Prestwick House

Activity Pack

THE PIGMAN

BY PAUL ZINDEL

Name: _____   Date:_____

Pre-Reading

Characterization

Objectives: Assessing the elements of friendship and the attributes of friends to understand their importance in determining a character's actions
Using friendship and the need for friendship as a means of identifying the drivers in this story

Activity

The Pigman is the story of two teenagers and an older man who becomes an important part of their lives. It is also a story about friendship. To help you understand the importance of friendship in the story, discuss the elements of friendship before you read the book. At the end of the story, you will have an opportunity to revisit this activity to see if your ideas about friendship have been changed by the experiences of the characters.

- Working in small groups, complete one chart to show qualities the group looks for in a friend.
- Complete a second chart to show qualities that suggest someone would not be "friend material."
- Save the charts for a review after reading the story.
- After the group has completed the charts, take an informal vote and put a star at the top five qualities of a good friend and the top five elements that suggest a person would not make a good friend.

Name: _____   Date:_____

Chapters One and Two

Character Development

Objectives: Developing a quick perception of the characters
Anticipating actions the characters might take
Perceiving how behaviors in themselves or others predict behaviors

Activity

This book is written in chapters with what is called "alternating voice," which means that one person writes (or "speaks") in one chapter, and another person writes/speaks in the next chapter. In this case, John Conlan and Lorraine Jensen are the two narrators, or speakers.

Complete the chart that follows.

- The first part of the chart will give you a quick map of the personality of each narrator.
- Next, complete the section that asks you to name a star, celebrity, or character from a book or movie similar to John and Lorraine.
- Finally, think about people in your school or family that remind you of John or Lorraine—you do not need to write these names down.

Name: _____   Date:_____

Chapters Three and Four

Drama (Role Playing)

Objectives: Understanding the dynamics of the phone gags
                      Identifying with the characters of John, Lorraine, Dennis, and Norton

Activity

First, we all need to understand that using the telephone to play jokes or for false purposes is illegal. **This activity will not include any actual phone use.**

- Four students will take turns using an inactive (turned off) cell phone as a prop, and they will pretend to make gag phone calls.
- Four other students will pretend to receive the calls, and they will reply to the callers in whatever way they choose.
- Pretend calls should be no more than three minutes.
- When all four "callers" have completed their role playing, the class can choose the person who made the best actor for John and for Lorraine.

Name: _____   Date:_____

Chapters One – Five

Artistic Interpretation: Book Jacket

Objective: Broadening interpretation by using art

Activity

Working individually, students will create a new front cover for *The Pigman*. Students may use any available media: drawing or painting, pictures taken from magazines or other sources, text or graphics from computers or magazines, fiber collages, paper creations or embossing, or any other source that allows for the creation of a usable book cover.

Name: _____   Date:_____

Chapter Seven

<u>Art</u>

Objective: Grasping nuances in the book

Activity

In Chapter Seven, Mr. Pignati takes John and Lorraine on a tour of his house. Follow along on this tour, making notes on what each room looks like.

Working alone or in small groups, develop a proposal to reorganize or redecorate Mr. Pignati's room, keeping the following ideas in mind:

- Mr. Pignati wants to honor his wife's memory.
- The budget for this project is $500.
- Mr. Pignati likes to be comfortable as he watches TV.
- Mr. Pignati does not want any fragile or high-maintenance art or furniture.

Name: _____   Date:_____

Chapters Eight and Nine

Dramatic Interpretation

Objectives: Grasping how home life has affected John and Lorraine
Stimulating students to think about how their own home life is shaping them

Activity

Students are selected (as volunteers or by appointment) for the following roles: Lorraine and Mrs. Jensen; John, Mr. Conlan, and Mrs. Conlan.

Chapter Eight includes a scene in which Lorraine and her mother interact in ways that show Mrs. Jensen's fears and Lorraine's desire for an accepting home. Two students will act out this scene in spirit – not reading directly from the text but interpreting the text – and then the class should discuss their insights into this relationship.

Chapter Nine includes a scene in which John and his parents have dinner. The scene shows the Conlans as parents who are tired of parenting and who have a clear preference for their older son Kenny. Have students recreate this scene, interpreting it freely rather than reading from the text. Then the class should discuss John's home life, its assets, and its liabilities.

After both dramatic interpretations, you should compare the two sets of parents.

Name: _____   Date:_____

Chapters Six – Ten

Book Jacket (Part 2)

Objective: Interpretation by using art

Activity

Working individually, students will create a new back cover for *The Pigman*. Students may use any available media: drawing or painting, pictures taken from magazines or other sources, text or graphics from computers or magazines, fiber collages, paper creations or embossing, or any other source that allows for the creation of a usable book cover.

The back cover of a book usually includes a summary of critical praise for the book. It may also include a photograph or other representation of the author, but it could include pictures of the characters, comments from readers, a map of the setting in which the story took place, or any creative approach that ties into the book.

Name: _____   Date:_____

Chapter Eleven

Writing

Objectives: Letter-writing
                   Restating the characters' feelings

Activity

Two major scenes occur in this chapter: John and Lorraine visit Mr. Pignati in the hospital, and John and Lorraine return to Mr. Pignati's house for dinner and discover something new about themselves. Students can choose either scene to discuss in a letter. The letters should include factual information from the book and express the feelings implied but not stated in the text.

When students have completed their letters, have volunteers read the letters aloud and encourage discussion on the issues raised.

Name: _____   Date:_____

Chapter Thirteen

Chronology

Objectives: Clarifying the action of a chapter or story
Mapping as a technique used in making movies or videos

Activity

Chapter Thirteen is the "busiest" chapter so far in *The Pigman*. It features many activities and a whole host of characters, some of whom are not important to the story. One way to clarify the action of the story is to make a map of it, literally noting the steps in the story. This makes it much easier to look back over the story and select the parts that are important from the ones that are "filler."

Story mapping is a technique used in developing a play or making a movie, where each action is broken down separately. It may help you map the story to see it unwinding as a movie.

Break the story down into segments, describing each one in a small box. For incidents that are important to the story, add an asterisk (*) or color the box a different color to make it stand out.