Title of Book:  Squashed

Author’s Name:  Joan Bauer

Publisher:  Puffin        Copyright Year:  2005
Reading Level:  5th         Genre:  realistic-ficton

Synopsis:

Ellie Morgan, a sixteen-year-old girl growing up in Iowa has two dreams, to lose 20 pounds and to win the Annual Rock River Weigh-In for the largest pumpkin in the festival. Throughout the book we find that Ellie has some enemies and allies. Her enemies include her father, who hates all agriculture, the 35-year-old man that normally wins the event, and her history teacher who thinks that school is way more important. On her side she has her cousin Richard who she uses as her pumpkin spy, and her Grandmother who gives her wisdom and strength. To add to Ellie’s stress, she begins to fall for the new guy at school, Wes. They find that they have a common love for agriculture, although his love lies in corn.

Theme:  Motivation

Activity One:  Add a character

• Original---Jeff Mendenhall
• The objective is to create a new character, making connections between this person and others in the story.
• In this activity the students will write in a new character in the story. This character may be a protagonist or antagonist, but they must clarify how they fit into the story. The story needs to be able to make sense with this character in the story. Give us some background information about the character and his or her connections with the other characters in the story. Tell us what happens to this person.

Activity Two:  Back Cover

• Original---Jeff Mendenhall
• The objective is for the students to review the book through a picture.
• This activity will allow the students to draw a picture while reviewing the book. The students should know that the cover of books often give them some insight into what the book will be about. This activity will allow readers to make several connections through their drawing, as if it covered the back of the book. The students should be able to explain and defend anything that is in their picture.