

A Guide for Using

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

in the Classroom

*Based on the novel written by E. L. Konigsburg*

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# Introduction

Good books are wonderful! They stimulate our imagination, inform our minds, inspire our higher selves, and fill our time with magic! With good books, we are never lonely or bored. And a good book only gets better with time, because each reading brings us new meaning. Each new story is a treasure to cherish forever.

In *Literature Units*, we take great care to select books that will become treasured friends for life.

Teachers using this unit will find the following features to supplement their own valuable ideas.

- Sample Lesson Plans
- Pre-reading Activities
- A Biographical Sketch and Picture of the Author
- A Book Summary
- Vocabulary Lists and Suggested Vocabulary Activities
- Chapters grouped for study, with each section including:
  - *quizzes*
  - *hands-on projects*
  - *cooperative learning activities*
  - *cross-curriculum connections*
  - *extensions into the reader's own life*
- Post-reading Activities
- Book Report Ideas
- Research Ideas
- A Culminating Activity
- Three Different Options for Unit Tests
- Bibliography
- Answer Key

We are confident that this unit will be a valuable addition to your literature planning, and that as you use our ideas, your students will learn to treasure the stories to which you introduce them.



# Sample Lesson Plan

## Lesson 1

- Introduce and complete some or all of the pre-reading activities found on page 5.
- Read “About the Author” with your students. (page 6)
- Read book summary with students. (page 7)
- Introduce the vocabulary list for Section 1. (page 8)

## Lesson 2

- Read Chapters 1 and 2. As you read, place the vocabulary words in the context of the story and discuss their meanings.
- Choose a vocabulary activity. (page 9)
- Complete “Taking Sides.” (page 11)
- Learn to anticipate the story. (page 12)
- Discuss the book in terms of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. (page 13)
- Begin Readers’ Response Journals. (page 14)
- Administer the Section 1 quiz. (page 10)
- Introduce the vocabulary list for Section 2. (page 8)

## Lesson 3

- Read Chapters 3 and 4. Place the vocabulary words in context and discuss their meanings.
- Choose a vocabulary activity. (page 9)
- Establish a museum. (page 16)
- Learn to use a compass. (page 17)
- Discuss the book in terms of the history of the Italian Renaissance. (pages 18-19)
- Ask the students to describe what it means to be a team player. (page 20)
- Administer the Section 2 quiz. (page 15)
- Introduce the vocabulary list for Section 3. (page 8)

## Lesson 4

- Read Chapters 5 and 6. Place the vocabulary words in context and discuss their meanings.
- Choose a vocabulary activity. (page 9)
- Design your own mark. (page 22)
- Have a group planning session. (page 23)
- Discuss the book in terms of a biography of Michelangelo. (page 24)
- Sculpt a statue. (page 25)
- Write about painting the Sistine Chapel ceiling. (page 26)

- Administer the Section 3 quiz. (page 21)
- Introduce the vocabulary list for Section 4. (page 8)

## Lesson 5

- Read Chapters 7 and 8. Place the vocabulary words in context and discuss their meanings.
- Choose a vocabulary activity. (page 9)
- Build a model mastaba. (page 28)
- As a group, complete puzzle. (page 29)
- Discuss the book in terms of the United Nations. (page 30)
- Discuss individual differences. (page 31)
- Administer the Section 4 quiz. (page 27)
- Introduce vocabulary list for Section 6. (page 8)

## Lesson 6

- Read Chapters 9 and 10. Place the vocabulary words in context and discuss their meanings.
- Choose a vocabulary activity. (page 9)
- Design a limousine. (page 33)
- Discuss the book in terms of point of view. (page 34)
- Complete “Adjective to Adverb.” (page 35)
- Discuss the book in terms of changing viewpoints. (page 36)
- Administer the Section 5 quiz. (page 32)

## Lesson 7

- Discuss questions about the story. (page 37)
- Assign book report and research projects. (pages 38 and 39)
- Begin work on the culminating activity. (pages 40, 41, and 42)

## Lesson 8

- Administer Unit Test 1, 2, and/or 3. (pages 43, 44, and 45)
- Discuss the test answers and responses.
- Discuss the students’ opinions and enjoyment of the book.
- Provide a list of related reading for students. (page 46)

## Lesson 9

- Celebrate the “Festival of the Arts” culminating activity. (pages 40, 41, and 42)

# Book Summary

*(Available in USA, Dell; Canada, Doubleday Dell Seal; UK, Macmillan; AUS, Transworld Publishers)*

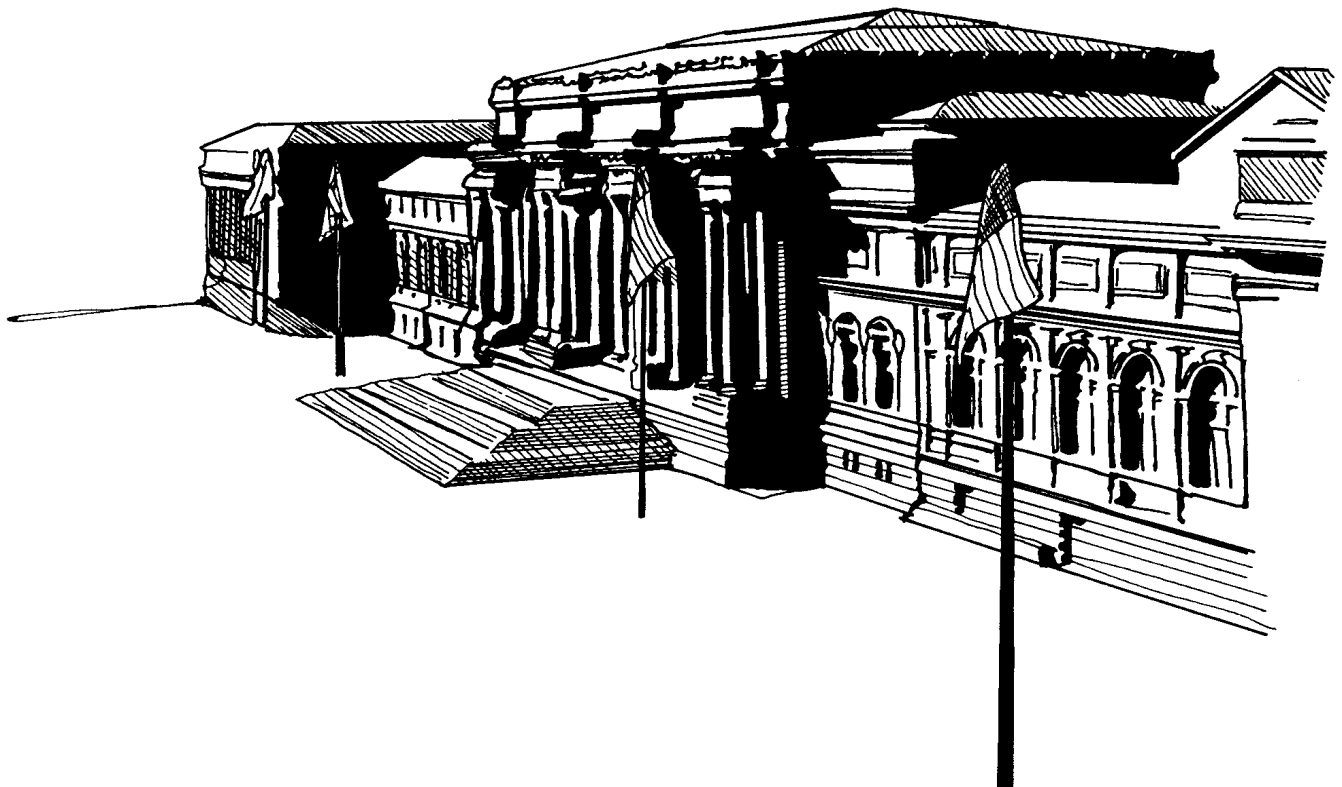
Claudia was sick and tired of not being appreciated, so she decided to do the logical thing about her circumstances. She decided to run away. She knew just where she was going to go, too. There was only one problem. She didn't have much money, because she'd spent most of it on hot fudge sundaes. So she decided to ask her favorite little brother, Jamie, to go with her. Jamie had money, tons of it, which he'd won cheating at cards. Claudia figured that he certainly would have enough to pay for the most exciting adventure in the world.

Running away wasn't really hard at all. Claudia and Jamie packed their clean underwear in her violin case and his trumpet case. Then they took the train to New York, and established residence in the most beautiful place Claudia could think of, the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

What a place to hide out! It was full of wonderful things from all over the world: paintings, statues, armor from the middle ages, and a great fountain in which to bathe. They even had huge canopy beds to sleep in at night. However, that wasn't enough to hold Claudia's interest very long. But then the children discovered the lovely little angel, the most mysterious thing Claudia had ever seen. Who had carved it? Was it really carved by Michelangelo? Not even the experts seemed to know.

The statue had a magic which trapped Claudia, and she simply couldn't return home until she discovered its maker. And who was Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler? How could she help Claudia solve the mystery so the children could go home?

Newbery Award-winning *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* is full of humor and suspense as Claudia and Jamie explore the museum and New York City, searching for the answer to the angel's mystery.



# Vocabulary Activity Ideas

Completing some vocabulary activities based on the words in the book will help your students learn and retain the words. A list of vocabulary words is provided for each section of the book. You may use all of them, or choose words which are most appropriate for your students.

The students may work in small groups or individually to study the words. Here are a few ideas for activities to try with the vocabulary words in *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*.

- **Color My Word**

In this activity students are to imagine what a word would look like if it had a shape and was a certain color. After using their imaginations, students can be encouraged to illustrate the word in the appropriate color.

- **Cross My Word**

Make a crossword out of some of the vocabulary words. Number the first letter of each word. The students then write clues for the words based on their meanings.

- **Auction My Word!**

Students are to choose a word they particularly like more than another. Then each student is to write a script telling why he/she likes using that word best and why others should use it too. Using his/her script as a guide, the student then tries to persuade the other students to “buy” his/her word. After all students have given their speeches, vote to see which is the most popular word. The word that gets the largest number of prospective buyers is declared the winner.

- **My Word, the Extraterrestrial**

Each student is to choose a word and imagine that word to be an extraterrestrial. What would the word look like if it were from another world? Then have each student write a description of what the word looks like.

- **My Word, the Artist**

Each student is to imagine a vocabulary word to be the name of a make-believe artist. What kind of pictures would that artist paint? Draw and color a picture in the style of that make-believe artist.

- **Word Categories**

In groups, divide the words into categories based on whether each is a noun, verb, or adjective. Are any words left over? What category of words are left over? As a class, share each group’s findings.

- **Make an Illustrated Dictionary**

In small groups, students are to work together to create an illustrated dictionary of all or a selection of vocabulary words.

- **Write an Art History Lesson**

Individually, or in small groups, students are to use vocabulary words to describe a particular period in the history of art.