



★ **Mega Awesome Notebook**

Kevin Minor

Schiffer Publishing (Feb 28, 2019)

Softcover \$16.99 (112pp)

978-0-7643-5694-0

The drawings in a teenager's notebook interact with him, causing some problems and helping to solve others in Kevin Minor's wild and wonderful *Mega Awesome Notebook*.

The adventure begins when the book's young protagonist accidentally microwaves his notebook and soon realizes that his doodles and drawings have come alive within its pages and are acting independent of his commands. The boy names his cartoon person "Dude" and Dude's small monster companion "Lil' Creation," before changing them, in a humorous touch, to "Dud" and "Lil' Cretin." The central figure in the story is not so much the boy artist, but rather the boy artist as revealed through the eyes of his alter ego, Dud.

Minor's art is a delight, convincingly kid-like and bursting with energy. The book painstakingly replicates many details of a typical teen student's notebook, from lined loose-leaf pages to stray eraser dust and "handwritten" word balloons. There are brief non-notebook scenes throughout. The boy's problems are filtered through his art, and when Dud discovers a page that depicts all of the things that are bothering his creator, they're finally able to team up and confront them.

The world of *Mega Awesome Notebook* will be sympathetic to teens—both the boy's "real" problems and the paths that his imagination takes during the story, influenced by school assignments, cartoon humor, science fiction, and other familiar elements.

Mega Awesome Notebook looks and feels different from other books and might have special appeal for reluctant readers. But for any audience, its twists and turns make for a fun, refreshing, and surreal ride.

PETER DABBENE (March/April 2019)

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