

**TEACHERS ACTIVITIES****Theme:**

A loving and amusing celebration of the much misunderstood pig shows how preconceived notions can affect our opinion.

**Topics For Discussion:**

Before viewing the program, ask students what they know about pigs. Write their statements on the board. After watching, review the sentences and decide which ones are actually myths about pigs.



Discuss animal performers. With what animals that perform in television or movies are students familiar? Have they ever seen a performing pig? What is special about animals that are "stars?"



Ask students why they think Perfect wished for wings. Discuss the expression, "Be careful what you wish for," and how it applies to Perfect's situation.



Discuss with students their opinions of the way the judge handled the decision about where Perfect should live. If they had been the judge, what would they have done?



In the program, LeVar finds Kermit the Frog in the pig section of the library. Why did Kermit make excuses for being there? LeVar has a conversation with Kermit as if he were a real person instead of a puppet. Discuss why puppets are so appealing to people of all ages.

**Curriculum Extension Activities:**

Find out if any of the students suffer from "Pigmania." Set up a display of pig items that students bring from home (e.g., stuffed animals, slippers, jewelry, figurines, socks, piggy banks, etc.). Allow students to set their own rules for handling the items they bring in and provide opportunities for students to share them.

Take the class to the school library media center in search of books about pigs, including fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and folktales. Bring the books back to the classroom and display them on a table covered with a piece of brown bulletin board paper that has been cut in the shape of a mud puddle (wrinkle the paper and then straighten it to give it a more “authentic” look!). Invite students to read the books independently or with a friend.



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Have students make pig paper bag puppets or stick puppets and use them to tell stories from the books about pigs.



Photocopy a number of pig outlines on pink paper and have students cut them out. Divide the class in half, and have half the class write statements about pigs that are not true. Have the other half write true statements about pigs. (Both groups will need to use the books about pigs for reference.) Students do their writing on the paper pigs. When they are finished, mix all the pigs together and place them in a large envelope or flat box entitled “Pigs...Fact or Fiction?” Make the activity available to students for independent work and have them sort the pig statements into the appropriate category.



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Have the class work in small groups to create a persuasive advertising campaign convincing people that pigs make great pets. Groups might do some of the following activities: make posters, write television or radio commercials, prepare persuasive speeches, write and perform jingles, write newspaper articles, and the like. Allow the groups to share their efforts and discuss the effectiveness of each group’s campaign.



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Have students make piggy banks out of recycled materials. Use a large plastic bottle, such as a milk jug, juice, or liquid detergent bottle for the pig’s body. If the lid is a color other than pink, paint it or glue a pink construction paper circle to the top of it. Color the nostrils. With the handle side of the jug pointing down, use a knife to cut 4 “Xs” where the legs should go. Insert spools, corks, or chunky packing material in the slots for legs. Turn over the jug and cut a tiny “X” in the jug for the tail. Curl a pink pipe cleaner and stick it in the “X.” Cut out two cardboard ears. Fold them along the bottom so there is a flat surface to glue onto the jug. Glue the ears on either side of the handle. Cut out cardboard eyes and glue them to the pig’s face. Cut a slot in the top just big enough for coins to slip through. Students might also wish to decorate their piggy banks with paint, glitter, yarn, etc. (Have an adult assist cutting with a knife.)

There are several common expressions associated with pigs, such as “eat like a pig,” “pig-out,” “go hog wild,” “pig-headed,” “in a pig’s eye,” “ride piggyback,” “live in a pig sty,” “when pigs fly,” “hog the road/seat/bed,” and others. Find out which of these expressions students have heard before. Discuss meanings. Have them listen for additional expressions about pigs and other animals.

### **SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKLIST:**

THE GREAT PIG ESCAPE  
by Eileen Christelow (Clarion)

SAILAWAY HOME  
by Bruce Degen (Scholastic)

WHEN BLUEBELL SANG  
by Lisa Campbell Ernst (Bradbury)

HUMPHREY THE DANCING PIG  
by Arthur Getz (Dial)

TOOT & PUDDLE  
by Holly Hobbie (Little, Brown)

YUMMERS  
by James Marshall (Houghton Mifflin)

PIGS APLENTY, PIGS GALORE!  
by David McPhail (Dutton)

PIGS  
by Peter Murray (Child’s World)

CHESTER THE WORLDLY PIG  
by Bill Peet (Houghton Mifflin)

GARTH PIG AND THE ICE CREAM LADY  
by Mary Rayner (Atheneum)

THE AMAZING BONE  
by William Steig (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)

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