



Meet the Author Rex Ogle

Rex Ogle is the author of *Free Lunch*, recipient of the YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction for Young Adults. Under the pen name Rey Terciero, he authored *Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy* as well as *Swan Lake: Quest for the Kingdoms*. Before becoming a full-time writer, Rex worked as an editor in New York for many years and championed several licensed titles, including the *New York Times* bestsellers *Star Wars: Jedi Academy*, *Secret Hero Society: Study Hall of Justice*, and Neil Patrick Harris's *The Magic Misfits*. Rex now writes full time from his home in California. When he's not busy writing, Rex can be found hiking with his dog, playing Mario Kart with his friends, or reading a new favorite book. Learn more about Rex at rexogle.com.

Q&A

Tell us about yourself. How did you become a writer?

I always wanted to be a writer. From an early age I was obsessed with stories. Over the summers, I was addicted to the reading programs at my local library . . . the more I read, the more often I got personal pan pizzas from Pizza Hut. But it wasn't just the cheesy pepperoni pies that kept me motivated. My home life wasn't all that pleasant at times, but my abuela always encouraged me to escape into stories. So that's what I did. There was nothing quite as safe as the pages of a good book. From there, it was an easy leap from reader to writer. After I wrote my first short story, I knew this was what I wanted to do. I wanted to create stories for others, like the ones I loved so much. And now I get to do that. It's a dream come true.

What have been the biggest influences—people or experiences—in your work?

That's a great question. I would have to say my abuela, who always encouraged me to read. She encouraged me to stay in school, to make good grades, to aim for college, and to pursue my passions. Those led me from Texas to New York City where I got job after job as an editor. In my editorial positions, I got to work on everything from Marvel and DC Comics to Minecraft and LEGO, Star Wars and Buffy the Vampire Slayer, and tons of other characters that I loved growing up.



What was your creative process like for this book?

Well, I got glasses in middle school (which is what the story is about), but then I got Lasik as an adult. Then it wore off! So a few years ago, I went to get my eyes checked and found out I had to get glasses again. Only this time, I wasn't embarrassed or scared. But it made me realize that so many kids wear glasses, but there hasn't been a story about it. I knew I wanted it to be a graphic novel, because a visual story is so perfect for a story about seeing. From there, I got so excited I wrote up a long outline and started writing the manuscript. Scholastic picked up the book, and they helped me find an amazing artist in Dave Valeza. Which is good, because I can barely draw stick figures.

If there was one message that you'd want every reader of this book to have, what would it be?

I know it seems like what you wear is super important in school, and that it's the end of the world if someone makes fun of you. But it's not. Every person has something they're embarrassed of, and most of the time, it's that insecurity that leads some to pick on others. So no matter what you wear—even if they're wonky glasses like the ones I had in 6th grade—know that you are awesome.



Four Eyes #1

Words by Rex Ogle and Art by Dave Valeza

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For fans of Raina Telgemeier's *Guts* and Victoria Jamieson's *All's Faire in Middle School* comes the hilarious graphic memoir *Four Eyes* (*Four Eyes* #1). Chronicling award-winning author Rex Ogle's experience growing up as an economically disadvantaged kid in Texas and his life as a newly bespectacled sixth grader, *Four Eyes* is a true coming-of-age story about surviving middle school against all odds.



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