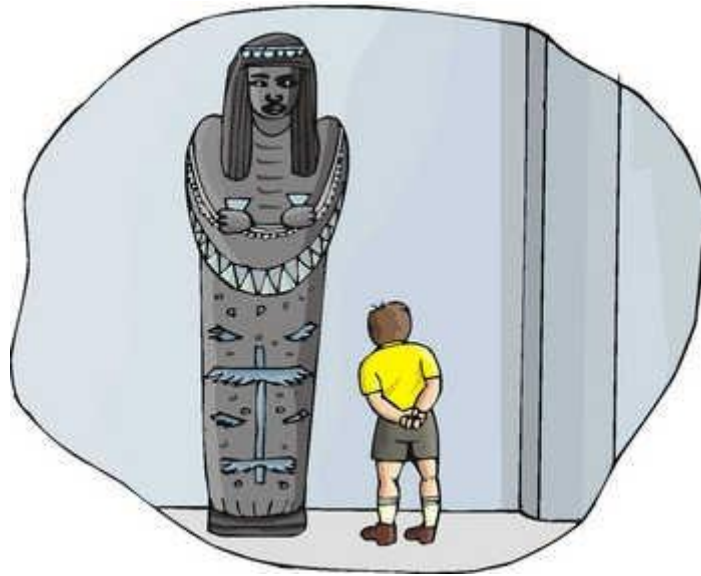


Preview Pages from

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

by E.L. Konigsburg

1968 Newbery Medal Winner



A Novel Teaching Pack

by Margaret Whisnant

with

***Chapter Summaries, Prereading Activities,
Vocabulary, Short Answer Questions,
Chapter-by-Chapter Objective Tests,
Whole Book Test,
Chapter-by-Chapter Think, Write, Create Activities,
Whole Book Think, Write, Create Activities,
Graphic Organizers for Writing,
and
Answer Keys***

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Claudia Kincaid,
straight-A student,
sixth grade,
the only girl with three younger brothers
the subject of injustice. . .

One brother has money and a transistor radio,
the perfect partner for the adventure she has planned
at
the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. . .

Then
an unexpected mystery complicates matters,
and the search begins for an answer

that can be pulled only
from the mixed-up files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler.



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Chapter Summaries

The Letter and Chapter 1

- In a letter that she writes to Saxonberg, her lawyer, Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler explains that she is making certain changes in her last will and testament, which he will understand after reading the account being delivered by her chauffeur.
- Mrs. Frankweiler also suggests that Saxonberg would almost be a fascinating person if he had some interest other than law, taxes, and his grandchildren.
- Because she doesn't like discomfort, Claudia Kincaid decides not to run away the old fashioned way. She chooses instead to run away to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, a comfortable, indoor, beautiful place.
- Claudia selects Jamie, her second youngest brother as her companion, because he can keep quiet and he is rich.
- It's the injustice of being the oldest child and the only girl that prompts Claudia to run away. Mrs. Frankweiler thinks the fact that she is bored with being straight-A's Claudia Kincaid is another reason for her decision.
- Claudia, one month away from being twelve, gives up hot fudge sundaes for more than three weeks to save money for train fare from Greenwich to New York City. She must also cover her intended return trip.
- Claudia loves New York City. She studies maps and pamphlets about the museum to prepare herself. Planning long and well is one of her special talents.
- In addition to having money, Claudia's brother Jamie also has a transistor radio, which Claudia thinks they will probably need.
- While performing her assigned chore of emptying wastebaskets, Claudia finds a ten-ride train pass with one unused pass—two half fares for her and Jamie. She decides they will leave on Wednesday.
- On Monday, Claudia instructs Jamie to sit with her on the bus so she can tell him something important. Jamie wants to sit with his buddy Bruce and play their continuing card game of *war*. He is angry with Claudia and complains that she should pick on somebody else.
- Claudia corrects her brother's use of words and then invites him to accompany her on the greatest adventure of their lives.
- Claudia explains that they will pack clothes in their violin and trumpet cases. Jamie is to bring his transistor radio and his money, which amounts to an astounding twenty-four dollars and forty-three cents. The fortune is the result of playing cards with Bruce for money.
- Jamie refuses to tell Claudia why he is confident he can win enough money from Bruce to make the total twenty-five dollars, if she will wait until Friday.
- Claudia is certain she has chosen the correct brother as a partner. She is cautious and poor; he is adventurous and rich. They compliment each other.
- Claudia intends to give Jamie written details of her plan, which he is to memorize and then destroy. Jamie says he will eat his copy because he likes complications.

Chapter 2

- Claudia leaves Jamie's instructions under his pillow pinned to his pajamas. He gives up on eating the note after two bites, tearing it into pieces and throwing it into the trash.
- Claudia and Jamie ride the bus to school as usual but hide, crouched in the back until everyone leaves. They remain hidden as the driver moves the bus to the lot where it will be parked during the day. After the driver leaves, they wait seven minutes and forty-five seconds before they raise their heads.
- As Jamie walks down the aisle of the bus, the twenty-four dollars and forty-three cents in change in his pocket makes an awful racket and it's pulling his pants down.
- Jamie has also brought a compass to use in the woods where he believes they will be hiding. The two of them argue over the use of the phrase *hide out in*.

Word Lists with Definitions

(Arranged in Story Order)

Some words may appear on more than one page.

Part One: Chapter 1 through Chapter 4

- chauffeur** A person employed to drive a private automobile or limousine for the owner or for paying passengers; to transport by car. (*The Letter*)
- metropolitan** Of or pertaining to a large city, its surrounding suburbs, and other neighboring communities; descriptive of a person who has the sophistication, fashionable taste, or other habits and manners associated with those who live in large cities. (p. 5)
- suburbs** The usually residential region surrounding a major city. (p. 6)
- commuting** Traveling regularly over some distance, as from a suburb to a city and back; changing a penalty, such as a sentence of death, to a less severe one. (p. 7)
- ventured** Participated in an undertaking involving uncertainty as to the outcome, especially a risky or dangerous one; embarked upon an adventure; risked; took a risk or a dare. (p. 7)
- jostling** Bumping, pushing, shoving, brushing against, or elbowing roughly or rudely, as in passing or in a crowd; existing in close proximity with each other; crowding; joggling; (p. 7)
- Neanderthal** An unenlightened or ignorant person; an extinct human species that once existed throughout most of Europe, parts of Asia and northern Africa, named after the *Neanderthal Valley* in Germany, near Düsseldorf, where evidence of its existence was first found. (p. 13)
- obvious** Easily seen, recognized, or understood; open to view or knowledge; evident. (p. 13)
- mutual** Possessed, experienced, or performed, etc., by each of two or more with respect to the other; shared; common; associated. (p. 13)
- tyrannies** Arbitrary or unrestrained exercises of power; despotic abuse of authority; undue severity or harshness. (p. 15)
- extravagant** Spending much more than is necessary or wise; wasteful; excessively high; exceeding the bounds of reason. (p. 28)
- fatigue** Weariness from bodily or mental exertion. (p. 29)
- mimicked** To imitate or copy in action, speech, etc., often playfully or derisively; imitated; parroting; impersonating. (p. 30)
- inconspicuous** Not readily noticeable; concealed; hidden; camouflaged. (p. 30)
- matinee** An entertainment, such as a dramatic performance or movie, presented in the daytime, usually in the afternoon. (p. 31)
- elegant** Tastefully fine or luxurious in dress, style, design., etc.; excellent; fine; superior. (p. 36)
- canopy** A covering, usually of fabric, supported on poles or suspended above a bed, throne, exalted personage, or sacred object; the part of a parachute that opens up and fills with air; the transparent cover over the cockpit of an airplane. (p. 36)
- ornately** Done in an elaborate or sumptuously adorned manner, often excessively; elaborately; flamboyantly; lavishly; opulently. (p. 38)
- fussbudget** A fussy or needlessly fault-finding person; nitpicker. (p. 38)
- corridors** Narrow hallways, passageways, or galleries, often with rooms or apartments opening into them; tracts of land forming passageways, such as one that allows an inland country access to the sea; thickly populated strips of land connecting two or more urban areas. (p. 40)
- essence** A perfume or scent; the indispensable properties that identify or characterize something; the most important ingredient. (p. 44)
- sarcophagus** A stone coffin, especially one bearing sculptures, inscriptions, etc., often displayed as a monument. (p. 44)
- urn** A large decorative vase, especially one with an ornamental foot or pedestal; a vase for holding the ashes of the cremated dead; a large metal container with a spigot, used for making or serving tea or coffee in quantity. (p. 45)

Dictionary Discoveries

(Part One: Chapter 1 through Chapter 4)

Use a dictionary to answer the following questions about some challenging words from the first four chapters of *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*. Write the letters of the correct answers in the blanks to the left.

- _____ 1. In addition to **fussbudget**, what is another word that can be used for a person who likes to find something wrong with everything? (A) nitpicker, (B) imposter, (C) chiseler.
- _____ 2. **Neanderthal** is both the name of a valley in Germany and the name of (A) an ancient city found buried in the valley, (B) a type of art that originated in Germany in the 17th century, (C) an extinct human species that once existed throughout most of Europe and parts of Asia and Africa.
- _____ 3. How is a **sarcophagus** different from other coffins? It (A) is larger and reserved for royalty or important leaders, (B) made of stone and usually bears sculptures or inscriptions that serve as a monument, (C) was made of a particular type of stone and used only by the ancient Egyptians.
- _____ 4. Which word is an *antonym* of **mediocre**? (A) average, (B) superior, (C) uninspired.
- _____ 5. **Fatigue** is a sophisticated word for (A) obesity, (B) tiredness, (B) uncertainty.
- _____ 6. Which of the following is **not** a correct definition of the word **commuting**? (A) traveling regularly over a distance, as to one workplace and back home, (B) changing a penalty imposed by a court of law to a less severe one, (C) finding the value of a group of numbers by using a commutative process.
- _____ 7. Two of the following phonetic spellings for the word **chauffeur** are correct. Which one is **incorrect**? (A) shō´fær, (B) shō´.fēr, (C) shō.fûr´
- _____ 8. Which word correctly completes the following sentence:
The absence of _____ evidence prompted the judge to dismiss the charges.
(A) **conclusive**, (B) **inconspicuous**, (C) **perilous**
- _____ 9. Which of the following would **not** likely be described as **outrageous**? (A) high prices placed on shoddy merchandise, (B) a small house in the country, (C) taking part in a loud argument in a public place.
- _____ 10. **Tyrannies** are usually committed by (A) large groups of people, (B) people suffering from oppression, (C) people in a position of power or authority.
- _____ 11. Which word or phrase can be substituted for the word in bold print in the following sentence without changing its meaning?
*The three children in the back seat passed time by **jostling** each other.*
(A) arguing with, (B) bumping against, (C) ignoring
- _____ 12. Areas known as **suburbs** are located near (A) a waterway or the shore of a large body of water, (B) large industrial areas, (C) a major city.
- _____ 13. If a group of friends attended the **matinee** performance of a play, what time of day would they most likely be together? (A) in the afternoon, (B) after eight o'clock in the evening, (C) around noon.
- _____ 14. **Vain**, **vein**, and **vane** are homophones. The correct spelling for the word that means *a device that indicates the direction of the wind* is (A) vain, (B) vein, (C) vane.
- _____ 15. A *synonym* for **imposter** is (A) enabler, (B) charlatan, (C) professional.
- _____ 16. A **perilous** journey is one that (A) offers pleasant surprises at every turn, (B) requires more than a few days of travel, (C) involves the risk of danger or hazards.

Short Answer Questions

The Letter—Chapter 1

1. Who was Saxonberg?
2. In Mrs. Frankweiler's opinion, what were the three things that interested Saxonberg?
3. Why did Claudia choose the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City as the place to run away to?
4. What was Claudia's reason for running away? What did Mrs. Frankweiler suspect as another reason?
5. What were the three reasons Claudia chose her brother Jamie as a running away partner?
6. Of what use was the train pass that Claudia found in the wastebasket?
7. Why was Jamie angry with Claudia for wanting to talk with him instead of allowing him to sit with his friend Bruce on the school bus?
8. What was special about Wednesday that made it Claudia's choice as the day to leave?
9. Explain how, on an allowance of twenty-five cents, Jamie had been able to amass a fortune of twenty-four dollars and forty-three cents?
10. Why did Jamie intend to eat the page of detailed plans that Claudia expected him to memorize?

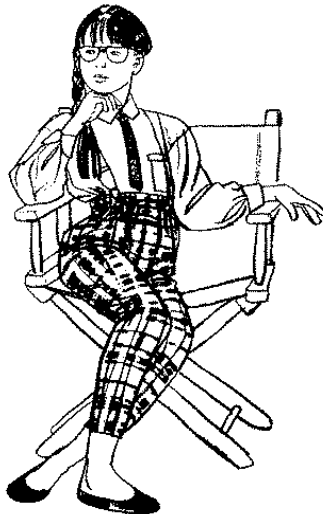
Chapter 2

1. What did Jamie do with Claudia's list of instructions instead of eating them as he had planned?
2. How did Claudia and Jamie hide from the driver when he moved the bus to the lot where it would be parked during the day?
3. Why did Jamie make a racket when he walked?
4. Why did Jamie bring his compass?
5. What two phrases did Claudia and Jamie argue over?
6. At first, what did Jamie think of Claudia's plan to hide in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Manhattan?
7. How did Jamie think he and Claudia should travel to New York?
8. What was in the two letters that Claudia mailed?
9. What was to be Jamie's responsibility as treasurer?
10. In addition to his money and radio, why else was Claudia glad to have Jamie along when they emerged from the train at Grand Central?

The Letter and Chapter 1
Pages 5-18

Write the **letter** of the correct answer in the space before each question.

- _____ 1. Who was Saxonberg? (A) Mrs. Frankweiler's lawyer, (B) the Kincaid's family butler, (C) Mrs. Frankweiler's son.
- _____ 2. Who told this story? (A) Claudia, (B) Claudia's father, (C) Mrs. Frankweiler.
- _____ 3. Why did Claudia not want to run away in the heat of anger? (A) She knew she would be caught. (B) She didn't like discomfort. (C) The weather was not suitable.
- _____ 4. Where did Claudia plan to go when she ran away? (A) to an abandoned house just outside New York City, (B) to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, (C) to an art museum in Greenwich.
- _____ 5. How many brothers did Claudia have? (A) three, (B) two, (C) four
- _____ 6. Why did Claudia choose Jamie as the brother to run away with? He (A) had a lot of money and a transistor radio, (B) was the oldest brother, (C) wanted to run away as well.
- _____ 7. Which of the following was **not** one of the reasons Claudia decided to run away? (A) She was the only girl and subject to a lot of injustice. (B) She was bored with simply being straight-A's Claudia Kincaid. (C) Her parents ignored her.



- _____ 8. How did Claudia manage to save money for train fare? (A) She picked up loose change she found around the house. (B) She skipped hot fudge sundaes. (C) She did some babysitting for the neighbors.
- _____ 9. What did Claudia plan to do after everyone had learned a lesson in "Claudia appreciation"? (A) go live with an aunt, (B) make her parents sign a contract, (C) return home.
- _____ 10. How did Claudia feel about New York City? (A) She knew it was dangerous. (B) She loved it. (C) It wasn't far away from home, but it would have to do as a running-away destination.
- _____ 11. Where did Claudia find the train ticket? (A) in a trash can, (B) in her father's coat pocket, (C) lying on the floor near a trash can.
- _____ 12. Which of the following was a clue that Claudia's family was **not** poor? (A) A cleaning lady came in twice a week. (B) Her father worked in New York City in a private office. (C) Claudia and Jamie were taken to school by a chauffeur.

Chapter 2
Pages 19-27

Write either **True** or **False** in the blank before each statement.

- _____ 1. Part of Claudia's instructions was for Jamie to forget his homework and get ready for their trip.
- _____ 2. Jamie actually tried to eat Claudia's note.
- _____ 3. Claudia and Jamie got off the bus as usual and hid until everyone went into the school building.
- _____ 4. Jamie's money was all in change.
- _____ 5. Jamie brought a compass because he thought they would be hiding in the woods.
- _____ 6. Claudia and Jamie got into an argument about the phrases "hide out in" and "run away to."
- _____ 7. Jamie was happily excited to learn that Claudia and he were going to the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- _____ 8. Claudia mailed a letter to her parents and a second letter to her teachers.
- _____ 9. Although Jamie wanted to hitchhike, the children took a train into New York City.
- _____ 10. Claudia appointed Jamie treasurer, which meant he would hold the money, keep track of it, and decide how it was spent.



Think, Write, Create

Chapter Activities

Chapter 1

Claudia's notion was that she needed to run away because, as the oldest child and the only girl, she was the subject of injustice, and her family needed a lesson in Claudia appreciation. Mrs. Frankweiler speculated that running away came into Claudia's mind because she was bored with being straight-A's Claudia Kincaid.

- Do you believe Claudia actually *was* treated unfairly and had good reason to run away? Why or why not?
 - Were Claudia's parents doing the right thing by expecting her to do chores? Explain.
 - What things in Claudia's life could possibly have been boring? Do you think Mrs. Frankweiler was correct in suspecting that *sameness* was one of the things that motivated Claudia to plan a disappearing act? Explain your thinking.
 - If you are the oldest child in a family, do you feel you have more responsibilities than your younger sibling(s)? Explain yourself. If you are a younger child, do you think your older sibling(s) have an unfair advantage and possibly too many privileges? Explain your position.
 - What are some of the merits of being an only child? What are some of the disadvantages?
-
- How was Claudia's running away plan unusual compared to the way it's commonly done? Find at least four differences.
 - Claudia's story took place in 1967. If her story were taking place in the current year, do you think Claudia would consider running away as an option for solving her problems? Explain your answer.

What clues from the first chapter indicate that Claudia's family was wealthy?

Planning long and well was one of Claudia's *special talents*. She chose to use her unique ability by developing a strategy for running away.

Eliminating the **usual** ones such as sports, music, art, etc., what would you say are **your** special talents? Like Claudia, do you *make good plans*? Are you known for *always being on time, being neat, making the best possible grades, creating unusual hair styles, spending money wisely, helping settle arguments*. . . ?

List your **three** top specialties and explain how you use your abilities in **positive** ways so that both you and those around you reap the benefits. Write a composition about **Special Talents at Work**. (See **Graphic Organizer #1**)

One of the many injustices heaped upon Claudia Kincaid was the amount of her allowance. She complained that it was probably the smallest in her class.

- Do you believe that allowances should be a right extended to all young people under the age of sixteen? Why or why not?
 - In your opinion, what is the *fairest* way parents can determine the amount of allowance they give their children?
 - Do you get an allowance? How do you feel about your situation? Do you, like Claudia, feel you are short-changed in this department, or are you able to live comfortably on your allowance? Explain.
-

Think, Write, Create

Whole Book Activities

Jamie was adventuresome, liked complications, cheated at cards, and hoarded his money. Claudia was certain she had chosen the correct brother to share her great adventure.

- Explain why Jamie, who obviously had his own ideas about things, fell under Claudia's spell so quickly and then stayed through the whole experience.
 - If you were planning a secret (but *legal*) endeavor, what characteristics would you require in a possible partner? Explain why you would need this type of person. Would any of Jamie's traits be acceptable? Why or why not?
-

When it came to money, Jamie Kincaid was *frugal* and Claudia was *extravagant*.

- Cite three events from the story to prove that the above statement is true.
 - How do you think the story would have taken a different turn if Claudia had been the treasurer instead of Jamie?
 - Who do you think you are most like in the way you handle money? Are you a Claudia or a Jamie? Explain your choice.
-

The commonly used sentence, *It depends on how you look at it*, ranks high on the list of life's important lessons. Claudia, a straight A student, tripped over this truism several times but didn't comprehend its meaning. For example, she thought too much fuss was being made by everyone over her six-year-old first grade brother. Her parents, as she remembered, hadn't made her anyone's special charge when she was in first grade except that her *mother had simply met her at the bus stop every day*.

- Explain how Claudia's *view* of her brother's treatment and her own treatment as first graders distorted the truth. How do you suppose her mother would describe the same two events?
 - Find **two** other examples in the story in which Claudia's *point of view* added a different twist on the situation.
 - Though Claudia was a gifted student, do you think it would also be fair to say that she was *immature*? Would *self-centered* be too harsh? Explain your thinking.
-

Mrs. Frankweiler observed that Claudia and Jamie became a team when they complimented each other on their choice of the large murder bed as their sleeping place.

- Search the story for **three** other accomplishments that you think were the result of brother and sister teamwork.
 - How would Claudia's great adventure have been diminished without Jamie's presence?
-

Claudia and Jamie's adventure required a combination of realistic and imaginative thinking.

- Which partner do you see as the realistic one? Who was the most imaginative? Did each child prove to be both realistic and imaginative? Explain your answer choices with actual events from the story.
 - Would the children have had the opportunity to live in a museum for a week and to meet Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler without Claudia's unique way of looking at things? Why or why not?
 - Could Claudia have brought her plans to a satisfactory conclusion without Jamie's involvement? Explain his role.
-

Special Talents at Work

Planning long and well was one of Claudia's *special talents*. She chose to use her unique ability by developing a strategy for running away.

Eliminating the **usual** ones such as sports, music, art, etc., what would you say are **your** special talents? Like Claudia, do you *make good plans*? Are you known for *always being on time, being neat, making the best possible grades, creating unusual hair styles, spending money wisely, helping settle arguments*. . . ?

In the boxes below, list your **three** top specialties. Use the attached lines to explain how you use your abilities in **positive** ways so that both you and those around you reap the benefits. Write a composition about **Special Talents at Work**.

1...

2...

3...