

Secrets of a Lab Rat Readers Guide

Trudi
Trueit

About Book One: No Girls Allowed (Dogs Okay)

Fourth-grader Scab McNally knows exactly what he wants: a dog. Part inventor, part scientist, and part mischievous student, Scab is determined not to let anything or anyone get in his way, especially his "smart times ten" twin sister, Isabelle. Yet, with Isabelle reporting his every move to their parents, how can Scab prove to his parents he's responsible enough to handle a pet? When his newest invention, a sister repellent spray (a.k.a. Isabelle's Smell) becomes a hit with the guys, Scab hatches a plan. He'll earn enough selling Isabelle's Smell to buy a dog, and then his parents will have to say yes, right? Soon, the money is flowing in. But one broken bottle of the mega-stinky Isabelle's Smell brings a cloud of disaster, not to mention a Haz Mat crew. And faster than a bunch of girls in Hello Kitty shirts can scream, "Ewww!" Scab's hopes of getting a dog vanish (cough!). In the midst of his self pity, Scab begins to see his at-any-cost drive to get a dog has hurt the people he cares most about. Can Scab find a way to turn things around before it's too late?

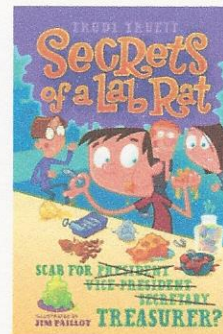
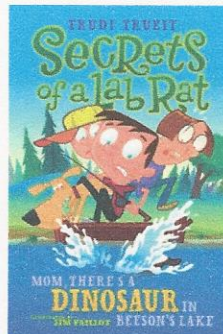
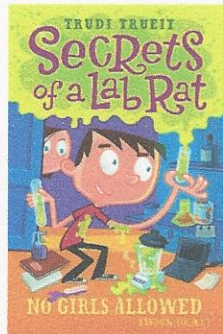


Secrets from the Author: Trudi Trueit

The character of Scab is loosely based on my younger brother, who was forever coming up with crazy schemes when we were kids. I suppose I was a bit like Isabelle, always keeping an eye on what he had up his sleeve to make sure he didn't get hurt. Fortunately, I never found cheese in my underwear drawer! Unlike Isabelle, I didn't give our parents a nightly news report on my brother's activities, but I *did* grow up to be a TV reporter so maybe I should have. It would have been good practice!

Read All the Books
in the Secrets of a
Lab Rat series!

www.trudittrueit.com



Themes For Discussion

Reaching Goals

Scab wants a dog, but his parents don't think he can handle the responsibility. Do you agree with Scab or his parents? Do you think his plan to sell sister repellent to earn money to buy a pet is a good idea? Why or why not? What could Scab have done differently to prove to his Mom and Dad he was ready for a pet?

Navigating Relationships

Scab argues with his best friend, Doyle, over how to split the profits from Isabelle's Smell. He also gets in trouble with Isabelle when she gets wind of what he's doing. How does Scab go about repairing things with his friend and sister? Do you agree with his solutions? What would you have done in his place?

Finding the Humor in Life

There's plenty of silliness in *No Girls Allowed (Dogs Okay)*. What part of the book made you laugh loudest? What's the funniest or most embarrassing thing that's ever happened to you. Do you like humor in books? Why or why not? If you do, name some of your favorite humor books.



Fun Activities!

You're the Inventor!

Scab McNally is a budding inventor. He spends hours in his top secret lab, thinking of clever, new ideas like parachutes for squirrels and peanut butter/root beer floats (yum?). Now it's your turn. Come up with your own invention. It can be a way to solve a problem or make life easier. How about a new recipe, game, sport, or article of clothing? You decide! Need some inspiration? Log on to www.inventionatplay.org. First, plan out the details on paper then craft your invention. Who knows? You might be the world's next great thinker!



Face Your Fear

In *Mom, There's a Dinosaur in Beeson's Lake* Scab is afraid to tell anyone he's scared of diving into deep water, but to save his dog, Joe, Scab has to gather his courage and take the plunge. Have you ever been frightened to try something, too? How did you, finally, overcome your fear? What did you learn about yourself? Write a story, poem, or song about your experience.



Share Your Secrets

Scab likes to give the reader advice, like how to tell if your bus driver is a zombie or the best way to hide cheese in your sister's underwear drawer! Chances are you've learned a thing or two about how to deal with siblings, teachers, and friends, too. Imagine you are giving advice to a new friend about how to do better in school. Write down your top three tips. Explain how you learned these things? How did they help you succeed? What mistakes did you make along the way?