

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Frindle, Day 1



Key Paragraph, p. 1

“If you asked the kids and the teachers at Lincoln Elementary School to make three lists—all the really bad kids, all the really smart kids, and the really good kids—Nick Allen would not be on any of them. Nick deserved a list all his own, and everyone knew it” (p. 1).

Writing Prompt

In this reading, it says Nick deserved a list for himself since he did not fit the bad kid, smart kid, or good kid lists. Do you think Nick, Ms. Deaver, and Janet agree with this statement?

In an expository paragraph, assess how these three characters would respond to this statement about Nick. How do their point of views differ or relate? Do you think any of these three characters, including Nick himself, believe he can change his bad habits to good ones?

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Frindle, Day 2



Key Paragraph, p. 10

“Her pride and joy was one of those huge dictionaries with every word in the universe in it, the kind of book it takes two kids to carry. It sat on its own little table at the front of her classroom, sort of like the altar at the front of a church” (p. 10).

Writing Prompt

Tell the story of the *Talents*, attached.

In this reading, it is discovered that Mrs. Granger’s pride is the dictionary, and it is the main focus of the book. Part of changing is doing a self-inventory. It helps you decide what is important to you, what you should keep, and helps you get rid of the bad habits.

Focusing on your own talents and beliefs is a central idea in this book. **In an expository paragraph describe what a talent is and reference both Mrs. Granger’s talents. Then follow with a reflective paragraph where you share some of your own talents, the things that you have pride in. What is the one thing you do well? Are there things people ask you to do well that makes you proud? Is there something you secretly like to do that you are awesome at?**

The Parable of the Talents

One day a man was going on a long trip. He needed his sons to take care of his property while he was gone, so he called them to him.

To the first son he gave five talents of money. (A talent was not a coin, but a weight of a precious metal such as silver, and one talent was worth more than \$1,000. So this son received money worth more than \$5,000.)

This man went to work at once using his money until he had doubled it. He now had ten talents instead of five.

The man gave the second son two talents. He probably thought the son was capable of managing that amount of money. The second son was successful also, and doubled his money. He began with more than \$2,000 and now he had twice as much.

The third son was not as capable as the other two, but the man gave him one talent with the expectation that he would manage it well. He, too, could have increased his money, but he dug a hole and hid it in the ground.

After a long time the man returned. He was ready for a report from the sons. The son who had received five talents brought his money and showed the man that he had doubled it. He was happy to show the man the results.

The man was pleased. He said, "Well done, good and faithful son! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share my happiness!"

The son that had been given two talents showed the man that he had also doubled his money. He received the same words of praise as the first son who had received ten talents.

The son who had received one talent dug up the talent he had buried and brought it to the man. He accused the man of being a hard man to work for, said he had been afraid, so he just buried his talent. He gave it back to the man saying, "See, here is what belongs to you."

The man was very angry with him and called him a lazy son. He said the son should have at least put the money with bankers and received some interest.

The man took his one talent away from him and gave it to the man who had ten talents, and the one talent man was punished because he had not properly used the talent he had been given.

What can we learn from this story?

We need to use whatever "talent" we have to do better for ourselves and others it might be money, ability, or opportunity. If we use it wisely, we will find success.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Frindle, Day 3



Key Paragraph, p. 16

“Nick barely heard the assignment. His heart was pounding, and he felt small, very small. He could feel the tops of his ears glowing red. A complete shutdown. An extra assignment. And probably a little black mark next to his name in the seating chart” (p. 16).

Writing Prompt

Nick used his talent with bad intentions, which resulted in a bad result. Nick is completely embarrassed and his plan has been ruined in front of his friends. **In a descriptive paragraph, write about a time in your life where you used one of your talents with bad intentions in hopes of a positive outcome. What were the plans? Was the outcome positive or negative? How did you feel about your plan? What did you learn from this experience?**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Frindle, Day 4



Key Paragraph, p. 17

“There was a rule in Nick’s house: Homework First. And that meant right after school” (p. 17).

Writing Prompt

Nick’s parents enforce the homework first rule. **In an expository paragraph, discuss how this rule develops and impacts this section. How do you think that rule will help Nick in the future? Does Nick think this rule will help him? What are the rules in your house? Answer these questions in a paragraph. At the end of the paragraph explain why these rules are important or not important? How would your parent’s answer differ from yours?**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Frindle, Day 5



Key Paragraph, p. 29

“Mrs. Granger was beaming at him. Nick sank lower in his chair. This was worse than writing the report, worse than standing up to give it. He was being treated like—like the teacher’s pet. And he had the feeling she was doing it on purpose. His reputation was in great danger. So he launched another question” (p. 29).

Writing Prompt

Sometimes people take drastic measures to maintain their reputations. Nick is trying to maintain his reputation, but things begin to get worse for him when Mrs. Granger treats him like the teacher’s pet. **In a descriptive paragraph, discuss a time when you tried maintaining your reputation and things started out good and got worse and worse. Describe the situation? What happened? How did things get worse? What was the outcome? In the end, was it worth it? Did you save your reputation?**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Frindle, Day 6



Key Paragraph, p. 37

“And by the time he had run down the street and up the steps and through the door and upstairs to his room, it wasn’t just a big idea. It was a plan, a whole plan, just begging for Nick to put it into action. And “action” was Nick’s middle name” (p. 37).

Writing Prompt

Change requires a vision, a plan, and effort. Nick has come up with a plan to prove a point to Mrs. Granger.

In an expository paragraph, determine the central idea behind Nick’s plan. How do you think he is going to develop this idea throughout the book? What kind of efforts will he put into this plan? How do you think this plan is going to work out in the end?

In a reflective paragraph relate this idea to your life. Think about a time in your life when you had a plan that begged you to take action. What was your plan? What was the action it involved? How did it turn out?

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Frindle, Day 7



Key Paragraph, p. 41

“‘But I really didn’t have a frindle with me,’ said Nick, amazed at his own bravery. And hiding behind his glasses, Nick kept his eyes wide and blank.

Mrs. Granger’s eyes flashed, and then narrowed, and her lips formed a thin, hard line. She was quiet for a few seconds, and then she said, ‘I see. Very well. Then I guess we have nothing more to discuss today, Nicholas. You may go’” (p. 41).

Writing Prompt

Nick is faced with a challenge. He can give into Mrs. Granger and go back to pen or he can continue on with his plan, knowing that it may get really tough and he may have to sacrifice. Nick believes in the word frindle.

Long-Term Writing: Persuasive/Argumentative Essay

Step One: Pick a Topic for Persuasive/Argumentative Essay

What is something in your school you would like to see changed? Can you come up with positive alternatives to this issue? What are things that you and your classmates could do to help bring about this change? Do you feel strongly enough about this issue to work for it?

The following are some topic ideas:

Should students be required to wear uniforms?

What type of lunch food should be provided?

Should there be homework?

Children should be required to read more.

All schools should implement bullying awareness programs.

The school year should be longer.

School days should start later.

Video games can be educational.

We need more school holidays.

School should take place in the evenings.

Year round school is a bad idea.

Suggestion: Have the class vote on which one they should write about. This will allow for the class to be at the same pace and make the teacher more available to assist with each step.

After you choose your topic, brainstorm different thoughts and ideas about the change you would like to see and why?

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Frindle, Day 8



Key Paragraph, p. 45

“And Nick looked right in her eyes and said, ‘Well, me and . . . I mean, a bunch of my friends and I took an oath about using the word, and we have to keep our promise. And besides, I don’t think there is anything wrong with it. I like my word.’ Nick tried to look brave, like a good general should” (p. 45).

Writing Prompt

Be true to yourself. Nick is taking the opportunity to stand up for something he believes in. He is being true to himself. He chooses his classmates as his audience to promote the word frindle.

Long- Term Writing: Persuasive/Argumentative Essay

Step Two: Understand the Audience

In order to write an effective persuasive/argumentative essay, the writer must understand the reader’s perspective. Nick’s classmates and Mrs. Granger are his target audience. In an informative paragraph, describe your target audience. Is the reader undecided or inclined to favor one side or the other? Don’t assume the audience has in-depth knowledge of the issue. Define terms and give background information on your topic so your target audience understands the issue you are discussing better.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Frindle, Day 9



Key Paragraph, p. 55

“Nick, I think we’d better talk a little more about this,’ said his mom, sitting back down on the couch. ‘If I find out you have been disrespectful to Mrs. Granger or any other teacher at school, then you will be in real trouble’” (p. 55).

Writing Prompt

Nick’s parents support him and the use of the word frindle. However, they set rules and perimeters on him. They insist that he must be respectful. Although Nick’s parents support him, the school does not. There are different views on this issue.

Long-Term Writing: Persuasive/Argumentative Essay

Step Three: Introductory Paragraph

Like the word frindle, there are different views on your topic as well. Summarize the different views on this topic. Then state your opinion. What is some background information on this issue?

The introductory paragraph should have a strong “hook” that grabs the reader’s attention. Open with an unusual fact or statistic, a question or quotation, or an emotional statement.

Summarize the different views on this topic. Then, state your opinion. The thesis statement should leave no doubts about the writer’s position. What is your position/argument? What is some background information on this issue?

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Frindle, Day 10



Key Paragraph, p. 61

“The reporter didn’t waste words. ‘So I hear that you plan to stop the students from using their new word. How goes the battle?’” (p. 61).

Writing Prompt

Sometimes change gets uncomfortable. While talking to the reporter Mrs. Chatham laughs because she is uncomfortable talking about the situation. A reporter’s job is to gather more information. However, often a reporter already has taken a stance on an issue and will ask leading questions to get more information in favor of their stance. Ask the class, what stance they think the reporter is taking on the word frindle?

Long-Term Writing: Persuasive/Argumentative Essay

Step Four: Body Paragraphs

Like the reporter, what would you say to persuade others of your position/argument? Focus on three reasons to support your position. What are some facts or examples that support your reasons? Organize your reasons into a clear and coherent paragraph.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Frindle, Day 11



Key Paragraph, p. 68-69

“‘What’s the meaning of this?!’ That’s what Nick’s mother said.

‘What’s the meaning of this?!’ That’s what the school superintendent said to Mrs. Chatham.

‘What’s the meaning of this?!’ That’s what Mrs. Chatham said to Mrs. Granger shaking the newspaper in front of her face” (p. 68-69).

Writing Prompt

At the beginning of the book, frindle seemed like a meaningless and harmless prank. It now seems to be getting out of hand. Three different people in the chapter asked “What is the meaning of this? Everyone has a different point of view on the issue at hand. Each person would answer this question differently.

Long-Term Writing: Persuasive/Argumentative Essay

Step Five: What Might Others Think or Say? (Counterarguments)

Just like Nick’s situation, not everyone may agree with your point of view on the issue you are presenting. What might those who have a different opinion say? Explain in more detail what an opponent, or a person who disagrees with your opinion, might say. Organize your counterarguments into a clear and coherent paragraph.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Frindle, Day 12



Key Paragraph, p.70

“Nick became sort of a hero for kids all over town, and he quickly learned that being a hero—even if you’re just a local hero—isn’t a free ride. It has a price” (p. 70).

Writing Prompt

Nick started the word frindle as a prank. Now it is taking off and with that comes fame, fortune, and a separate set of rules. He is standing behind his idea and defending it regardless of different viewpoints in order to make a change.

Long-Term Writing: Persuasive/Argumentative Essay

Step Six: Rebuttal

During the interview, Nick must respond in a way where he is defending his idea yet answering the counterarguments against him. How would you respond to the counterarguments for your issue?

Explain why you disagree with the opposing point of view. What would you say to others to show that the change about the issue should occur? Provide details that support your opinion and organize your reasons into a clear and coherent paragraph.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Frindle, Day 13



Key Paragraph, p. 84

“All of the kids and even some of the teachers used the new word. At first it was on purpose. Then it became a habit, and by the middle of February, frindle was just a word, like door or tree or hat. People in Westfield barely noticed it anymore” (p. 84).

Writing Prompt

Change requires a vision, plan, and effort. Nick started his change with a vision, created a plan and recruited people to help, and then added effort and sacrifice to keep the new word going. Now frindle is part of daily language and is sweeping across the nation. Do you think this was what Nick intended when he started with his plan? **In a clear and concise paragraph analyze the theme of “Change Requires Effort” through the book and how it developed. As you analyze the development, summarize the key details and ideas leading up this point of the reading.**

Long-Term Writing: Persuasive/Argumentative Essay

Step Seven: Conclusion

Similar to frindle, the issue you are defending required a vision, plan and effort. Restate your opinion and state a solution or suggestion to the issue.

The concluding paragraph should summarize the most important evidence (ideas) of your issue. By this point in your essay, you are persuading the reader to agree or take on your position.

The closing sentence can be a dramatic plea, a prediction that shows a need for urgent action, a question that makes readers think seriously about the issue, or suggestions that give readers specific ideas on what they can do.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Frindle, Day 14



Key Paragraph, p. 92

“...I’ve noticed you’ve been quiet the last few months. You know, Nicholas, you didn’t do anything wrong this year. I know a lot of things happened, and a lot of things were said, and you must have had some difficult days here and there. But your idea was a good idea, and I have been very proud of the way you behaved—most of the time...” (p. 92).

Writing Prompt

Both Mrs. Granger and Nick have changed throughout the book. In two separate paragraphs analyze their change. **Write a paragraph about Mrs. Granger. Describe her now compared to the beginning of the book. How do you think her actions have helped Nick and his future? Do the same for Nick and ask yourself, has he changed for the better? How will his change help him in the future? Be sure to address how their point of views shaped the issue at hand and affected their change.**

Long-Term Writing: Persuasive/Argumentative Essay

Step Eight: Review

After you put the writing from the different steps together to form an argumentative essay make sure to go back and check the style of writing, that it is written or the audience you are trying to reach, it has Clear and logical transitions, grammar, and punctuation.

Transitions hold the essay together. Transitions should wrap up the idea from the previous section and introduce the idea in the next section.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Frindle, Day 15



Key Paragraph, p. 97

“This is a brand new dictionary, the one I recommend that my students use for their homework. And now when I teach them how new words are added to the dictionary, I tell each of them to look up the word frindle” (p. 97).

Writing Prompt

Mrs. Granger sends Nick a letter to apologize. It took 10 years but she sent the letter. Continue to add to your previous days writing. Now that 10 years have passed, how else have both Nick and Mrs. Granger changed? How effective was the word frindle in the end? What changes did Mrs. Granger help Nick make? What changes did Nick help Mrs. Granger make?