



TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

From the Mixed-up Files of
Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler

based on the book by
E. L. Konigsburg

Written by
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TABLE OF CONTENTS
From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler

Introduction	7
Unit Objectives	9
Reading Assignment Sheet	10
Unit Outline	11
Short Answer Study Questions	15
Multiple Choice Study/Quiz Questions	25
Vocabulary Worksheets	41
Lesson One	63
Non-fiction Assignment Sheet	77
Oral Reading Evaluation	74
Writing Assignment 1	80
Writing Assignment 2	89
Writing Assignment 3	96
Writing Evaluation Form	83
Vocabulary Review Ideas	98
Critical Thinking Questions	92
Unit Review Ideas	99
Unit Tests	103
Unit Resource Materials	147
Vocabulary Resource Materials	169

A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR
E. L. Konigsburg

“I knew I had been right about the spirit of adventure shared by good readers. I owe children a good story.”

-Elaine Lobl Konigsburg

Elaine Lobl was born on February 20, 1930 in New York City. Early in her childhood, her family moved to small-town Pennsylvania, where Elaine graduated first in her high school class and became the first person from her family to attend college. The young woman earned a degree in chemistry from Carnegie Mellon, though graduate work at the University of Pittsburgh convinced her that she did not have the heart for further pursuit of the science. After she and her husband married, they moved to Florida, and Konigsburg began teaching science at a girls’ school.

Through teaching young women, Konigsburg realized that she was more fascinated by the students she taught than the subject matter she presented. She left the classroom after a short time in order to raise her three children—Paul, Laurie, and Ross-- but continued to marvel at young people and their experiences in the world. While she was home raising her children, Konigsburg began taking art classes, as well. She discovered a natural talent for art, and several of her novels feature her original illustrations. Konigsburg’s first novel *Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, William McKinley, and me, Elizabeth* won Newbery Honors in 1967, and it was followed by *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*, which won the Newbery Medal in 1968. Over the next thirty years, Konigsburg would write over fifteen novels, including *The View From Saturday*, which earned her a second Newbery Medal in 1997.

INTRODUCTION

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

This unit has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, and language skills through exercises and activities related to *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*. It includes 22 lessons supported by extra resource materials.

In the introductory lesson students look at several interesting, old items and write short stories about the articles of their choice. Students are also introduced to the idea of the Hero's Journey. Following the introductory activity, students are given a transition to explain how the activities relate to the unit. The class will then be given materials relevant to the unit.

The reading assignments are from ten to twenty pages each; some are a little shorter while others are a little longer. Students have approximately fifteen minutes of pre-reading work to do prior to each reading assignment. This pre-reading work involves reviewing the study questions for the assignment and doing some vocabulary work for 8 to 10 vocabulary words they will encounter in their reading.

The study questions are fact-based so students can find the answers right in the text. These questions come in two formats: short answer and multiple choice. The best use of these materials is probably to use the short answer version of the questions as study guides for students (since the answers will be more complete) and to use the multiple choice version for occasional quizzes.

The vocabulary work is intended to enrich students' vocabularies as well as to aid in their understanding of the book. Prior to each reading assignment students will complete a two-part worksheet for approximately 8-10 vocabulary words in the upcoming reading assignment. Part I focuses on students' use of general knowledge and contextual clues by giving the sentence in which the word appears in the text. Students are then to write down what they think the words mean based on the words' usage. Part II nails down the definitions of the words by giving students dictionary definitions of the words and having them match the words to the correct definitions based on the words' contextual usage. Students should then have an understanding of the words when they meet them in the text.

After each reading assignment, students will go back and formulate answers for the study guide questions. Discussion of these questions serves as a review of the most important events and ideas presented in the reading assignments.

After students complete reading the work, there is a vocabulary review lesson which pulls together all of the fragmented vocabulary lists for the reading assignments and gives students a review of all the words they have studied.

Following the vocabulary review, a lesson is devoted to the critical thinking questions. These questions focus on interpretation, critical analysis, and personal responses, employing a variety of thinking skills and adding to the students' understanding of the work.

There is a group theme project in this unit. Students will divide into pairs based upon a common investigative interest. Each pair will research a particular aspect of art or history that they select, thereby becoming the class expert on that topic. Each group will then develop an original product based on their study. A presentation day is scheduled in the unit so that students may benefit from one another's work and practice their public speaking skills.

There are three writing assignments in this unit, each with the purpose of informing, persuading, or expressing personal opinions. The detailed writing assignment sheets guide students through the assignments. The first assignment is to give a personal response to an article in *The New York Times*. In the second assignment students inform Claudia (via letter) about plans they are making and ask for her advice, since she is a planning expert. In the third writing assignment, students write a letter as Mrs. Frankweiler to Mr. and Mrs. Kincaid to persuade them to be lenient on the children when they return home.

There is a non-fiction reading assignment. Each student must read nonfiction articles, books, etc., to gather information about their non-fiction topics, which are related to the book.

The review lesson pulls together all of the aspects of the unit. The teacher is given several choices of activities or games to use which all serve the same basic function of reviewing all of the information presented in the unit.

The unit test comes in two formats: short answer and multiple choice. As a convenience, two different tests for each format have been included. There is also an advanced short answer test for advanced students.

There are additional support materials included with this unit. The unit resource materials section includes suggestions for an in-class library, crossword and word search puzzles related to the book, and extra worksheets. There is a list of bulletin board ideas which gives the teacher suggestions for bulletin boards to go along with this unit. In additions, there is a list of extra class activities the teacher could choose from to enhance the unit or as a substitution for an exercise the teacher might feel is inappropriate for his/her class. Answer keys are located directly after the reproducible student materials throughout the unit. The vocabulary resource materials section includes puzzles, worksheets, and games to reinforce the vocabulary work done in the unit.

The level of this unit can be varied depending upon the criteria on which the individual assignments are graded, the teacher's expectations of the students in class discussions, and the formats chosen for the study guides, quizzes, and tests. If teachers have other ideas or activities they wish to use, they can usually easily be inserted prior to the review lesson.

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UNIT OBJECTIVES
From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler

Through reading *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* students will explore themes of the novel and make connections to themselves and the larger world.

Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text of four levels: factual, interpretive, critical, and personal.

Students will gain a better knowledge of nonfiction topics presented in the novel. Students will pursue their own interests within a partnership dynamic.

Students will practice reading orally and silently to improve their reading proficiency.

Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in the book as they relate to the author's theme development.

Students will enrich their vocabularies and improve their understanding of the novel through the vocabulary lessons prepared for use in conjunction with the novel.

The writing assignments in this unit are geared to several purposes:

- To have students demonstrate their abilities to inform, persuade or express their own ideas
- To check students' reading comprehension
- To make students think about the ideas presented in the book
- To encourage logical thinking
- To improve students' use of the English language

Students will read aloud, report, and participate in large and small group discussions in order to improve their public speaking and personal interaction skills.

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET
From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler

Date Assigned	Assignment	Completion Date
	Chapter 1	
	Chapter 2	
	Chapter 3	
	Chapter 4	
	Chapter 5	
	Chapter 6	
	Chapter 7	
	Chapter 8	
	Chapter 9	
	Chapter 10	

UNIT OUTLINE
From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler

1 Introduction	2 Read Ch 1 Oral Rdg Eval KWL Character Chart	3 Review Ch 1 Read Ch 2 Oral Rdg Eval	4 Review Ch 2 Non-fiction Read Ch 3	5 Review Ch 3 Update KWL "Secrets" Read Ch 4
6 Review Ch 4 NY Times Writing #1 Read Ch 5	7 Review Ch 5 Read Ch 6-8	8 Read Ch 6-8	9 Quiz Ch 6-8 "Heroism" Update KWL	10 Writing #2 Read Ch 9
11 Review Ch 9 Read Ch 10	12 Review Ch 10 Non-fiction Reports	13 Extra Discussion Questions	14 Extra Discussion Questions	15 Writing #3
16 Vocabulary Review	17 Unit Review	18 Unit Test		

Key: P = Preview Study Questions V = Vocabulary Work R= Read

LESSON ONE

Objectives

- To introduce the novel
- To give students an overview of the unit
- To distribute books and materials relating to the unit
- To preview chapter 1

Activity #1

Bring to class several old, interesting items: an old trunk, an unusual kitchen item or farm implement or tool, a painting, an ornate glass, an old rifle, an old photo of a person or house, or an old piece of clothing, etc.

Put the items on display and give your students time to examine them. Students should not discuss anything about the items with each other. Each student should evaluate the pieces independently and silently.

After students have had time to examine the items, they should sit down at their desks and compose a story about the item of their choice. They should think about who may have owned the item, what it might have been used for, what may have happened to it in its past.

Give students ample time to complete this assignment. Ask if any students have stories they would like to share with the class. If no one does, collect the stories and read a few to the class. This is designed more as an introductory exercise than an official writing assignment, but grade the stories if you so choose.

TRANSITION:

Explain to students that in the book they are about to read, the main characters become involved in the mystery of the history of a statue they see in The Metropolitan Museum of Art. And although the discovering the origins of the statue is important, the main character, Claudia, discovers that solving the mystery is not the only thing that will fulfill her quest.

Briefly discuss the word “quest” with your students. A synonym would be “search.”

NOTE: *The idea of the Hero’s Journey is one that is probably a little advanced for most students who will be reading this book; it is probably better introduced properly at a higher grade level. However, that being said, this book fits so perfectly with the idea of the Hero’s Journey it would be wrong not to introduce the theme/idea on some level relating to the book.*

There are a few pages more completely describing the Hero’s Journey formula following this lesson. If you have a very advanced class, you might want to share some of this information with them; however, a simple explanation or brief outline would be more practical for most classes.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1
From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler
Expressing Personal Responses In Writing

PROMPT

Claudia and Jamie looked in the *New York Times* for information about the statue. Scan the newspaper you have been given for headlines that look interesting to you. After you have scanned through the whole paper, go back and read 2 or 3 short articles or 1-2 long articles of your choice. After you have read them, choose one article, write a report and response for it, citing the newspaper article as your source.

PREWRITING

Think about the articles you have read. Which one was the most interesting to you? Why? What are the topics of the articles? Do any of the articles stir up your opinions or emotions? Why? What do you think about the topics being discussed? Which article would you have the most to say in response? Write about that article.

DRAFTING

At the top of your page, use your usual heading for this class. Then, cite the newspaper. Follow this format:

SOURCE:

Author. "Title or Headline of The Article." Name of the Newspaper Date of the newspaper dd Month Year: SectionPage.

An example would be:

SOURCE:

Di Rado, Alicia. "Trekking through College." Los Angeles Times 15 March 1995: A3.

Skip two lines and write the heading "REPORT." Write a paragraph summarizing the article.

An example would be:

REPORT

The article cited above is about college students who belong to a Star Trek fan club. They meet weekly to watch the television show together, and once a month they have a "swap meet" where they exchange memorabilia. Once a year they go together to a Star Trek convention.

Skip two lines and write the heading "RESPONSE." Write a paragraph or two clearly stating your response to the article. Did you agree or disagree with it? What did you think of it. What are your personal opinions? Use a topic sentence and then explain it.