



TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

The View from Saturday

based on the book by
E. L. Konigsburg

Written by
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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

This LitPlan has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, and language skills through exercises and activities related to *The View from Saturday*. It includes 22 lessons, supported by extra resource materials.

The **introductory lesson** introduces students to the process of group collaboration and individual contribution as students participate in an “Information Scavenger Hunt” in the school library. Following the introductory activity, students are given a transition to explain how the activity relates to the book they are about to read. Students also are given the materials they will be using during the unit. The class will have an opportunity to draw conclusions about the novel based on a cursory examination of the cover and table of contents.

The **reading assignments** are approximately thirty pages each; some are a little shorter while others are a little longer. Students have approximately 15 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 6 to 12 vocabulary words they will encounter in their reading.

The **study guide questions** are fact-based questions; students can find the answers to these questions right in the text. These questions come in two formats: short answer or 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 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 the students' understanding of the book. Prior to each reading assignment, students will complete a two-part worksheet for approximately 6 to 12 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 students 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 of the words they have studied.

Following the vocabulary review, a lesson is devoted to the **extra discussion questions/writing assignments**. These questions focus on interpretation, critical analysis and personal response, employing a variety of thinking skills and adding to the students' understanding of the novel.

There is a **group theme project** in this unit. Students will divide into groups of 4 or 5 students based upon a common investigative interest. Each group will research a particular hobby, skill, subject or issue they would like to explore, thereby becoming the class experts 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, in addition to practicing their public speaking skills.

There are three **writing assignments** in this unit, each with the purpose of informing, persuading, or having students express personal opinions. The first writing assignment calls upon students to write a thank-you letter to someone who has bestowed kindness on them. The second writing assignment asks students to compose a narrative essay recalling a positive experience they have shared with a parent or grandparent. The third writing assignment allows students to express their own opinion regarding the "decline of Western Civilization," and charges them to write a speech that will persuade their classmates to take action in order to change that downward course.

There is a **nonfiction reading assignment**. Students must read nonfiction articles, books, etc. to gather information about their themes in our world today.

The **review lesson** pulls together all of the aspects of the unit. The teacher is given four or five 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: multiple choice or short answer. As a convenience, two different tests for each format have been included. There is also an advanced short answer unit 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 novel, 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 addition, 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 similar worksheets and games to reinforce the vocabulary words.

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

UNIT OBJECTIVES - *The View from Saturday*

1. Through reading E. L. Konigsburg's *The View from Saturday*, students will explore themes of the novel and make connections to themselves and the larger world.
2. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text on four levels: factual, interpretive, critical and personal.
3. Students will gain a better knowledge of nonfiction topics presented in the novel. Students will pursue their own interests within a larger group dynamic.
4. Students will be given the opportunity to practice reading aloud and silently to improve their skills in each area.
7. Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in *The View from Saturday* as they relate to the author's theme development.
8. Students will enrich their vocabularies and improve their understanding of the novel through the vocabulary lessons prepared for use in conjunction with the novel.
9. The writing assignments in this unit are geared to several purposes:
 - a. To have students demonstrate their abilities to inform, to persuade, or to express their own personal ideas
Note: Students will demonstrate ability to write effectively to inform by developing and organizing facts to convey information. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to persuade by selecting and organizing relevant information, establishing an argumentative purpose, and by designing an appropriate strategy for an identified audience. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to express personal ideas by selecting a form and its appropriate elements.
 - b. To check the students' reading comprehension
 - c. To make students think about the ideas presented by the novel
 - d. To encourage logical thinking
 - e. To provide an opportunity to practice good grammar and improve students' use of the English language.
10. Students will read aloud, report, and participate in large and small group discussions to improve their public speaking and personal interaction skills.

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET - *The View from Saturday*

Date Assigned	Chapters Assigned	Completion Date
	Chapter 1	
	Chapter 2	
	Chapter 3, Part 1	
	Chapter 3, Part 2	
	Chapters 4-6	
	Chapter 7	
	Chapters 8-12	

UNIT OUTLINE - *The View from Saturday*

1 Introduction	2 PVR Chapter 1 Oral Reading	3 Study? Chapter 1 Group Project	4 PVR Chapter 2, Part 1	5 Study? Chapter 2, Part1 PVR Chapter 2, Part 2
6 Study? Chapter 2, Part 2 PVR Chapter 3, Part 1	7 P-Chapter 3, Part 2 Group Work	8 VR Chapter 3, Part 2	9 Writting Assignment 1	10 Study? Chapter 3, Part 2 PVR Chapters 4-6
11 Study? Chapters 4-6 PVR Chapter 7	12 Study? Chapter 7 Class Activity	13 PVR Chapters 8-12	14 Study? Chapters 8-12 Class Activity	15 Writing Assignment 2
16 Extra Writing/Discussion Questions	17 Vocabulary Review	18 Group Presentations	19 Lesson: Allusions	20 Writing Assignment #3
21 Unit Review	22 Test	23	24	25

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

LESSON ONE

Objectives

1. To introduce students to subject matter discussed in the novel
2. To introduce students to a variety of media center resources or online research
2. To distribute the books and other materials necessary for the unit
3. To preview the novel by drawing conclusions from the cover and table of contents

Activity #1

Students should meet in the library for this activity. Alternately, you may choose to conduct this activity on the Internet, which would allow students to hone their computer research skills.

Divide students into 5 groups. Each group should receive a **folded** “Scavenger Hunt” form with three questions on it. *(Note: These questions have been taken directly from the “fifteen questions with thirty-six answers” found at the end of the novel. A question list follows this lesson for your convenience—simply cut the pages and distribute to the appropriate groups. A complete answer key can be found at the back of the novel.)*

When told to begin, the students will have about 15 minutes to answer their three questions. They may go about this any way they see fit. Let them decide how to divide the responsibilities for the task. After time is called, ask the students to come back together as a class to discuss their experience. Then check their answers. Some sample discussion questions follow:

How did each group tackle the challenge?

Did the students work together as a group on each question, or did they divide individual responsibility among the three questions?

How did the groups handle any disagreements that arose?

Do they feel confident that their answers are correct?

Did the group completely finish their assignments in the time allotted?

Were the topics familiar to them?

Were they able to answer any of the questions without consulting outside sources?

What were the most difficult questions?

What were the most interesting questions?

Did their research leave them with further questions?

TRANSITION: “In E.L. Konigsburg’s novel *The View from Saturday*, we are going to read about a group of students who build friendships and participate in an Academic Quiz Bowl, which tests students’ ability to answer questions on a variety of topics like the ones you researched today. Throughout this unit, you will also have an opportunity to form a group and explore a hobby, craft, subject, or issue that is of common interest to you and your group members.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 *The View From Saturday*

PROMPT

“I let my pen drink up a whole plunger full of ink and then holding the pen over the bottle, I squeezed three drops back into the bottle.

And I thought—a B & B letter is giving just a few drops back to the bottle.”

The first chapter of the novel closes with this quote from Noah as he begins writing a note of thanks to his grandparents at Century Village.

Think about a time when someone showed you hospitality or kindness. What impact did that kindness have on your life? Give a few drops back to the bottle by writing a thank you letter to that person (or persons) and letting him/her know how much you appreciate his/her kindness.

PREWRITING

You may begin by making a list of items people have given to you or kindnesses people have shown you. Look back over your list. Which of these made the greatest impact on your life? Have these people gone unthanked? After choosing the recipient of your letter, brainstorm the ways that person made your life better. Think about Noah’s prewriting activity in the novel.

DRAFTING

Since you are writing a letter, you should use standard letter form. When you thank the recipient of this letter, be sure to be specific when explaining the way they made your life richer, or how they might have inspired you to pass along that kindness to someone else.

PEER CONFERENCING/REVISING

When you finish the rough draft of your paper, ask a student who sits near you to read it. After reading your rough draft, he/she should tell you what he/she liked best about your work, which parts were difficult to understand, and ways in which your work could be improved. Reread your paper considering your critic's comments, and make the corrections you think are necessary.

PROOFREADING

Do a final proofreading of your paper double-checking your grammar, spelling, organization, and the clarity of your ideas.