

# Who Is R. L. Stine?

- A young boy who wrote joke books on an old typewriter he found in the attic
- The creator of a humor magazine called *Bananas*
- The successful author of the Goosebumps horror series for kids
- ✓ **All of the above!**  
*Find out more in this illustrated book!*

YOUR  
HEADQUARTERS  
FOR HISTORY



Who? What? Where?

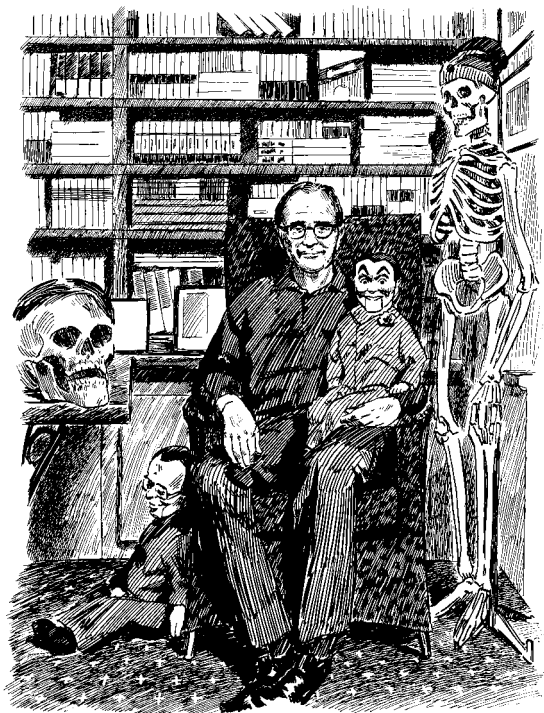
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# Who Is R. L. Stine?



by M. D. Payne

illustrated by Jake Murray

Penguin Workshop

To Francesco, Gabe, and Josh, for letting a  
Halloweenie into the world of Goosebumps—MDP

For Sara—here's to the many stories we've shared!  
—JM

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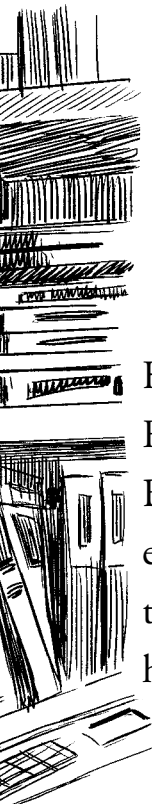
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## Who Is R. L. Stine?

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In 1990, R. L. Stine was a successful author. He had already written a best-selling series called Fear Street. Young adults loved his spooky stories. But he wondered if he could write a series for even younger readers—something scary, but not too scary. R. L. Stine never began working until he had the perfect title. He thought day and night

about what to call this new children's series, but the name just wasn't coming to him.

One morning, as he was reading the TV listings, R. L. saw an advertisement that said "It's Goosebumps Week on Channel 11!" And he thought that would be the perfect name for his new series: Goosebumps! He knew it was going to be something special.

Goosebumps was equal parts scary and funny. It combined ideas from Fear Street and all the other scary stories, funny magazines, and silly joke books he had created as a child.

By July 1992, the first book in the Goosebumps series, *Welcome to Dead House*, was in bookstores. And children around the world loved it!

R. L. Stine's previous books had been popular, but nothing like this. At one point, his Goosebumps books were selling four million copies a month! The series grew into the biggest worldwide best seller of the 1990s. R. L. Stine

worked as hard as he could. He became one of the most famous authors in the world and has written over three hundred books over the course of his career.





Along the way, the horrifying and hilarious Goosebumps tales have inspired children to read—and to read more! Many fans race to check as many titles off their reading wish lists as they can. The series has been featured on television, in film, onstage, at sleepovers, in backyards, and around campfires all over the world.



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## CHAPTER 1

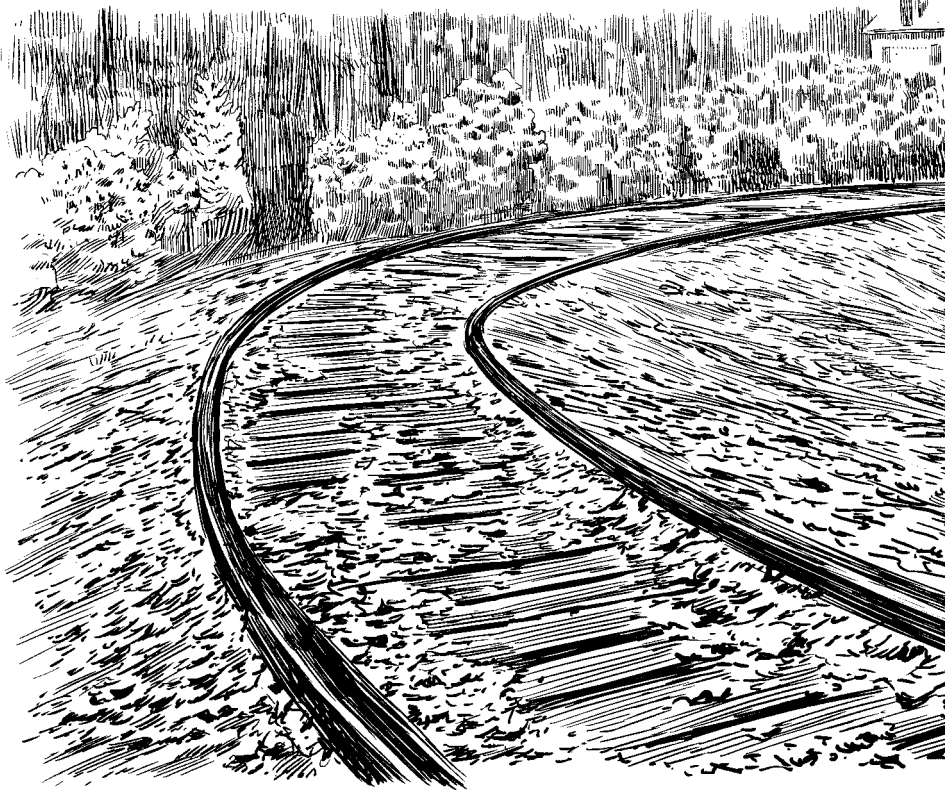
### A Totally Typical Family

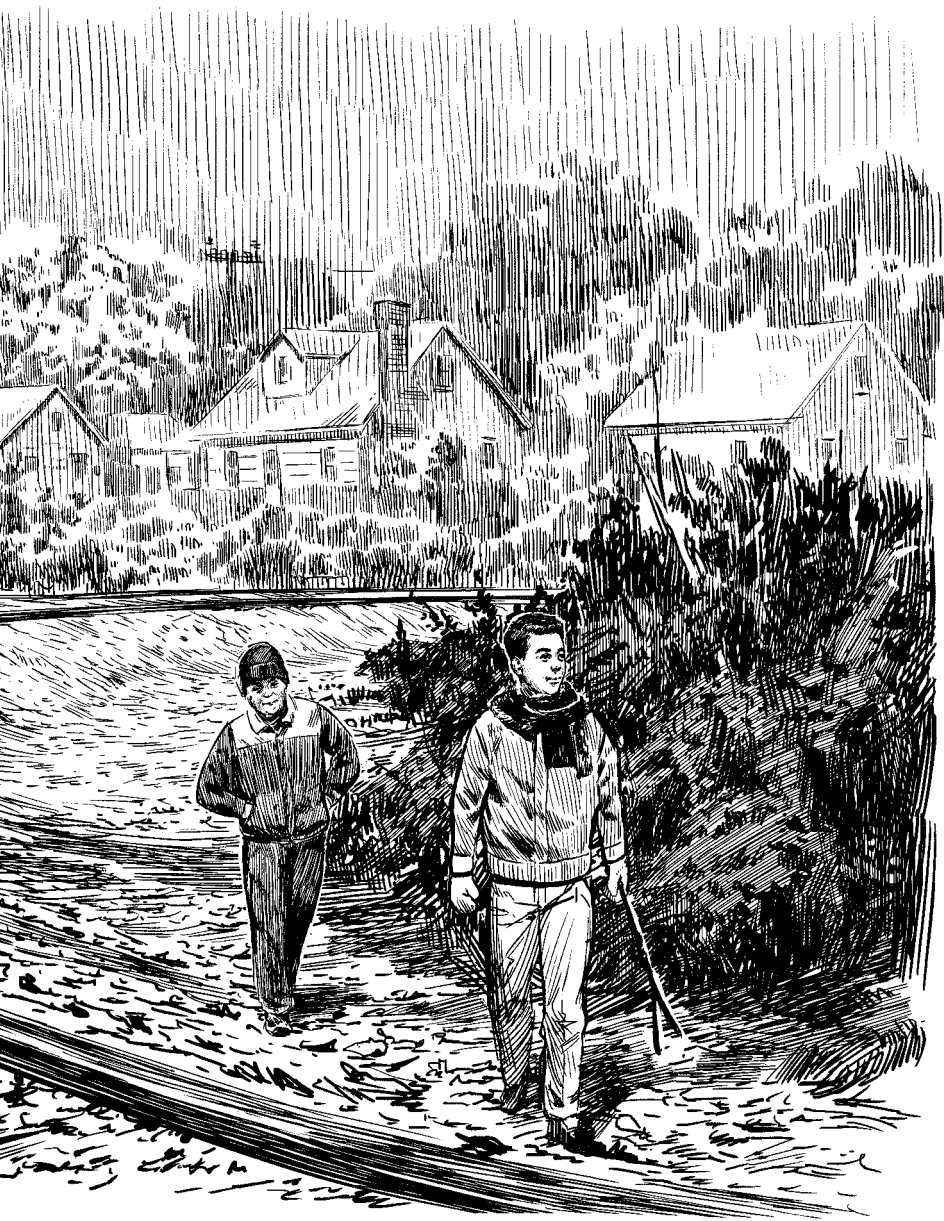
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Robert Lawrence Stine was born in Columbus, Ohio, on October 8, 1943. Bob, as he was called by his friends and family, was the first of three children. His brother, Bill, was born three years later. His sister, Pam, was born seven years later, in 1950.

His father, Lewis, worked for a restaurant-supply company. His mother, Anne, was a stay-at-home mom. In the city of Columbus, the Stine family lived in the wealthy neighborhood of Bexley. But their home was close to the railroad tracks—not where the really rich families lived.





Growing up in a town where most of the other kids had more money was tough for Bob—sometimes he felt as if he didn't fit in.

But Lewis and Anne always made sure their children got the best education they could, and gave them everything they needed. Bob was even able to go away to camp in the summer.



Bob and Bill shared a bedroom. Before bedtime, the brothers would tell each other scary stories. Bob's stories were usually about a younger boy who was a lot like Bill. When Bob got to the scariest part, he would end the story quickly. Bill was left wondering what terrifying thing might have happened to the kid in the story!



Bob would often get in trouble with his mother for spending too much time listening to the radio. In the early 1950s, not every home had a television set. Most people still listened to the radio for news reports, music, and entertaining story series, sometimes called “serials.” Bob liked *The Lone Ranger*, *The Shadow*, *The Whistler*, and *Gang Busters*. These were continuing stories with new episodes each week. Bob learned how to be a better storyteller by listening to all these radio shows. But he was too scared to listen to the show called *Suspense*, because the voice that narrated the show was so terrifying.

