

1999

Clements, Andrew. *Frindle*. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 1996.

SUMMARY:

Nick Allen is a very creative fifth-grader who thrives on challenges. His language arts teacher, Mrs. Granger, loves dictionaries and emphasizes the importance of words. Nick asks about the origin of words, and Mrs. Granger answers:

“Who says *dog* means dog? You do, Nicholas. You and me and everyone in this class and this school and this town and this state and this country. We all agree. . .But if all of us in this room decided to call that creature something else, and if everyone else did, too, then that’s what it would be called, and one day it would be written in the dictionary that way. We decide what goes in that book.” (pp. 29-31)

Soon after that, Nick creates a new word for pen - *frindle*. He says it first and then his friends. Use of the new word spreads to other classmates, the whole school, his community, the country, and then the world, and it eventually becomes an entry in a dictionary.

QUESTIONS:

What is the rule about homework at Nick’s house, and why is it important?
When you first read about Mrs. Granger’s letter to Nick (pp. 45-7), what do you think it will say?
What price does Nick have to pay for being a hero to his classmates?
Who do you think sent the fifth grade class picture to Judy Morgan and why?
How does the relationship between Nick and Mrs. Granger change?
What role does Mrs. Granger play in *frindle* becoming a word?
Who do you think has donated the money for college scholarships and why?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

If I suddenly learned that I was rich, I would. . .

ACTIVITIES:

Learn to play chess.
Create your own word origin dictionary.
Choose a word and compare its definition(s) found in several different dictionaries.
Choose ten words and translate them into five different languages.

Research either Samuel Johnson or Noah Webster.
Find out what a trademark is and give some examples.
Find an example of a local story that has been covered by a major television network.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 4-6.

BOOKTALK:

Fifth-grader Nick Allen loves challenges and when he learns that he and everyone else determine what goes in a dictionary, he decides to create his own word, *frindle*. He encourages his classmates to use it, beginning a word war between the students and the teachers of Lincoln Elementary School, starting an adventure that he never could have imagined.

READ-ALIKES:

Author Last Name, Author First Name. *Title*. Publisher, Date.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Andrew Clements: <http://www.andrewclements.com/index.shtml>

The Official *Frindle* Website: <http://frindle.com/>

Literature Circle Guide to *Frindle*: http://teacher.scholastic.com/clubs/pdfs/frindle_t.pdf

Teaching Guide: <http://www.simonsays.com/content/book.cfm?tab=4&pid=406954&agid=21>

William Allen White Children's Book Award: <http://waw.emporia.edu/winners/winner98-99.htm>

OTHER RECOGNITION:

Winner of a Children's Choice Award in each of the following states and region:
Arkansas, 1999; Delaware, 1999; Georgia, 1999; Indiana, 1999; Kansas, 1999;
Maryland, 1999; Massachusetts, 1999; Minnesota, 1999; Nevada, 1999;
New Hampshire, 1998; North Carolina, 1999; North Dakota, 2001;
Pacific Northwest, 1999; Pennsylvania, 2000; Rhode Island, 1998;
South Dakota, 1999; Utah, 2000; Washington, 1999.