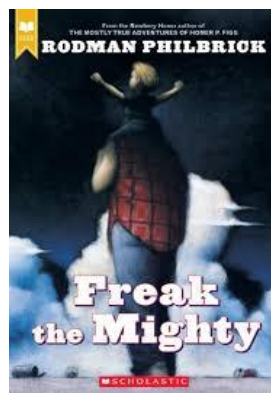


Freak the Mighty

Writing Prompts



ISBN-10	0-439-77129-3
ISBN-13	978-0-439-77129-0
Author	Philbrick, Rodman
Publisher	Scholastic Paperbacks
Copyright	1993
Lexile	930L
Genre	Young adult fiction
Synopsis	Two boys – a slow learner stuck in the body of a teenage giant and a tiny Einstein in leg braces – forge a unique friendship when they pair up to create one formidable human force.
Themes	Stereotypes and Identity Development
Protagonist	Teen Boy
Note	Over the years, these books have been published in multiple editions. The page numbers in your book may be different than the ones on the lesson plan.
More Information	www.scu.edu/character 

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Freak the Mighty, Day 1



Key paragraph, p. 5

“Not that I ever do much of anything. Grim has it fixed in his head I’m at a dangerous age and they need to keep me under observation. Like I might make bombs or start a fire. Or whack out the local pets with my trusty slingshot or whatever—except I never had a slingshot, it was Grim who had one when he was my age. The proof is right there in the family photo album. You can see this blurry little miniature Grim with no front teeth, grinning at the camera and yanking back on this prehistoric slingshot. Good for whacking mastodons, probably. ‘Just proper targets,’ Grim says, closing up the photo album, end of discussion. Like, ‘oops, better hide the evidence. Don’t want to give the dangerous boy any ideas’” (p. 5).

Writing Task

In today’s reading, Max is trying to convince his grandparents that he is not the bad kid that they think he is. **In one narrative paragraph, describe why Grim and Gram think he is bad. In a second narrative paragraph, describe in detail what your parent or parents think of you. In other words, what kind of person do they think you are?**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Freak the Mighty, Day 2



Key paragraph, p. 20

"I go up and open the bulkhead door and his mother is in the back yard and she's looking at the little red wagon. She catches sight of me coming up out of the down under and it's like somebody shot her. Like she's scared out of her mind. 'Kevin?' she says. 'I'm looking for a little boy'" (p. 20).

Writing Task

In today's reading, what type of reaction did Gwen have when she saw Max come out of the basement? Why do you think she reacted this way? Write about a time when you looked at someone for the first time and the person looked so different or unusual to you. How did you react? Was your reaction negative? How did you feel afterwards? **Your response will be a minimum of two narrative paragraphs.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Freak the Mighty, Day 3



Key Paragraph, p. 29

“Hey you! Mutt and Jeff! Frankenstein and Igor! Don’t look around, I’m talkin’ to you, boneheads. What is this, a freak show?” (p. 29).

Writing Task

During the fireworks show by the pond, Blade uses name-calling with Max and Freak. Why is name-calling not a responsible thing to do? Is name-calling acceptable if it’s done playfully between friends? Why or why not? How do you think name-calling makes a person feel? Has anyone ever called you a name that made you angry or hurt your feelings? Have you done the same to someone else? Sometimes there can be a lasting impact. How can name-calling affect a person in a negative (or positive) way years later? In other words, can it make a person stronger and more self-confident or weaker with a poor self-image? **Your response should be a minimum of three narrative paragraphs.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Freak the Mighty, Day 4



Key Paragraph, p. 35

“You! The freak! You and that giant retard, I’ll cut you down to size. Dice and slice, baby! Freak show time!” (p. 35).

Writing Task.

In today’s reading, Blade and his gang cornered Freak and Max, continued to call them names and challenged them to fight. Do you think Freak and Max should have responded differently? Did their response exhibit smart and mature choices? Why or why not? If you found yourself in a similar situation, what could you do to avoid a confrontation? **Explain your response in two narrative paragraphs.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Freak the Mighty, Day 5



Key Paragraph, p. 50

“‘Can you keep a secret?’ he says. ‘Do you swear on your honor?’
‘Sure. On my honor’” (p. 50).

Writing Task

Write about a time when you were told to keep a secret about something. Who shared it with you and why? Was it good or bad? Could the person have gotten in trouble if you told someone else the secret? Could it have harmed someone's reputation? Were you happy the person confided in you or did you wish you did not know the secret? Is there ever a time when you **should not** tell someone about a secret? Why or why not? Is there ever a time when you **should** tell someone about a secret? Explain your answer. If the secret would put someone in a dangerous situation, and you felt like you needed to do something to protect the person's overall safety, with whom would you share the secret? **Your response will be a minimum of three narrative paragraphs.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Freak the Mighty, Day 6



Key Paragraph, Page 54

“All that walking you do, it must be stretching out your legs. And carrying poor Kevin around, that seems to e putting real muscle on you.’

‘He’s not that heavy. And anyhow it’s not fair everybody always says ‘Poor Kevin,’ just because he didn’t grow” (p. 54).

Writing Task

In today’s reading, as in previous readings, you can see that Max is influenced by Freak and sees him as a leader by looking up to him, and not as someone to feel sorry for. Max does not allow Freak’s small size interfere with his opinions about Freak. Max does what he should do and treats him with respect. **Cite evidence in 1-2 narrative paragraphs to support why Max does not have pity for Kevin. In addition, include your thoughts on whether or not you think there may be something else wrong with Freak that Max does not know about.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Freak the Mighty, Day 7



Key Paragraph, p. 71

‘Yeah,’ Loretta says. ‘Right after you was born. He must be a magician, because as soon as he heard the magic words ‘birth defect,’ he disappeared’” (p. 71).

Writing Task

Iggy & Loretta Lee are very mean to Freak and Max. They came to return her purse, but then she accused them of stealing and wants the money returned. What does this tell you about their characters? Are there any reasons that would justify rude and disrespectful behavior? If you knew someone who treated you like Iggy & Loretta treat Freak and Max, how would you feel about that person? What would you do? **Frame your response into two narrative paragraphs.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Freak the Mighty, Day 8



Key Paragraph, Page 78

“The whole class is raising their fists in the air and chanting: ‘Freak the Mighty! Freak the Mighty! Freak the Mighty!’” (p. 78).

Writing Task

In today’s reading, one of the students in Mrs. Donelli’s class makes a disrespectful comment about Max. This remark initiates chaos in the classroom. The other students begin shouting at Max, calling him names, and throwing things at him. The teacher had completely lost all control of the classroom. As is fitting to the story, only one man can restore order. Freak climbs up on one of the desks and shouts: “Order in the court!”

Have you ever been in a classroom or involved in a situation that was out of control? Did you participate in the disorder? Did you make the right decision and decide not to be part of the chaos? **Explain your response in two narrative paragraphs.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Freak the Mighty, Day 9



Key Paragraph, p. 89

“‘But how come you need a new body?’ I ask. ‘How come you can’t just stay like you are?’ Freak shakes his head, like he knows I’m not smart enough to understand. ‘No one stays like they are’ he says. ‘Everybody is always changing. My problem is, I’m growing on the inside but not the outside’” (p. 89).

Writing Task

We have periods of our lives where we go through change. Sometimes it is intentional and sometimes it is more of a natural transition. Adolescents experience sometimes significant changes in their maturity, and in physical and mental growth.

Physically, socially, mentally, and/or emotionally, how have you changed within the past year? Whether it was drastic or subtle, did this change, or changes, benefit or hinder you? If you could change one thing about yourself today, what would it be?

Describe this transformation in two narrative paragraphs.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Freak the Mighty, Day 10



Key Paragraph, p. 102

“My, my,’ he says, checking me out. ‘Will you look at this? It’s like I’m looking at an old picture of myself. You really are a chip off the old block, you know that?’” (p. 102).

Writing Task

After Killer Kane comes to take Max away in the middle of the night, he gets a good look at Max as they stand under a street light. Killer Kane compares their appearances and seems proud of the similarities.

In the first paragraph of your narrative essay, introduce your paper with what it means to be “a chip off the old block,” followed with who you resemble in your family and what are the similarities? Are they physical features or are your personality traits similar, too? In the second paragraph, if you had to choose a famous person to look like you, who would it be? Why?

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Freak the Mighty, Day 11



Key Paragraph, p. 112

“‘I’ve been locked up like an animal,’ he says. ‘Every single night I cried myself to sleep and that’s a fact. Killer Kane, that’s just an unkind nickname they hung on me. You know how kids can be mean in school, mean as animals? It was like that, only these weren’t kids, they were adults who should know better, except they’re so ignorant and hateful they believe the worst’” (p. 112).

Writing Task

Do you and your close friends have nicknames for one another? **In a 3 paragraph narrative essay, answer the following questions: Would you like to be part of a group that identifies itself with a name? Why or why not? Have you ever hurt someone’s feelings with a nickname? Has the same happened to you? Why do you think nicknames are used? Are the names you have heard about others kind, endearing, playful and openly spoken? Or, are they insulting and shameful and said behind the person’s back?**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Freak the Mighty, Day 12



Key Paragraph, p. 121

"Iggy leaves, walking backward out of the room. My father lifts me up by the rope and says, 'I know you have more sense than to waste your time stealing pocketbooks with a cripple kid. You can't trust a cripple, but I guess you know that now, don't you?'" (p. 121).

Writing Task

Why does Killer Kane say you **can't** trust a cripple? What is a cripple? Do you believe that it is offensive to call someone a cripple? Why does society sometimes view people who are different as not desirable? Is there anybody in your life that you **can** trust? What makes them trustworthy? Describe the time that you knew this person was someone you could confide in and count on. **Respond with a 2 paragraph narrative essay.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Freak the Mighty, Day 13



Key Paragraph, p. 133

“‘Easy!’ a voice says. ‘Take it easy, kid, you’re okay!’” (p. 133).

p. 136

“It all goes to show, like Grim says, that you can’t always judge a book by the cover” (p. 136).

Writing Task

When the author introduced Iggy, we saw a rough and tough character that was not by any means someone who could be trusted. Sometimes, the way a person initially appears, especially on the outside, does not always represent the person’s heart and intentions. What transformation did you see in Iggy? How do you feel about him? What does “you can’t always judge a book by the cover” mean? Have you ever assumed something about someone’s character but turned out to be completely wrong? Explain in descriptive detail the order of events and the people involved that led you to your incorrect assumption. **Present your response in a 3 paragraph narrative essay.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Freak the Mighty, Day 14



Key Paragraph, p. 138- 139

“‘They can’t make you if you don’t want to,’ Freak says. ‘A son doesn’t have to testify against his father’” (p. 138-139).

Writing Task

Max does not want to have to testify at Killer Kane’s trial. Everyone says he has to if he wants his father locked up for the rest of his life. He believes his father should be locked up, but he’s questioning himself on whether it is the responsible course of action to take. Perhaps he is also struggling with the issue of bravery.

In the first narrative paragraph, clearly state your thoughts and opinions about Max’s struggle with testifying against his father and conclude with what happened right before the trial was supposed to start.

In your second narrative paragraph, describe a time when someone wanted you to do something that you did not want to do. What influenced you to make your decision? Was the decision you made the right or wrong decision? How did you feel about it afterwards?

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Freak the Mighty, Day 15



Key Paragraph, p. 159

“This one day just before school was supposed to start I was moping around the backyard and thinking again how pointless and stupid everything was and Grim comes over and says, ‘You know what? Most of us go all the way through life and we never have a friend like Kevin. So maybe you should count yourself lucky’” (p. 159).

Writing Task

Grim’s words of wisdom came from years of experience and were genuinely spoken with love and compassion. The relationship between Max and Freak was truly special. Why do you think they became such close friends? What did Max learn from Freak about himself at the end of the story? Think about a friendship you have had, currently have, or of someone you know. What qualities do you think are required in order to become close friends with someone?