
Ages 10-12

Children's Book Reviews


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Review: Frindle (Revised)

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Frindle

By Andrew Clements

Illustrated by Brian Selznick

Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, 1996

DESCRIPTION:

When Nick Allen enters the portals of Mrs. Granger's fifth grade class, he already knows the teacher's reputation. Strangely enough, Mrs. Granger wants her students to *learn*, and she brooks little nonsense, with, "look-it-up-in-the-dictionary," being her mantra. Nick has a reputation to uphold also, and that necessitates getting the teacher off the subject just in time to prevent homework assignments. When the volley is fired across the bow on the first day of class, Mrs. Granger seems to have won with a personal assignment just for Nick. However, challenged and determined, Nick follows his teacher's own path, planning to go a bit overboard in his research. What follows is a running battle for words, creativity, and the culmination of the competition playing out many years later.

CRITIQUE:

For teachers and students who think beyond the classroom, this small novel about research, causes, intellectual freedom, and mutual respect is a memorable read. Some of the events seem a bit melodramatic, but the overall theme quickly overrides any question of the validity. Clements, with his usual insight, manages the middle student mentality with wit and tenderness while providing space for the traditional teacher to preserve her integrity. If awards won are any test of quality, the accolades garnered by this little book proclaim it to already be a classic.

RELATED SUBJECTS:

Creative Writing, Family relationships, Language, Peer relationships, School, Teachers, Words, Writing

CHARACTER THEMES:

Humor, Ingenuity, Leadership, Respect

AWARDS:

100 Best Young Adult Books of All Time, Beehive Book Award (UT), Best Children's Books of the Year (Bank Street), Black-eyed Susan Book Award, Bluestem Award (IL), California Young Reader Medal, Capitol Choices (DC), Charlie May Simon Children's Book Award (MD), Children's Book Award (AK), Children's Crown Award, Christopher Award, Delaware Diamond Award, Dorothy Canfield Fisher Children's Book Award, Flicker Tale Children's Book Award, (ND), Georgia Children's Literature Awards, Golden Sower Award ((NE), *Horn Book* Fanfare, Indian Paintbrush Book Award (WY), Iowa Children's Choice Award, Judy Lopez Memorial Award for Children's Literature, Kentucky Bluegrass Award, Maine Student Book Award, Massachusetts Children's Book Award, Maud Hart Lovelace Book Award, Nene Award (HI), Nevada Young Readers' Award, Nutmeg Children's Book Award (CT), North

Carolina Children's Book Award, Pennsylvania Young Readers' Choice Award, Phoenix Award, Prairie Pasque Award (SD), Quahog Book Award (ME), Rebecca Caudill Young Readers Book Award (IL), Sasquatch Reading Award (WA), Sequoyah Book Award, (OK), Sunshine State Young Reader's Award (FL), Texas Bluebonnet Award, Utah Children's Book Award, William Allen White Book Award (KA), Wisconsin Battle of the Books Award, Young Hoosier Book Award (IN), Young Reader's Choice Award (Pacific Northwest Librarian's Association