



STUDENT PACKET

GRADES 6-8

Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key

Jack Gantos



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key

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NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Name _____

Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key
Activity #2 • Word Association/Freewriting
Use Before Reading

Directions: Think about each word or phrase listed below. Freewrite about each idea for at least five minutes. Use extra paper if you need it. Be prepared to discuss your thoughts with your classmates.

1. Hyperactivity

2. Special education

3. Family

4. Self-control

5. Decision-making skills

SAMPLE

Name _____

Directions: Write a brief answer to each question as you read the novel at home or in class. Use the questions to guide your reading and prepare for class discussion.

Chapter 1 “Off the Wall” & Chapter 2 “Family Tree”

1. What question does Joey repeat often in the first chapter?
2. Where does Mrs. Maxy send Joey?
3. Who does Joey imitate when he spins around in the hallway?
4. What task does Joey perform in the principal’s office?
5. Where are Joey’s father and mother?
6. Who takes care of Joey in his parents’ absence?
7. Who surprises Joey at the front door?
8. Who else in his family is “wired,” according to Joey?
9. How does Joey describe his family tree?
10. Describe Joey’s activities with Grandma.
11. What color is Joey’s bedroom painted? Why?
12. How does Joey’s mother change the way Joey and Grandma have been living?
13. What punishment does Grandma devise for Joey?
14. What article of Grandma’s clothing does Joey find in the street?
15. What does Joey imagine happened to Grandma?
16. According to Joey’s mother, what is the difference between Joey and Grandma?
17. What is rule number one?

Chapter 3 “Handful” & Chapter 4 “Go Fish”

1. How is Joey’s behavior in the morning different from his behavior in the afternoon?
2. List at least three of Mrs. Maxy’s rules for Joey.
3. Describe what happens with Joey and the pencil sharpener.
4. Why do you think people give each other secret looks when Joey is around?
5. What is Mrs. Maxy’s concern for Joey and the other students in his class?
6. What is Joey’s nickname in his neighborhood?
7. To what does Joey compare his new medicine? Why?
8. Why don’t Joey’s pills always work?

Name _____

Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key
Activity #4 • Vocabulary
Chapters 1 & 2

drills (3)
whirling (4)
recognize (8)
high-voltage (9)
hobbies (11)
hyperactive (14)

blurt (3)
yanked (5)
crumble (8)
pyramids (10)
mesmerized (12)
stuntman (15)

hesitate (4)
clamped (5)
pigpen (8)
scalded (11)
fuse (13)
dispenser (16)

holler (4)
behavior (6)
responsible (8)
vibrate (11)
apologizing (14)

Directions: The teacher will assign you one of the vocabulary words. Turn to the page on which it is used in *Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key* and examine how it is used in context. Complete the word map below and share your results with the class.

synonyms

magazine cut-out, drawing, or symbol that shows what the word means

word

definition in your own words

word used in a sentence

Name _____

Joey's World

Directions: You may be able to draw parallels between a character's world and your own. Think about each item on the top. Then describe a related situation or event from your own world on the bottom.

Joey's World
Joey is raised by his grandmother rather than his parents.

My World

Joey's World
Joey is impulsive and has trouble concentrating.

My World

Joey's World
Joey and his mother have difficult issues to resolve.

My World

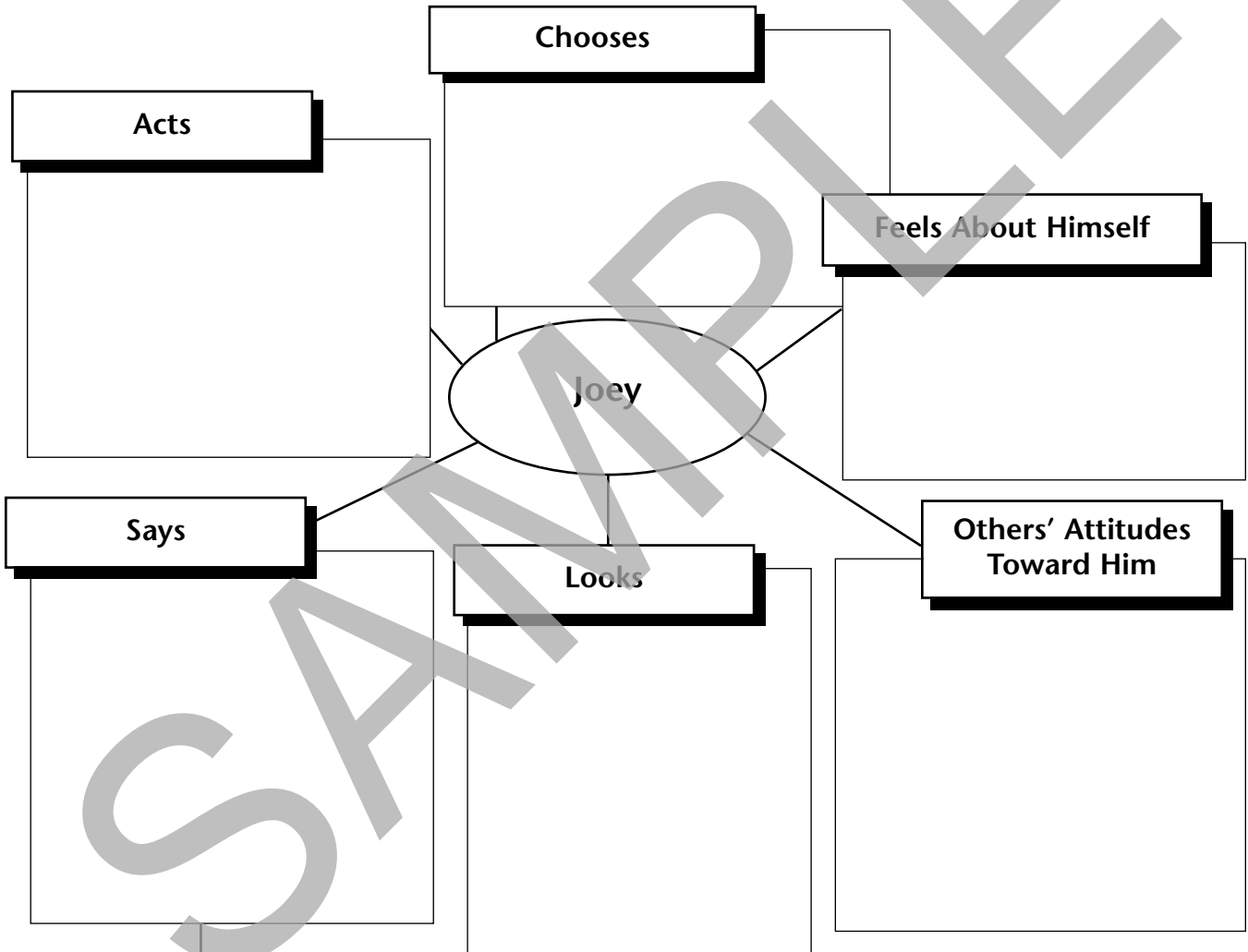
Joey's World
Joey longs for a pet of his own.

My World

Name _____

Attribute Web

Directions: Recall what you learned about Joey Pigza in the first half of the book, before his move to the Lancaster County Center. Now think about Joey as he appears at the end of the book. How has he changed? Complete the attribute web below by giving at least two examples in each category, one from the first half and one from the second half of the book.



Saddest/Funniest Quotes:

Additional Notes and Thoughts:
