



TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 6-8

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

The View from Saturday

E. L. Konigsburg

READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The View from Saturday

E. L. Konigsburg

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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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Skills and Strategies

Thinking

Brainstorming, research

Literary Elements

Story elements, simile/
metaphor, characterization,
framework story, humor,
personification, symbol,
dialogue, theme

Listening/Speaking

Interviewing, role play

Comprehension

Predicting, comparison/
contrast

Writing

Reading response log,
letters, creative, narrative,
persuasive

Vocabulary

Synonyms, antonyms, word
mapping, sorting

Summary of *The View from Saturday*

Four students, with their own individual stories, develop a special bond and attract the attention of their teacher, a paraplegic, who chooses them to represent their sixth grade class in the Academic Bowl competition. The plot is composed of interwoven puzzles. What prompts Mrs. Olinski to choose Noah, Nadia, Ethan, and Julian for the team over the usual overachievers and honor students in her class? What do they know about her, themselves, and each other that gives them the advantage? Each has a tale to tell, in the course of which all four witness acts of kindness and respect that teach them to find those feelings in themselves and others.

About the Author

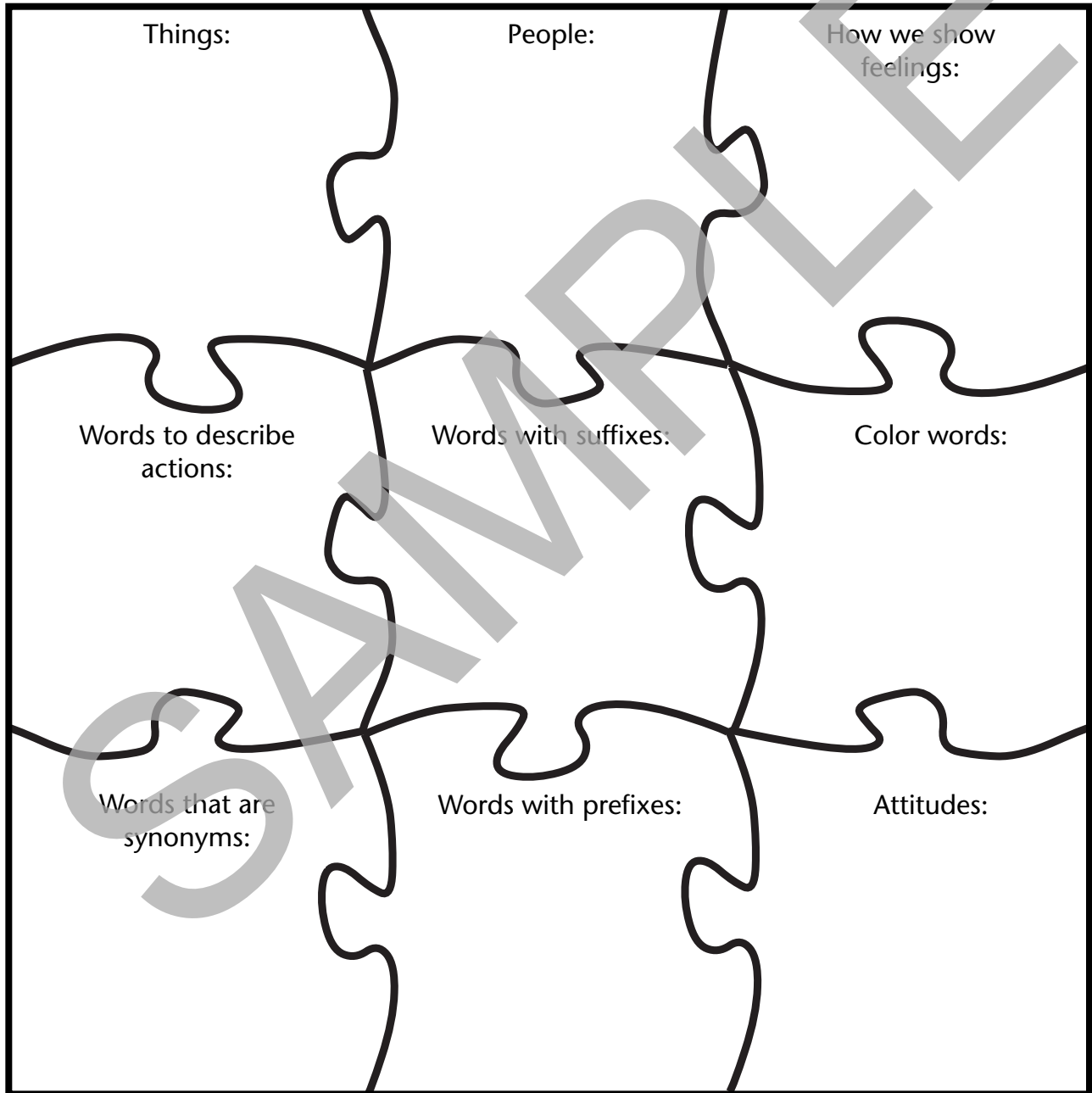
Elaine Lobl Konigsburg was born in New York, N.Y. in 1930. She did most of her growing up in a small town in Pennsylvania. She studied to be a scientist and was a science teacher in Florida before she married. She has three children. She found that writing stories was more fun than working as a scientist. When her children started school, she decided to write a book about what was happening to them in their school and community. She has said, "All my stories use the same things in different proportions: things that happen to me, to my family, to my friends, things that I read, that I see, that I hear about. When I stir all this together and write it down, the people become characters..." (Commire, Anne [editor]. *Something About the Author*, page 137. Detroit: Gale Research, 1985.)

Other writings by E. L. Konigsburg are:

About the B'nai Bagels
Altogether, One at a Time
From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler
(George)
Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, William McKinley, and Me, Elizabeth
Journey to an 800 Number
A Proud Taste for Scarlet and Miniver
Samuel Todd's Book of Great Colors
Samuel Todd's Book of Great Inventions
The Second Mrs. Gioconda
T-Backs, T-Shirts, Coat, and Suit
Throwing Shadows
Up from Jericho Tel

Vocabulary Puzzle Page

Directions: Fill in each puzzle piece with as many words as possible found in the vocabulary of the entire novel.



Chapter-by-Chapter Vocabulary, Discussion Questions, and Activities

Chapter 1—Pages 1-20

Chapter Opening Summary—Pages 1-4:

Mrs. Olinski remembers the answers she has given for her choice of team members for the Academic Bowl. She thinks about why The Souls are truly a team and how unusual it is that sixth graders have made it to the finals.



“Noah Writes a B & B Letter”—Pages 5-20

Noah remembers the wedding he had played a part in as he writes his B & B letter.

Vocabulary:

benevolently 3
nibs 9

baited breath 3
domiciles 10

calligraphy 4
version 11

destinations 7
maimed 15

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. What is the setting—time and place—in which the story opens on pages 1-4? What is the setting on pages 5-20? (*Page 1, The story opens on Academic Bowl day in Albany, New York. The setting for page 5 is New York State, but Noah is remembering his trip to Florida.*)
2. What is a B & B letter? (*Page 5, A “bread and butter” letter is one that you write to people to thank them for having you as their houseguest.*) Why did Noah think his mother, not he, should be sending the thank you letter? (*Pages 5-6, His mother was able to go on a cruise she had won because the grandparents cared for the children.*)
3. What are your impressions of Noah? (*Pages 5-6, He is a bit of a smarty but restrains himself with his mother. Noah is also imaginative and innovative.*) How does Noah demonstrate his creativeness and imagination? (*pages 11 and 18, cat paw invitations and surprise gifts*) How does his mother handle him and get him to do what she wants? How would your mother talk to Noah?
4. What was the biggest event in Noah’s visit to Florida? (*Pages 10-19, He helped prepare for a wedding of senior citizens at the retirement village.*) What were the high points that Noah remembered? Why were Post-It notes, a calligraphy pen and ink, a tuxedo T-shirt and a red wagon important?
5. How was Noah helpful? (*He wrote the invitations and helped run the organizing of coupons for the wedding dinner. When Allen, the best man, was injured, Noah stepped right into the best man’s place with a painted tuxedo. He helped move the*



wedding cake and also helped with the delivery of flowers.) Would the senior citizens have been able to manage the wedding without him?

6. How do you think senior citizens would react to Noah's definition of the retirement center as a place where old people lived who had "retired from useful life"? (page 7) How would you describe a retirement village?
7. Do you think Noah found that being around the old people was boring? Why or why not? What did the old people do to help the situation? (Pages 10-19, *They gave Noah something to do and made him feel a part of the important event.*)
8. What does *ironic* mean? (page 13, *"the contrast between what you expect to happen and what really happens"*) Why did Noah think it was ironic that Allen Diamondstein should say that the red wagon was the problem? (page 15)
9. What superstitions might people have thought about if they knew the fate of the couple on the top of the toppled wedding cake? (page 15)
10. Which part of the chapter did you find funniest? Do you think the characters saw the humor?

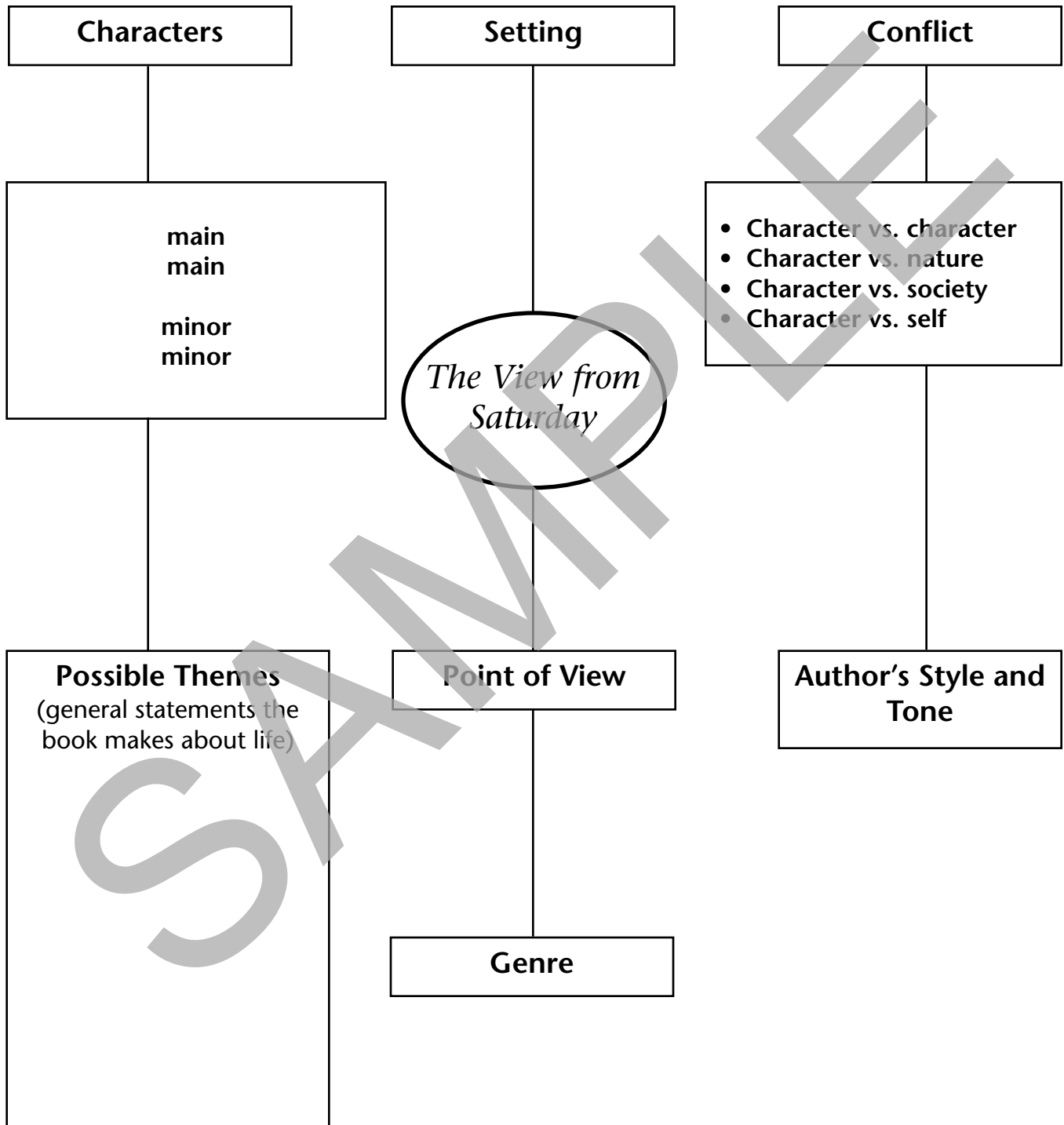


Supplementary Activities:

1. **Literary Analysis—Framework Story:** A framework story is a story within a story. The framework may or may not have a plot itself, and the story may or may not return to the frame situation at the end. Mrs. Olinski and the Academic Bowl provide a frame for the stories of the four contestants.

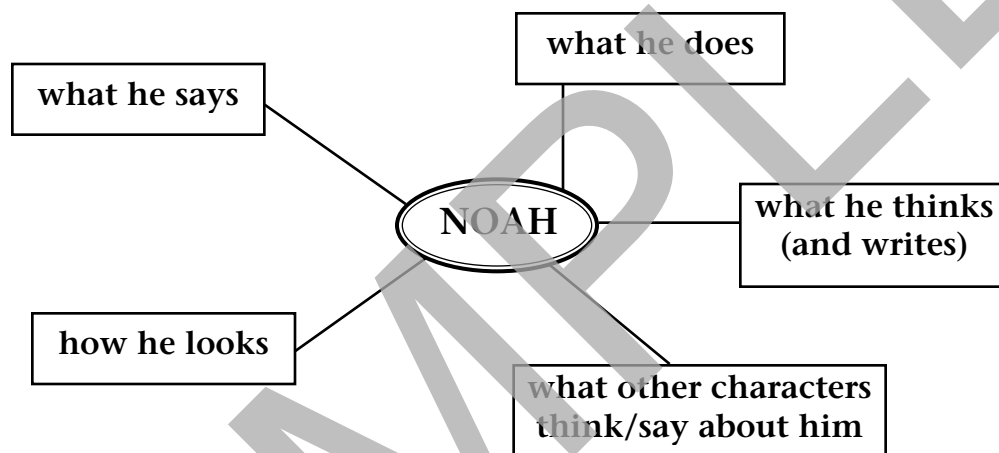
A story map is an outline that helps you to understand and remember the story better. Because this is a framework story, it is harder to make a story line diagram. Begin the story map on page 17 of this guide. As the story is read, more characters may be added and the setting and the problem may change, so additions to the story map may be made. You may want to make story maps for each of the chapters on Noah, Nadia, Ethan and Julian, plus the overall map of the entire book.

Story Map



-
2. **Literary Analysis—Characterization:** Explain that characterization is the way an author informs readers about what characters are like. Direct characterization is when the author describes the character. Indirect characterization is when the reader figures out what the character is like based on what the character thinks, says, or does—or what other characters say about him or her.

Ask: “What are your impressions of Noah so far?” Ask students to support any words or phrases they use to describe Noah with evidence from the story. Have them jot down the evidence on a web like this one. For each of the major characters in this novel, make a character web.



3. **Literary Analysis—Humor:**
1. Can you list five things that kids think are funny but adults do not?
 2. What are all the ways adults are funnier than kids?
 3. Why are some people funnier than others?
 4. What is a practical joke? What is the difference between a funny practical joke and a mean joke?
 5. Would you rather see something funny or hear something funny? Why?
 6. Is it better to laugh at someone or be the one laughed at? Does laughter ever hurt?
 7. What comes after a funny joke?

Write your definition of humor.

4. **Research:** How many retirement communities are in your area? What opportunities do they provide for interaction with young people? Do they invite young people for Christmas programs or provide any tutoring help to children? What can young people learn from senior citizens?

5. Writing Ideas:
 1. Write Noah's B & B thank you letter.
 2. How could events in Noah's story have been changed to create a different ending? Write another version of Noah's story.
 3. Noah was inventive. As you read the novel, find other examples of courage and inventiveness. Would you rather be courageous or inventive? Write a short paper with examples from your life.

6. Interview: Interview a grandparent or other older person in your family or neighborhood. Find out how things have changed. Does your interviewee think the "old days" were better than present times? What are his or her happiest memories? saddest?

Chapter 2—Pages 21-57

Chapter Opening Summary—Pages 21-24:

At the Academic Bowl contest, Mrs. Olinski thinks about the superintendent and her answer to why she had chosen the members of the team. Mrs. Olinski sees Nadia as a beautiful person with a cautious, friendly manner.



“Nadia Tells of Turtle Love”—Pages 25-57

Nadia describes her vacation with her father and grandparents in Florida. These are the grandparents who were married with the assistance of Noah. Nadia has adjustment problems with her divorced father and her move to New York. She compares the turtles commuting up and down the Atlantic with her joint custody and vacations between New York and Florida. She no longer feels comfortable with her Florida friends in the old neighborhood. She had enjoyed working with her grandfather and Margaret before they were married. The fun of moving turtle nests and saving the turtles has changed and she is uncomfortable with Ethan, Margaret's grandson, until the northeaster hits and she swallows her resentment and jealousy and helps save the turtles.

Vocabulary:

podium 21	onyx 21	coiffed 21	incandescently 24
de facto 25	mixed marriage 26	hovered 26	bubbe 26
atrociously 27	zaftig 27	prepubescent 27	unforeseen 28
gourmet 32	tranquelize 35	hybridization 36	thoroughbred 36
rugelach 39	bobka 39	subtle 40	recipient 47
communicator 48	sarcasm 49	pathetic 51	frazzled 51
philosophical 54	frenzy 54		