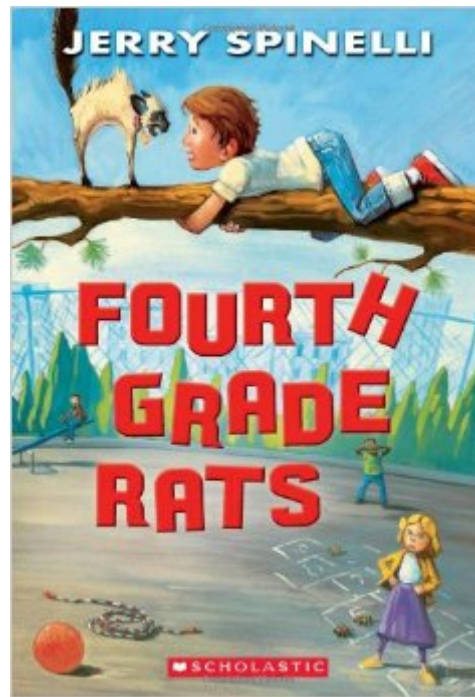


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# Fourth Grade Rats



## Synopsis

Last year Suds was a Third Grade Angel, but now... it's time to be a Fourth Grade Rat! Fourth graders are tough. They aren't afraid of spiders. They say no to their moms. They push first graders off the swings. And they never, ever cry. Suds knows that now he's in fourth grade, he's supposed to be a rat. But whenever he tries to act like one, something goes wrong. Can Suds's friend Joey teach him to toughen up... or will Suds remain a fourth grade wimp? Now with brand-new illustrations, this sequel to Jerry Spinelli's *THIRD GRADE ANGELS* is a classic story of fitting in (or not) and friendship.

## Book Information

Paperback: 160 pages

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Product Dimensions: 0.2 x 5.2 x 7.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (91 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #5,706 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #8 in [Books > Children's Books >](#)

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[> School](#) #235 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social](#)

[Skills & School Life > Friendship](#)

Age Range: 7 - 10 years

Grade Level: 2 - 5

## Customer Reviews

This is a comedy book. The setting of the story takes place at the characters house and in the swings at the school playground. That's where the story starts. The main characters names are Suds and Joey. Suds likes taking a bath when he has a problem. Joey likes to act cool! Like a rat. He wants to get Suds to do the same things as him. The other little character is Judy Billings. She is a big show off and will go for any tough guy. (Suds likes her.) The story begins at the school playground where first graders teased fourth graders by saying they were rats. Every body felt bad to be a rat, except joey, he was proud to be one. He said it was the first step to become a man.

That's when the problem starts. Joey wanted suds to be a rat too. Joey was telling him to say no to his mother, eat baloney, push little kids around, and not to be scared to what suds is scared of most, spiders. (suds doesn't like the sound of that.) The resolution to the problem happened when Joey's mother went to Suds house and told him that Joey shouldn't have pushed him into the rat stuff, and that he was dropping out of the rat race and joining the human race again. finally the story ends when Suds tells his mother a confession: that the last few days that he was a rat it was all him, without Joey telling him to do so. Or making him do it. At first Joey was the one pushing him to do the things. After it was just him doing them. I recommend this book because I like comedy books. Dialogues between characters are funny. I enjoyed this book very much. This book will show you not to follow what you think doesn't sound to good and to be a leader, not a follower just because you think the person who you are following is cool! This book is one of the best! Only now be a follower and get the book and read it! Alex

I am writing this from the perspective of a parent of a 4th grader. This 85+ page book was required reading for all rising 4th graders in the weeks before school began. There was no direction given to the children, just that they needed to read it and be prepared to talk about it. So I bought it. What a shame. All I can say is that I found absolutely nothing redeeming about this book. No lesson I want to teach my child, no "silver lining" in the stories. Basically it's about a nice boy who now that he's in 4th grade, feels the pressure to do things he knows in his heart aren't right, but he wants the attention of a girl and a "friend" so he goes ahead with his friend pressuring him to do "bad". What could be so bad, you ask? How about stealing food from kids in the lunchroom, laughing at kids having a difficult time, ignoring former teachers you liked but now it's considered babyish to return a smile to. The book was a constant reminder of how NOT to behave; it was incredibly difficult to find the message of "Good always wins." So lots of bad behavior, gets the girl, then it ends with the friend getting caught, being FORCED by his mom to apologize to the boy for making him do bad things, then ending a page later with no real ending other than a disbelief this book actually got a publisher. I know people will say that it's a good message, to show that bad behavior isn't good and that you should stay true to your heart and do good things. So why did we need to hear the 85% percent of the book showing bad behavior? The whole school acts like they care not at all about each other, do not need to be nice to each other, and basically only look out for themselves. And why is the ONLY lesson coming through that you will need to change your way IF YOU GET CAUGHT BY YOUR MOTHER, not if your conscience pulls you back? Why do authors think the only way to appeal to children is to talk about bad behavior? Is that the best we can do for our kids? For

9-10 year olds? Come on. It could have been so much better.

Jerry Spinelli unfolds a basic story and sprinkles humor, love, detail, and a major life lesson. *Fourth Grade Rats* is a book about a ten-year-old named Suds who is in fourth grade. According to the rhyme, "First grade babies, second grade cats, third grade angels, fourth grade rats", he is now supposed to be a rat. However, it isn't like him that he should steal first and second graders Twinkies, throw them off the swings, say "no" to his mom, and mess up his room, but his best friend, Joey Peterson, thinks otherwise. He tells him to get rid of his flying elephant lunchbox, eat bologna sandwiches instead of peanut butter and jelly, and to steal Twinkies and kick little kids off swings. His love, Judy Billings, goes after Joey when a bee lands on his arm and stings him--and he doesn't even cry. The major life lesson is don't let anybody pressure you into doing anything you don't want to do. I loved this book because of its major life lesson, and its detail. I would recommend this book to anybody and everybody.

I think that Jerry Spinelli is a great writer. I gave him that many stars because he described his characters. The book was about these two boys who were angels in the Third Grade. At the beginning of the story the third graders were walking around the playground saying a chant. When they approach Suds and Joey they yelled out loud, fourth grade rats. Suds said to Joey I wish I were a third grade angel, while standing at the monkey bars with Joey. Joey said to Suds I don't wish I were a third grade angel; I've waited my whole third grade year to be a fourth grade rat. In the middle of the story Suds and Joey started to change. Joey started by keeping his room messy, also when he was stung by a bee he didn't cry, and started saying no to his mom. Suds started to be mean, he didn't cry any more, and he started saying no to his mom also. At the end, Suds were stuck in a tree, when his mom called him in to eat dinner she had heard him yelling mom. She came outside and saw that he was stuck in the tree. His father brought a ladder to help him get down. When they went into the house he told his mom how sorry he was for being rude to her. Joey came over later and apologized to Suds for pushing him to be a rat, and telling him to say no to his mom. Joey and Suds stayed good friends. I gave it 5 stars because I thought the book was interesting and it taught me a lesson that you don't have to change to fit in.

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