

**Paul Zindel**

# Journey to Meet the Pigman

## Before You Read

### Focus Question

Who has had the greatest influence on you? Why?

### Background

Like many novelists, Paul Zindel sometimes bases his fictional characters on real-life people who have had an influence on him. In "Journey to Meet the Pigman," Zindel describes the people on whom he based the major characters in *The Pigman*.

## Responding to the Reading

1. How did Paul Zindel manage to live rent-free in a castle? Why does he think that the castle was a good place for a storyteller to live?

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2. Whom did Zindel meet while he was living in the castle? What fictional characters did these people help inspire?

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3. What made Zindel recall his mother's former roommate, Connie? Why did the recollection give him chills?

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4. Who was Nonno Frankie? In your opinion, what was Nonno Frankie's greatest contribution to Zindel's life?

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5. **Making Connections** Compare and contrast Nonno Frankie with Mr. Pignati. In what ways are they alike? Different?

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## Personal Writing

In a few paragraphs, describe the person who has had the greatest influence on you. Make your description vivid by using specific details and quoting a few of the person's favorite sayings.