

# Pants Project, The

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Liv, who is struggling with gender identity and identifies as a boy, attends a school with a uniform policy that requires her to wear a skirt. She develops a series of plans to deal with the problem and recruits her friends to help have the uniform policy modified so she can finally wear pants. This realistic story about a student trying to change her situation to feel more authentic and comfortable would be useful as a class read-aloud, literature circle title, or for a classroom library for grades 6-8. It addresses problem solving, acceptance, and friendship and will allow for some increased understandings about gender identity and the transgender experience.

**Collections:** LGBTQ

**Subjects:** English Language Arts, Physical and Health Education  
Grades 6-8

**Evaluation Date:** Jan 2018



Social Considerations

# Resource Evaluation

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## CURRICULUM FIT

### Does the resource support BC curriculum?



Extensively

In Language Arts, students can be encouraged to "think critically, creatively, and reflectively to explore ideas within between, and beyond texts" and to "recognize and identify the role of personal, social, and cultural contexts, values, and perspectives in texts. " Additionally, in Physical and Health Education, they can be guided to explore the "consequences of bullying, stereotyping, and discrimination, " as well as "influences on individual identity, including sexual identity, gender, values, and beliefs. "

### This resource supports the Core Competencies of the BC curriculum:

- Critical & Reflective Thinking
- Positive Personal and Cultural Identity
- Personal Awareness and Responsibility
- Social Awareness and Responsibility

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## SUGGESTED CLASSROOM USAGE

The book could be used as a classroom read-aloud, with facilitated discussion. It would fit into a literature circle set, particularly as a title that addresses positive and peaceful problem solving, as well as gender identity, acceptance, and friendship. It could be included in a classroom library.

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## SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

### Gender Roles, Identity & Sexual Orientation

In general, the girls attending Liv's private school are portrayed as accepting of the school rule that girls must wear skirts. The student who stands up against this rule self-identifies as a boy.


### Violence

There are scenes where Liv is being intimidated by a classmate, Jade, who knocks over her food tray in the cafeteria. Liv contemplates retaliating with physical violence, but controls her anger, partially to avoid a repeat of "The Incident," an event where she punched a classmate in the face on the last day of school the previous year, because the boy had been harassing her friend, Maisie. Liv momentarily fantasizes about attacking her uncooperative principal with a trophy in his office, and contemplates briefly what would happen if he were dead.

### Language

Another student calls Liv a "freak" because of Liv's gender identity.

### Do the social considerations support, rather than detract from, student learning?

 Extensively


Though there are several cautions listed, particularly with regard to Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation, as well as Violence, the included scenes are relevant to understanding the character and the anxiety and frustration that Liv feels being identified as a girl while feeling like a boy. The story is a realistic one about a student trying to change her situation in order to feel more authentic and comfortable. The emphasis is on solving an uncomfortable situation, and understandings about Liv's gender identity, including fears about revealing sensitive feelings, are pivotal to understanding Liv's motivations for initiating "The Pants Project."

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## GENERAL CONTENT

### Content


#### Is the resource engaging?

 Extensively


#### Is the content current for the intended curriculum and grade?

 Extensively

#### Is the content accurate for the intended curriculum and grade?


 Extensively

**Is the content relevant and important for student broad understandings?**


 Extensively

Audience


**Is the content appropriate to the emotional maturity and cognitive level of students?**

 Extensively


**Does the resource provide opportunities for creative and critical thinking?**

 Moderately

**Is the level of detail appropriate?**

 Extensively

**Is the language use appropriate to the emotional maturity and cognitive level of students?**


 Extensively

The story is an engaging read about a likeable character, and students will likely be able to relate to Liv's frustration about following arbitrary rules. Students will be able to think critically about taking action to address a problem and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies they might apply to resolve it. It will allow for some increased understandings about gender identity and the transgender experience.


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TECHNICAL DESIGN


**Does the resource make effective use of the medium?**

 Extensively


**Is the resource easy to use?**

 Extensively

**Is the use of font, text size and presentation suitable?**


 Extensively

**Are extraneous elements/illustrations kept to a minimum?**


 Extensively

The book is a 265 page novel divided into 37 chapters.


**Does the text show insight into the complexity of the human condition?**

 Extensively

**Does the text broaden students' experiences and understanding?**

 Extensively

**To what degree is this text stylistically rich?**

 Moderately

**Plot description**

The Pants Project is the story of Liv's efforts to navigate her middle school experience and to seek out a way to avoid wearing the skirts she is mandated to wear because of the school uniform policy. She struggles with her gender identity, and resents being identified as a girl. She strategizes a series of plans, and recruits her friends to help her adjust the uniform policy so that she may have permission to wear pants.

**Related Comments**

Liv, the main character, and Jacob, her friend, are nuanced characters who have depth and complexity to them. The middle school environment will likely be relatable to readers. The characters face a realistic problem given their age and maturity. They strategize a series of actions to advance their agenda with varying degrees of success and disappointment.

**Genre**

- Contemporary
- LGBTQ

**Literary Highlights**

- Rich characterization
- Well-developed themes

**Type**

- Novel

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**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

**Reading Level**

- At intended grade level(s)

The novel is available in Kindle, Audio, and MP3 CD formats.

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**GRADES AND SUBJECTS**

**Subjects**

- English Language Arts: 6-8
- Physical and Health Education: 6-8

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**ADDITIONAL INFO**

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