



## The Curse of the Bologna Sandwich

*Greg Trine , Rhode Montijo (Illustrator)*

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**Bad guys tremble at the sound of his name!**

Meet Melvin Beederman. He's a pretty good superhero, even though it always takes him five or six tries to get launched and flying. His weakness (every superhero has one) is bologna, which makes it hard to go into a deli. Still, Melvin manages to keep the city of Los Angeles free of nasty villains—once he's airborne.

*Crash! Splat! Thud! Kabonk!*

This series has it all: hilarious story lines, amazing classic-comic-inspired illustrations, fearless new superheroes, and SNACKS!

**Bad guys tremble at the sound of his name!**

Melvin loves fighting crime in Los Angeles, until the McNasty Brothers, the baddest guys of all, start robbing banks—and Melvin's superpowers mysteriously disappear. Enter Candace, a third-grade actress with some surprising new talents. Once they team up, nothing can beat these partners in uncrime. Nothing but bologna, that is . . .

## The Curse of the Bologna Sandwich Details

Date : Published May 30th 2006 by Square Fish

ISBN : 9780805078367

Author : Greg Trine , Rhode Montijo (Illustrator)

Format : Paperback 144 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Childrens, Humor, Funny, Chapter Books, Comics, Superheroes

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## From Reader Review The Curse of the Bologna Sandwich for online ebook

### Lauren says

I miss Ordinary Boy. As far as creativity goes, Melvin's up there with Ordinary Boy: Melvin's a recently graduated superhero who always needs five or six tries before he manages to fly and has a weakness for bologna (instead of kryptonite). Even better (for me), he's assigned to Los Angeles. What's not to like? Well, for one, the book is an easy reader (Amazon lists the reading level ages as 9 to 12, but I would say that 6 / 7 to 9 is more accurate): in other words, it's not one of those children's books that most adults (at least me) want to read. The funny thing is, there's enough plot and detail that the story would have been better served as a fully fleshed-out novel. As it is, there's too much packed into such a short book - what I remember loving about those first "read alone novels" was how simple and straightforward they were without too much information. The simple plot made it easy to focus on learning to read. With Melvin, I came away feeling like this would not be a book I'd recommend to children at that early stage of solo reading. But given the creativity, I would recommend it for children who are about to make the leap to actual novels.

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### Adam says

Recent graduate from Superhero Academy, Melvin Beederman is assigned to the city of Los Angles... a city who needs a superhero in the worst way. While Melvin can't quite lead tall buildings in a single bound (it takes a couple of tries) or stop a speeding locomotive (it takes him a little while) he knows that what sets him apart is his brain power.

Full of the 2nd and 3rd grade boy jokes that include the burden of x-ray vision and adult's underwear, bologna sandwiches, and general silliness this is one that appeal the young guy who likes his superhero, loves to laugh, and likes a fast paced story. The sprinkling of illustrations and recurring pattern of storytelling makes this a great first "chapter book" beyond those leveled readers.

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### Tami says

Tons of Fun! That's what the Melvin Beederman Superhero books are! They are simple chapter books about Melvin Beederman, the top graduate in his Superhero Academy class. Orphaned when his math-genius father was killed in a speeding train word problem accident, Headmaster Spinner spotted Melvin in the orphanage, recognizes his special abilities and takes him to live at the Superhero Academy.

As we begin the first book in the Melvin Beederman series, Melvin has just accepted his first superhero assignment in Los Angeles, California. They are in desperate need of a superhero and Melvin gets off to a great start. Unfortunately, a rescue at a tractor pull causes Melvin to part with his superhero cape temporarily at the same time the McNasty brothers ("bank robbers and all-around bad guys") break out of jail.

Alas, when Melvin and his cape are reunited things do not work out the way Melvin was expecting. Melvin knows what his weakness is: bologna. What they do NOT teach you at the Academy is how to defeat your weakness. Melvin's special gifts—the ones that exceed mere superpowers—are the key to discovering his true

strength.

This is a great read-aloud for 1st -3rd graders (1st graders at the END of the school year)! My 8 and 9 year old and I had a blast reading it as a bedtime story! Rhode Montijo's cartoonish superhero illustrations are the perfect accompaniment to a story with a good heart and a little tongue-in-cheek humor that even the kids get!

This one is fun to read WITH a young person!

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### **Maria says**

Melvin is a superhero. He came to protect Los Angles. But there he fight with bad guys but when he met Mc Nates brothers have escaped they wanted to take revenge from Melvin and his assistant.

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### **Tj Lonergan says**

In this book, the main character, Melvin Beederman is a new graduate of the superhero academy. The city he had been assigned to protect was Los angeles, CA. Melvin is great at his job, though it takes him a couple tries to get up and flying, and loves fighting crime in LA. But When he has his first encounter with the McNasty Brothers, he knows he has met his match. I'm not gonna give to much away, but let's just say that every superhero has a weakness, and the McNasty brothers know what Melvin's is.

Melvin- Melvin is a newly graduated student of the superhero academy. He is short, has black hair, big glasses, and his best friend is a rat.

Candace is a third grade student who becomes Melvin's sidekick. She can fly, and shares the same weakness as Melvin. She is short with black hair. She once scored 100 points in a single basketball game.

McNasty Brothers- Two good for nothing, bad smelling bad guys. They steal anything that they can get their hands on.

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### **Kate Hastings says**

RL 550. Melvin Beederman has just graduated from the Superhero Academy and has his first assignment in LA, CA. He creates a hideout in an abandoned treehouse where he watches cartoons and eats junk food. Melvin is far from being a perfect superhero. It takes him about 5 attempts to fly, he's afraid of speeding locomotives and his downfall (think kryptonite) is bologna sandwiches.

In this episode, Melvin's cape comes back shrunk from the cleaners and his powers have evaporated. Meanwhile, a girl in a play finds her cape has grown twice it's size... and she suddenly can move very fast (and has an aversion to bologna). Funny stuff. Great boy book. Grades 2-3.

#### **POST PROGRAM NOTE:**

This was a really fun book discussion. We had pretzels, rootbeer and bologna sandwiches for a snack. I cut out some random pictures from clip art and put them in a bag... the kids pulled a picture of their "weakness."

I have questions if anyone needs them.

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### **Michael says**

The "pilot" episode was very entertaining, and it acts as a kind of coming-of-age story as Melvin tries to find his place/purpose. A lot of classic superhero tropes are introduced, but definitely tongue-in-cheek the whole time. The laundromat dilemma is inspired.

Series impressions: Clever and funny, very relatable for kids who want to be superheros. I like that his sidekick is an African American girl, although I was not pleased that she has trouble in math, and it is Melvin that has to solve their problems with "noggin' power." Still, she has superhero powers, can fly more easily than Melvin, and the two have entertaining interactions. Bonus: contains occasional subtle humor for any adults who may be narrating.who may be narrating.

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### **Ashlee Christians says**

This book's audience is older elementary students to early middle school such as fourth grade to about seventh grade. Both boys and girls would enjoy this book, but I could see more boys reading it than girls.

I thought this book was appealing for its audience because, although there were not a lot of pictures, the book itself was quite funny. The story line in this book included corky humor and ways to boost courage in a person. I enjoyed reading this book and giggling at its goofyness.

This book was from the Goldfinch Award list from the state of Iowa.

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### **Kasha says**

This book is a little bit like Captain Underpants. Melvin Beederman is a superhero boy who just graduated from superhero academy at the top of his class, and he is given the opportunity to work at protecting his first city. This book is just pure fun for kids. It has very little literary value, but kids find it very entertaining. What kid doesn't want to read about kids saving the world?!

The only thing that is mildly offensive is that melvin mentions feeling guilty that he sees people in their underwear all the time because of his x-ray vision. I know my husband would be nonplussed that the main character makes mention of underwear in that context here and there, but my son is at the age where stuff like that is nothing but funny.

I think it's good entertaining reading for young boys. There isn't an AR level for this one that I could find, but I would guess it's probably a 2nd grade level. Also, there are six or seven books in the series, so once you get your kid to read the first one, they'll probably want to read the rest, too.

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### **Abby Johnson says**

Melvin Beederman has just graduated from superhero school and been assigned to cover the bad guys in Los Angeles. He's maybe not the strongest superhero to come out of the academy. And maybe it takes him five tries to actually take off into the air. And he does have a weakness for bologna. But what Melvin lacks in strength, he makes up for in smarts, and that just might be enough to save the day.

This is a funny beginning chapter book that will appeal to fans of Captain Underpants with its slapstick humor.

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### **Ubalstech says**

Tale in the vein of Captain Underpants. Melvin is plucked from the orphanage and trained to be a superhero. Despite graduating at the top of his class, he is unable to do things like fly with ease. He also has trouble turning off his x-ray vision. He is assigned to LA and must learn how to be a hero, even after there is a mishap with his cape robs him of his powers.

This book is not as funny as the Captain Underpants books, most likely as it lacks the bathroom humour and sheer outrageous silliness of its inspiration. Still, it is a low vocab and the illustrations will appeal to the same reader.

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### **Jen says**

Melvin Beederman just graduated at the top of his class from Superhero Academy. Of course, while his noggin is his greatest superpower this doesn't mean that he isn't lacking in other departments -- it takes him 4 tries to fly, clearing buildings takes more than just a single bound, and stopping trains isn't his forte. And don't even get him close to a bologna sandwich. But he eagerly accepts his position as Superhero of LA and does it well -- until a small mix-up with his cape at the cleaners. Now that his powers are gone, how will he rid LA of the theiving McNasty brothers?

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### **James Vachowski says**

Melvin Beederman is a brand-new superhero, fresh out of training. His first assignment takes him to the city of Los Angeles, which hasn't had a superhero since Kareem Abdul-Jabbar retired. In a dry-cleaning mishap and epic wardrobe malfunction, Melvin's powerful cape accidentally finds its way to a third-grade girl named Candace Brinkwater. Even though Candace and Melvin end up sharing some of the same superpowers, they both still have one weakness... bologna. Will the evil McNasty Boys be able to exploit this weakness and continue their crime spree? You'll just have to read the books to find out!

There are eight books in the Melvin Beederman series, and I'd bet that all of them are as funny as the first. If you're looking for a smart new superhero, then Melvin's your man. The hilarious illustrations by Rhode Montijo are the icing on the cake, and I'd recommend these books to any boy who's ever been tempted to wear his underpants on the outside!

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### **Christine Rains says**

Superhero Melvin isn't the fastest or strongest, but he's the smartest and that's why he graduated the top of his class. He was sent to LA for his first assignment, and somehow, he started to lose his powers. Yet the McNasty brothers are on the loose and Melvin can never ignore a cry for help.

A fun superhero story I just finished with my seven year old son. It's silly and it made us laugh. I liked that Melvin's greatest strength was his smarts. Nice way he got past his weakness and defeated the bad guys too.

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### **Ms. Yingling says**

#### Library copy

Melvin is a super hero who has some trouble with his super powers. It takes him a little longer to launch into flight, it takes him longer to stop trains, and he isn't fond of his x ray vision, because he gets tired of seeing underwear! His one undoing-- if he is around bologna, he is weakened. Other super heroes give him a hard time. When aspiring actress Candace takes her cape to the cleaners at the same time Melvin does, the two get the wrong cape, and Candace gets some of Melvin's powers. Eventually, the two meet up and are able to change capes and decide to be partners in UNcrime.

**Strengths:** Many of my reluctant readers LOVE superheroes books. These are a great length, similar to Captain Underpants in their ratio of words to pictures, and on a fairly easy reading level. There are eight books in the series so far, so this will keep them reading for a bit.

**Weaknesses:** Not quite as funny and clever as Captain Underpants, and while the illustrations might be more attractive than those, they also look very computer generated.

**What I really think:** The downside of telling your students that you have read all of the fiction books in the school library is that if you buy seven books in the series, you have to READ seven books in the series. (Book 8 did not come in this shipment. Hmm.)

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