CHAD

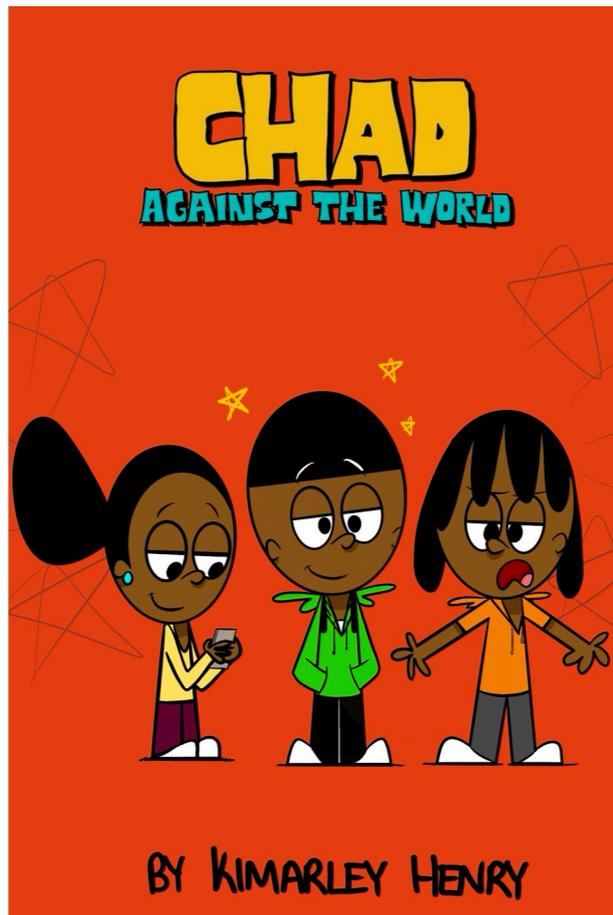## By Kimarley Henry

TEACHING GUIDE

Encourage creativity, inspire student writing, spark critical thinking, explore writing in nontraditional formats, and so much more!

CHAD
AGAINST THE WORLD

BY KIMARLEY HENRY

BASED ON THE HIT COMIC SERIES BY KIMARLEY HENRY

Includes:
- Assessments
- Teaching rationale
- Student reproducible
- Discussion questions
- Writing prompts

KIMARLEY
ENTERTAINMENT

ABOUT THE SERIES

Chad is a comic strip that follows the everyday experiences of its title character, a hapless student navigating school, friendships, and self-identity as an aspiring artist. Told through illustrated scenes, dialogue, and visual humor, the series blends comedy with honest moments about growing up, making mistakes, and figuring out where you fit in.

Throughout the series, Chad encounters relatable challenges, such as misunderstandings with friends, conflicts with authority, and moments of self-reflection. Through it all, he learns to not have the weight of the world on his own shoulders and to lean on his loved ones. By presenting realistic school experiences in an accessible comic format, *Chad* helps students connect reading to their own lives and emotions, *Chad* has been widely used in school visits, classrooms, and literacy programs to support reluctant readers and spark discussion. The series demonstrates that reading can be both entertaining and meaningful, especially when students see themselves reflected on the page.
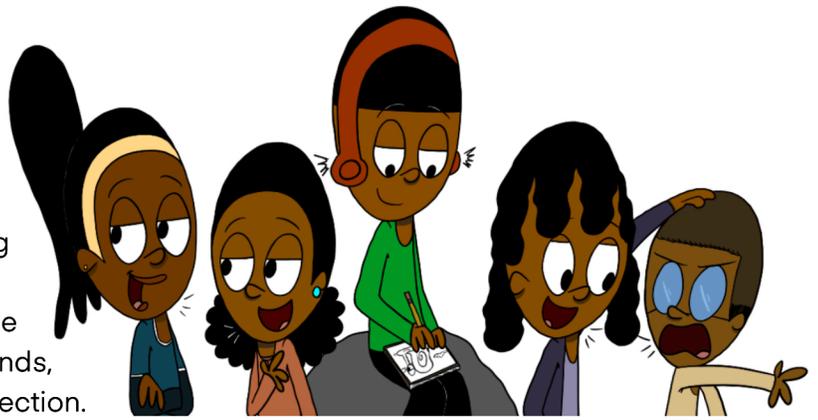
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kimarley Henry grew up in Connecticut and always knew he wanted to be a cartoonist. One day in his seventh grade science class, he drew a 2-panel comic about a young boy with his head in the clouds. This would go on to become the *Chad* comic series, which Kimarley published in his local newspaper, the Bloomfield Messenger, during his time at a performing arts high-school in June 2019.
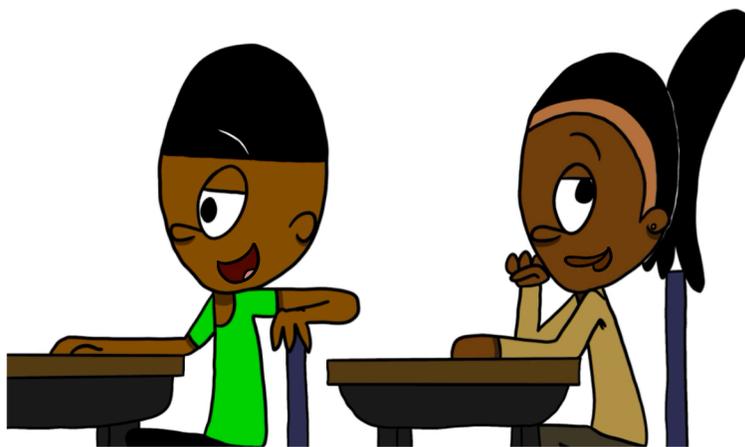
Shortly after, he began attending Morehouse College, where he became the cartoonist of the school newspaper, The Maroon Tiger. However, Kimarley was not successful in getting the comic strip picked up by major syndicates. Instead, he took the weekly comic strips published in his local newspapers and turned them into a book, *Chad Against the World*, which was published during his sophomore year at Morehouse in November 2021.

What started as a student-created comic grew into a multi-year creative project spanning comic strips, books, school programming, and animated content. Kimarley has shared *Chad* with hundreds of students through classroom visits, workshops, and school partnerships, using the series to encourage creativity, literacy, and self-expression.

Kimarley's work emphasizes the power of storytelling, consistency, and creative ownership, showing students that their ideas, when nurtured, can grow into real opportunities.

WHY USE CHAD IN YOUR CLASSROOM

Chad has helped students connect to reading through relatable experiences with school and family. The comic format makes the series especially effective for reluctant and developing readers, while still offering depth for discussion and reflection. Completing a *Chad* book gives students a strong sense of accomplishment and confidence as readers.

• It is a fun, accessible read that encourages reflection, discussion, and self-expression for students reading at a wide range of levels.

• Students talk about *Chad*. Reading it gives them a shared text with classmates, peers, and school communities, sparking conversations about books and storytelling.

• The series serves as a gateway to other comics, graphic novels, and traditional texts, helping students build reading stamina and curiosity.

• Students see themselves in the characters and situations, leading to meaningful discussions about school life, friendships, family, and decision-making.

• *Chad* creates opportunities for critical thinking as students analyze both text and images, question character choices, and discuss social norms.

• Humor plays a central role. As students read closely to catch every joke, they also develop an understanding of how language, visuals, and timing communicate ideas.

• Using *Chad* in the classroom allows teachers to meet literacy standards while keeping students engaged and entertained.

• Educators can extend learning beyond the book through discussions, creative activities, and writing or drawing exercises inspired by the series.

READING CHAD IN YOUR CLASSROOM

Because *Chad* is published as a long-running comic strip, many students may already be familiar with the characters or have seen individual strips online. To support both first-time readers and returning fans, consider the following classroom reading approaches. If these methods are new to your students, introduce and explain them clearly before beginning.

READ ALOUD / THINK ALOUD

Whether students have read *Chad* before or not, reading selected strips or chapters aloud creates a shared classroom experience. Pairing this with a "think aloud" helps students understand how skilled readers pause, reflect, and make meaning while reading.

Before reading with students, preview the material yourself and plan moments where you will model your thinking, such as interpreting humor, noticing visual details, or questioning a character's decision. Share with students why you chose *Chad* and what you want them to think about as they read.

Read with expression and energy, allowing time for laughter and discussion. If possible, display the illustrations so students can follow both the text and visuals together. This reinforces comprehension, visual literacy, and engagement.

As you read aloud, stop and "think aloud," modeling general reading strategies that help students engage with *Chad*. Share the kinds of questions you ask yourself to make meaning from both the text and the illustrations, since understanding *Chad* relies heavily on visual storytelling. In moments that may confuse students, model how you use context clues, facial expressions, body language, and surrounding panels to interpret unfamiliar words or situations. Also "think aloud" during scenes or images that make you laugh, pause, or reflect, helping students recognize how humor and emotion are intentionally created.

If students continue reading *Chad* independently, encourage them to use the strategies you modeled (or others that best support your students) to monitor their comprehension and make personal connections. Students can record questions, reactions, predictions, or notable strategies they use in a Response Journal, sketchbook, or reading log.

If you choose to read the entire book or series of strips aloud, continue to "think aloud" at key moments as appropriate. Most importantly, model reading fluency, pacing, and expression, and allow yourself to fully engage with the humor and meaning of the text.

BUDDY READING

Buddy reading allows students to engage with *Chad* collaboratively. Reading pairs may include two independent readers reading alongside each other, or partners who take turns reading aloud. Pairs may have similar reading abilities, or you may pair a more fluent reader with a developing reader.

Each reading buddy should have their own copy of *Chad,* along with sticky notes or a Response Journal. Before reading begins, have pairs preview the book together and discuss what they think it will be about, what they already know about the characters, and whether they've encountered *Chad* before. Independent reading pairs should decide how many pages or strips they plan to read before meeting again. For read-aloud pairs, help students decide whether they will alternate pages, read dialogue by character, read together, or change approaches over time.

When pairs meet, encourage discussion around:
- What's happening in Chad's life and whether they agree or disagree with how he handles different situations
- Similar experiences they've had in school, with friends, or at home
- Predictions about what might happen next to Chad or other characters
- Graphic elements they believe are essential to understanding the story (facial expressions, panel layout, visual humor, timing)
- Their own reading process and the strategies they and their partner used

After completing the book, reading buddies may choose one of the suggested Activities or design their own collaborative project to share their shared reading experience.

BOOK CLUB

A book club approach to reading *Chad* works especially well for independent readers who are ready to participate in authentic, student-led discussions without assigned literature roles. This approach encourages students to take ownership of conversations, share personal insights, and respectfully challenge each other's interpretations. Students should be familiar with discussion norms such as listening actively, building on others' ideas, and referencing specific moments from the text and illustrations to support their thinking.

Before forming book clubs of four or five students, teach or review strategies for active listening and thoughtful participation with the whole class. Brainstorm what strong literary discussions look and sound like, what kinds of topics are worth discussing, and how students can prepare to contribute meaningfully. At the initial book club meeting, students should take time to get to know their group members, preview *Chad,* agree on how many pages or strips they will read before the next meeting, and decide what preparation is expected for the first discussion.

Encourage students to bring their own experiences and perspectives into the conversation. Book club should feel like a space where students can openly share personal reactions to *Chad* and discuss themes such as friendship, popularity, peer pressure, conflict, humor, and self-identity.

Because book clubs are centered on reader response, having students keep a Response Journal supports responsibility and ownership of the reading experience. Students can use their notes, drawings, observations, and questions as starting points for discussion.

Give students the opportunity to guide their own conversations. If they need support, the Discussion Questions in this guide can help prompt deeper thinking and dialogue. After finishing the book, invite students to select their strongest discussion questions and organize them into a student-created discussion guide to share with future *Chad* book clubs.

RESPONSE JOURNAL

Begin by discussing different forms of personal writing with the class. Ask students what distinguishes journals, diaries, blogs, comics, or sketchbooks. Invite them to share examples they have read, written, or encountered in their own lives.

Have students discuss why people choose to write or draw about their thoughts and experiences, how journaling can benefit the creator, and how it can affect or connect with readers.

Explain that students will keep a Response Journal while reading *Chad*. This journal will be used to ask and answer questions, note moments that stand out, analyze character choices, make predictions, and reflect on how the story connects to their own lives. Students should be encouraged to reference their journals during book club discussions.

Students may take inspiration from *Chad*'s comic-style storytelling and structure their Response Journals using a mix of writing and drawing. Encourage them to be honest, descriptive, and direct. At the same time, emphasize that there is no single "right" way to respond to a text. Responses may include written reflections, sketches, diagrams, timelines, charts, or visual storytelling.

Work with students to generate journal prompts that support personal connections, critical thinking, and creative expression. This helps students take ownership of their reading while reinforcing that their thoughts and perspectives matter.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The questions below may be used for whole-class discussions, small group conversations, or as reflective writing prompts. For meaningful discussion, encourage students to note ideas that interest them, moments that confuse or surprise them, images or lines they enjoy, and places where they question, predict, or draw conclusions. Students may also use their notes to develop original discussion questions to bring to their groups.

- *Chad* is told through a comic and visual storytelling format. How do the illustrations affect the way the story is told? In what ways is *Chad* different from other books or novels you've read?
- What characteristics and behaviors do you associate with Chad? What characteristics and behaviors do you want others to associate with you? Why?
- Chad is often skeptical of how things will turn out. How does Chad see himself? How do you think others see him?
- Do you agree or disagree with Chad's ideas about popularity, respect, or fitting in at school? Why or why not? How can these ideas influence the way people behave?
- What do you think makes someone a good friend? How does Chad treat his friends? How do his friendships change over time?
- Describe Chad's relationship with his family. How is it similar to or different from relationships in your own family?
- Are there moments when Chad feels misunderstood by adults or peers? How does he respond? Have you ever experienced something similar?
- Do you think *Chad* is funny? Why or why not? Describe a moment that made you laugh and explain what made it humorous. If something similar happened in real life, how do you think you would react?
- How does *Chad* portray teasing, conflict, or bullying? Are all conflicts the same? Why or why not?
- Who holds power in different situations throughout the story? Students, teachers, friends, or family members? How does that power affect outcomes?
- Think about another book, comic, or show you've experienced. How does it deal with school life, friendships, or conflict? Compare it to *Chad*.
- Why do you think *Chad* resonates with so many students? What parts of the story feel realistic or relatable?

ACTIVITIES

GET TO KNOW CHAD!

Understanding characterization helps students explore a character's thoughts, motivations, behaviors, and growth. *Chad* provides a strong opportunity to discuss and study characterization and point of view. Begin by discussing the creator's choice of point of view. How does observing Chad from the outside shape the way readers understand him? Talk about how characters are developed using direct characterization (what characters say about Chad) and indirect characterization (what readers learn through Chad's actions, expressions, and interactions).

Next, focus on how Chad is brought to life. As a class, generate a list of details that help define Chad as a character. Encourage students to reference specific dialogue, scenes, and illustrations that reveal Chad's personality, values, strengths, flaws, and relationships. Then invite students to choose one of the following activities to demonstrate their understanding of Chad's character. Provide examples or templates as needed.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

CHAD'S FICTIONAL CHARACTER PROFILE

Ask students to imagine that they are creating a profile about Chad for a website, blog, or character guide. Using evidence from the book, have students write a character profile that includes: an "About Chad" section describing his personality and behavior, a list explaining Chad's family members and relationships, and a list of Chad's interests and favorites, such as hobbies, music, sports, games, or activities. Students should include an illustration or image of Chad that reflects his personality and role in the story.

BIOPOEM: WRITING ABOUT CHAD

Have students write a Biopoem about Chad, using evidence from the comic strips and illustrations. A Biopoem may include: Chad's name, three or four character traits, an important relationship, things Chad enjoys, feelings he commonly displays, fears or challenges he faces, accomplishments, goals, and where spends most of his time. Students may expand the poem to include major moments, interests, or recurring jokes.

CHARACTERIZATION BOOKMARK

To further demonstrate understanding of characterization, invite students to experiment with perspective and voice. Ask students: How might Chad describe someone in his life? How would Chad's personality and humor come through if he were reacting to a teacher, classmate, or family member?

Students may write a short profile, poem, or list written from an observer's perspective, using Chad's typical tone, expressions, and behavior as a guide. This reinforces understanding of character consistency and perspective.

WHAT'S YOUR POINT, CHAD?

Identifying a story's themes requires strong comprehension and higher-order thinking. Begin by discussing how characters help communicate themes through their reactions, decisions, and emotional growth. Consider how characters respond to challenges, solve problems, and are treated by others.

Apply this thinking to *Chad*. How does Chad handle everyday school and life situations? How does his perspective shape the way messages are delivered? What larger ideas emerge from his experiences?

Once students identify a theme, have them express that message creatively using a different form of writing.

CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONS

After finishing *Chad,* ask students what messages or big ideas stood out to them. Challenge them to communicate one of those themes in a new way. Have students choose a theme from *Chad* and, writing in Chad's voice, express it through one of the following:

- A short comic strip
- Song lyrics or spoken-word piece
- A campaign poster
- A letter to a friend or family member

Next, have students create the same product again using their own voice.

Display or present both versions without identifying which is Chad's and which is the student's. As a class, discuss how voice, tone, and language help distinguish the two.
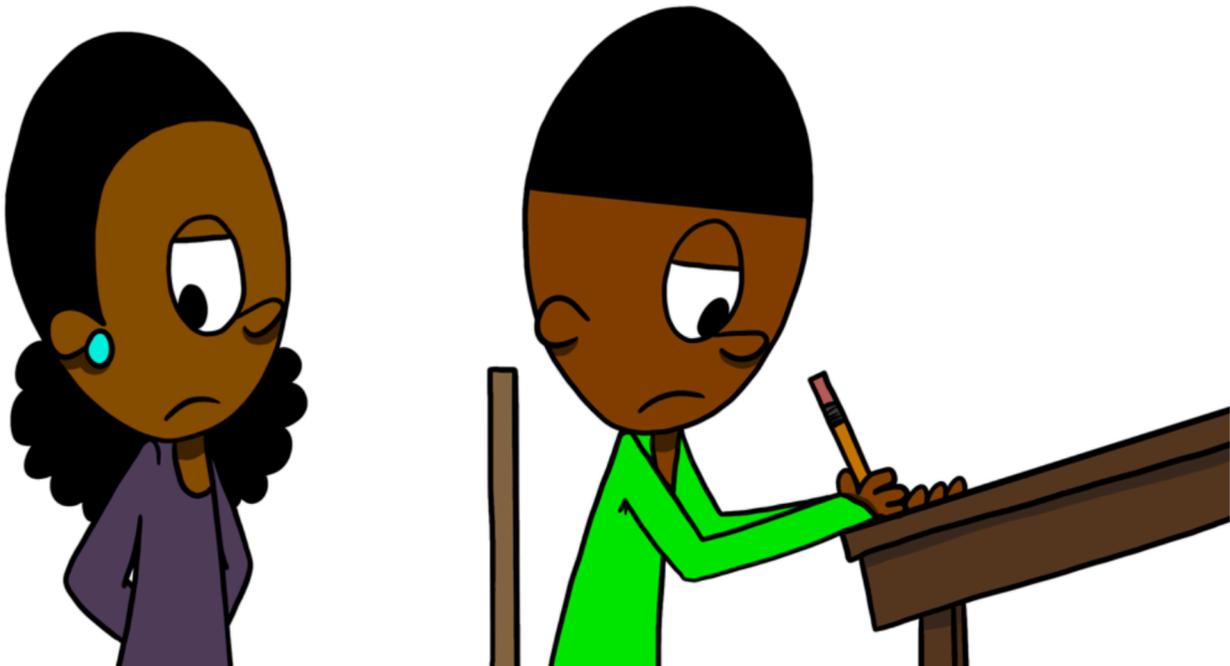
CHAD THE CARTOONIST

In *Chad,* illustrations do more than deliver humor, they communicate meaning. Help students understand that visual elements such as facial expressions, body language, setting, and timing are essential to comprehension. Introduce or review the concept of making inferences, and discuss how readers combine text and images to understand characters, situations, and tone.

Model this process by examining a single panel together. Ask students what the image reveals that the words do not. Emphasize that visuals can also help readers interpret figurative language and unfamiliar expressions.
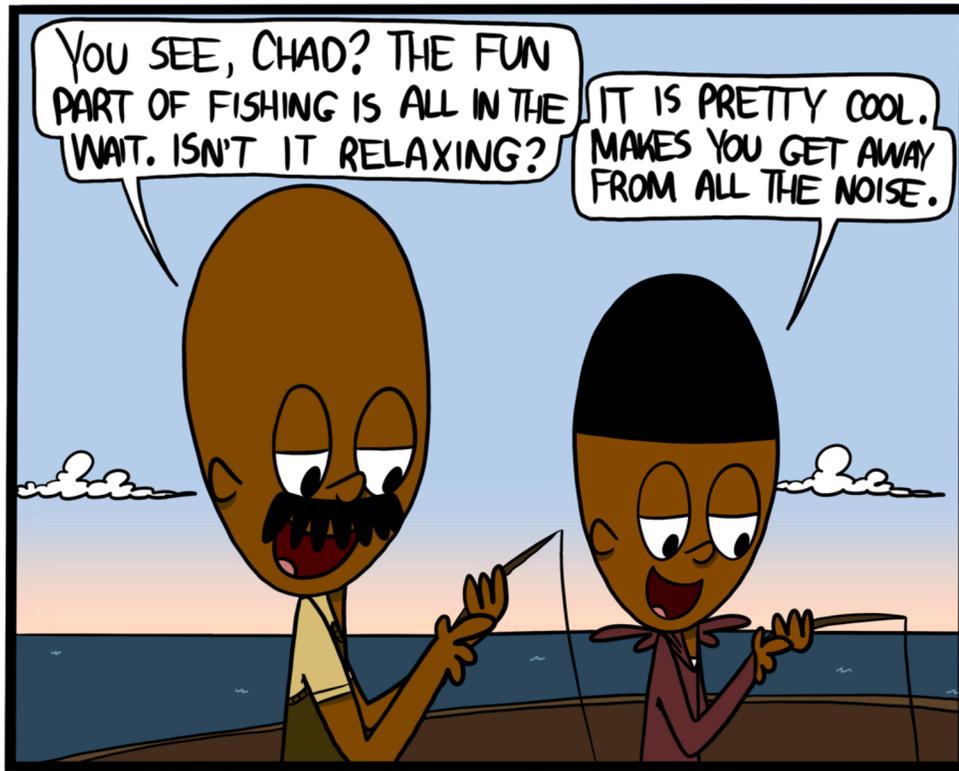
CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONS

DRAW YOUR OWN CONCLUSION

Explain that comic readers often infer meaning by closely reading illustrations. Have students create the first two panels of a short comic. Without explaining their work, students exchange comics with a partner.

Each partner infers what is happening and completes the final panel based on visual and contextual clues. Students then compare endings and discuss whether the conclusion matched the original intent, what clues guided their thinking, and how different readers can interpret the same images in different ways.

BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD

Explain that idioms are expressions whose meanings go beyond the literal words (for example, "caught red-handed"). Identify idioms that appear in *Chad* or in everyday language students hear at school or at home.

Have students choose one idiom and:
- Illustrate its literal meaning in a *Chad*-style drawing
- Write the figurative meaning of the idiom

Each idiom and illustration should be placed on a separate page. Collect all pages to create a class illustrated idiom book, reinforcing visual literacy, vocabulary, and creative expression.

CHAD THE ACTOR

Performance-based activities allow students to deepen comprehension by retelling, summarizing, and reinterpreting scenes from *Chad*. Retelling helps students organize events, understand plot and character, and evaluate how stories are constructed.

Use selected comic panels to prompt student retellings of key moments. Explain that these activities serve as rehearsal for classroom drama and role-play, and help students build confidence in expressive reading and performance.

CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONS

CHAD DRAMA

Working in small groups, students select a scene from *Chad* and adapt it into a short Reader's Theater script. Groups may perform live for the class or record their performance to share with others. As an extension, students may design a performance poster or simple program.

READER'S THEATER: TALK SHOW

In small groups, students create a talk show featuring characters from *Chad*. One student serves as the host, while others portray different characters.

As a group, students develop questions (but not scripted answers) for each character. The host prepares brief character introductions, and each character responds using text evidence and personal interpretation to express thoughts, feelings, values, and personality.
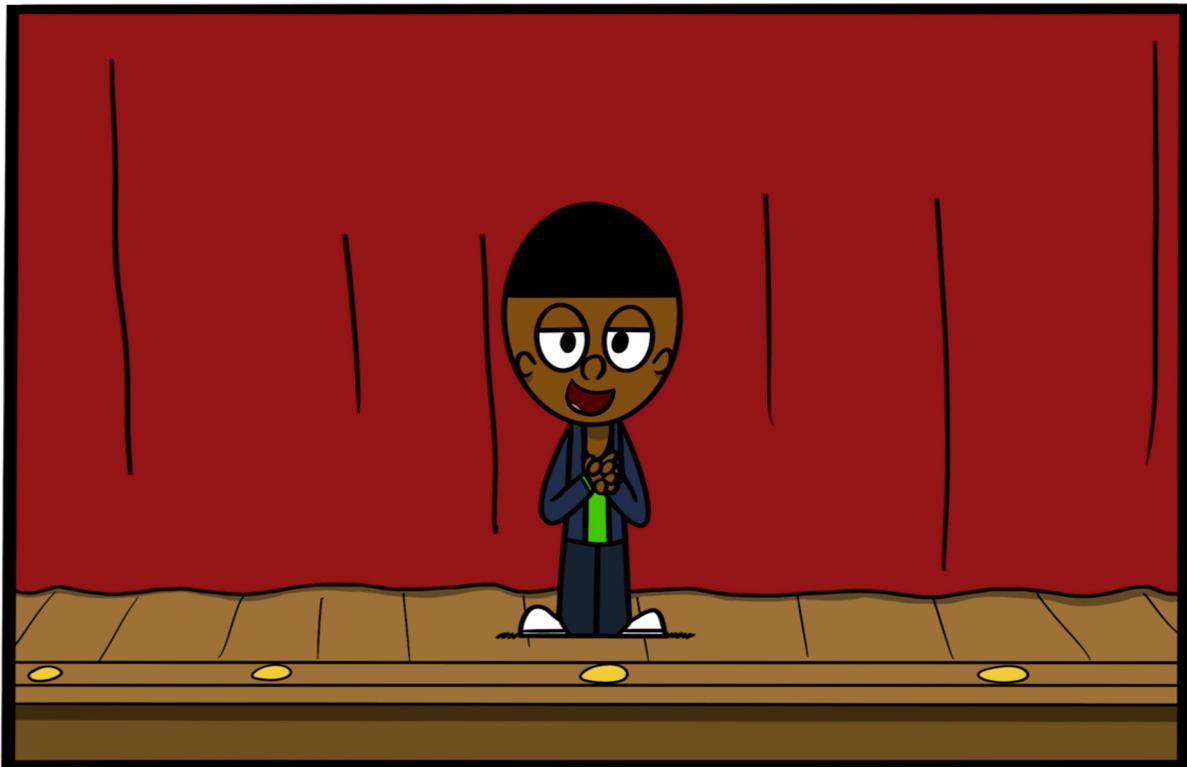
SIGN MY YEARBOOK, CHAD!

Create a class yearbook page inspired by *Chad*. Under each character image, have students record details they learned from the story, such as nicknames, interests, clubs, activities, or memorable traits. Then, writing in Chad's voice, students add short yearbook-style comments they imagine Chad would write for each character.