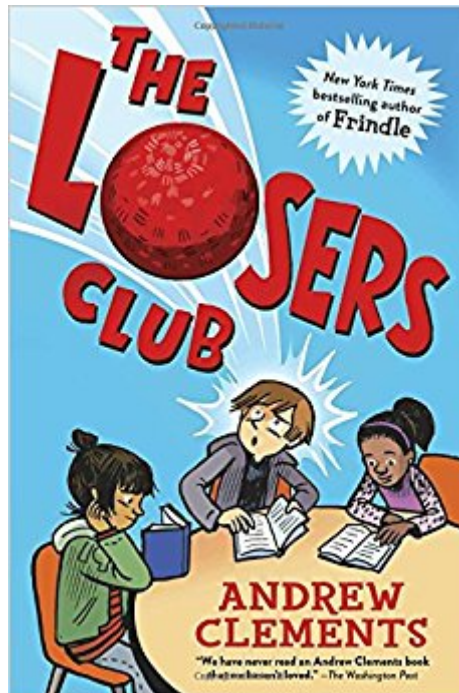




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# The Losers Club



## Synopsis

The beloved New York Times bestselling author of the modern classic *Frindle* celebrates books and the joy of reading with a new school story to love! *Â* Sixth grader Alec can't put a good book down. *Â* So when Principal Vance lays down the law "pay attention in class, or else" Alec takes action. He can't lose all his reading time, so he starts a club. A club he intends to be the only member of. After all, reading isn't a team sport, and no one would want to join something called the Losers Club, right? But as more and more kids find their way to Alec's club "including his ex-friend turned bully and the girl Alec is maybe starting to like" Alec notices something. Real life might be messier than his favorite books, but it's just as interesting. *Â* With *The Losers Club*, Andrew Clements brings us a new school story that's a love letter to books and to reading and that reminds us that sometimes the best stories are the ones that happen off the page "our own! *Â* Praise for *The Losers Club*! "Clements's latest is engaging and funny. A laugh-out-loud first purchase for all middle grade collections, and a solid read-aloud choice for classrooms" *•* "School Library Journal, Starred Review" *•* "LOVED this book" |Five stars. I cannot wait to talk about this when we head back to school next year. I think my fifth graders are going to love it." *•* "Colby Sharp, teacher, blogger, and co-founder of the Nerdy Bookclub" *•* "Readers will instantly relate to Alec's passion and plight, and Clements once again effectively taps into the challenges of middle school social politics and mapping out one's identity. This empathetic coming-of-age journey makes it clear how limiting and pointless labels can be." *•* "Publishers Weekly" Best-selling author of beloved school stories, Clements (*Frindle*, 1998) celebrates readers, inclusion, and the joy of discovering new books. Refreshing and empowering." *•* "Booklist" Praise for Andrew Clements! "Clements is a genius." *•* "The New York Times" *Â* "We have never read an Andrew Clements book that we haven't loved." *•* "The Washington Post

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 0860 (What's this?)

Hardcover: 240 pages

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Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #10,564 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #22 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Books & Libraries #38 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Bullies #293 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Friendship

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Book lovers and reluctant readers alike will enjoy the relatable characters, realistic dialogue, and humorous scenes. "School Library Journal, Starred Review Praise for Andrew Clements! Clements is a genius." "The New York Times" "We have never read an Andrew Clements book that we haven't loved." "The Washington Post" "The master of the . . . feel-good school story." "Kirkus Reviews, Starred" "Clements's style . . . will easily capture the attention of even the most reluctant readers." "School Library Journal

Andrew Clements is the New York Times bestselling author of the beloved modern classic *Frindle*, which has sold over six million copies, won nineteen state awards (and been nominated for thirty-eight!), and been translated into more than a dozen languages around the world. Called the "master of school stories" by Kirkus Reviews, Andrew is now the author of over eighty acclaimed books for kids. He lives in Maine with his wife, Becky. They have four grown sons and two rascally cats. Visit Andrew online at [andrewclements.com](http://andrewclements.com).

Andrew Clements is among my favorite authors for his portrayals of interesting people who face all kinds of situations with creativity, resourcefulness, and positive energy. "The Losers Club" is another winning story, showing how sixth-grade Alec protects his passion for reading while managing challenges at school and home. Although Alec is a "bookworm," Clements' characters are never one-dimensional: Alec is a realistic kid with interests other than reading and with problems other than keeping his teachers and parents off his back. Clements' plots are never predictable, and I enjoyed seeing how Alec figured out how to handle the central issues with honor, humor, and persistence. The final scene is a perfect and surprising culmination to the story. It also contains one of the best statements ever written about the value of books: "We lose ourselves in books for hours and hours--books about all kinds of people and tons of different places. Then we come back, and

we bring things with us. When we get lost like that, I think we find all kinds of cool stuff.... And the book Hatchet? I've read that story so many times that if I ever got lost in the wilderness? I'd be scared, but I'd have a lot of good ideas about how to stay alive, and I wouldn't feel totally helpless or ignorant. Because books do that--they make us lose some ignorance, and lose some fear. And losing fear might mean losing some anger, too."I give "The Losers Club" my highest recommendation.

School stories are an important genre of middle grade literature. Kids can relate to issues with teachers, friends, bullies, crushes, siblings, and parents -- and all of these elements are easy to incorporate into a realistic novel in a school setting. Andrew Clements knows how to write these novels well, and his latest -- The Losers Club -- is no exception. I think there should be a subset of school stories called books for kids who love books. That's what this book is. There are other elements, including sports and crushes and family issues, that make it a general read, but at the core, it's a love letter for kids who love to read. Alec would rather read than do almost anything. In fact, he does read instead of doing a lot of things, like listening to his teachers and participating in class discussions. Word has gotten around at his school, so his 6th grade teachers are keeping a close eye on him, making sure that he is not reading when he's supposed to be working. He even gets sent to the principal for reading. Trying not to read makes his first day of 6th grade exhausting. He misses that mental break. Another new element in Alec's school year is that he and his younger brother are going to the after school program since his parents, who used to work at home, now have to drive into an office. The first day he almost forgets as he rushed to his bus line, so he could finally crack open a book, until his younger brother comes to remind him. Well, at least he can tuck away in a corner for the two hours he is waiting to be picked up and finally read and relax, right? Wrong! The program director tells him that he can't just sit on the bleachers in the gym. He needs to be involved. He has to choose to participate in one of the clubs (origami, LEGO, robotics, Chinese), Active Sports, or Homework Club (where the only reading he would be allowed is that assigned by school). He asks about a reading club, and the director tells him that anyone can start a club with permission and one other member, and she thinks a reading club would be a great idea. The problem is that Alec doesn't really want a lot of people in the club. People mean noise, and he just wants quiet and the ability to read by himself, so after he recruits someone to join, he starts "The Losers Club," because who would want to be a member of a club with that name? Well, it turns out that people do. The club grows, and his little brother even starts one in the room for the lower grades. Alec is still bothered when his frenemy Kent refers to him as Bookworm, but he's happy.

He's able to focus on school during the day and mostly able to read after school. It wouldn't be a good story without growth and conflict, and there's plenty of that here -- a little bit of a love triangle, flying kickballs (illustrated on the cover) coming from the Active Games corner, and parental negotiations. It has been a while -- several months at least -- since I've read a middle grade novel, and this hit the spot. It was funny and sweet and realistic. No one was pigeon-holed. Alec wasn't just a bookworm, and Kent wasn't only a jerk. The story moved along well and had twists and turns along the way that kept me engaged.

How can a kid who loves to read as much as Alec always be in such trouble at school?

That's the story of the Losers Club. Principal Vance tells Alec if he does not stop his constant reading while in class he will be doomed to attend Summer School and this threat happens on the first day of sixth grade! So Alec hatches a plan. He will no longer read in class but he will use his newfound three hours of The Extended Day Program to read and reread his beloved books until - he finds out that laying on the gym floor and escaping into his favorite adventure stories is also against the rules. He has his choice of three locations: 1. Active Games; 2. Homework Room; 3. Clubs. Alec decides to form his own club. A reading club but he can't call it that or others may want to join and he just wants to be left alone to read his favorite books. He submits an application for a group that he will call the Losers Club. He's quite sure no one will want to participate in this group. Or will they? And after his application is accepted what is he going to do for the big presentation he must put on at Open House? This is a charming little book about a boy who must constantly overcome obstacles that he's mostly put in his own way. Alec and his brother Luke, his mom and dad, the teachers and especially his fellow friends and frenemies at school are all colorful and real enough that the reader knows people just like them.

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