



# Amber Brown Is Not a Crayon

*By Paula Danziger*

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Amber Brown and Justin Daniels are best friends. They've known each other for practically forever, sit next to each other in class, help each other with homework, and always stick up for each other. Justin never says things like, "Amber Brown is not a crayon." Amber never says, "Justin Time." They're a great team—until disaster strikes. Justin has to move away, and now the best friends are fighting. Will they be able to work it out before it's too late?

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## Amber Brown Is Not a Crayon By Paula Danziger Bibliography

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## **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

With spunky Amber Brown, Danziger ( *The Cat Ate My Gymsuit* ; *Everyone Else's Parents Said Yes* ) adds to her oeuvre's sizable brood of magnetic young characters. This heroine's perky, first-person narrative ("I, Amber Brown, am one very excited third grader") allows readers to make her acquaintance immediately--and effortlessly. They'll learn straight away that Amber's life is about to change, and she is not at all happy about it. Her best friend, Justin, is moving away. Since preschool, they have been "a great team": he helps her with fractions ("which I only half understand"); she eats the cream center out of Oreos and passes the cookie part to him ("We call it teamwork. Hannah Burton calls it 'gross.' ") Though she tries to keep a stiff upper lip, Amber's emotions get the best of her when Justin, while packing, decides to throw out the chewing-gum ball they have accumulated. She resolves never to speak to him again, but the two make peace in an affecting scene that brings this brief but memorable novel to a close. Once again, Danziger demonstrates her ability to connect with her audience. One hopes she has more escapades planned for Amber. Ages 7-9.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 2-4-She may not be a crayon, but Amber Brown is certainly blue over the fact that her best friend, Justin Daniels, is moving away. What's making it even harder is that he won't talk to her about how he feels and she can only assume he's not as broken up about it as she is. Then, while cleaning his room for the move, Justin throws away the chewing-gum ball they've been building for a year and a half. It's the last straw and the pair are no longer speaking at all. Finally, Amber's mother helps her understand that Justin's reticence is his way of protecting himself against his sadness and anxiety over leaving, and Amber makes the move that reconciles the two pals. There's lots of fun along with the pathos here; third graders, true to form, call each other outrageous names and gross each other out good-naturedly, and their teacher, Mr. Cohen, is a paragon of creativity and understanding. Ross's black-and-white sketches throughout add humor and keep the pages turning swiftly. Danziger reaches out to a younger audience in this funny, touching slice of third-grade life, told in the voice of a feisty, lovable heroine.

*Marie Orlando, Suffolk Cooperative Library System, Bellport, NY*

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 2-4. Amber Brown has been best friends with Justin Daniels since preschool. They have private games and jokes; they look out for each other. Then Justin's dad gets a job in Alabama, and the family has to move away. As the house is sold and things are packed up, Justin tries to act as if nothing is happening; Amber picks a fight; the friends aren't speaking. Without a trace of condescension, Danziger gets the child's funny and vulnerable voice. The third-graders' friendship is beautifully drawn, especially the rituals about food (Amber always eats the cream filling of the Oreos and hands Justin the cookies), their shared enjoyment of the messy and the gross. Ross' cartoon-style illustrations capture Amber's vital classroom--the fun and the fights, as well as the empty place when a friend moves away. *Hazel Rochman*

## **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

**Linda Gordon:**

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