Dead End in Norvelt [1]

[2] Jack Gantos is one of my favorite authors, especially when I'm in the mood for a quirky, darkly funny read. Dead End in Norvelt [3] is no exception - in fact, it had me laughing out loud in several places about the (fictional?) escapades of the protagonist, also named Jack Gantos! I wish I'd been witness to the real-life childhood of Gantos, to see exactly which of the characters and situations in this novel occurred exactly as he describes. So many favorite scenes - one where Jack is enlisted to dress as the Grim Reaper to determine whether an old person is dead or not, another when his nose bleeds AND he faints after seeing what he thinks is a woman stripping the skin off her arm with her teeth.

Set in 1962 in Pennsylvania, there is a wealth of interesting historical information about the town of Norvelt, named in honor of Eleanor Roosevelt, and founded in the 1930s in order to improve the quality of life of impoverished coal miners. Read this book and enjoy the weird and oddly poignant humor that inhabits the world of Jack Gantos. Recommended for grades 6 and up, and especially for those with a high tolerance for the more morbid side of life. Younger children will enjoy Gantos' Rotten Ralph picture books and first chapter books (illustrated by Nicole Rubel), and older school-age kids may enjoy, and relate to, the Jack Henry books and the award-winning Joey Pigza titles.
Posted by Ellen A. on October 15, 2011
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[3] http://mcpl.monroe.lib.in.us/search/searchresults.aspx?cbx=1.1033.0.0.7&type=Keyword&term=dead%20end%20norvelt&by=KW&sort=RELEVANCE&limit=COL=jfic&query=&page=0
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