

Name: _____

Story in Stereo: Point of View in *The Pigman* Self-Assessment

Post your short essay to your wiki page use the formatting functions of the wiki to do this:

Underline & Bold your **primary claim/thesis**. Just underline the minor claims that help develop it. *Is the thesis/primary claim a single, simple sentence that answers the question in the prompt? It should be!*

All the specific, **textual evidence** from the novel needs to be turned **RED**.

- Quotations from text (with quotation marks).
- Paraphrasing of a passage (in your own words).
- Summary of an event (in your own words).

Source citations need to be turned **BLUE**.

- Page numbers where quotes came from go in parentheses at the end of the sentence (pp. #).
- “In Chapter 2, Lorraine discusses....”

Put **reasoning** for textual evidence in **bold**.

- Explain and clarify why the evidence supports the theme.
- Logic is clearly spelled out.

Counterargument should be *italicized*, and the **rebuttal** should be **highlighted** in yellow.

Get used to including all the following elements of writing in your essays:

_____ Attention Getter/Background Info

_____ Transition Words/Phrases

_____ Conclusion Statement

_____ Varied sentence length and structure

_____ Correct spelling and punctuation

Sample:

The Pigman by Paul Zindel is a novel with two first-person narrators. John and Lorraine lend their voices to alternate chapters, which allows the reader to see the story from two different perspectives. As narrators, John and Lorraine balance each other by providing a more complete telling of the story than either of them would alone.

“As Lorraine said, I am very handsome, and I do have fabulous eyes,” John writes at the beginning of Chapter 3. **This illustrates his extreme self-confidence because only a person who borders on arrogant would bring such a fact to the reader’s attention. Most of us consider it conceited to brag about our own looks.** Lorraine, on the other hand, does not feel so confident. She says, “**You may as well know, I am not Venus or Harlow**” (9), and she admits at the end of Chapter 2 that **she feels embarrassed when she has to reach over the side of her seat to pick up a book: “I was sure I’d look like an enormous cow”** (12). **Frequent self-criticism is commonly understood to be a sign of low self-esteem, so balancing this against John’s overconfidence provides the reader a more realistic view of the events in the story. John is probably incapable of criticizing his own behavior, but Lorraine is the voice that reminds the readers when the line of acceptable behavior has been crossed. She feels the shame that John ignores.** John, on the other hand, reminds us that sometimes bad things happen no matter what, as when he says of Mr. Pignati’s death, “**I think he would have died anyway. We may have speeded things up, but you can’t really say we murdered him**” (18). **It is true: People die. Lorraine and John are both right part of the time, so the reader can decide for him/herself how to feel about the characters and their behavior.**

The way each narrator talks about other people also provides a more balanced narrative. Within the first four chapters, John casually refers to the librarian by her cruel nickname, “The Cricket,” calls the student using the encyclopedia a “four-eyed dimwit” (3) and even refers to his supposed friends Norton and Dennis as “two amoebae” (15). **People who speak this callously of others are usually not too concerned about hurting feelings or sympathizing.** Conversely, in the same chapters, Lorraine sympathizes with Miss Reillen, even going so far as to correct herself when she calls the librarian by that nickname. She sympathizes with Miss Stewart, the type teacher who keeps her sick mother in the middle of the living room (8). She also feels bad about Mr. Pignati’s apparent loneliness when she first calls him during the phone prank (22). **This concern for others is a hallmark of a kind, empathetic character. John’s outrageous insensitivity coupled with Lorraine’s oversensitive nature allows the reader to reach his/her own conclusions about the deeper significance of the story,** and this is one sign of good literature.

*Having two narrators could cause the story to seem inconsistent, and it could become confusing for the reader, but the voices of the characters come through so clearly, that I don’t think this is a problem in *The Pigman*.* John and Lorraine seem to balance each other nicely, and it is a refreshing way to present a story. I have never read a book like this before, but I think I like this “story in stereo.”