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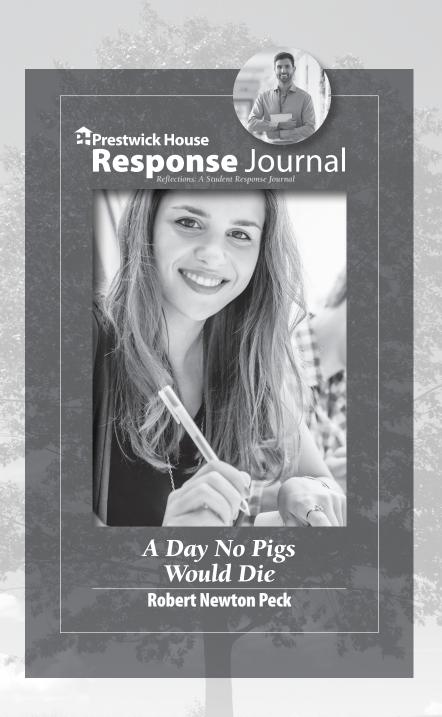
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Response Journal

To The Student

Although we may read a novel, play, or work of non-fiction for enjoyment, each time we read one, we are building and practicing important basic reading skills. In our ever-more complex society, in which reading has become more and more crucial for success, this, in itself, is an important reason to spend time reading for enjoyment.

Some readers, however, are able to go beyond basic reading techniques and are able to practice higher thinking skills by reflecting on what they have read and how what they read affects them. It is this act of reflection—that is, stopping to think about what you are reading—that this journal is attempting to encourage.

To aid you, we have included writing prompts for each section; however, if you find something that you wish to respond to in the book more compelling than our prompts, you should write about that. We hope you enjoy reading this book and that the act of responding to what you have read increases this enjoyment.

After you read the indicated sections, choose the questions to which you will respond. Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers to these prompts, and there is no one direction in which you must go.

A Day No Pigs Would Die

Chapter 1

- 1. Because of his Shaker religion, the narrator dresses quite differently from his classmates. As a result, Edward Thatcher makes fun of him. Has anyone ever made fun of the way you dress? Have you ever been tempted to make fun of someone you thought dressed oddly? Why do you suppose people make fun of others?
- 2. The narrator has a great desire to return at some time and teach Edward Thatcher a lesson. Just about everyone has probably had a similar desire. Do you know anyone who plans to return to high school someday, just to show up all of his or her old classmates? How would you like to impress your friends from school ten years after you graduate?
- 3. Did you have any reaction to the description of the cow, the calf, and the narrator's actions that took up most of Chapter One? Is it too graphic, believable, exciting, or disgusting?

Chapter 2

4. This story is written in a rural, New England dialect. A dialect is a distinctive variety of a language spoken by members of an identifiable region, nation, or social class. Dialects differ in pronunciation, vocabulary and, often, in grammar. Write a dialogue between two or more people in some dialect that you're familiar with.

Response Journal

15. This chapter ends with Robert Peck saying, "With Pinky next to me that night, I guess I must have been the luckiest boy in Learning." Why do you suppose he feels lucky? Do you suppose the name of this town is meant to be symbolic? Of what?

Chapter 5

- 16. In Chapter Five, Robert describes how he spends a typical Sunday afternoon. How would you feel about growing up like that? What do you see as that lifestyle's good and bad points?
- 17. In this kind of novel, readers frequently wait for something bad to happen, and, possibly, a bad thing is just about to occur. Do you get a similar feeling as you read this book? If so, what bad thing or things might happen?
- 18. What kind of reaction to the scene with the frog, the pig and the crow did you have?
- 19. Papa had said earlier that it's his mission to work in the slaughterhouse killing pigs even though he becomes bone weary, because that is how he earns money to pay off the farm. Robert says that Papa gets stirred up when he fails to do his chores. Robert adds, "Right he should. Chores are my mission, not his." Does this discussion of missions give rise to any thoughts about jobs you have to do?

A Day No Pigs Would Die

29. Robert's father tells him that if oxen and hogs are to be judged at the same time, Robert's place is with the oxen, not Pinky. Why does his father say that? If the judging does come at the same time, what do you think Robert will do? What would you do if you were in his situation?

Chapter 10

- 30. Robert tells us that his father said, "Never miss a chance to keep your mouth shut." What would you say is good or bad with that advice?
- 31. As he leaves for Rutland, Robert is told one thing by his father, "manners." What does that word mean to you? What do you suppose the word "manners" means to Robert's father? Why do you suppose it is so important to Robert's father that Robert have manners?
- 32. This book has a great deal to do with learning values like duty, responsibility, respect, neighborliness, love, and caring for others. When you become a parent, what values do you think you'll wish to teach your children? How do you think you might go about teaching these values?

A Day No Pigs Would Die

Wrap Up

- 45. Sometimes when a novel ends, we are sorry because we wish to spend more time with the characters whom we've come to know so well. This is probably why sequels are so popular. Tell what you think would happen to Robert and his family in a sequel to this novel.
- 46. When you read the last page of this novel, what are your thoughts and/or feelings?
- 47. Many novels that have a young person as the main character are said to be of the "Coming of Age" genre. The term indicates that in the course of the novel the character moves from immaturity to maturity. Describe the ways in which *A Day No Pigs Would Die* fits this description.