

***The Pigman* by Paul Zindel (Published by Bantam Books)**

Approved for use in Communication Arts, Grade 8

Summary

Two disaffected teens connect with a lonely old man, Mr. Pignatti. Through their cruel pranks and insensitive disregard for his personal feelings, readers watch The Pigman's disillusionment, eventual decline, and finally, his death. Through repentance and remorse, the teens develop a sense of moral responsibility and expand their ability to relate to others outside of their immediate social group. It was too late for The Pigman to benefit, but the reader does.

Connection to the Curriculum

The shifting first person point-of-view of *The Pigman* allows for the in-depth study of multiple characters and their development. The plot is dramatic and clearly delineated, lending itself to plot line analysis and an examination of the connection between the plot elements. In addition, students can examine the cause and effect of the boys' actions. The thematic structures of this book are far-reaching and especially applicable to the struggles for identity that adolescents face.

Standards

Course Objectives (Benchmarks)

Reading: 1.2- The students read fluently. 1.3- The students expand vocabulary. 1.4- The students comprehend a variety of texts.

Literature: 2.1- The students use literary concepts to interpret and respond to text.

Possible Skills Taught (Indicators)

Reading:

1.4.15- The student uses information from the text to make inferences and draw conclusions.

Literature:

2.1.1- The student describes different aspects of characters (e.g., their physical traits, personality traits, feelings, actions, motives) and analyzes how major characters are developed (through their thoughts, words, speech patterns, actions) and how they change over time.

2.1.2- The student identifies and describes the setting (environment, time of day or year, historical period, situation, place) and analyzes connections between the setting and other story elements (e.g., character, plot).

2.1.3- The student identifies major and minor elements of the plot (e.g., conflict, crisis/turning moment, climax, resolution, rising action, falling action, subplots, parallel episodes) and explains how these elements relate to another.

2.1.4- The student understands aspects of theme (e.g. moral, lesson, meaning, message, author's ideas about the subject) and supports with implicit/explicit information from the text.

2.1.5- The student identifies the use of literary devices (foreshadowing, flashback, figurative language, imagery, symbolism) in a text and how the author uses such devices to help establish tone and mood.

2.2.7- The student identifies common structures and stylistic elements in literature, folklore, and myths from a variety of cultures by comparing and contrasting customs, ideas, and shared characteristics.

A Note on the Text

(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.) *In this story about teens, readers experience typical teenage banter. Although the boys make poor decisions (tricks on the elderly man, drinking, using the man's property irresponsibly), the novel emphasizes the teens' regrets for their detrimental actions. This is an excellent novel to examine intergenerational relationships and consequences for inappropriate behavior.*

Additional Unit Design Connections

Coming soon:
To be completed during future curriculum development activities