

Teacher Guide

Grades 3–4

Frindle

Andrew Clements

 **NOVEL UNITS**[®]



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FRINDLE

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Teacher Guide

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Note

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Please note: Please assess the appropriateness of this novel for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading and discussing it with them.

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Skills and Strategies

Literary Elements

Character analysis, figurative language, conflict/resolution, plot development

Listening/Speaking

Discussion, reenactment, jingle

Writing

Freewriting, essay, journal entry, poetry, interview questions, author profile

Critical Thinking

Identifying attributes, research, compare/contrast, brainstorming, problem solving, creative thinking, inferences, predicting

Comprehension

Summarizing, cause/effect, sequencing

Vocabulary

Word wall, charades, word map, glossary

Across the Curriculum

Social Studies—freedom of the press, free enterprise, copyright laws, trust funds; Language—dictionaries and their rules; Art—print advertisement, billboard, shadow box, comic strip, book cover, novel illustration; Music—song selection

Nick–Word Detective

Nick Allen is famous for having great ideas—and for distracting his teachers. But upon entering fifth grade, Nick discovers that the English teacher, Mrs. Granger, is onto his tricks. While trying to avoid a homework assignment, Nick accidentally gets himself an extra one. As Nick researches words and the history of language, he gets a great idea.

Vocabulary
creative
jolt
annoying
pounced
monopoly
worshipped
essential
delay
congratulate
pretexts

Discussion Questions

1. Why is Nick known as a kid with plenty of ideas? *(In third grade, Nick managed to turn his classroom into a “tropical island,” with paper palm trees on the desks, the students wearing beach gear, sand on the floor, and the teacher giving hula lessons. In fourth grade, Nick puzzled his teacher by making big sounds during class and negotiating another student to do the same. Also, most kids know about Nick’s “thought grenades”—questions that will stall the teacher and possibly save the class from having homework.)*
2. Why did Nick apologize to Janet Fisk? *(Nick didn’t mean for Janet to be blamed for the big sounds in Mrs. Avery’s class and feels guilty. Nick likes Janet because she lives in his neighborhood, is good at sports, and is funny. He also probably thinks Janet would be interested in the information he learned about hula.)*
3. Describe Mrs. Granger. What is her reputation at Lincoln Elementary? *(Mrs. Granger is a small, intelligent, tidy English teacher who lives alone in an older part of town. She drives an old blue car, has a perfect attendance record, and is known for her neat and black “uniforms”—or skirt-and-jacket suits. She has a reputation at Lincoln Elementary for being a tough but fair teacher who encourages her students to use the dictionary. She is known for her dark gray eyes, which she can “power” up and down at will. She is also rumored to have “super vision.”)*
4. Describe Mrs. Granger’s “pride and joy” (p. 10). Why do you think she is so proud of it? *(Mrs. Granger’s pride and joy is the enormous dictionary that sits on the front of her class—“one of those huge dictionaries with every word in the universe in it, the kind of book it takes two kids to carry” [p. 10]. Answers will vary, but students should assume Mrs. Granger’s love of words [and of making students look up words] is the reason she is proud to own such an extensive volume.)*
5. What does the letter Mrs. Granger sent to fourth-grade students’ parents say? Why is Mrs. Allen pleased with this letter? *(Mrs. Granger’s letter stresses the importance of having a quality dictionary in the house so students can do their homework. She also claims that fixing the house is the ideal time for every student to expand his or her vocabulary. Mrs. Allen is pleased that Nick has “a teacher who takes her work this seriously” [p. 17].)*
6. How does Nick usually find out the meanings of words he doesn’t know? How does Mrs. Granger teach students to find the meanings of unfamiliar words? *(Nick usually asks his dad, brother, or whoever is around what a word means. In contrast, Mrs. Granger will not tell students a word’s meaning. Rather, she will make them look it up themselves.)*
7. Describe Nick’s first day in Mrs. Granger’s class. How do things turn out differently than Nick expected? *(Mrs. Granger begins by giving her students a vocabulary pretest, then a handout on class procedures, a review paper about class writing, and a sample heading sheet. Nick asks a question toward the end of class that is meant to distract Mrs. Granger from giving a homework assignment. Instead, he ends up with an extra homework assignment.)*

8. What is the main rule at Nick's house? Why are Nick's parents very firm about this rule? *(The rule at Nick's house is "Homework First" [which means as soon as he gets home from school]. Nick's parents believe completing homework is important and enforced the rule with both of their sons. When Nick's older brother James wrote home from college saying the homework rule really helped him in college, Nick's parents upheld the rule even more firmly.)*
9. Where does Nick get information for his report? Why doesn't his research go as quickly as expected? *(Nick gets information from his dictionary and encyclopedias. Nick's research takes longer than he anticipated, both because there is more to read on the subject than he thought and because he has trouble understanding much of what he reads.)*
10. **Prediction:** What is Nick's plan for his report?

Supplementary Activities

1. **Writing:** Write a formal paragraph telling whether you think Nick is a troublemaker or simply imaginative. Support your opinion with examples from the novel.
2. **Character Analysis:** Begin a Characterization web like the one on page 23 of this guide for Nick and Mrs. Stranger. Add to your web as you continue reading the novel.
3. **Research:** Complete the same assignment as Nick by researching where words come from. Write a one- to two-page essay with your findings.

Similes and Metaphors

A. Directions: Read the quotes from the novel below. Each uses a simile or metaphor to compare two things. In the blank boxes next to each quote, write what the simile or metaphor really means.

Quote	Explanation
1. "That gave Nick and his secret agents plenty of time..." (p. 42).	
2. "Staying after school with [Mrs. Granger] became a badge of honor" (p. 43).	
"It was kind of like a conference during a war" (p. 44).	

B. Directions: Now, read the following quotes from the novel. The quotes given DO NOT use similes or metaphors. This time, rewrite each quote so that it DOES use a simile or metaphor.

Quote	Rewrite
4. "[Mrs. Chatham] was a large person...with wide shoulders" (p. 49).	
5. "[Mrs. Chatham] was wearing a long black raincoat with a red sash of tie loosely around her neck" (p. 49).	

Rainstorming

Nick invents the
word "frizzle."

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