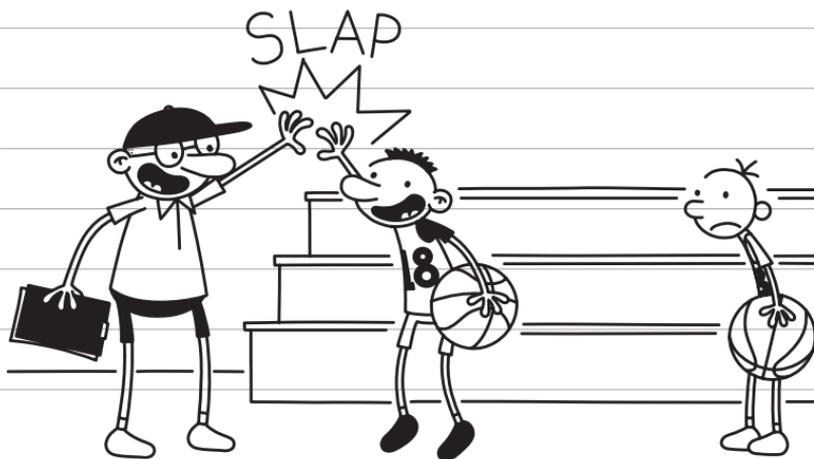
Once we finished with our dribbling drills, we switched to free throws. And I really wished I hadn't learned to shoot a basketball with a BALLOON, because I totally misjudged how much effort I needed to put into my shot.



I think Mom could see I wasn't doing so great, so whenever one of the evaluators got near her, she'd snitch on the OTHER kids who were struggling.



But it's not like Mom was the ONLY parent helping their own kid. Some of the evaluators had kids who were trying out tonight, so I wonder how fair the scoring really was.



By the end of the night, it was pretty obvious who was gonna make a team and who wasn't. But I guess they needed to decide which kid was gonna get the final spot, because they made the bottom nine kids duke it out in a scrimmage. And all I can say is it wasn't PRETTY.



Once that was over, they collected our jerseys. The guy running tryouts told everyone that if we made a team, our parents would get an e-mail by tomorrow night. But after that experience, I'm not exactly holding my BREATH.