



## Lesson Plan Aid for Book Punch® - Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH

Grade level 5  
Lexile Framework for Reading Measure 790L

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### Introduction to Book Punch®

Book Punch guides students through the steps of thinking and writing about well-known core literature for grade levels 3 through 9. Students write paragraphs or essays responding to interactive writing prompts. The program tutors students to develop ideas and organize their thinking about books they read.

Each program in the Merit Book Punch collection focuses on one book title. Each contains 6-7 writing prompts, 600 supporting questions and 600 helpful tips to guide students through each step in the writing process. The program for each book title comprises 3 online interactive units as follows:

- Text-to-Self: Based on themes from the book, students write paragraphs about their own experiences.
- Evidence and Inference: Students write paragraphs or essays that connect details with ideas in the book to infer a deeper meaning from what they are reading.
- Reading Check: Students write a paragraph about facts and/or events from the book to ensure that they have read it.

Together, these units develop students' reading comprehension and writing skills in complementary ways.

### Printables

Each Book Punch title includes 11 printable worksheets, a lesson plan aid, and the Book Punch® Series Manual with detailed instructions for implementation. The documents can be viewed and printed from My Learning Center. Self-learners and teachers click the course name; tutors and parents click the Programs link and then click the Book Punch title.

All printables can also be viewed and printed from the links provided on the last page of this document.

**Text-to-Self**

Text-to-Self writing prompts help to enrich students' reading experience. Students write paragraphs that help them relate their own experiences to events that take place in the book. See the topics listed below.

**Text-to-Self Topic 1**

In the story, Mrs. Frisby realizes that she has a problem when her son, Timothy, is too frail to be moved on Moving Day. Mrs. Frisby doesn't know what to do, so she reaches out to the owl for advice. Write about a problem that was too big for you to solve on your own. Tell who helped you.

**Text-to-Self Topic 2**

In the story, Nicodemus explains how the rats use the intelligence the scientists have given them to escape NIMH. They are able to problem solve in order to obtain their freedom. Write about a situation that required you to use your intelligence to solve a problem.

**Text-to-Self Topic 3**

In the story, the rats help Mrs. Frisby safely move her family, and Mrs. Frisby helps the rats with their Plan. Through cooperation, both the rats and Mrs. Frisby reach their goals. Write about a time you worked together with others to achieve a goal.

**Evidence and Inference**

See the writing prompts below and the accompanying list of questions, the answers to which should be included in a satisfactory paragraph. Help students determine whether they have recognized (inferred) the ideas in the book from the details (evidence) given.

**Evidence and Inference Topic 1**

Sometimes one has to be willing to take risks to find a way out of life's difficulties. Write a paragraph describing the brave acts Mrs. Frisby undertakes in order to deal with Moving Day.

*(This topic is recommended for students who have read through "The Owl.")*

1. Who is the first creature Mrs. Frisby turns to for help with her problem? Tell why she thinks that she has the right to approach this creature.
2. What is the creature's response to Mrs. Frisby's request for help?
3. What frightening things do the creature's suggestion require Mrs. Frisby to do?
4. How does Mrs. Frisby decide to respond to the creature's suggestion?

**Evidence and Inference Topic 2**

A civilization requires many things. As the rats pursue their education, they discover some interesting things about their ancestors, who may have been on the verge of creating a civilization. Write a paragraph detailing what the rats learn about their ancestors and describe what it makes them wonder.

*(This topic is recommended for students who have read through "The Toy Tinker.")*

1. Why did scientists think the rats' ancestors were on the verge of creating a civilization?
2. Who are the descendants today of the rats who almost created a civilization?
3. Why do scientists think the rats did not develop a civilization?
4. The rats wonder about the civilization they might have created. What are some of the things they wonder about?

**Evidence and Inference Topic 3**

It can be difficult to move to a new home, especially if it is much easier to stay where one is. Write a paragraph describing the Plan of the rats and explain how it came about.

*(This topic is recommended for students who have read through "Thorn Valley.")*

1. What concerns do some of the rats have about their life on the farm?
2. What do the rats think might happen if they stay on the farm? Why do they think this is likely to occur?
3. What is Nicodemus's idea? How does Jenner feel about it?
4. What is the Plan?

## Reading Check

The Reading Check unit evaluates students' paragraphs using a key point check to determine if the student has read the book. See the Reading Check writing prompt below and the list of questions that accompany it, the answers to which should be included in a satisfactory paragraph.

### Reading Check Topic

"Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH" tells about various acts of kindness that result in friendship and repayment. The theme of cooperation runs throughout the story. Write a paragraph describing two acts of kindness that occur in the story and tell how they are rewarded.

1. How does Mrs. Frisby help Jeremy? Be detailed in your response to this question.
2. How does Jeremy repay Mrs. Frisby's act of kindness?
3. What was the kind act Jonathan Frisby performed for the rats of NIMH?
4. How does Jonathan Frisby's helpfulness towards the rats affect his family?

## Curriculum Integration

See the Book Punch Series Manual. The Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary section and the Beyond the Program section provide detailed instructions for implementing vocabulary, character and pre-writing lessons. The Book Punch Series Manual includes printable worksheets for these lessons.

## Vocabulary

See the Vocabulary Exploration worksheet in the Book Punch Series Manual. Thematic words from Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH that can be explored include:

VOCABULARY	DEFINITION
authoritative	Speaking with the ability to determine action
maternal love	Strong motherly feelings (2 words)
cooperation	Working together
courage	Facing difficulty
determination	Firm or fixed intention
intelligence	The ability to learn and understand
survival	Continuing to live
technology	The use of science in solving problems

Vocabulary particular to the time and setting of Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH include:

VOCABULARY	DEFINITION
contrary	Opposite in position
corridor	A passage connecting parts of a building
cursory	Hasty and superficial
delirious	Very excited
efficient	Working quickly and well
emerge	To come out
frail	Weak
futile	Useless
hypochondriac	A person with imagined health problems
laborious	Requiring great amounts of work
nimble	Quick and light in movement
pneumonia	A disease that inflames the lungs
rodent	A gnawing animal such as a rat, squirrel or rabbit
wary	Cautious

The Word Search Puzzle and Crossword Puzzle worksheets that are included contain many of the words above. They can be used to reinforce the vocabulary in the book.

### *Character Exploration*

See the Character Exploration worksheet and the Compare and Contrast worksheet in the Book Punch Series Manual. Here are suggested character exploration prompts for classroom discussion:

Imagine that Mrs. Frisby is your friend in real life. Write words and phrases that would help you describe her to someone who doesn't know her. (What kind of personality does she have? What does Mrs. Frisby like to do?)

Compare and contrast Mrs. Frisby with Jeremy or another character in the book.

### *Group Work and Discussion – Pre-writing*

See the Brainstorming worksheet in the Book Punch Series Manual. Here is a suggested topic for classroom discussion:

Life can sometimes present us with unexpected difficulties. Describe the difficulties Mrs. Frisby faces at the beginning of the story.

*(This topic is recommended for students who have read through “Mr. Fitzgibbon’s Plow.”)*

### *Additional Writing Prompts*

See the Independent Follow-up worksheet in the Book Punch Series Manual. Using the context of Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH, and the Independent Follow-up worksheet, students may continue the writing process after publishing their paragraphs from Book Punch. Here are two additional topics students can write about:

“Stereotyping” is forming a fixed idea about a group that may often be untrue or only partly true. In the story, the rats discover how humans perceive them. Write a paragraph about what the rats discover about how humans have stereotyped rats.

*(This topic is recommended for students who have read through “The Toy Tinker.”)*

In the story, Mrs. Frisby is determined to save her family. She exhibits tremendous courage when she rides on Jeremy’s back, visits the owl, and ventures into the rosebush. Write about a time you needed to be courageous in order to accomplish a goal.

*(This topic is recommended for students who have read through “In the Rosebush.”)*

## Printable Worksheet Links

You must be connected to the Internet to access these links.

[Crossword Puzzle - starter](#)

[Crossword Puzzle - challenge](#)

[Word Search Puzzle](#)

[Evidence and Inference Worksheet](#)

[See the Book Punch® Series Manual for additional printable worksheets.](#)

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