

Name: _____

Student Journal

Hole in My Life

by Jack Gantos

Reading Schedule

Group members: _____

<i>Hole in My Life</i>	Student Journal	Due Date	Discussion Date
Introduction	Pages 2-4		
Pages 13-65	Pages 5-6		
Pages 66-92	Pages 7-8		
Pages 93-130	Pages 9-10		
Pages 131-166	Pages 11-12		
Pages 167-217	Pages 13-14		
The Exchange			
Assessment			

THE EXCHANGE

How can art
destroy someone?
How can it save
someone?

Getting Started

What If?

You have a talent for drawing comics. You are excited when your town's newspaper announces that it is having a comic strip contest. The winning comic strip will appear in the Sunday paper. You spend days drawing your comic strip. When you see your comic in the paper, you are thrilled.

Now, you spend all day drawing. Your grades start to fall. You quit all your other activities and never see your friends. You become angry when your parents, friends, and teachers suggest that drawing is taking over your life. You tell them you can only become good by practicing all the time.

Make notes about how this would affect you.

- What positive things might come from your art?
- What negative things might happen as a result?
- How much should you sacrifice to do what you love?

Connect to The Exchange Question Discuss how this situation could relate to The Exchange Question: **How can art destroy someone? How can it save someone?** Summarize your discussion.

Introduction

Read the Introduction on pages 7–9 in *Hole in My Life*. The Introduction will help you understand key concepts in the book. Knowing them will help you discuss and write about the book.

The Introduction includes information about

- how Jack Gantos decided to become a writer
- Jack Gantos’s childhood
- the effect prison had on Gantos’s life and ambitions
- more books by Jack Gantos

After you read the Introduction, answer these questions to check your understanding.

1. How did Jack Gantos realize that he wanted to become a writer?

2. What inspired Gantos to share his prison story with the world?

3. What type of books did Gantos write at the beginning of his career?

Introduction: Key Concepts

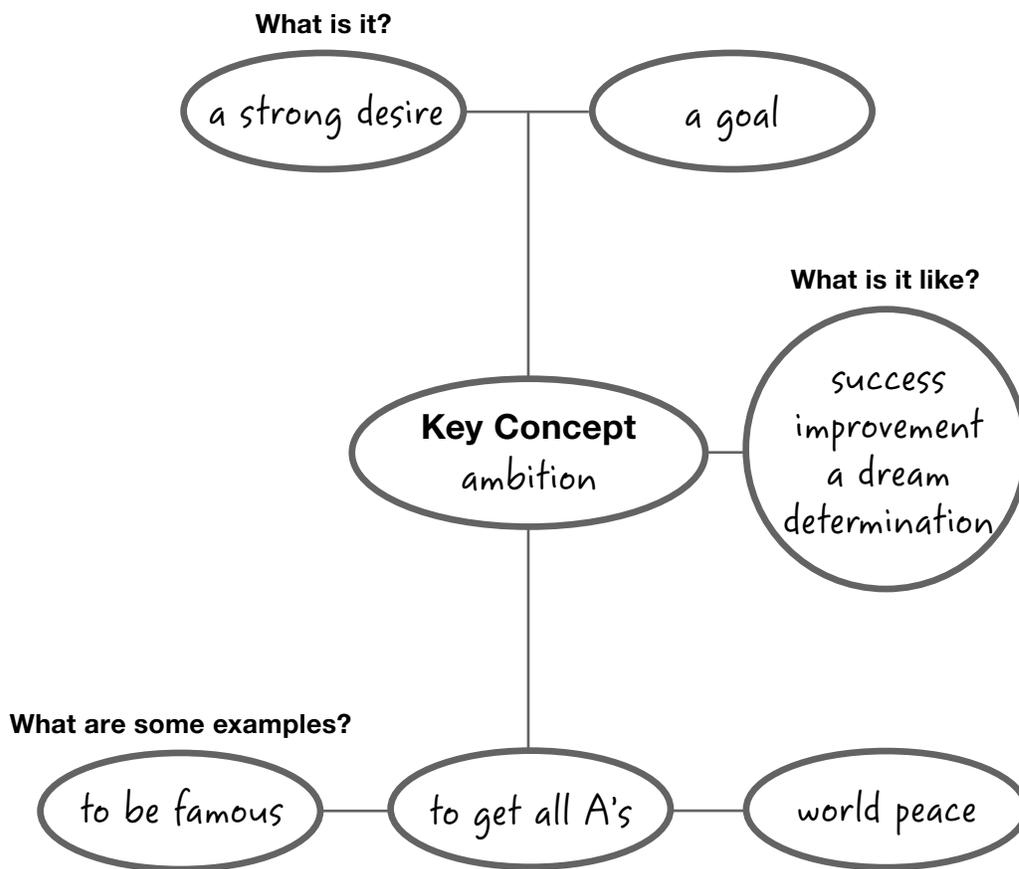
Definition Map

Study the **Definition Map** for *ambition*. Write a sentence using the word *ambition*.

Key Concepts

ambition
inmate
potential
remorse
smuggle

Definition Map



On a separate sheet of paper, create a similar **Definition Map** for each of the **Key Concepts**. Write a sentence for each one.

Respond to Pages 13–65

1. **Personal Response** Jack said that after reading the book *On the Road*, he wanted to be like the main character and travel. What book, movie, or song has inspired you to do something new? Explain.

2. **Cause and Effect** How did prison improve Jack’s potential to become a writer? Use the word *potential* in your response.

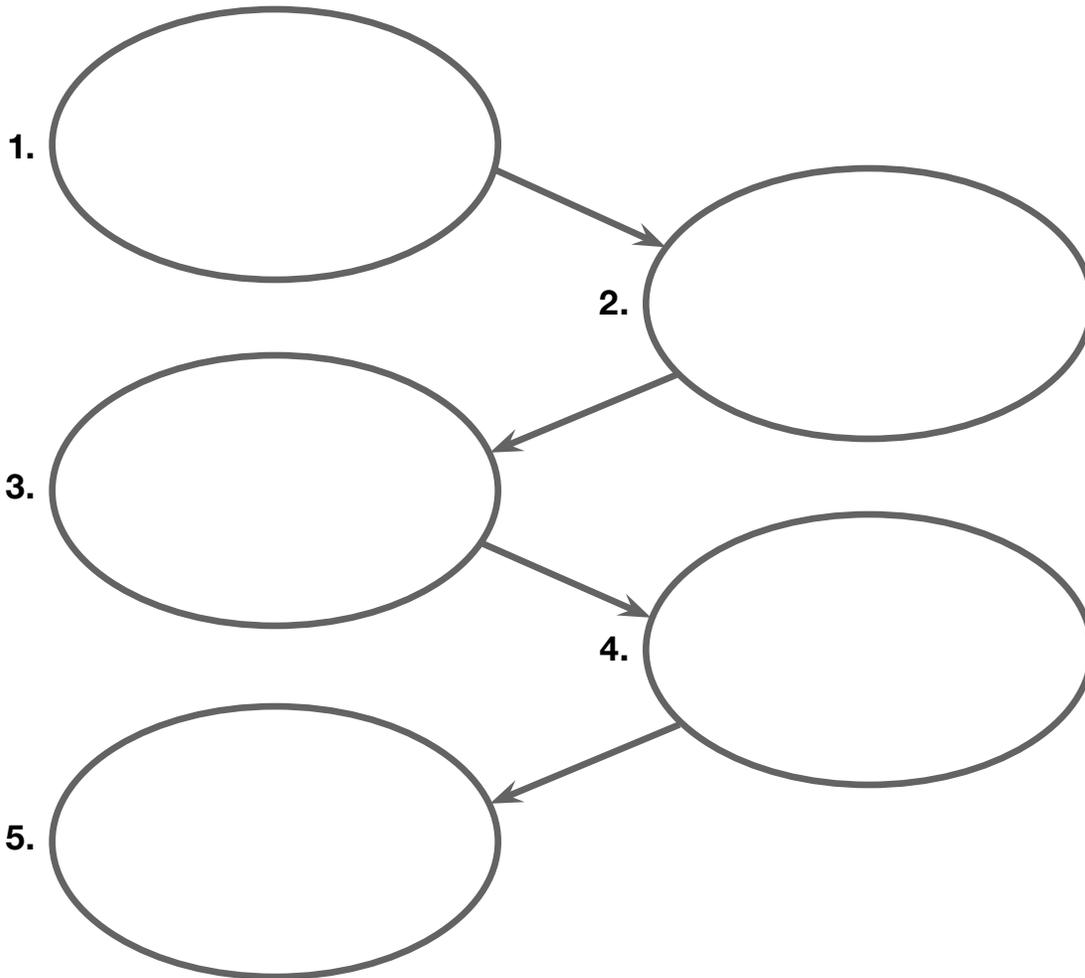
3. **Irony** What was ironic about the building that was Jack’s high school? Why was it ironic?

4. **Generate Questions** Write a question about this section for someone else reading this book. Exchange questions with them. Do you agree with their answer?

Respond to Pages 13–65, continued

5. **Inference** Jack returned to Florida to finish school. Write what happened to Jack after he finished high school in the **Sequence Chain**.

Sequence Chain



How might things have been different if Jack had stayed in San Juan?

Respond to Pages 66–92

1. **Personal Response** Jack believed that he had a good reason for becoming involved in crime. Have you ever have a good reason for doing something wrong? Was the outcome worth it?

2. **Comparisons** How are Jack’s and his father’s attitudes about smuggling drugs similar? Use the word *smuggling* in your response.

3. **Main Idea and Details** Name 3 events or facts that suggest there was racial tension in St. Croix.

4. **Generate Questions** Write a question about this section for someone else reading this book. Exchange questions with them. Do you agree with their answer?

Respond to Pages 66–92, continued

5. **Perspectives** Jack agreed to help Rik and Hamilton transport drugs. Tell what each person did and what this shows about him in the **Personality Description Map** below.

Personality Description Map

Person	What the Person Did	What This Shows About the Person
Jack		
Rik		
Hamilton		

If you were Jack, would you have agreed to help sail the boat? Why or why not?

Respond to Pages 93–130

1. **Personal Response** Jack wrote that the only thing he was afraid of was being caught. How do you think the world would be different if there were no consequences?

2. **Problem and Solution** What problem did Jack have shortly after he was paid? How did his solution affect his ambition to attend college? Use the word *ambition* in your response.

3. **Summarize** How did the prisoners find a way to relate to each other in prison?

4. **Generate Questions** Write a question about this section for someone else reading this book. Exchange questions with them. Do you agree with their answer?

Respond to Pages 93–130, continued

5. Make Predictions On pages 93–130, Jack and Hamilton finally made it to New York. Write down the major events in the order they happened during and after their trip.

Sequence Chart

First:
↓
Next:
↓
Last:

How do you think Jack will get arrested? Do you think Hamilton will tell the FBI about Jack’s involvement, or do you think he will get caught some other way?

Respond to Pages 131–166

1. **Personal Response** While Jack was awaiting his trial, he read books about jail to prepare himself for the worst. What do you do to prepare yourself for something you are nervous about? How does it help you?

2. **Inference** How might the trial have ended differently if Jack had shown real remorse in the courtroom for what he had done? Use the word *remorse* in your response.

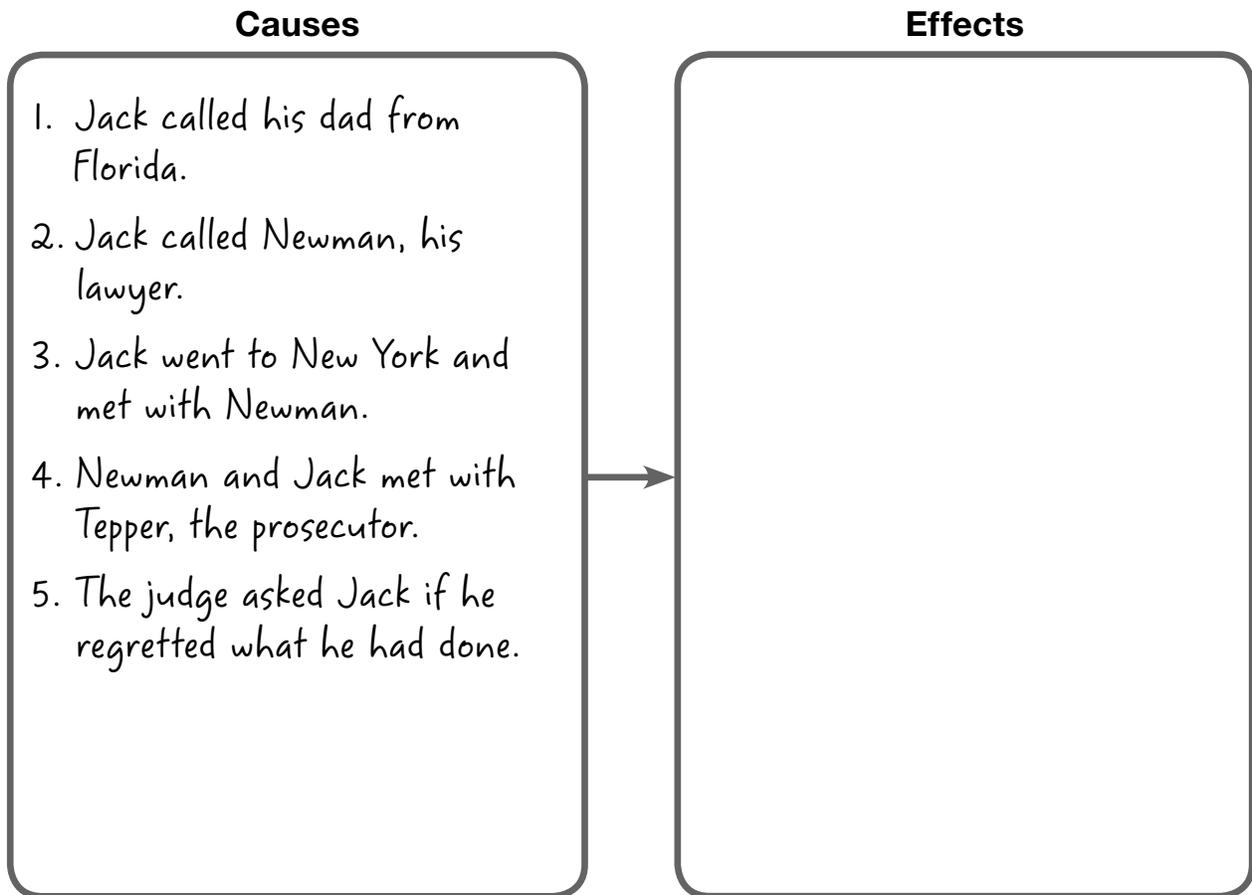
3. **Conclusions** What did Jack do to his face when he began to get pimples? How did this treatment represent how he felt about the terrible situation he was in?

4. **Generate Questions** Write a question about this section for someone else reading this book. Exchange questions with them. Do you agree with their answer?

Respond to Pages 131–166, continued

5. Confirm Predictions On pages 131–166, Jack had to face the consequences of his actions. Read the causes below and write the effect of each.

Cause and Effect Chart



Was your prediction about how Jack would get arrested correct? Did any of the events of his arrest from above surprise you? Why or why not?

Respond to Pages 167–217

1. Personal Response Jack sometimes felt he had lost another week of his life in jail. Other times, he felt closer to being released. Do you usually look at situations positively or negatively? Explain.

2. Cause and Effect Why was the X-ray technician position a good job for Jack? How did it affect his interaction with the other inmates? Use the word *inmate* in your response.

3. Figurative Language On page 169, Jack said of the people in his life, “I burned them all on a bonfire of blame.” What does this expression show about Jack’s feelings at the time?

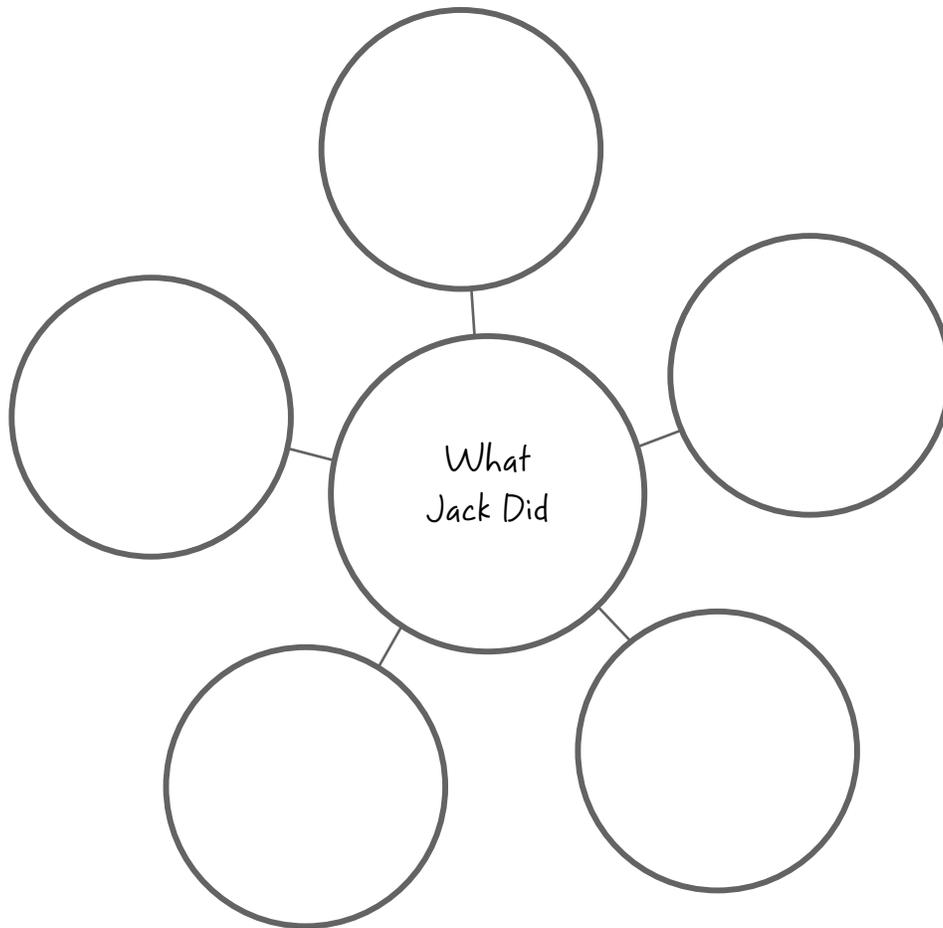
What If?

4. Connect Look at your notes on **Student Journal, page 2**. Think about what might happen if you allowed art to be the only focus in your life. Compare this to *Hole in My Life*. How did Jack let art destroy him? How did art save him?

Respond to Pages 167-217, continued

5. **Cause and Effect** On pages 167-217, you find out about the time Jack spent in prison and what he did when he got out. Write down the important things that happened.

Details Web



How did prison change Jack for the better?
