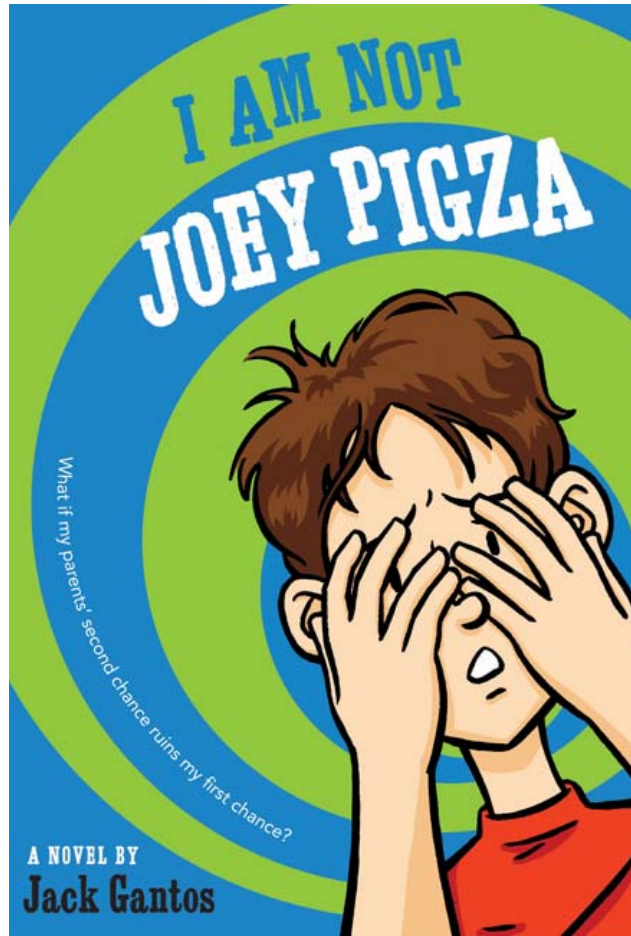


I AM NOT JOEY PIGZA  
Discussion Guide



*I Am Not Joey Pigza* by Jack Gantos

ISBN: 978-0-312-66100-7

Grade Range: 5 to 9/Age Range: 10 to 14

**ABOUT THE BOOK**

Joey's dad is back and he's handing out hundred dollar bills. He's also changed his name from Carter Pigza to Charles Heinz. Joey's mom thinks it's perfectly normal because she used to be Fran and now she's Maria. Now Charles and Maria are calling Joey a new name, too. Freddy. And it turns out they were never divorced. They're even renewing their vows. And the whole family is going to run a diner together. Should Joey's parents really be the ones making all the decisions around here?

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Carter Pigza / Charles Heinz tells Joey, "You have to dig deeper than just your name to know who you are" (p. 14). What do you think he means?
2. Do you think Joey knows who he is at his core?

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3. Being Freddie Heinz causes Joey to doubt who he is at the core. Is he really different?
4. On many occasions, Joey tries to use his better judgment (p. 18)—sometimes he’s successful, sometimes he’s not. Find examples and discuss.
5. For private reflection, think about who you are at the core—your qualities, interests, and talents. Are there moments when you doubt yourself or don’t use your better judgment? What might you do to bolster your self-awareness and good judgment?
6. Why is Joey convinced that the only thing his dad has changed is his name?
7. How has a windfall of money changed Joey’s dad? His mom?
8. Throughout the book, Joey is asked to forgive and forget his father’s actions. Why does Joey struggle with this? How does Joey feel after he has forgiven his father?



**Jack Gantos** is the author of numerous series for younger readers including the Jack Henry books, the Joey Pigza series, and the Rotten Ralph Readers. *Hole in My Life*, his memoir for young adults, was chosen as a Printz Honor book. His next book, *Dead End in Norvelt*, will be available from FSG in September 2011. He lives with his family in Boston, Massachusetts.

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