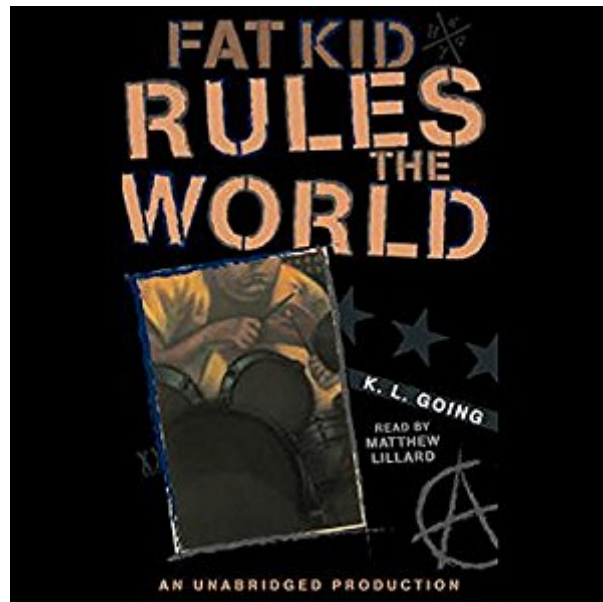


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# Fat Kid Rules The World



## Synopsis

This Michael L. Printz Honor Book and School Library Journal Best Book of the Year is an engaging debut--the story of two unlikely friends who meet when a high-school dropout talks a boy out of suicide and who ultimately save each other. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 5 hours and 45 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Listening Library

Audible.com Release Date: November 13, 2009

Language: English

ASIN: B002WV4OES

Best Sellers Rank: #95 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Performing Arts > Music #107 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Suicide #923 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Friendship

## Customer Reviews

"I'm ready to give him full credit and be on my way, mosey along to contemplate some new nonfunny form of suicide (FAT KID GETS HIT BY A BUS?), but the blond ferret stands up and extends a grimy hand. "Curt MacCrae," he says. That's when I just about piss my pants. Curt MacCrae is a legend at W.T. Watson High School. He's the only truly homeless, sometimes student, sometimes dropout, punk rock, artist god among us." K.L. Going's *Fat Kid Rules the World* is an engaging, page-turning read from a new author on the Young Adult scene. Troy Billings (a.k.a. the Fat Kid) is 6' 1", weighs 300 pounds, and spends most of his waking hours trying to determine how to end what he sees as his useless life. The novel begins with Troy contemplating suicide in a Manhattan subway station, only to be interrupted by Curt MacCrae and presented with Curt's vision for Troy's future: "Big T" will become the drummer in Curt's punk rock band, Rage/Tectonic. The catch? Troy can't play the drums to save his life, but, to Curt, that's no big deal. Over the course of 183 pages (Hardcover Edition), Going takes a deep look at the impact of life, death, obesity, family dysfunction, drug abuse, and the love of music on two high school seniors. The narrative moves along quickly, with some chapters as short as two or three paragraphs. Going's characters are multi-dimensional -- both flawed and passionate -- lending a strong, realistic tone to the story. The

interactions between Troy; Curt; Troy's younger brother, Dayle; Troy's father (an ex-Marine now working as a security consultant); and Curt's mother and stepfather are eerily true to life for many young adults who have lost parents or come from broken homes. *Fat Kid* is definitely a Young Adult novel, suited for readers aged 15 and above. Parents who monitor their children's reading tastes should be aware that Going's language reflects High School in the 21st Century, with somewhat liberal usage of cursing, not-so-vague descriptions of sexual situations, a quick (and needless) swipe at "born-again Christians," and a very true to life picturization of the punk rock scene. *Fat Kid* also deals with drug abuse (including prescription and OTC medicines), loss of a parent, and homelessness. Language and sexuality aside, Going has crafted a marvelous debut novel that should spark intense discussions among teens, their peers, and (hopefully) parents about self-image, self-acceptance, health and well-being, and family dynamics. Highly recommended.

"I'm a sweating fat kid standing on the edge of the subway platform staring at the tracks. I'm seventeen years old, weigh 296 pounds, and I'm six foot one. I have a crew cut, yes a crew cut, sallow skin, and the kind of mouth that puckers when I breathe. I'm wearing a shirt that reads MIAMI BEACH--SPRING BREAK 1997, and huge, bland tan pants--the only kind of pants I own. Eight pairs, all tan." As this head-bashing-yet-really-sweet-tale hits its first screeching chord progression, seventeen year-old Troy Billings contemplates jumping in front of an approaching subway train. A once average-sized child, he has eaten his way through years of depression after the death of his mother. Raised by his father, who is a retired military officer, and having experienced unrelenting contempt from a younger brother, who is a popular jock, Troy is certain that everyone is constantly eyeing him and laughing. "First, the train is coming, its single headlight illuminating the dark tracks. I hear its deep rumble and take the fateful step forward. I want to picture myself flying dramatically through the air but realize I wouldn't have the muscle power to launch my body. Instead, I would plummet straight down. Maybe I wouldn't even get my other leg off the platform--my weight would pull me down like an anchor. That's how I see it." But Troy does not jump. Or plummet. His plans are rudely interrupted by the "disembodied voice" of a skinny teenager--Curt MacCrae--who is sitting in the dark behind him. "He looks like a blond ferret. Stringy unwashed hair and huge eyes, jeans that are barely recognizable, stained white T-shirt, huge red overshirt, ratty old sweater...The sneakers, one Converse and one Nike, are both untied and the laces are all partially buttoned even though it's got to be one hundred degrees in the subway. The guy is so filthy I can hardly look at him. I mean, he's caked--looks like an old war victim from some black and white film." Curt, this majorly poor example of good hygiene, is a homeless, locally legendary punk guitarist who disappeared

from the high school Troy attends. He is also a walking pharmacy. (He believes in self-inflicted health care.) Curt demands lunch from Troy for saving his life, and then informs the enormous young man that he, Troy, is to be the drummer in Curt's new band--a duo named Rage/Tectonic. That Troy has not played the drums since junior high is irrelevant--at least to Curt. As Troy tries to conceive of a different self-image for himself and tries to overcome his paralyzing fears of what he believes everyone else is thinking of him, Curt's dicey health and his dicey relationship with Troy's dad and brother Dayle kept me alternately holding my breath and laughing so hard that I could barely catch it. Though much of Curt's on-the-fringe lifestyle remains an enigma to both Troy and to us, we do get vivid glimpses of the grunge and the glamor associated with being a teenage punk musician." 'You are punk rock, T. You just don't know it yet, and I don't know how to convince you.'

"FAT KID RULES THE WORLD is totally phat! While the joyfulness and quirkiness of the story and the body image issue may allow for grouping this book with some others you've read before, K. L. Going is truly a new voice on the YA scene. Richie Partington ...

I started reading this book this morning, and had to finish it before going to bed. What a great story, and told in a way that doesn't drown you in details. KL Going does a wonderful job of leading you through the story while leaving enough room for you to fill in the blanks. As an adult who struggles with weight, I could certainly identify with Big T's insecurities. It is so easy to get wrapped up in feeling like everyone else is perfect while you miss the mark. Curt's frazzled ability to cut through the hypocrisy and show T that everyone is flawed is a fantastic bonus in this book. I believe parents who are not comfortable with their children being familiar with the struggles of young people suffering from addiction, minors in possession of drugs and alcohol, or foul language should read this book with their child. The issues that the characters face are not far fetched, and this story is a great way to start a conversation with young people about skipping school, drug abuse, sex & managing hormones, and how to handle difficult situations. Great story, only giving 4 stars because I wish the book had another 60,000 words to read.

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