



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

by E.L. Konigsburg

Teacher's Guide

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CLASSROOM FAVORITES

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Synopsis

Letter to Lawyer

Mrs. Frankweiler sends her lawyer Saxonberg a letter with changes to her will.

Chapter 1

Claudia Kincaid, a precocious 12-year-old, feels that her parents don't appreciate her. She decides to run away from home just long enough to show her family what they would be missing without her. Since she doesn't like discomfort, she chooses the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City as her destination. As her companion, Claudia chooses Jamie, the second youngest of her three younger brothers. He is nine years old. She persuades him to accompany her because he's quiet, but most importantly, he has a secret stash of cash he's accumulated by saving his allowance and by cheating at card games with his best friend. When Claudia finds a 10-pass train ticket that the cleaning woman threw out by mistake, she can move up her plans. The ticket has one ride left, which the kids can use as they go for half-fare each.

Chapter 2

Tuesday, Claudia leaves Jamie his list of instructions. The next day, they board the school bus as usual. Jamie's money makes a lot of noise because it's all in coins. Jamie had assumed that they were going to hide in the woods and is astonished to discover they're going to hide in the Met. On the way to the train, Claudia mails a letter to her parents, telling them they'll be home shortly and not to call the FBI. They ride the train to Manhattan.

Chapter 3

Jamie tells Claudia that they will walk the forty blocks to the museum to save their money. The kids walk up Madison Avenue and soon arrive at the Met. There, the kids check their bags and music cases and go downstairs to eat lunch in the snack bar. They next decide where they should hide. Claudia finds an elegant bed on display, but Jamie wants something more complicated. She reads the explanation on the bed and suddenly, the siblings band together as a team. At the end of the day, they check out of the museum and re-enter through a back door. They wait in the rest rooms for an hour and then sneak back and sleep in the antique bed.

Chapter 4

The next morning, the kids hide their belongings and leave the museum to get breakfast. They buy food at a grocery store. Claudia decides they should learn history while they are at the museum; Jamie chooses the Italian Renaissance. They wait in huge crowds to see a statue of an angel. The *Times* has sent a reporter to cover the exhibit and Claudia wants to read the

newspaper the next day to see why the angel is so important. Next they join a school group at the mummies.

Reading the newspaper the next day, the kids learn that "Angel" may have been created by Michelangelo. If so, it would be the greatest bargain in art history, costing the museum only \$225. The statue came from the collection of Mrs. Frankweiler. Claudia misses the article in the newspaper about her and Jamie's disappearance. The kids decide to solve the mystery of the statue. They join a group for dinner and learn more art.

Chapter 5

Three days have passed and it's Saturday. The kids wash their clothing at the Laundromat. Then they go to the



New York Public Library and do research on Michelangelo. After lunch, they play in Central Park and then return to the museum. Jamie overhears some workmen saying they are moving Angel. That night, the kids take a bath in the restaurant fountain. To their delight, they collect the coins from the bottom of the fountain.

Chapter 6

The kids visit the statue and see a mark on the velvet they take as a valuable clue. In a book in the gift shop, they identify the mark as Michelangelo's stonemason sign. At a typewriter store, Claudia types a letter to the head of the museum, alerting him to their discovery.

Chapter 7

The kids rent a post office box. Back at the museum, they run into Jamie's third grade teacher Miss Clendennan and Jamie's class! Claudia has Jamie deliver the letter to the museum office.

Chapter 8

On Tuesday, they do their laundry again and then take a tour of the United Nations. Harold C. Lowery, a member of the Met's public relations department, has answered their letter, saying that the Met knows all about the mark on the bottom of the statue. Claudia cries with disappointment. She doesn't want to go home because she has not yet become different. Claudia has a hunch and instead of returning home or to the museum, the kids go to Mrs. Frankweiler's house in Farmington.

Chapter 9

Mrs. Frankweiler immediately recognizes them as the missing children. While Claudia takes a bath, Jamie accidentally reveals to Mrs. Frankweiler that they have been hiding in the Met. They eat lunch and Mrs. Frankweiler gives them one hour to find the secret of Angel in her filing cabinets. With only minutes to spare, they find the secret in a file labeled "Bologna, Italy." The proof is a beautiful sonnet and sketches. To Jamie's delight, Mrs. Frankweiler reveals that she won the proof in a card game. She intends to leave it to Jamie in her will.

Chapter 10

Mrs. Frankweiler and Jamie play cards and he wins. Mrs. Frankweiler calls the Kincaids and has her chauffeur bring the kids home in her Rolls Royce. The chauffeur overhears their conversation; they decide to adopt Mrs. Frankweiler as their grandmother and visit her often. Saxonberg is their grandfather.

Timeline of Michelangelo's Life and Major Works

- 1475** Born Michelangelo Buonarroti in Caprese, 6 March
- 1481** His mother dies
- c. 1485** Michelangelo attends school. He was taught by humanist Francesco da Urbino (to 1488) Michelangelo's father remarries
- 1487** Becomes apprentice to the painter Domenico Ghirlandaio
- c. 1490-92** Works in the Medici household
- 1494-95** Works in Bologna
- 1495** Returns to Florence, carves St. John the Baptist and the Sleeping Cupid
- 1496-1501** Moves to Rome. Carves the Bacchus and the Rome Pietà
- 1501** Returns to Florence. Contracted to carve figures for the Piccolomini altar; receives the commission to carve the David
- 1504** Completes the David. Receives commission to paint the Battle of Cascina
- 1505** Summoned to Rome by Pope Julius II; commissioned to create the tomb for the pope. Spends eight months in the quarries of Carrara selecting marble for the tomb
- 1505-1545** Works on the tomb of Julius II in both Rome and Florence, carves Moses, the Rebellious and Dying Slaves, Rachel, and Leah
- 1506** Returns to Florence (April). Michelangelo and Pope Julius II reconcile in Bologna (November)
- 1508** Returns to Florence (February). Summoned to Rome by Pope Julius II and asked to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel
- 1508-1512** Paints the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel (finished October 1512)

- 1515-1534** Works largely for the Medici family in Florence. Designs and carves tombs for the family, including the Medici Chapel.
- 1524** Commissioned to design the Laurentian Library at San Lorenzo
- 1532** Visits Rome and presents Tommaso de’Cavalieri with drawings and poems. Signs new contract for the tomb of Pope Julius II
- 1536-1541** Paints the Last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel. Unveiled in 1541.
- 1545** Tomb of Julius II completed and installed in San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome. Still working on the Pauline Chapel frescoes (to 1550).
- 1546** Appointed chief architect at St. Peter’s and the Farnese Palace
- 1550** Giorgio Vasari’s *Lives of the Painters, Sculptors and Architects* published (features Michelangelo)
- 1553** Ascanio Condivi’s *Life of Michelangelo* published
- 1555** Complete the Florentine Pietà
- 1564** Work on the Rondanini Pietà, now in Milan.
- Feb. 18** Dies at home in Macel de’Corvi, Rome

Author Sketch

E(laine) L(obl) Konigsburg was born in 1930 in New York City, NY, but was raised in small towns in Pennsylvania. Her father was a businessman; her mother, a homemaker. She earned her B.S. degree from Carnegie Mellon University in 1952 and married David Konigsburg, a psychologist, the same year.



Ironically, Konigsburg never planned to be a writer. An excellent student, she graduated valedictorian of her high school class. For a young person growing up in the small mill towns of Pennsylvania, college was not necessarily the next step, but Konigsburg decided that college was for her. Her parents did not have the money to pay for college and Konigsburg was completely unaware of scholarships, so she decided to alternate

working for a year with a year of school. That way, she could earn the money she needed for her tuition. The first year out of high school, she took a bookkeeping job at a local meat plant where she met the brother of one of the owners—the man who would become her husband, David Konigsburg. The following year, she enrolled in Carnegie Mellon University, majoring in chemistry. A professor helped her get scholarships and she was able to continue her studies uninterrupted. She was the first person in her family to attend and graduate from college.

In 1952, when her husband got a job in Jacksonville, Florida, Konigsburg moved with him, getting a job as a science teacher in an all-girls school. She left teaching in 1955 after the birth of their first child, Paul. A year later a daughter, Laurie, was born, and in 1959 a third child, Ross. Konigsburg became a full-time mom, drawing and painting as a hobby. She returned to teaching from 1960-1962 until her husband’s work required a move to New York. With her children in school, Konigsburg started her writing career.

Konigsburg often drew from her own experiences in writing. Her first two books, for instance, were inspired by her daughter’s experience making friends in their new home in Port Chester, New York. She got the idea for *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* by the finicky manner in which her kids behaved on a picnic. Konigsburg also illustrated both these books, as she has many of her titles, using her children as models.

Some of Konigsburg’s characters, such as Jennifer, Elizabeth, and Claudia, have come to represent complex emotions and adolescent conditions. “The strong demands Konigsburg makes of her characters and the fine moral intelligence she gives them imply much respect for children, a respect she has continued to express in all of her books,” asserted critic Perry Nodelman.

In Konigsburg’s acceptance speech for her first Newbery, she talked about her feeling of owing kids a good story. “[I try to] let the telling be like fudge-ripple ice cream. You keep licking the vanilla, but every now and then you come to something richer and deeper and with a stronger flavor.” Her books all explore this richer and deeper territory, while employing humor in large doses.

Critic's Corner

A towering figure in children's literature, E. L. Konigsburg is the only author to have had two books on the Newbery list at the same time. *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* won the 1968 Newbery Medal and *Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, William McKinley, and Me, Elizabeth* was a runner-up for the award in the same year. Konigsburg has also won two of the coveted Newbery Medals, capturing the 1997 award for *The View from Saturday*. *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* also won the Lewis Carroll Shelf Award, 1968, and William Allen White Award, 1970. Critics were uniformly laudatory.

The *Booklist* critic said *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* was "fresh and crisply written" with "uncommonly real and likable characters." The *Horn Book* critic noted that the novel violated every rule of writing for children, yet was still "one of the most original stories of many years." A *Kirkus Reviews* critic commented that the novel is a "dandy."

The *New York Times Book Review* said that Konigsburg "is a lively, amusing and painlessly educational storyteller." *Washington Post Book World* reviewer Polly Goodwin commented that *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* is "an exceptional story, notable for superlative writing, fresh humor, an original theme, clear-eyed understanding of children, and two young protagonists whom readers will find funny, real and unforgettable."

Other Books by E.L. Konigsburg

For Children

Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, William McKinley, and Me, Elizabeth (1967)
About the B'nai Bagels (1969)
(George) (1970)
Altogether, One at a Time (1971)
A Proud Taste for Scarlet and Miniver (1973)
The Dragon in the Ghetto Caper (1974)
The Second Mrs. Giaconda (1975)
Father's Arcane Daughter (1976)
Throwing Shadows (1979)
Journey to an 800 Number (1982)
Up from Jericho Tel (1986)
Samuel Todd's Book of Great Colors (1990)
Samuel Todd's Book of Great Inventions (1991)
Amy Elizabeth Explores Bloomingdale's (1992)
T-Backs, T-Shirts, COAT, and Suit (1993)
The View from Saturday (1996)
Silent to the Bone (2000)

The Outcasts of 19 Schulyer Place (2004)
Silent to the Bone (2004)

For Adults

The Mask beneath the Face: Reading about and with, Writing about and for Children (1990)
TalkTalk: A Children's Book Author Speaks to Grown-Ups (1995)

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Horn Book, March-April, 1967, Ruth Hill Viguers, review of *Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, William McKinley, and Me, Elizabeth*, pp. 206-207; September-October, 1967, Ruth Hill Viguers, review of *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*, p. 595; July-August, 1968, E. L. Konigsburg, "Newbery Award Acceptance," pp. 391-395; June, 1969, p.307; September-October, 1973, Paul Heins, review of *A Proud Taste for Scarlet and Miniver*, pp. 466-467; September-October, 1975, pp. 470-471; May-June, 1982, pp. 289-290; May-June, 1986, p. 327; March-April, 1996, p. 229; January-February, 1997, p. 60; July-August, 1997, pp. 404-414; July-August, 1997, Laurie Konigsburg Todd, "E. L. Konigsburg," pp. 415-417; May-June, 1999, p. 3; November-December, 2000, Peter D. Sieruta, review of *Silent to the Bone*, p. 756.
Kirkus Reviews, July 1, 1967, review of *From the Mixed-up Files of*

Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler, p. 740; July 1, 1973, p. 685; February 1, 1986, p. 209.

New York Times Book Review, November 5, 1967, Alice Fleming, review of *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*, p. 44; March 30, 1969, p. 29; June 8, 1969, p. 44; October 20, 1974, p. 10; November 7, 1976, p. 44; July 5, 1980, p. 19; May 25, 1986, p. 25; April 10, 1994, p. 35; November 10, 1996, p. 49; November 19, 2000, Roger Sutton, "In the Blink of an Eye," p. 54.

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Washington Post Book World, November 5, 1967, Polly Goodwin, review of *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*, p. 22.

General Objectives

1. To identify with the characters' feelings, especially Claudia's
2. To appreciate the story's wry humor
3. To probe the meaning of the novel's title
4. To visualize the unusual setting
5. To distinguish between third-person point of view and first-person point of view
6. To describe the novel's plot
7. To help the kids solve the mystery
8. To recognize the novel's theme
9. To appreciate the surprise ending
10. To appreciate the novel's high quality

Specific Objectives

1. To analyze why Claudia decides to run away from home
2. To understand why Claudia chooses to hide in the Metropolitan Museum of Art
3. To appreciate why Claudia decides to bring Jamie along
4. To compare and contrast Claudia and Jamie
5. To understand Michelangelo's reputation and the value of his art
6. To explore how the kids manage to hide in the museum and New York City for a week
7. To understand how the kids solve the mystery of Angel
8. To analyze what has changed and what has stayed the same in the decades since the book was first published
9. To explore why Mrs. Frankweiler leaves the poem and drawing to Jamie
10. To understand the relationship of the lawyer Saxonberg to Claudia and Jamie

Literary Terms and Applications

For a better understanding of E.L. Konigsburg's style, present the following terms and applications to the novel:

humor: parts of a story that are funny. *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* has a dry, sophisticated humor. For instance, Claudia is interested in seeing her picture in the newspaper, the picture that her parents have issued in their attempt to locate her. Blissfully unaware that her parents are worried sick, Claudia says, "I'd like to see that. I haven't had a decent picture taken since I've been able to walk," she says. This is humorous because it is a comment we would expect from a woman in middle age, not a twelve-year-old.

authorial intervention: occurs when the author or narrator interrupts the story to add a comment. This technique often creates a connection between the reader and writer, as is the case here. For example, on page 14, Mrs. Frankweiler breaks into the story to comment: "(Flattery is as important a machine as the lever, isn't it, Saxonberg? Give it a proper place to rest, and it can move the world.)" Here, the authorial intervention helps keep readers focused on Saxonberg, preparing the way for the surprise ending.

characterization: the different ways an author tells readers about characters. Sometimes, writers tell about characters directly. Other times, writers let readers reach their own decisions by showing the comments, thoughts, and actions of the other characters. At the very beginning of the novel, Konigsburg describes Claudia directly as someone who does not like to be inconvenienced. She writes: "Claudia knew that she could never pull off the old-fashioned kind of running away. That is, running away in the heat of anger with a knapsack on her back. She didn't like discomfort; even picnics were untidy and inconvenient: all those insects and the sun melting the icing on the cupcakes."

The Importance of Setting

From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler is set largely in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The setting is absolutely vital to the novel, functioning almost as another character. Claudia and Jamie spend their week away from home in the museum visiting various collections, bathing in the (now removed) fountain, and sleeping on an antique bed.

Established 1872, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, usually referred to as The Met, is one of the world's largest and most important art museums. It is located on 5th Avenue, New York City, on the edge of Central Park. The Met had another building as well, "The Cloisters" in Fort Tryon Park, but this annex is not featured in the novel.

The Met's permanent collection contains more than two million works of art from around the world. The collection's holdings include treasures of classical antiquity, armor, musical instruments, photographs, costumes, European paintings and sculptures, and American art. The collection also contains extensive holdings of Egyptian, African, Asian, Oceanic, Middle Eastern, Byzantine and Islamic art. In addition, the Met showcases recreations of famous rooms.

However, Michelangelo's Angel statue, central to the book's plot, is purely fictional and not actually part of the museum's collection.

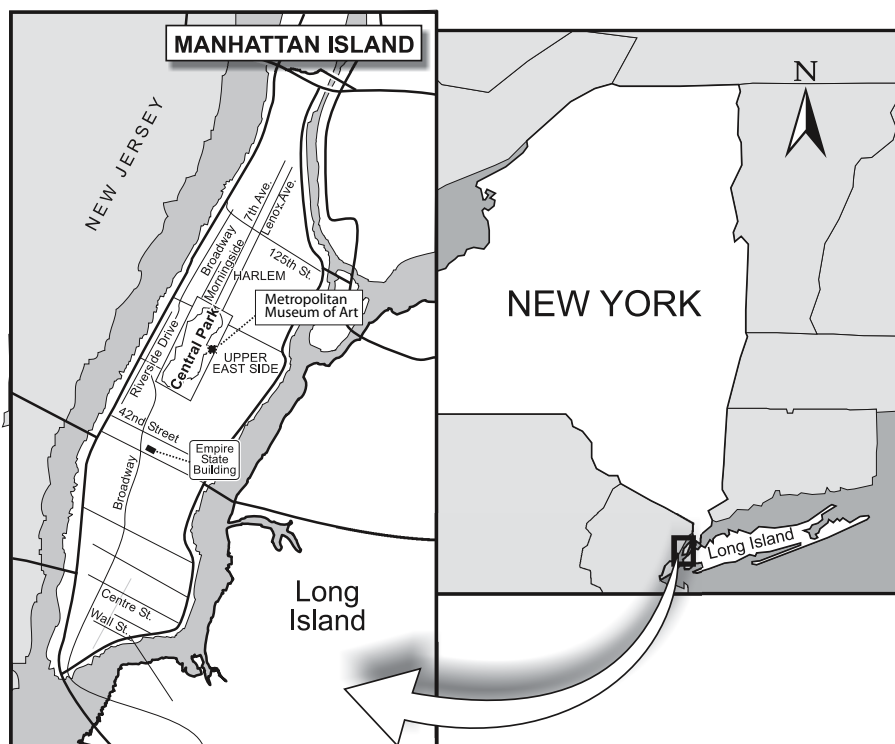
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- Andrew Clements, *Frindle*
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- Jack Gantos, *Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key*
- John Reynolds Gardiner, *Stone Fox*
- Eva Ibbotson, *The Secret of Platform 13*
- Kate Klise, *Regarding the Fountain: A Tale, in Letters, of Liars and Leaks*
- Alex Kathleen Krull, *Fitzgerald's Cure for Nightmares*
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- Dave Pilkey, *Captain Underpants and the Perilous Plot of Professor Poopypants: The Fourth Epic Novel*
- Lemony Snicket, *The Miserable Mill*
- William Steig, *Abel's Island*

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- Simon Birch* (1998)
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Audio

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

A videocassette interview by Tim Podell Productions,
Good Conversation!: A Talk with E. L. Konigsburg, 1995.

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Media

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Themes and Motifs

A study of the central issues and situations in E.L. Konigsburg's *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* should include these aspects:

Themes

- culture and museums
- fine art
- humor
- individuality
- Michelangelo
- money
- maturity

- mystery
- upper-middle class life
- wills and legacies

Motifs

- running away from home
- wanting to be special
- feeling unappreciated
- hiding in a museum
- exploring New York City
- cheating at cards
- learning about the masters of the Italian Renaissance
- meeting an interesting elderly lady
- changing your will
- feeling different because you have an important secret

Meaning Study

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have particular meaning in the novel. Explain the meaning of each. Chapter and page numbers indicate the context from which the item is taken.

1. Claudia had planned her speech. "I want you, Jamie, for the greatest adventure in our lives." (Chapter 1, p. 13)
(Claudia uses this line to manipulate her younger brother Jamie into running away with her. Ironically, their week-long adventure in the Met does prove to be the greatest adventure in their lives as they discover the secret of the Angel statue.)
2. What happened was: they became a team, a family of two. (Chapter 3, p. 39)
(Suddenly, Claudia and Jamie bond and work together to ensure the success of their adventure and their survival. Becoming a team does not mean the end of their arguments; rather, it means the arguments become part of the adventure. Claudia and Jamie love each other and they suddenly realize it. It is a rare bond, but a vital one. It is nuggets of wisdom such as this that make From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler an enduring classic.)
3. Claudia was lost in remembrance of the beautiful angel she had seen. Why did she seem so important; and why was so special? (Chapter 4, p. 53)
(Claudia does not have the words to express her feelings, but she recognizes true art when she sees it. The Angel statue, as with all true art, has an ineffable quality that marks it as real art.)

4. "Jamie, let's do it now. Let's skip learning everything in the museum. Let's concentrate on the statue." (Chapter 4, p. 62)
(The kids decide to solve the mystery of the Angel statue, to determine whether or not Michelangelo sculpted it himself. Of course, they are oblivious to the irony here: if the greatest art history experts in the world can't solve the mystery, how can two young children? In a double twist of irony, they do solve the mystery!)
5. "I didn't say *differently*, I said *different*. I want to go back *different*. I, Claudia Kincaid, want to be *different* when I go back. Like being a heroine is *different*." (Chapter 8, p. 119)
(Claudia's entire plan to run away was motivated by her attempt to break out of her routine and become someone different, someone special. Everyone can identify with this feeling, especially teenagers. Claudia's search to find her identity is another way that the author created a classic. No matter what else changes, everyone will always want to be unique and set apart from the crowd.)
6. "I got the idea because I was mad at my parents. That was getting the idea. Then I started planning it." (Chapter 9, p. 138)
(Here, Claudia explains to Mrs. Frankweiler why she ran away from home. Nearly all children feel unappreciated at one point or another, but few act on these impulses.)
7. Claudia looked at the sketch until its image became blurred. She was crying..."Just think, Jamie, Michelangelo himself touched this. Over four hundred years ago." (Chapter 9, p. 146)
(Claudia and Jamie have solved the mystery of Angel: it was indeed created by the great Italian master Michelangelo. Because she is sensitive to art, beauty, and history, Claudia can appreciate the discovery and is deeply moved by it. In addition, earlier in the novel, Jamie had made the ridiculous suggestion that he and Claudia check the statue for fingerprints. Ironically, the document they hold probably has Michelangelo's fingerprints.)
8. Then he asked me, "Why did he give it to you?" "Because he was a very, very bad poker player, and I am a very good one." (Chapter 9, p. 148)
(Mrs. Frankweiler won the Angel statue in a poker game. This admission is a slyly ironic reference to Jamie's cheating at cards. On a much smaller but perhaps equally significant level, it was his cheating that enabled the kids to fund their grand adventure because his ill-gotten gains financed it.)

9. I laughed. "The deal is this: you give me the details of your running away, and I'll give you the sketch." (Chapter 9, p. 149)
(Mrs. Frankweiler makes this deal with the kids, which sets up the surprise ending. She changes her will to leave the sketch to the kids, so she must contact her lawyer. He is the children's maternal grandfather, as we discover at the end.)
10. "Because after a time having a secret and nobody knowing you have a secret is no fun. And although you don't want others to know what the secret is, you want them to at least know you have one." (Chapter 10, p. 158)
(Claudia is very wise: she recognizes why Mrs. Frankweiler sold the Angel statue.)

Comprehension Study

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages in the book.

Questions 1-5 (Literal Level)

1. Why does Claudia decide to run away?
(She decides that her parents don't appreciate her. She wants an adventure to make her become someone special.)
2. Why does she chose to run away to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City?
(She wants a comfortable place; she doesn't like the outdoors or discomfort of any sort.)
3. How did Jamie get the money that he and Claudia needed to run away?
(Two ways: he saved his allowance and he cheated his friend at cards over a long period of time.)
4. Who really made the Angel sculpture? What proof do the kids find?
(Michelangelo really made the sculpture. The kids find a sonnet and sketch in Mrs. Frankweiler's files that prove it.)
5. What change does Mrs. Frankweiler make to her will?
(She leaves the proof of the statue's provenance—the sonnet and the sketch – to Jamie and Claudia.)

Questions 6-8 (Interpretative Level)

6. Claudia wants an adventure to make her feel special. Do you think she was special all along? Why or why not?

(She is very much a typical twelve-year-old in that she feels unappreciated. However, she is atypical because she is aware of art and beauty. She appreciates both and is moved by them.)

7. The author makes only one casual mention of the kids' parents. Why do you think she leaves them out of the story?
(She does not want to bring up their fear and terror at their children's absence. To do so would spoil the story's light, fun mood.)
8. Why will Claudia keep the secret?
(It will enable her to return to Greenwich being a different person, special because she has an important secret.)

Questions 9 and 10 (Critical Level)

9. What parts of the novel did you find especially humorous? In what ways?
(Students are likely to cite Claudia's concern with comfort and cleanliness are very amusing, especially when contrasted to Jamie's utter disregard for personal hygiene.)
10. Do you think this novel deserved the Newbery medal? Why or why not?
(Readers are likely to agree with the award because the novel is emotional as well as entertaining. It expresses eternal truths of human nature—our drive to be special, our need to be appreciated, the value of art—while making us laugh.)

Questions 11-12 (Creative Level)

11. Draw the Angel statue as you envision it.
12. Working with a small group of classmates, create a second meeting between the children and Mrs. Frankweiler.

Across the Curriculum

Art

1. Create a modern art museum in your classroom by having each of your classmates create an original work of art. Have each artist write their name, the painting's title, and year on an index card. Display the art around the room, with the appropriate index card next to each one. Then invite other students, administration, and family members to tour your class art museum.
2. Make a model of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Use descriptions in the novel and online research to make your model accurate.

3. Write and illustrate a children's book on the life and works of Michelangelo.
4. Tour a real art museum in your community. Choose one work of art to report on, describing the art and artist.
5. Using scenes from the novel, create a mural that shows its main events.
6. Create a board game based on the characters and events in *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*.
7. The unofficial mascot of the Met is "William," a small blue faience figurine of a hippopotamus from the Twelfth Dynasty, acquired in 1917. Download a picture of William and then make your own model of him. Paint your model the same colors and add the same decorations.

Language Arts

1. Write Mrs. Frankweiler's Last Will and Testament.
2. *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* won the Newbery prize, arguably the top prize in children's literature. Research the last twenty Newbery prize winners. Then choose one of the books on the list to read.
3. Claudia decides that her parents don't appreciate her. Write a letter to your parents, telling them how much you appreciate them.
4. Write the letter than Claudia sends to her parents when she and Jamie run away.
5. Jamie congratulates Claudia for her plan, saying they will be inconspicuous. One of the best places to hide out is in plain sight, as E.A. Poe revealed in his famous short story "The Purloined Letter." Read the story and summarize it, paying special attention to the plot twist.

History/Social Studies

1. Take a virtual tour of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Report on the exhibits you saw.
2. Claudia's mother plays Mah-Jong. Trace the history of this game and learn how to play it. Teach your friends, too!

3. To learn all about New York City before she runs away there, Claudia studies maps and tour guide books. Learn all about the largest city in your state. Share your findings on the bulletin board.
4. Claudia tells her parents not to call the FBI. Prepare a report on the FBI, including its history and mission.
5. Claudia refers to Daniel Boone and Henry Hudson. Choose one of these historical figures and explain his importance.
6. Many of the places described in the novel no longer exist, such as Gimble's. List at least three stores or other institutions from the book that are now closed. Choose one and explain its history and importance.

Speech/Drama

1. The Metropolitan Museum of Art just raised its admission to a suggested fee of \$20. Some people are outraged that museum admission costs so much; others feel that it is a small sum compared to what people pay for admission to a professional sporting event or a rock concert. Debate this issue: should all art museums be free to charge what they wish or should they be subject to strictly regulated prices?
2. With a group of classmates, create the scene where Claudia and Jamie are reunited with their parents and siblings.
3. In a roundtable discussion, decide whether or not it would be possible to hide out in a museum for a week or more.
4. Working with some friends, act out the lunch scene with the children and Mrs. Frankweiler.
5. The children take a tour of the UN. With a team of classmates, debate the role of the UN in world affairs today. Is the UN an effective body or not?

Science/Math

1. Mrs. Frankweiler explains that she is keeping a "carbon copy" of the changes to her will. Explain what a "carbon copy" was and what technology has replaced it.

2. In the novel, train fare to the city from the suburbs costs \$1.60 one way. Find out how much train fare costs one way from your town to the nearest large city.
3. Claudia feels that she does not get enough allowance. Research the average allowance for a twelve-year-old. Use on-line sources and poll your classmates.
4. In Chapter 3, the author provides some statistics on the number of people who visit the Met every year. Update these statistics. Show your findings on a chart.
5. The Angel statue sold for \$225. Find out how much any other statue by Michelangelo would cost today.

Alternate Assessment

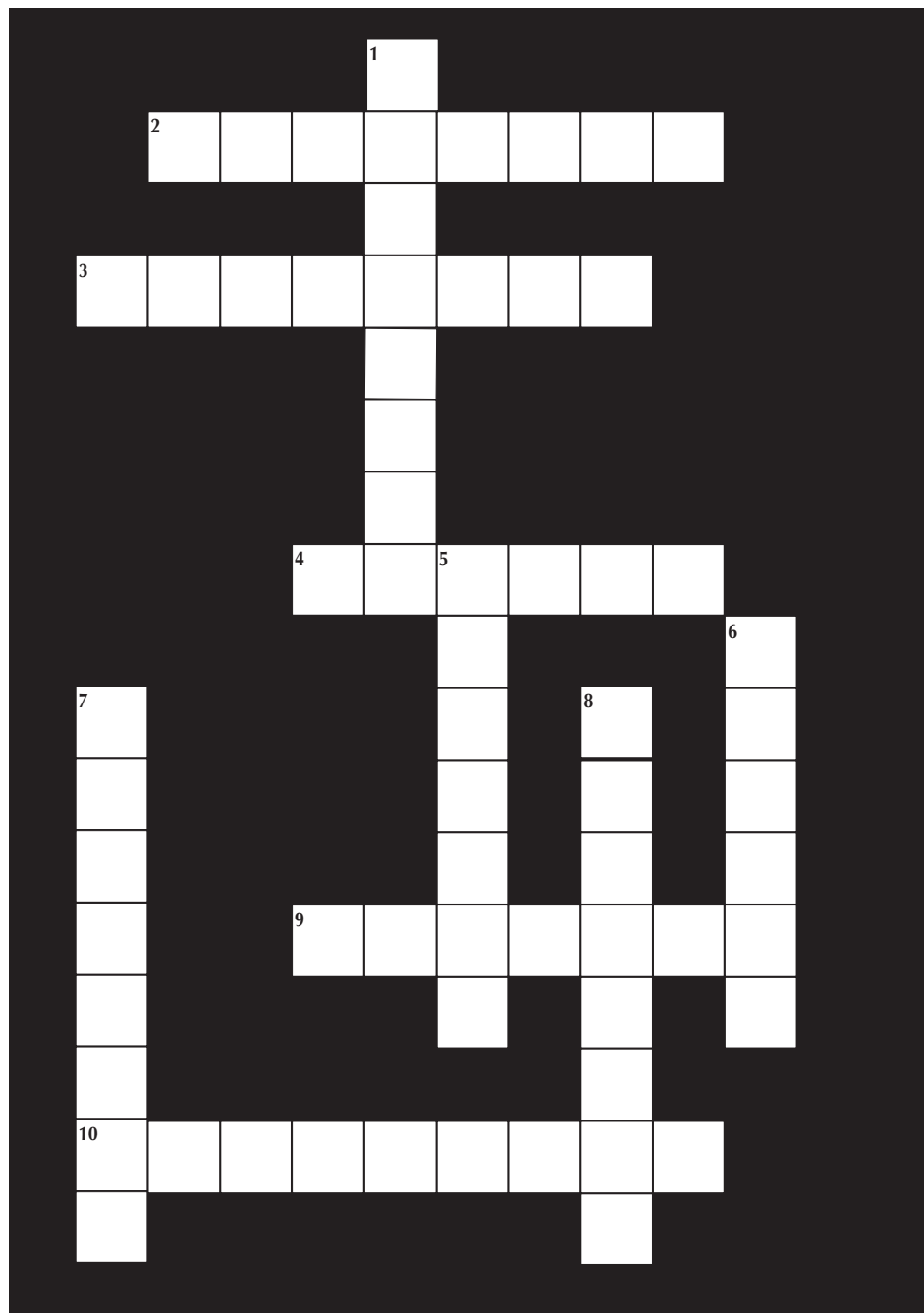
1. Mrs. Frankweiler compares the novel to a jigsaw puzzle. Draw or paint a scene from the novel. Glue the picture to some cardboard and then cut it apart to make a *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* jigsaw puzzle.
2. The kids treat New York City as one giant amusement park, which in a way it is. Plan your ideal week in New York City. Decide what you will do every day.
3. Claudia initially runs away because she is bored and wants to be different. In a speech, describe how you are different from your classmates and others your age.

Vocabulary

Complete the following crossword puzzle with these ten words used in *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*

WORD BOX

impostor	mediocre	tycoon	despise	chauffeur
monotony	cherish	perilous	pauper	knapsack



CLUES

Across

2. fake
3. poor quality
4. rich, successful business person
9. hate
10. driver

Down

1. boredom
5. love
6. poor person
7. backpack
8. dangerous

Comprehension Test A

Part I: Matching (20 points)

Complete each of the following descriptions with a name from the list that follows. Place the letter of your answer in the blanks provided.

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| A. E.L. Konigsburg | F. Claudia |
| B. Saxonberg | G. Jamie |
| C. Sheldon | H. New York City |
| D. Greenwich, CT | I. Miss Clendennan |
| E. Harold C. Lowery | J. Farmington |

- ___ 1. man from the public relations department of the Met who answers the children's letter
- ___ 2. location of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
- ___ 3. girl who decides to run away from home
- ___ 4. author of *From The Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*
- ___ 5. location of Claudia and Jamie's home
- ___ 6. Mrs. Frankweiler's lawyer
- ___ 7. Claudia's younger brother
- ___ 8. Jamie's third grade teacher
- ___ 9. Mrs. Frankweiler's chauffeur
- ___ 10. location of Mrs. Frankweiler's house

Part II: True/False (20 points)

Mark the following statements either T for true or F if any part is false.

- ___ 1. Claudia Kincaid is seventeen years old.
- ___ 2. Claudia brings her brother with her because he's quiet, but most importantly, he has a secret stash of cash he's accumulated by saving his allowance and by cheating at card games with his best friend.
- ___ 3. On the way to the train, Claudia mails a letter to her parents, telling them they'll be home shortly and not to call the FBI.
- ___ 4. Jamie, a cheapskate, is angry that they have to pay admission to get into the museum every day.
- ___ 5. Claudia decides they should learn history while they are at the museum; Jamie chooses the armor exhibit.
- ___ 6. Reading the newspaper, the kids learn that Angel statue may have been created by Michelangelo.
- ___ 7. If so, it would be the greatest bargain in art history, costing the museum only \$25 million.
- ___ 8. The kids take a train and a cab to visit Mrs. Frankweiler. They want more clues about the statue.
- ___ 9. Mrs. Frankweiler does not realize that Claudia and Jamie are the missing children.
- ___ 10. Claudia and Jamie decide to adopt Mrs. Frankweiler as their grandmother and visit her often.

Comprehension Test A (Page 2)

Part III: Quote Identification (30 points)

Briefly explain why each quote is important in the novel.

1. You might call it caring. You could even call it love. And it is very rarely, indeed, that it happens to two people at the same time—especially a brother and a sister who had always spent more time with activities than they had with each other.
2. As Claudia passed by, she thought that the angel was the most beautiful, most graceful little statue she had ever seen; she wanted to stop and stare; she almost did, but the crowd wouldn't let her.
3. "Jamie, let's do it now. Let's skip learning everything in the museum. Let's concentrate on the statue."
4. Claudia looked at the sketch until its image became blurred. She was crying... "Just think, Jamie, Michelangelo himself touched this. Over four hundred years ago."
5. I laughed. "The deal is this: you give me the details of your running away, and I'll give you the sketch."

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Explain the novel's theme, its message about life.
2. Provide three details from the novel that make *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* seem to be nonfiction, even though it is really fiction.
3. Compare and contrast Claudia and Jamie. Show how they are similar and different.
4. What function does Mrs. Frankweiler serve in the novel?

Comprehension Test B

Part I: Sentence Completion (20 points)

Choose the word or phrase that best completes each of the following statements.

1. Claudia Kincaid is (**twelve, sixteen**) years old.
2. Jamie has a lot of money that he accumulated by (**working odd jobs, cheating at cards**).
3. The kids hide their clothing in their (**music cases, coat pockets**).
4. At night, the kids sleep (**on the floor, in an antique bed**).
5. The kids take a bath in the museum's (**rest room, fountain**).
6. Claudia decides they should learn history while they are at the museum; Jamie chooses the (**mummies, Italian Renaissance**).
7. Reading the newspaper, the kids learn that the Angel statue may have been created by (**Rafael, Michelangelo**).
8. If so, the purchase would be the greatest bargain in art history, costing the museum only (**\$225, \$25 million**).
9. Mrs. Frankweiler gives the kids one hour to find the secret of Angel hidden in her filing cabinet. With only minutes to spare, they find the secret in a file labeled ("**Angel Statue, "Bologna, Italy"**).
10. The proof of the statue's authenticity is a (**poem, photograph**) and sketches.

Part II: Matching (30 points)

Complete each of the following descriptions with a name from the list that follows. Place the letter of your answer in the blanks provided.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ___ 1. Angel | A. Parks |
| ___ 2. girl who runs away | B. E.L. Konigsburg |
| ___ 3. Claudia's younger brother | C. Claudia |
| ___ 4. Mrs. Frankweiler's butler | D. Metropolitan Museum of Art |
| ___ 5. where the kids run away to | E. Saxonberg |
| ___ 6. the author | F. Jamie |
| ___ 7. Miss Clendennan | G. Jamie's third grade teacher |
| ___ 8. Greenwich, CT | H. Mrs. Frankweiler's chauffeur |
| ___ 9. Sheldon | I. the children's home |
| ___ 10. the kids' grandfather | J. a statue |

Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

Part III: Identification (20 points)

Explain why each is important in the story.

1. the left-over 10-pass commuter ticket
2. coins and money
3. the fountain
4. Bologna
5. M

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. "Returning with a secret is what she really wants," says Mrs. Frankweiler. "Claudia doesn't want adventure. She likes baths and feeling comfortable too much for that kind of thing. Secrets are the kind of adventure she needs. Secrets are safe, and they do much to make you different. On the inside, where it counts." Prove this statement with examples from the novel.
2. Trace the novel's plot. Include the rising action, climax, and resolution.
3. Explain the enduring appeal of *From The Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*.
4. What role does the novel's setting play in the story? Why is the setting so important in this novel?

Answer Key

VOCABULARY

Across

2. imposter
3. mediocre
4. tycoon
9. despise
10. chauffeur

Down

1. monotony
5. cherish
6. pauper
7. knapsack
8. perilous

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. E | 6. B |
| 2. H | 7. G |
| 3. F | 8. I |
| 4. A | 9. C |
| 5. D | 10. J |

Part II: True/False (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. T |
| 2. T | 7. F |
| 3. T | 8. T |
| 4. F | 9. F |
| 5. F | 10. T |

Part III: Quote Identification (30 points)

1. Suddenly, Claudia and Jamie bond together and work together to ensure the success of their adventure and their survival. Becoming a team does not mean the end of their argument; rather, it means the arguments become part of the adventure. Claudia and Jamie love each other and they suddenly realize it. It is a rare bond, but a vital one. It is nuggets of wisdom such as this that make *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* an enduring classic.
2. Claudia does not have the words to express her feelings, but she recognizes true art when she sees it. The Angel statue, as with all true art, has an ineffable quality that marks it as real art.
3. The kids decide to solve the mystery of the Angel statue to determine whether or not Michelangelo sculpted it himself. Of course, they are oblivious to the irony here: if the greatest art history experts in the world can't solve the mystery, how can two young children? In a double twist of irony, they do solve the mystery!
4. Claudia and Jamie have solved the mystery of Angel: it was indeed created by the great Italian master Michelangelo. Earlier in the novel, Jamie had made the ridiculous suggestion that he and Claudia check the statue for fingerprints. Ironically, the document they hold probably has Michelangelo's fingerprints on it.

5. Mrs. Frankweiler makes this deal with the kids, which sets up the surprise ending. She changes her will to leave the kids the sketch, so she must contact her lawyer. He is the children's maternal grandfather, as we discover at the end.

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Sentence Completion (20 points)

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. twelve | 6. Italian Renaissance |
| 2. cheating at cards | 7. Michelangelo. |
| 3. music cases | 8. \$225 |
| 4. antique bed | 9. Bologna, Italy |
| 5. fountain | 10. poem |

Part II: Matching (30 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. J | 6. B |
| 2. C | 7. G |
| 3. F | 8. I |
| 4. A | 9. H |
| 5. D | 10. E |

Part III: Identification (20 points)

1. Claudia finds the left-over 10-pass commuter ticket in the garbage pail; the maid threw it out by accident, thinking it had already been used-up. There is one trip left over, enough for Claudia and Jamie, since they travel for half-fare each. This is important because it enables the kids to run away sooner than Claudia had planned since she does not have to save as much money.
2. Money enables the children to run away in the first place: without Jamie's coins and cash, the plan would not have worked. Second, money enables the children to have a fortunate upper-middle class life and be exposed to treasures such as the Met.
3. The children bathe in the fountain. It is also their source of additional funds, as they pick up coins from the bottom.
4. Jamie keeps saying "baloney" during the book. When he says it while the kids are looking through Mrs. Frankweiler's files, they break the code and solve the secret of Angel.
5. The kids find an M mark in the velvet under the statue; the mark was left when the statue was moved. They take this as proof positive that Michelangelo carved it, not understanding that anyone could have added the M, especially one of his apprentices, as was common in Renaissance workshops.

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.

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