

Approved for use in English II

Summary of the Work:

The Pigman explores the relationship between two high school sophomores, John and Lorraine, who feel that all adults in their lives, including their parents and teachers, are against them, and a man named Angelo Pignati, whom they call "the pigman." Though they initially meet through a ruse to get money from the lonely old man, John and Lorraine soon learn that Mr. Pignati is not like the other adults in their lives, and they come to value their relationship with him. When Mr. Pignati ends up in the hospital after suffering a heart attack, John and Lorraine cross the line with their relationship with him, leading to tragic results.

Rationale:

Even though *The Pigman* was published in 1968, the book still has relevance for sophomores. The main characters in the book are sophomores, and their behaviors and attitudes, especially toward adults, mirror those of many students even today. While the experiences John and Lorraine have may be different than those of modern-day sophomores, students can still see themselves and their classmates in John and Lorraine and, therefore, relate to them. The book also reveals the struggles that teenagers go through on a daily basis while trying to grow to adulthood but still enjoying the freedoms and explorations of youth. The book lends itself well to lively discussions of teenage behaviors vs. adult expectations, and students are able to analyze and evaluate the behaviors of two students who may be very much like themselves or, on the other hand, may be polar opposites.

Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:

- Kirkus (Kirkus Reviews, 1992)
- Kelly Winters, Critical Essay on *The Pigman*, in *Novels for Students*, The Gale Group, 2002.
- Teri Lesesne, "Humor, Bathos, and Fear: An Interview with Paul Zindel," in *Teacher Librarian*, Vol. 27, No. 2, December 1999, pp. 60-62.
- National Council of Teachers of English, *Speaking for Ourselves: Autobiographical Sketches by Notable Authors of Books for Young Adults*, National Council of Teachers of English, 1990.
- Scholarly reviews are also available online through Books in Print and Gale. Contact the library media specialist to obtain username and password information to access the subscription database of full-text reviews.

* Print resources are available from the library media center and libraries in the district. Contact any library media specialist to view the scholarly sources.

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Noted Distinction:

- Book Links (A.L.A.) 05/01/06
- Notable/Best Books (A.L.A.)
- Best Books for Young Adults, 1993, American Library Association

Readability:

- Lexile Score: 950
- Readability Level: 5.9

Learning Resources Guidelines:

- The novel meets the Learning Resources Guidelines.

Standard Alignment: [\(link\)](#)

Approval:

Submitted to Committee:

Approved for Adoption: 1969

Notes on the Text:

(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

This novel fits well into the sophomore English curriculum, especially with the development of critical thinking skills. It also lends itself well to exploration of important issues in today's society, such as those related to morality and personal responsibility.

Connection to the Curriculum:

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Additional Connections:

(AP, Honors, Essential/Applied, Dramas, Films, etc.)