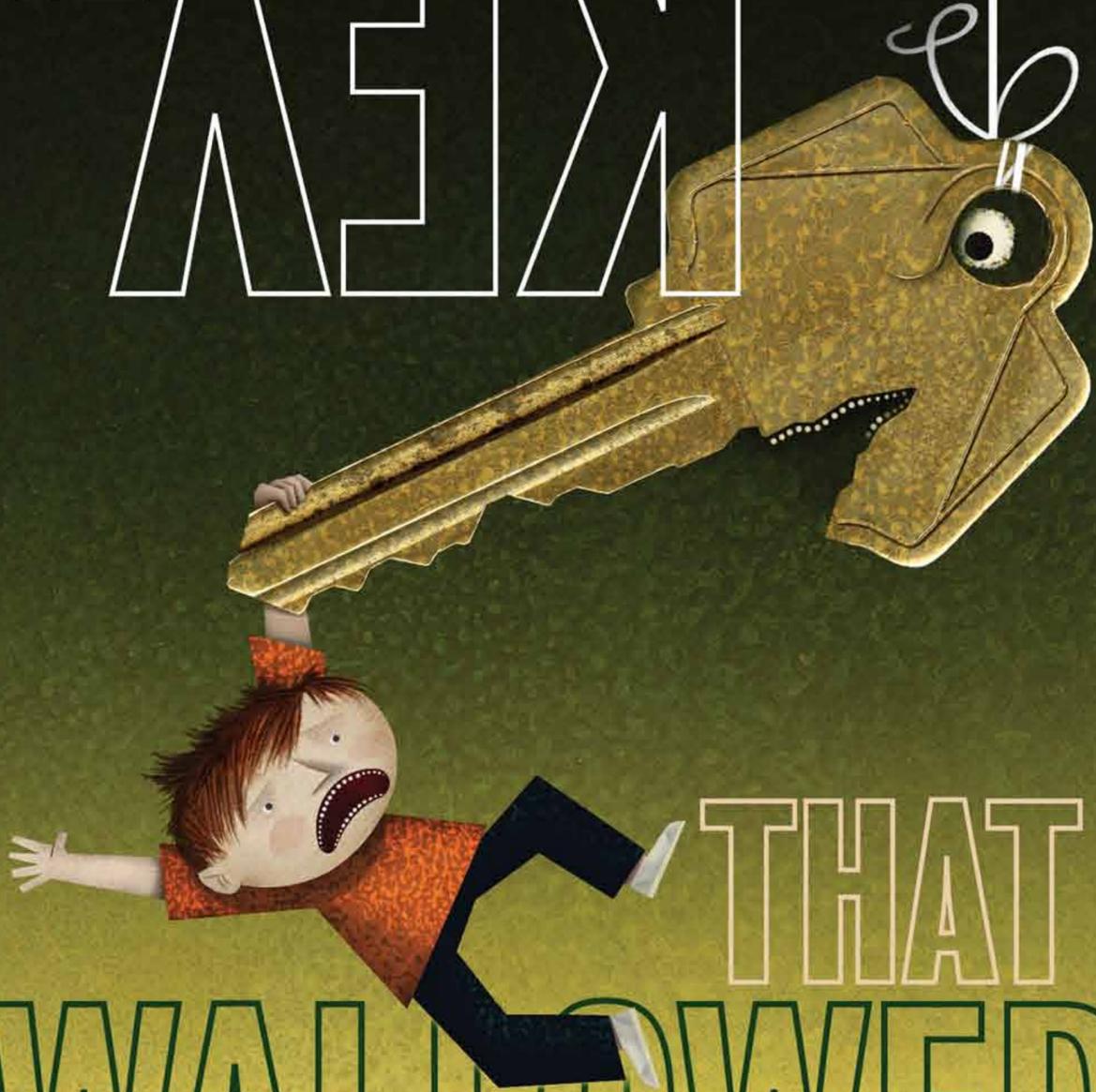


Joey Pigza's Most Triumphant Misadventure Yet!

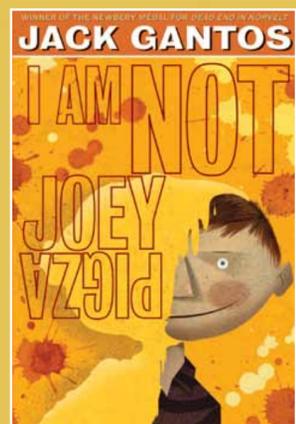
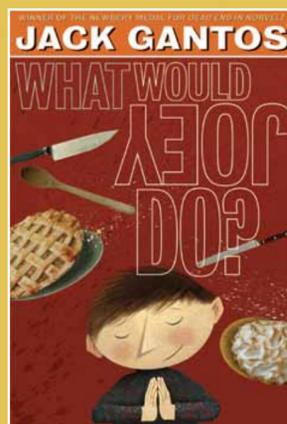
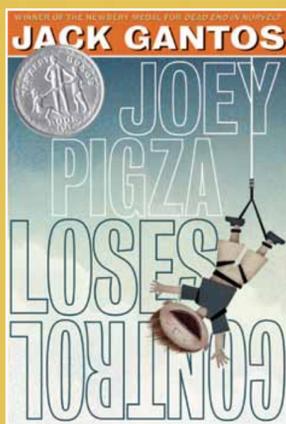
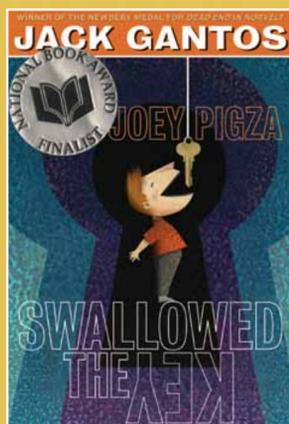
JACK GANTOS

THE KEY



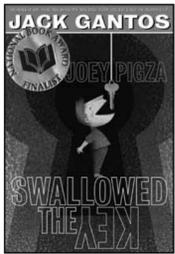
THAT SWALLOWED JOEY PIGZA

Read the entire
JOEY PIGZA
series from the
**NEWBERY
MEDAL-
WINNING**
author of *Dead End
in Norvelt*



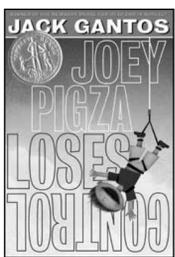
COMMON CORE TEACHER'S GUIDE

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION



About the Book: Joey Pigza is wired—bouncing-out-of-his-chair, running-around-in-circles, and talking-a-mile-a-minute wired. He lives with his mom, who understands how to handle him, but Joey's teachers don't always have patience with him. One day he swallows his house key, one day he cuts off the tip of a girl's nose, and one day he sharpens his finger in the pencil sharpener. Joey needs help, so the principal sends him to a special school where he can be tested and can have his meds regulated. Life can only get better for Joey!

1. Joey wants to follow the rules, but he just can't. Why does Joey make such poor decisions?
2. Joey's mother abandoned him. How does she prove to Joey that he can depend on her?
3. Why does Joey finally believe that he is a good kid? What role do other people play in helping him accept himself?
4. How does being placed in the special-education class affect Joey's attitude about himself? How does Special Ed help Joey?



About the Book: Joey desperately wants to get to know his father, so when summer rolls around, Joey's mom takes him to his dad's house to spend a month. Even though Joey has heard his dad is crazy, Joey is surprised by the way his father acts. Joey discovers his father is coaching a baseball team, and he wants Joey to pitch. When his father puts a lot of pressure on him to win for the team—and without his medicine—Joey starts to unravel. Joey learns the hard way that he isn't as much like his father as everyone says he is.

1. Why doesn't Joey listen when his dad starts talking? What does Joey want from conversations with his father that his father doesn't give him?
2. How does Joey's relationship with his grandmother change? What does she do that helps Joey? How does the reader know that Joey's grandmother truly has his best interest at heart?
3. What are the similarities between Joey and his father? How are the two of them different? What does Joey learn about his father that helps him understand himself?
4. What does Joey enjoy about playing baseball? When Joey is on the pitcher's mound, how does his father make him nervous? How does Leazy help make Joey's game time more enjoyable?



About the Book: Joey's new self is put to the test as the craziness with his parents spins out of control. He just wants to help everybody he meets, so their lives will be better. He even tries to help his parents, but Joey's grandma tells him they are beyond help and he should focus on helping himself.

Joey loves helping at the grocery store, but when he attends homeschool with his blind neighbor, Olivia, he's not sure how to help her. Olivia calls Joey a hyper-retard and refers to herself as blind-as-a-brat; she is just mean to Joey, but still he wants to help her. But when his grandma tells Joey bad things happen in sevens, Joey starts counting. And, sure enough, by numbers six and seven, Joey thinks his world is falling apart.

1. How does Joey's work at the supermarket help him relax and feel in control? How does Joey's label maker contribute to his new, unwired self?
2. What advice does Joey's grandma give him about his parents? What does she say that helps Joey understand his parents' fighting?
3. How do Joey's parents demonstrate their lack of parenting skills? What effect does their selfishness have on Joey?
4. Why is it so important to Joey's grandma that Joey have a friend? How does Joey eventually convince Olivia to meet his grandma?
5. On page 200, Joey's Saturday thought is "to look as grown-up as I had become." What events contributed to Joey's being more grown-up? How does he show others around him that he is taking himself more seriously?



About the Book: Joey's parents are now officially off-the-chain. After Joey's father wins the lottery, he changes his name to Charles Heinz, remarries Joey's mother, and changes her name to Maria. But, worst of all, Joey Pigza is now Freddy Heinz. Joey hates the name

and does everything he can to prevent the change, but to no avail. His father also buys a diner and insists that "Freddy" quit school to help him, and then "Freddy" discovers his mother is pregnant. His father spends his days playing the lottery, his mother spends her days shopping, and Joey spends his days with his paint ball gun, trying to stay out of trouble. Soon, baby Heinzie is born, and Joey's life changes once again.

1. How do the changes that Joey's parents make in their lives affect Joey? What does Joey think about his new life?
2. Why does Joey's mother think it is so important for Joey to forgive his father? How does Joey come to grips with forgiveness? What is his father's reaction when Joey finally forgives him?
3. Why is Joey so excited about the new baby? What does Joey do in preparation for Heinzie's arrival? How does Joey's dad influence the kind of brother Joey will be?
4. No one in the Pigza family ever really comes to grips with being a Heinz, but they all deal with it differently. Discuss how each family member reacts to the changes.



About the Book: Joey proves to all those in his life and, most importantly, to himself that he is not a messed-up kid. He is a caring son to his parents, a loving big brother to Carter Junior, an amazing friend to Olivia, and a good student and classmate. Through his efforts, Joey reunites his family by confronting his father and then supporting his mother through an emotional breakdown. Joey assumes responsibility for Carter

Junior, and he cleans and organizes the family home. He also encourages his girlfriend, Olivia, to be her true self. Joey finally discovers the key to living a contented life.

1. As Joey's mother declines emotionally, Joey must step up to take care of Carter Junior and to assume adult responsibility for himself and their home. How does Olivia's arrival help Joey? What does Olivia learn about herself that will benefit her life?
2. Once again Joey confronts his father for his lack of responsibility and for stalking the family's home. What does Joey say that finally helps his dad understand the family's need for him to be responsible? What decision does his father make that could change all of their lives?
3. How does Carter Junior help those around him feel calmer and more at peace? What special gift does Joey possess? How do Carter Junior's and Joey's gifts help others?
4. What is the key that swallowed Joey Pigza?

CCSS: L.4.1, L.4.3, L.5.1, L.5.3, L.6.1, L.6.3; RL.4.1, RL.5.1, RL.6.1; SL.4.1, SL.5.1, SL.6.1

ACTIVITIES

ADHD

Divide students into small groups and ask them to research Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, or ADHD. Each person in the group should research one aspect of the disorder: symptoms, diagnosis, causes, treatment, or "living with the disorder." Then, have students write a short synopsis of the information they gathered from their research for two different audiences: parents and students. Have each group compile their information into a parent brochure and a student brochure. Present to the school counselor and nurse for review and request that they place the information on the school's website as a resource for both students and parents. Rotate the brochures each month or two so that all group brochures will be made available to students and parents.

CCSS: L.4.1, L.4.3, L.5.1, L.5.3, L.6.1, L.6.3; RL.4.1, RL.5.1, RL.6.1; W.4.1, W.4.4, W.5.1, W.5.4, W.6.1, W.6.4

Losing Control—NOT!

In each book, Joey develops a different method of controlling himself and the symptoms of his ADHD. Ask each student to select one of the five books and to identify the method Joey uses to help him maintain control of himself and to calm him down when he feels "spring." Have students research the method in the selected book for information that would support this as a good focusing or stress-reducing strategy. Have students write a brief explanation of how the method works for Joey and his thought process in determining what helps him, and include the information that they may have found that agrees or disagrees with the usefulness of this strategy. Students can share their writing in groups of five, with each member discussing a different Joey Pigza book. Post the writing in the classroom.

CCSS: L.4.1, L.4.3, L.5.1, L.5.3, L.6.1, L.6.3; RL.4.1, RL.5.1, RL.6.1; W.4.2, W.4.4, W.5.2, W.5.4, W.6.2, W.6.4,

To Thine Own Self Be True

Joey learns so much about himself as he navigates the minefield that is his life. School and home are both difficult, and all of his relationships try his patience. Ask students to identify the lessons Joey learns about himself that have made him more confident and that have given him the ability to love himself. On a sheet of paper ask students to make three columns and label them: Lesson Learned, Conflict That Prompted the Lesson, and Relationships Affected. Upon completion of their prewriting, ask students to choose three of the lessons and to compose a letter from Joey's point of view to his parents, a school official, Olivia, his grandma, or another character about what he has learned. Students can share their letters with the class.

CCSS: L.4.1, L.4.3, L.5.1, L.5.3, L.6.1, L.6.3; RL.4.1, RL.5.1, RL.6.1; W.4.1, W.4.4, W.5.1, W.5.4, W.6.1, W.6.4

Literary Element—Theme

The theme is the main idea of a story, generally based on an insight about life or human nature. Have students pair up to write a one-sentence theme about the Joey Pigza series and to write a brief justification of their theme. Then, ask each pair of students to research a famous quote that exemplifies the theme. Have students write their quote, their theme, and the brief justification on a poster board. Have students add drawings and/or visual elements with captions to connect to scenes in the book that support the theme. Display the poster boards on the walls of the classroom.

CCSS: L.4.1, L.4.3, L.5.1, L.5.3, L.6.1, L.6.3; RL.4.2, RL.5.2; W.4.1, W.4.4, W.5.1, W.5.4, W.6.1, W.6.4

Who Is Joey Pigza?

Divide the class into five groups and assign each group one of the five Joey Pigza books. Then ask each group to write a character analysis of Joey based on the assigned book, including: Joey's actions or behaviors, his words, his thoughts, his motivations, and how others react to him. Each student in the group should take one of the above topics and write a paragraph or two about that topic, including specific details from their book to enhance and support their character study. Then regroup the students by selecting one student from each group, forming new groups based on similar character topics, and have them write a paper, detailing the evidence that Joey changed in that particular area over the course of the books. Each group can then share their writing with the class. Encourage groups to present their analysis in creative or original formats.

CCSS: L.4.1, L.4.3, L.5.1, L.5.3, L.6.1, L.6.3; RL.4.1, RL.4.3, RL.5.1, RL.5.3, RL.6.1, RL.6.3; W.4.1, W.4.4, W.5.1, W.5.4, W.6.1, W.6.4

A Friend to Depend On

Olivia and Joey form an amazing bond based on their need for each other. Their relationship is difficult because Olivia is so mean and Joey is so kind. Ask students to select a partner and to write a poem for two voices: one voice from Olivia's point of view and one voice from Joey's point of view. Students can use and/or adapt direct quotes from the book, and the poem should be true to both characters. Have students practice reading their poems and performing them for the class.

CCSS: L.4.1, L.4.3, L.5.1, L.5.3, L.6.1, L.6.3; RL.4.1, RL.5.1, RL.6.1; W.4.2, W.4.4, W.5.2, W.5.4, W.6.2, W.6.4

