



**TEACHER GUIDE**

**GRADES 3-5**

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

**Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, William**

**McKinley, and Me, Elizabeth**

E. L. Konigsburg

**READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT**

# Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, William McKinley, and Me, Elizabeth

E. L. Konigsburg

## TEACHER GUIDE

**NOTE:**

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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## **JENNIFER, HECATE, MACBETH, WILLIAM MCKINLEY, AND ME, ELIZABETH,** **BY E. L. KONIGSBURG**

**STUDY GUIDE BY JEAN JAMIESON**

### **Summary:**

This book is about a friendship, which both Jennifer and Elizabeth need, that develops as the girls pretend to be witches, Jennifer as the master witch and Elizabeth as her apprentice.

### **About the Author:**

E(laine) L(obl) Konigsburg was born in New York City, and reared in mill towns in Pennsylvania. She married David Konigsburg, an industrial psychologist, and they have three children, Paul, Laurie, and Ross.

Konigsburg attended the Carnegie Institute of Technology as a chemistry major, because she was good at it and felt that she might get a job when finished, and received a B.S. degree, with honors, in 1952. She did graduate study at the University of Pittsburgh, 1952-54, and attended the Art Student's League, 1962-1966.

Of her college years, she has said, "College was a crucial opening up for me. I worked hard and did well. However, the artistic side of me was essentially dormant. There was not a lot of time for much besides work and school work."

While teaching science in Jacksonville, Florida, she began to suspect that chemistry was not her field, as she became more and more interested in what was going on inside of her students rather than what was going on inside of the test tubes. "I had the mind for chemistry, but not the temperament."

Konigsburg left teaching shortly before the birth of her son, Paul, and, soon after her second child, Laurie, was born, she took up painting in local adult education classes.

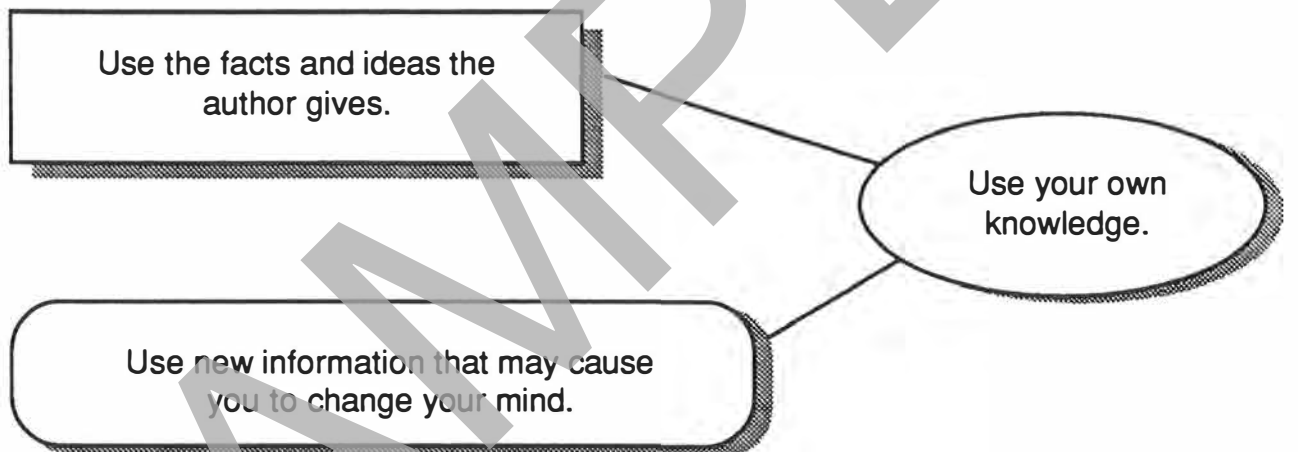
Her writing began when the family moved to New York, and her youngest child went to school. "I wanted to tell how it is normal to be very comfortable on the outside but very uncomfortable on the inside. Tell how funny it all is. But tell a little something else, too, about how you can be a nonconformist and about how you can be an outsider. And tell how you are entitled to a little privacy." *Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, William McKinley, and Me, Elizabeth* was her first novel, and a Newbery runner-up in 1968, when her second book, *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*, won the Newbery Medal. She illustrated both novels. "The illustrations probably come from the kindergartner who lives somewhere inside of me. Besides, I like to draw, and I like to complete things, and doing the illustrations answers these simple needs."

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## Using Predictions in the Novel Unit Approach

We all make predictions as we read—little guesses about what will happen next, how the conflict will be resolved, which details given by the author will be important to the plot, which details will help to fill in our sense of a character. Students should be encouraged to predict, to make sensible guesses. As students work on predictions, these discussion questions can be used to guide them: What are some of the ways to predict? What is the process of a sophisticated reader's thinking and predicting? What clues does an author give us to help us in making our predictions? Why are some predictions more likely than others?

A predicting chart is for students to record their predictions. As each subsequent chapter is discussed, you can review and correct previous predictions. This procedure serves to focus on predictions and to review the stories.



Predictions:

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## Chapter 3, Pages 23-32

### Vocabulary:

apprentice 26

### Vocabulary Activity:

How many words can you make from the letters in the word *apprentice*? (Here are some: *pen, pin, pit, pet, pat, rat, tap, cap, ice, rap, nap, tip, rip, nip, pip, ten, price, nice, rice, pie, tie, rent, print, cent, etc.*)

### Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. Jennifer leaves a note for Elizabeth, suggesting that they meet at the library on Saturday morning. Elizabeth then feels like, "The rest of that week seemed to have a month's worth of days..." (page 25) Can you explain that feeling? Has that ever happened to you?
2. Why isn't Elizabeth very popular at the A & P grocery store? (Page 25, *She had once knocked over a display of cracker boxes, and, although she had picked them up and arranged them artistically, the aisle was blocked for forty-five minutes.*) How do you think that Elizabeth felt when this happened? Has anything similar happened to you at a store? Would you like to tell us about it? How did you feel? Do you know what the A & P in the name of the store represents? (*Atlantic and Pacific*)
3. Jennifer decides that Elizabeth is to become an apprentice witch. She tells her, "If you really want to be a witch, nothing you have to do will seem like too much. If you don't really want to be a witch, everything will seem like too much." (page 26) Could these words be applied to other situations? Discuss.
4. We are told on page 27 that Jennifer is dressed in an ordinary manner that Saturday, except for one thing. What is it? (*Around her neck she has a gigantic key hanging from an old yo-yo string.*)
5. What is it in the park that holds Jennifer's interest the most? (Page 27, *The cement circle, the center of which is the water fountain.*)
6. What is it that Elizabeth must do to begin her apprenticeship?
  - Be a part of the ceremony in the park
  - Wear the big key on the yo-yo string
  - Eat a raw egg every day for a week
  - Leave a hardboiled egg for Jennifer at the tree every day
  - Read a book about witchcraft

Would you do all of these things as an apprentice? Why? Why not?

**Postreading Activities:**

1. Use other words to express the feeling that Elizabeth had when waiting for Saturday to come. Make a list.
2. Collect some empty boxes, preferably all of the same size, and allow the children to arrange them "artistically" for a display. You may wish to allow individuals to use small boxes, and to glue them together to make a permanent display.
3. Pretend that you are an expert at something, like making hot dogs, newspaper hats, etc. Make up some requirements for your apprentice to accomplish for a week.

**Chapter 4, Pages 33-41**

**Vocabulary:**

insectivorous 36  
ointment 37

guillotine 36  
cougar 38

reputation 37  
indigo 40

**Vocabulary Activity:**

Develop word maps for several of the current vocabulary words and those from earlier chapters.



For example:

