**Proscribing Porcelain Pigs?**

Have you ever gone to a school library and seen a list of books that students cannot read, because they have themes of violence, drug abuse, and other topics that could be considered inappropriate? The popular novel, *The Pigman*, is often on those sorts of lists. I, for one, do not believe that it should be there. It has important themes of family, realistic situations, and is humorous. *The Pigman* would be a very inspirational book to teach to young adults and should be.

In this story, the theme of family is a large part of the book. Both John and Lorraine have family problems. John’s father used to drink, and he really wants John to work at the Exchange. His mother is always busy cleaning. Lorraine’s mom is very strict, and wants her to stay home and clean the house. When John and Lorraine meet Mr. Pignati, they become a makeshift kin of their own. The two young teens learn about the values of family and how much their parents mean to them. Eighth graders reading this story would also be enlightened upon these family values and begin to treat their families better.

*The Pigman* also introduces realistic situations into the story. When John and Lorraine constantly make lies, they eventually face the consequences, as shown when caught by the police at the party at Mr. Pignati’s house. Lies are a part of the real world, and consequences also come with lies. Another realistic aspect is the deaths in the story. Mr. Pignati’s death was imminent, and a part of life. Everybody dies, and some people don’t want to face the truth. Also, some kids have trouble facing the fact that someone has died, like Lorraine. They can easily relate to her and her endeavors. Eighth graders will be facing the real world sooner than you think, and *The Pigman* shows the everyday world in the eyes of John and Lorraine in an astute way.

Humor is another part of the story that makes *The Pigman* so good for young adults. A novel that is boring and flat will not keep the attention of students. *The Pigman*, along with all of its other good qualities, will keep students entertained and wanting to come back and read more. It will be one thing that kids will want to come to school for. An example of this is when John draws the mustache on his face, to look older and sillier. It’s funny because that can be rather demeaning in the right situation, and is quite nonsensical. Another example is when John was questioned about if he had glued the lock on the telephone. He answered, “The ghost of Aunt Ahra.” It is comical because it’s obvious that his Aunt Ahra is dead, and she could have never done it. It is not often that a book is funny and has a serious message at the same time, but *The Pigman* nails it.

A great deal of parents and teachers may believe that this book encourages unlawful actions, such as underage drinking and breaking and entering. The problem with this argument is that if they read the novel, they would have realized that there were consequences of those actions that they took. For instance, John and Lorraine got in trouble with the police from having a large cocktail party in Mr. Pignati’s house without permission. After that, they learned their lesson, and John thought, “Our life would be what we made of it-nothing more, nothing less.” This shows that he definitely learned his lesson and will not do anything too bad anymore because if he does, he could ruin his life. He realizes that he needs to do everything he can to make his life the way he wants to.

In the end, *The Pigman* is a great book for teaching young adults, due to its connections to the theme of family, its rational situations, and its comicality. This novel teaches commendatory themes in general, and a growing teenager deserves to know these things, so they can take on the world. Maybe you could take the time to pick up a copy of *The Pigman* and see for yourself these very qualities found in it. The story might just even sweep you off of your feet and become one of your favorites.