

A Choose to Read Ohio Toolkit

Use this toolkit to plan book discussions, library programs, or classroom activities.

Meet Cincinnati novelist and high school teacher Kurt Dinan and learn about his debut novel.

Select from a range of discussion questions and extension activities to deepen the experience of reading *Don't Get Caught*.

Discover read-alikes and deep-dive resources to explore topics and themes in depth.

Don't Get Caught

By Kurt Dinan



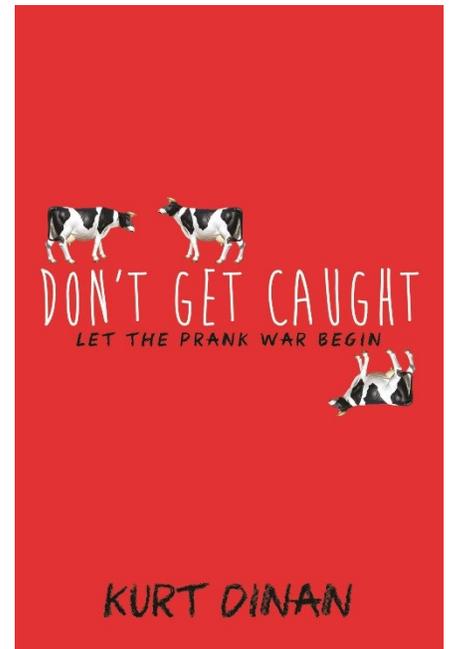
About the Book

10:00 tonight at the water tower. Tell no one.
- Chaos Club

When Max receives a mysterious invite from the untraceable, epic prank-pulling Chaos Club, he has to ask: why him? After all, he's Mr. 2.5 GPA, Mr. No Social Life. He's Just Max. And his favorite heist movies have taught him this situation calls for Rule #4: Be suspicious. But it's also his one shot to leave Just Max in the dust...

Yeah, not so much. Max and four fellow students—who also received invites—are standing on the newly defaced water tower when campus security "catches" them. Definitely a setup. And this time, Max has had enough. It's time for Rule #7: Always get payback.

Let the prank war begin.



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Book Details

Don't Get Caught by Kurt Dinan.
Sourcebooks Fire, 2016. ISBN 9781492630142. 331 pages. Ages 14+.
Leveled Reading: AR Points 11.0. ATOS Book Level 5.1. HL770 Lexile.
shop.sourcebooks.com/dont-get-caught.html

Available as an ebook through the Ohio Digital Library:
ohiodigitallibrary.com

Enjoy the official book trailer for ***Don't Get Caught***:
youtu.be/-EZoTwKPU78



Author photo courtesy Sourcebooks; used with permission. Biography provided by the Ohioana Library.

About the Author

Kurt Dinan is a high school English teacher. He's had several short stories published, including one in 2010's *The Year's Best Dark Fantasy and Horror*. He lives in Cincinnati, Ohio, with his wife, three young sons, and baby girl. *Don't Get Caught* is his first novel.

Author Resources

Kurt Dinan's official website

kurt-dinan.com

Kurt Dinan's blog

kurt-dinan.blogspot.com

Mark Purzel of WVXU's The Book Club @ 91.7 interviews Kurt Dinan

www.wvxu.org/post/kurt-dinan-dont-get-caught#stream/0 (audio)

For publicity and speaking engagement inquiries:

Contact Kurt Dinan at kurtdinan101@gmail.com to schedule an appearance.

Talk About It

*Topics to share when discussing **Don't Get Caught** with teens.*

Spoiler warning! Some discussion questions refer to key elements in the book. Do not read if you do not want to find out what happens.

- Would you have accepted the invite from the Chaos Club? Why or why not?
- Max lists different rules for heists throughout the book. Does the Water Tower 5 follow all these heist rules? Does the Chaos Club follow these rules?
- Which prank was your favorite and why?
- During the course of the book, Max's views on the pranks change. He goes from finding the pranks funny to believing they are harmful. Make a chart of which pranks you thought were funny and which you thought were harmful. Discuss why you put each prank into the category you did.
- Wheeler's character drastically changes from a failing student to a student who wants to succeed. What do you think sparked these changes?
- The Chaos Club was a longstanding club that dated back to when Max's parents were in high school. Were you surprised when you found out who was running it? Who did you think was in charge of the club before Max found out?

**"It's Heist Rule
#23: Always
know more than
everyone else...**

**...that's how you
write your name
in the wet
cement of the
universe."**

Talk About It (continued)

- Was Ellie's reasoning for starting her pranks justifiable? Could she have handled this a different way?
- The title of the book is **Don't Get Caught**, but in almost every instance Max is caught pranking. Why do you think the book was given this title?
- Throughout the book Max struggles with thinking of himself as "Just Max". Do you think he is still "Just Max" by the end of the book? Why or why not?

Go Further

*Ideas for extending the experience of reading **Don't Get Caught**.*

Educators: Every CTRO book may be used to support Ohio's English Language Arts reading, writing, and speaking and listening standards. Other Learning Standards, such as Social Studies: Contemporary World Issues (HS) may also apply. Discussion questions and educational activities for **Don't Get Caught** align with Learning Standards for Grades 9-12.

Librarians, parents, and others: These activities are also for library programs, family activities, and other projects. Learning Standards define what students should know and be able to do at each grade. For more information, see the Ohio Department of Education website, education.ohio.gov. From the Topics dropdown menu, click on "Learning in Ohio."

Spoiler warning! Some activities refer to key elements in the book. Do not read if you do not want to find out what happens.

- Throughout **Don't Get Caught**, Wheeler uploads videos, pictures, and more to the website H8box. This is a fictional website created for the sake of the book. However, it is similar to the social media of real life. How does it compare to the social media that you use? What makes it different?
- The pranks in the book might have only been intended to affect the high school, but other entities, such as the police, had to become involved. How does the involvement of the police, or any other group or organization involved, change the outcome or consequences of the pranks?
- For one of the pranks, the Water Tower 5 steal Mr. Stranko's cell phone and take all of the data off of his phone to help them investigate the Chaos Club. This violates privacy laws in regards to the use of cell phones. Using online resources available to students through INFOhio (infohio.org) and to all Ohio residents through Ohio Web Library (ohioweblibrary.org), look up news stories about court cases regarding cell phone privacy, and current laws on privacy related to technology. What would happen to someone who violated the cell phone privacy laws?
- At first, the Water Tower 5 do not have much in common other than the fact they were all apparently targeted by the Chaos Club. Would the members of the Water Tower 5 have been friends otherwise? What social groups does each member belong to? Think about the different social groups in your school and how you can work to understand and befriend others outside your typical social group.
- The book ends with Max meeting up with Ellie and walking away after he knows the truth. Ellie promises to make Max's life chaos, and essentially turns into the villain of the story. Write or act out how the beginning of next school year will go from the viewpoint of Max or Ellie.

Explore More

*Additional ideas and resources to use with **Don't Get Caught**.*

Privacy and Technology

www.aclu.org/issues/privacy-technology

The American Civil Liberties Union works to ensure that everyone has a right to privacy in our increasingly technological world. The website covers privacy laws and court cases regarding devices from phones to desktop computers. You can review the issues that the website covers from Location Tracking information to Consumer Privacy.

Smartphone Privacy Rights

www.privacyrights.org/consumer-guides/smartphone-privacy

Learning the specific laws and rules around smartphone privacy is important because it could be your data or information being stolen. This site provides information on federal and state laws regarding smartphone security and privacy. The site also covers theft and spyware, and tips to avoid them.

Schools and Social Media

www.pbs.org/video/why-schools-are-watching-students-social-media-1497999195/

This video clip talks about how schools are now trying to monitor students' social media usage. As social media use is so prevalent in our society today, students have to be careful regarding what they post.

Teens, Social Media, and Technology 2018

www.pewinternet.org/2018/05/31/teens-social-media-technology-2018

Learn about the evolving landscape of teen social media use, and teens' attitudes about the effect that social media has on the lives of young people today. This link describes the main findings from a Pew Research Center survey of U.S. teens conducted March 7-April 10, 2018. Also see **Teens' Social Media Use** on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website, www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/news/e-updates/february-2016-teens-social-media-use/index.html, for links to helpful resources to use with teens.

Don't Get Caught Educators Guide

cdn.sourcebooks.com/assets/downloads/libraryresources/DontGetCaught-EducatorGuide.pdf

Provided by Sourcebooks, this guide features standards-aligned pre- and post-reading activities and discussion questions.

Check It Out

*Recommended for readers of **Don't Get Caught**.*

Con Academy by Jon Schreiber. HMH Books, 2015.

Five Times Revenge by Lindsay Eland. Greenwillow, 2016.

The Fourth Stall by Chris Rylander. Walden Pond Press, 2011.

The Haters by Jesse Andrew. Amulet Paperbacks, 2017.

One of Us Is Lying by Karen McManus. Random House Children's Books, 2018.

Choose to Read Ohio, a project of the State Library of Ohio, the Ohioana Library Association, and the Ohio Center for the Book, encourages public libraries, schools, families, and others to build a community of readers and an appreciation of Ohio authors, illustrators, and literature. CTRO is adaptable for use in classrooms, libraries, bookstores, by book discussion groups, families, and other community groups.

Explore Choose to Read Ohio resources & toolkits:
library.ohio.gov/ctro.

This toolkit revised
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