

## Lesson Plans for Health Classes

### **Pre-reading**

Students will:

Skim and scan the first twenty pages of *The Fat Boy Chronicles*.

Write down any words, names or ideas that make the novel sound interesting.

Look up the dictionary meaning of *chronicle*.

Students discuss:

What is the setting of the novel?

What predictions can you make about the book?

What do you know about the main character?

**Homework:** Students are to list ingredients found in each of their five favorite foods. Also write down the nutritional counts of the food in grams. Note how many calories are in each serving.

Read the first twenty pages of *The Fat Boy Chronicles*.

### Day 1

After reading the first twenty pages:

Students discuss the foods they eat and share their lists of ingredients and nutritional counts in grams. Does knowing the nutritional value change your attitude towards food?

Encourage students to consider personal health practices related to nutrition and weight control. Read about nutrition on the Internet or in teacher-selected articles.

1. Discuss Jimmy's attitude towards food. Find examples from the text to support your opinions.
2. What kinds of foods do Jimmy and Allen eat? On a scale of 1-10, 10 being the healthiest, how would you rate Jimmy's and Allen's food choices.

Divide class into groups of four or five. Student groups design an eating plan for Jimmy and Allen that might result in weight loss. Consider creating a plan that YOU would follow. Share this plan with the class.

**Homework:** Read the short story "The Scarlet Ibis." How is Jimmy similar to Doodle?

## Day 2

Discuss the “The Scarlet Ibis.” Give students time to read their written responses to the story.

Next, instruct students to individually prepare a drawing of Jimmy Winterpock. On the back of the paper, draw the ideal teenage boy. In lieu of drawing, you might use adjectives to describe each.

Discuss:

1. What differences did you notice between your first and second drawings?
2. Which drawing do you like the best? Why?
3. What characteristics did you draw that were unrealistic for most people you know?
4. Where do we learn about body image and attractiveness?
5. How can you identify myths about body size and shape?
6. What is unhealthy about female and male media models?
7. What are the dangers of an over-emphasis on appearance and thinness?
8. What are the dangers of using commercial weight loss products?
9. What can be done to help people think about healthy body shape and size?
10. What have you learned from this exercise?

Writing Assignment:

Based on personality only, which character would you choose as your friend? (Jimmy, Paul, Jessica, Allen, or Spencer) Using at least three quotes from the text, explain why.

## Day 3

Discussion:

1. Describe Jimmy’s high school experience.
2. Who are the biggest bullies Jimmy encounters? How does Jimmy deal with this humiliation? How do you deal with people who put you down?
3. Describe Paul’s home life. How is his home life different from Jimmy’s?
4. What is Jimmy’s attitude towards Allen? Support your opinions with quotes from the text.

Divide into groups. Each group enacts a scene in which Jimmy and Allen stand up to Nate. Share the scene with the rest of the class.

Writing assignment: If you saw someone bullying or making fun of someone, what would you do? How would you handle it if someone started bullying you, day after day?

**Homework:** Assign the next twenty pages.

Day 4

Discussion:

1. Describe the murder. What actions do Jimmy and Paul take to try to solve it?
2. How do Jimmy and Paul almost get caught putting his sister's picture on MySpace?
3. Of what importance is church to Jimmy?
4. What more do we learn about Paul's home life?
5. What is the result of Jimmy's visit to the doctor?

Students read their favorite journal entries out loud. Discuss Jimmy's feelings in these entries.

Days 5, 6, 7

Students begin research on speeches:

Topics may include the following:

Alcoholism: Cause and Effects

Teen Obesity

Heart Disease

Anorexia

Bulimia

Cutting

Teen suicide

Eating Disorder Treatments

High Fructose Syrup

Trans Fats

Homework: Work on speeches, read the next 20 pages

Day 8, 9, 10

Students give speeches. Free reading if time remains.

Day 11

Discussion:

1. What measures does Jimmy take to lose weight?
2. Find quotes from text describing Sable. How is she different from Whitney?
3. How has Paul changed?
4. What does Jimmy say about the food industry?
5. Why do Jimmy's peers think Jimmy is like "Piggy"?
6. What happened when Jimmy spent the night at Paul's house?
7. How did Spencer betray Jimmy?

Do you agree with Jimmy's dad that the teachers need to take a bigger role in teaching values in the schools? Why or why not?

Write a comparison/contrast paper on two characters of your choice.

Day 12

Large group seminar:

Students sit in circle and teacher poses these questions.

What is our responsibility to stop the cruel actions of others? Does our responsibility change depending on place and circumstances? Why or why not?

Why do so many people ignore cruelty and abuse? Should Jimmy have said something when Paul showed up with a black eye at youth group?

Are human beings basically good or evil?

In your opinion, what forms your core values?

**Homework:** Finish the novel.

Days 13, 14

Discussion:

1. What characters in the story changed? Describe the change.
2. Do you think life for Paul will be better? Why or why not?
3. What did you learn about body image from this book?
4. What was your favorite part? Least favorite part of the book?

Do you think the journal helped Jimmy? Why or why not?

Do you think Mrs. Pope read the entire journal, even though Jimmy marked some of the pages, Please Don't Read This Page?

Students get in small groups and share what the book taught them about life.

Final Writing Assignment: Write a letter to Jimmy, Paul or Sable about how they affected or changed your life.