

Donald Duck

Mr. Teacher

English III

00 October 2013

## Independent Reading Assignment

### Title

Joyland

### Author

Stephen King

### Setting

Most of the story takes place in a small North Carolina town called Heaven's Bay; specifically at an amusement park called Joyland. The story is set in the early 1970's.

### Characters

**Devin Jones** – Main character and narrator. Devin is a college student who travels to North Carolina to work at Joyland for the summer. Dynamic

**Annie Ross** – Single mother of Mike; estranged from her father, who is a famous televangelist. Annie saves Devin in multiple ways. Dynamic

**Mike Ross** – Son of Annie; suffers from a form of muscular dystrophy (terminal). Mike has “the sight” and can view glimpses of the future and from people's minds. Dynamic

**Tom Kennedy** – Devin's friend who he meets and works with at Joyland; becomes Erin's boyfriend. He's the only character to “see” the ghost of Linda Gray. Dynamic

**Erin Cook** – Devin's friend who he meets and works with at Joyland; becomes Tom's girlfriend. She assists Devin in his research into the killer of Linda Gray. Dynamic

**Lane Hardy** – Carny at Joyland; operates the Carolina Spin. He teaches Devin “the talk”. He later is revealed to be the killer. Dynamic

**Linda Gray** – Murdered Joyland patron; focus of the story as the Joyland ghost.

### Conflict

Primary conflict – Devin struggling to find the killer of Linda Gray and put her soul at rest.

Secondary conflict – Devin dealing with a broken heart.

### Main Events

The story begins by introducing the main character, Devin Jones, and his break up with his girlfriend, Wendy. To cope, he leaves town for the summer to go work at an amusement park in North Carolina, Joyland, where he becomes a Happy Hound and occasionally has to “wear the fur”, which he is very good at. At Joyland, Devin learns how to be “carny”. He finds out about the ghost of Horror House and is curious. Several

times throughout the summer, Devin becomes the hero by saving lives. Towards the end of the summer, Devin, Tom, and Erin decide to ride the Horror House ride, where Tom “sees” Linda Gray. At the end of the summer, Tom and Erin go back to school and Devin stays behind to work a year at Joyland and try to solve the mystery of Linda Gray.

At the beginning of the fall season, while walking to work, Devin meets Annie and Mike Ross on the beach. Mike suffers from MS and Annie is an overprotective mother. Devin soon learns that Mike has “the sight” and Mike gives Devin insight into the murder. Through their interactions, Devin becomes close to Annie and Mike, eventually convincing Annie to let him take Mike to Joyland. Mike has the time of his life at the park, but at the end, a creepy occurrence happens at the Horror House when a car rolls out of the ride by itself. Devin sees a headband of the ghost’s in the car and Mike sees Linda himself, setting her free. For his attention and what he has done for Mike, Annie offers herself, taking his virginity.

### **Climax**

Back at the bed and breakfast where he is staying, Devin pieces together the solution to the murder of Linda Gray. As soon as he does, the murderer, Lane Hardy, calls Devin on the phone and forces him to meet him at the park during a tropical storm (or he will hurt Mike and Annie). Lane, holding Devin at gunpoint, forces him into the Carolina Spin as the storm beats at the high flying machine. Just as Lane is about to kill Devin, Annie shows up and uses her sharpshooting skills to kill Lane and save Devin.

### **Conclusion**

Lane is revealed to be the Carny Killer. Annie has saved Devin from a murderer and a broken heart, but no further romantic relationship can continue, because of Mike’s illness. Mike dies shortly after. Devin goes back to school to become a writer.

### **Your Opinion**

Joyland is a fun and easy read. While King borrows heavily from his previous works, he still manages to keep it fresh and entertaining. I would definitely recommend this novel to a friend.