

From The Mixed Up Files Of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler



By

E.L. Konigsburg

A Novel Study
by Joel Michel Reed

From The Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler

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About the author: Joel Reed has over 70 published novel studies and is the author of four novels. For information on his work and literature, please visit www.reednovelstudies.com

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Suggestions and Expectations

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on two or three chapters of **From The Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler** and is comprised of five of the following different activities:

- Before You Read
- Vocabulary Building
- Comprehension Questions
- Language Activities
- Extension Activities

Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities in this unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to;

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases. . . including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters ... respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story . . . **and many others.**

A principal expectation of the unit is that students will develop their skills in reading, writing, listening and oral communication, as well as in reasoning and critical thinking. Students will also be expected to provide clear answers to questions and well-constructed explanations. It is critical as well that students be able to relate events and the feelings of characters to their own lives and experiences and describe their own interpretation of a particular passage.

A strength of the unit is that students can work on the activities at their own pace. Every activity need not be completed by all students. A **portfolio cover** is included (p.7) so that students may organize their work and keep it all in one place. A **Student Checklist** is also included (p.6) so that a record of completed work may be recorded.

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List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homonyms
3. Identifying/creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identify *foreshadowing*.
6. Identify *personification*
7. Use of singular / plural nouns
8. Listing compound words
9. Identifying parts of speech
10. Identifying syllables
11. Identify/create *similes*
12. Identify anagrams

Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Complete Five W's Chart
4. Identify *cliffhangers*
5. Identify the climax of the novel.

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Identify the protagonist
3. Relating personal experiences
4. Compare two characters

Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Compare the book and movie.
5. Write a description of personal feelings
6. Write a book review
7. Complete an Observation Sheet
8. Complete a KWS Chart

Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Create an Information Card
4. Design a cover for the novel
5. Create a comic strip

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Synopsis

Claudia knew that she could never pull off the old-fashioned kind of running away ... so she decided to run not from somewhere but to somewhere – somewhere large, warm, comfortable, and beautiful. And that was how Claudia and her brother, Jamie, ended up living in the Metropolitan Museum of Art – and right in the middle of a mystery that made headlines. (Publisher – Simon and Schuster)

A complete synopsis and other helpful reviews can be found on the following website:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/From_the_Mixed-Up_Files_of_Mrs._Basil_E._Frankweiler

Author Biography

E.L. Konigsburg

Elaine Lobl Konigsburg (February 10, 1930 – April 19, 2013) was an American writer and illustrator of children's books and young adult fiction. She is one of six writers to win two Newbery Medals, the venerable American Library Association award for the year's "most distinguished contribution to American children's literature."

Konigsburg submitted her first two manuscripts to editor Jean Karl at Atheneum Publishers in 1966, and both were published in 1967: *Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, William McKinley, and Me, Elizabeth* and *From The Mixed-Up Files of Mrs Basil E.*

Frankweiler. They made her the only person to be Newbery Medal winner and one of the runners-up in one year. She won again for *The View from Saturday* in 1997, 29 years later.

For her contribution as a children's writer Konigsburg was U.S. nominee in 2006 for the biennial, international Hans Christian Andersen Award.

Courtesy of Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E._L._Konigsburg



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Student Checklist

Student Name _____

Assignment	Grade / Level	Comments

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Name: _____

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Chapters 1-2



Before you read the chapter:

Briefly predict what you believe the plot-line of our novel will be about.



Vocabulary:

Draw a straight line to connect the vocabulary word to its definition. Remember to use a straight edge (like a ruler).

1. Punctuated
2. Conductor
3. Procedure
4. Companion
5. Inconvenient
6. Injustice
7. Monotony
8. Commute
9. Transistor
10. Expenditure

- A. Lack of fairness or natural virtue.
- B. Regularly traveling between home and work.
- C. An established/official way of doing something.
- D. A material or device that transmits electricity.
- E. Causing trouble, difficulties, or discomfort.
- F. A portable radio using circuits rather than valves.
- G. Occur at intervals throughout (an area or period)
- H. A person who shares the experiences of another.
- I. Money that is spent on a specific purpose.
- J. Lack of variety; tedious repetition and routine.

Questions



1. Why did Claudia want to run *to somewhere* rather than *from somewhere*?

2. Why did Claudia give up her hot fudge sundaes for six weeks?

3. What item did Claudia find in a waste paper basket?

4. What made a lot of noise when Claudia and Jamie were sneaking off the bus?

5. Where did Claudia say they would hide in New York City?

--

6. When Claudia and Jamie decided to run away, they left behind many of the comforts and luxuries that are often found at home. Write a list of five different things that you feel would be difficult to live without, and why they are so important to you.

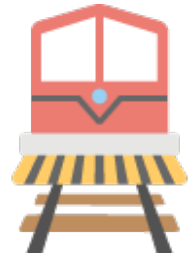
Language Activity



A. Foreshadowing is a literary device used by authors to provide clues for the reader so they are able to predict what might occur *later* in the story. How might the following quote from Chapter 1 be considered an example of this literary device: *"I wish it could be Steve's turn every week," Kevin whined. "You just may get your wish." Kevin never realized then or ever that he had been given a clue, and he pouted all the way home.*



B. A simile is a comparison using the words "like" or "as". An example from Chapter One is *"Using the tips of her forefinger and thumb like a pair of forceps, she pulled at it and discovered a ten-ride pass for the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad."*



What two things are being compared in this example?

--	--

Invent two of your own **similes** comparing two different things using your own imagination:

a)

b)

C. Pick A City, Any City.

Sports Cards have been a very popular collector's item for nearly one hundred years. As a matter of fact, a Willie Mays 1952 Topps rookie baseball card is worth over \$3000.00 today!



Wouldn't it be great if a series of collectors cards were issued celebrating some of the world's most fascinating cities?

Design an information card about a city of your own choosing. The back should include at least five interesting facts about the city, and the front of the card should feature an image or drawing of an object that you feel best identifies the city of your choice. (i.e. London=double-decker buses, Paris=Eiffel Tower, etc)

D. Where In The World?

Using resources from your school library or the Internet, do some research on the following works of art, and list which museum and country where the art is on display.

	Artwork	Museum and Country
1	<i>The Birth of Venus</i> (Sandro Botticelli)	
2	<i>Night Watch</i> (Rembrandt van Rijn)	
3	<i>David</i> (Michelangelo)	
4	<i>The Scream</i> (Edvard Munch)	
5	<i>Girl with a Pearl Earring</i> (Johannes Vermeer)	
6	<i>The Creation of Adam</i> (Michelangelo)	
7	<i>The Last Supper</i> (Leonardo da Vinci)	
8	<i>Starry Night</i> (Vincent van Gogh)	

E. The Eight Parts of Speech

From Chapters 1-2 find at least two examples of each of the eight parts of speech and list them in the appropriate section of the chart below.



Interjections	
Nouns	
Pronouns	
Conjunctions	
Prepositions	
Adjectives	
Adverbs	
Verbs	

Extension Activity

A. Identify The Famous Statues

Using resources from your school library or the Internet, identify the following famous statues. Be sure to include both the name of the statue as well as the nation it is found.



a)



b)



c)



d)



e)



f)

B. Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A storyboard can tell the story of only one scene – or the entire novel.

Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events described in the last 2 chapters of **From The Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler**. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.



1	2
3	4
5	6