



STUDY BUDDY

ArtsPower ♦ 39 S. Fullerton Avenue ♦ Montclair, NJ 07042 ♦ 973.744.0909

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ArtsPower National Touring Theatre

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Executive Producers

From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler

Based on the book by **E.L.
Konigsburg**. Copyright
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Books for Young Readers,
an imprint of Simon &
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Adapted by **Greg Gunning**

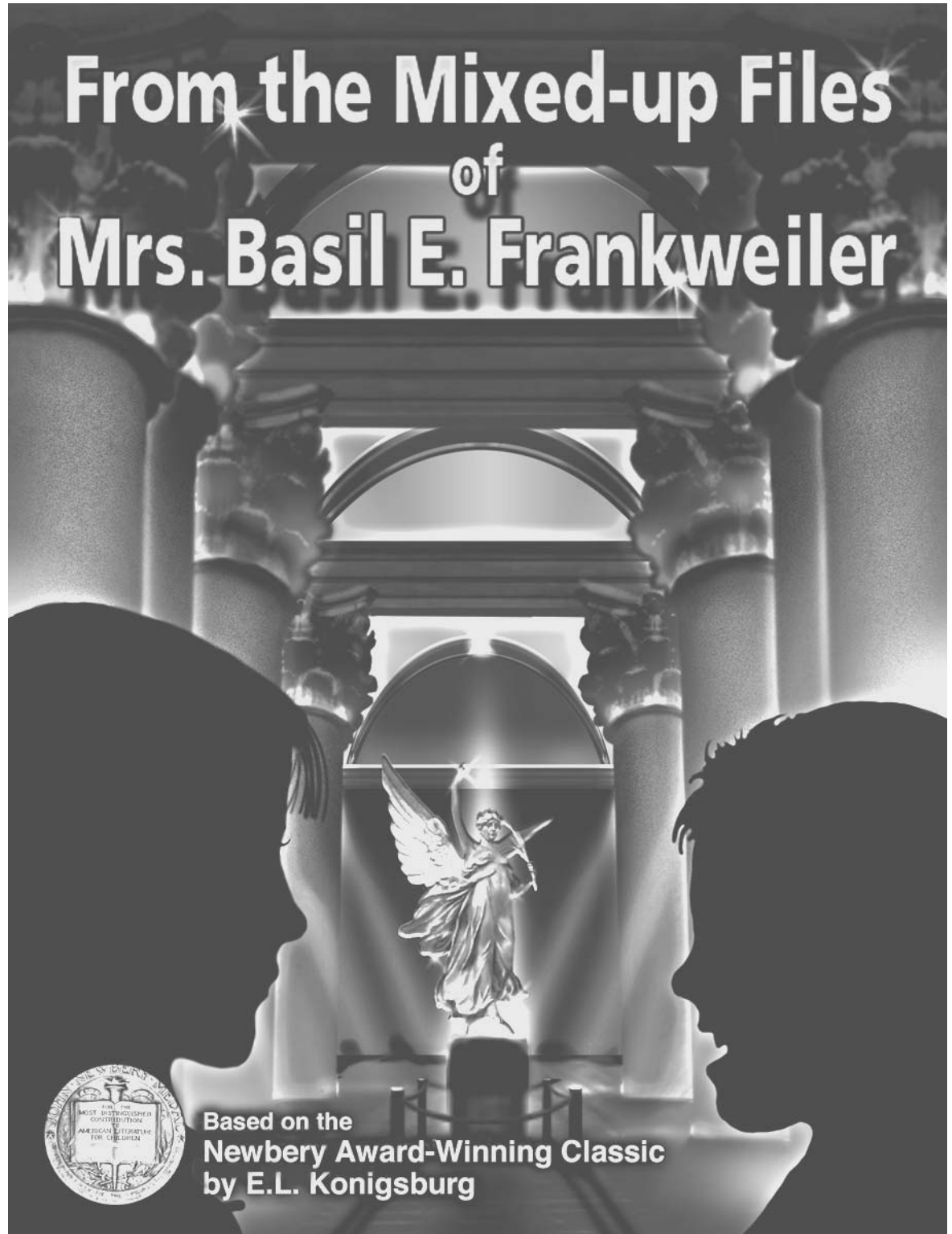
Music by **Richard DeRosa**

Costume Design &
Construction by
Fred Sorrentino

Set Construction by
Tom Carroll Scenic

Study Buddy Written by
Dr. Rosalind M. Flynn

Study Buddy Design by
Melissa L. Diaz



Based on the
Newbery Award-Winning Classic
by **E.L. Konigsburg**

This production sponsored by **Panasonic**

Please photocopy any or all of the
reproducible student activity pages.



Teacher Information

This study guide is designed to help you and your students prepare for, enjoy, and discuss ArtsPower's one-act musical play ***From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler***.

This guide contains background information and cross-curricular activities to complete both before and after the performance.

What Happens in *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*?

To help students understand the action of the play, read this plot summary to them. The main characters' names appear in boldface type.

Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler is a collector of fine art, facts, figures, and secrets. She narrates the action of this musical play through a letter she is writing to her lawyer - Saxonberg. After she learns about the adventures of **Claudia** and **Jamie Kincaid** in New York City, Mrs. Frankweiler needs her lawyer to change her last will and testament.

Among her many files, she will now include the story of how Claudia and Jamie run away, hide out and sleep over in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, investigate whether a statue called Angel was carved by Michelangelo, and become a terrific sister-brother team.

There are sixteen characters or roles in ***From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler***. But the cast (all of the actors in the play) has only four actors. Three actors play the main roles - Mrs. Frankweiler, Claudia, and Jamie. One actor plays 13 roles. In theatre, when an actor plays more than one character, it's called "doubling." You will know that the actor who "doubles" has become a new character when he changes hats, speech, and movement.



From left, Heidi Landis, Michael Ruby, Candice Alfonso, and Michael Bellotti in ArtsPower's ***From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler***.



Resources

To read books by E.L. Konigsburg, look for:
From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler;
Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, William McKinley, and Me, Elizabeth;
Up From Jericho Tel; The View From Saturday.

To learn more about E.L. Konigsburg, visit: www.randomhouse.com/teachers/authors/koni.html



Facts and Secrets

Read the following information to prepare you to better understand

From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler:

Facts

HOW OLD
WOULD I BE
TODAY?



MICHELANGELO
(my-kull-LAN-jel-lo)

- ▶ One of the greatest artists of all time.
- ▶ He was born in Italy in 1475.

To learn more about him, visit:

www.michelangelo.com/buonarroti.html

WHERE ON A
MAP IS NEW
YORK CITY?



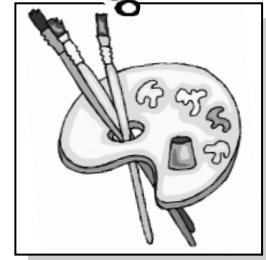
**THE METROPOLITAN
MUSEUM OF ART**
"The Met"

A gigantic New York City museum with art from all over the world and from all time periods.

To learn more, visit:

www.ny.com/museums/MET.html

HOW MANY
CENTURIES AGO
WAS THAT?



ITALIAN RENAISSANCE
(REN-uh-sahnts)

A new time of great cultural and artistic achievement in Italy, 1420-1600.

To learn more, visit:

www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/tl/it-ren

Secrets

People who put on plays have special ways of telling stories on the stage. Here are two of their secrets:

- Two scenes appear on stage at the same time. This is called a "split-stage" effect. When the actors "freeze," you are supposed to pretend that they are not there. They will "unfreeze" when they want your attention.
- The actors use mime (silent acting) to suggest some settings. In ***From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler***, Claudia and Jamie mime:

- ⇒ **getting on a school bus and hiding behind the back seat.**
- ⇒ **boarding a train and finding a seat.**



LEARNING ACTIVITY

Try Some Mime

Using chairs as bus and train seats, mime getting on a school bus and hiding behind the back seat, and boarding a train and finding a seat.

Dialogue



Playwrights write lines of dialogue for actors to speak. Lines are the main way the audience receives information about the plot (story) and the characters.

Learn more about the characters by reading the lines of dialogue below. Try speaking the lines aloud with expression.

MRS. FRANKWEILER

"Claudia was organized - paying attention to every detail - almost as much as I do."

"You tell me all the details of your running away - everything - and I'll have my chauffeur drive you home in my Rolls Royce."

"Let's just say I needed the secret more than I needed the money."

CLAUDIA

"Jamie, we've got to stay inconspicuous."

"Tight wad. Maybe bringing you along was a mistake."

"You've just arrived at the most beautiful place in the whole world - filled with the masterpieces of **Renoir**, **Monet** - and all you can think about is food?"

JAMIE

"Stop correcting my grammar!"

"Hey! We could sleep in a **sarcophagus** tonight!"

"Twenty-seven dollars and eleven cents left. Did you know that food was going to be so expensive?"

**Renoir (ren-WAH),
Monet (moh-NAY)** -
names of famous painters

sarcophagus -
a decorated stone coffin



LEARNING ACTIVITY

Keeping Files

Be like Mrs. Frankweiler and create three new files. Read the lines above and predict some character traits of:

1. Mrs. Frankweiler
2. Claudia
3. Jamie

During the performance, listen for these lines.

After the performance, review your files to cross out or add adjectives to them.

Lyrics

From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler is a musical. This means that the story is told in words and songs.

The music and songs help establish mood and setting, express characters' emotions and inner thoughts, and move the action forward. Lyrics are the words of songs.

What do these lyrics tell you about the musical's plot and characters?



CLAUDIA:

If you want to achieve something beautiful, make and follow a plan. There's beauty in strategy. There's beauty in details, you see.

I'm tired of just being Claudia. Greenwich, Connecticut Claudia....I will escape this dull suburban life.

CLAUDIA AND JAMIE:

If you hope to get lost and run away and want no one to notice you, New York is crowded. Lots of fun! And nobody notices anyone!

Seems, ready or not, the world will see a new team!
Look out world, we're a team!

CLAUDIA:

I have to go back a different me.
I didn't run away just to go back home the same.



LEARNING ACTIVITY

Updating Your Files

Go back to the character trait files you created after reading lines spoken by:

1. Mrs. Frankweiler 2. Claudia 3. Jamie.

After reading the lyrics, add new information to each file.

During the performance, listen for these lyrics.

Author, Adaptations

Author

E.L. Konigsburg wrote ***From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler***. The "E.L." stands for Elaine Lobl. She was born in New York City, but she has never spent the night in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She studied science and chemistry in school, never thinking she would be an award-winning author in the future. After her children were born, Konigsburg began writing stories. She used events from her life and the lives of her children for many parts of her books. She is also a painter and has done illustrations for several books.



Adaptations

The musical ***From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*** is an adaptation of E.L. Konigsburg's novel. Adaptation means the original work is changed to create a new work. ArtsPower playwright Greg Gunning used Konigsburg's story as a starting point. He kept major characters and events, and he made some changes. If you have read ***From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler***, watch for differences between the novel and the musical. After the performance, discuss how characters and events were similar to and different from those in the book.

LEARNING ACTIVITY

Adapt This!

Read the following description of a scene between Claudia and Jamie. Adapt the scene for the stage by writing lines of dialogue for the characters to speak.

While preparing to run away, Claudia asks Jamie how much money he has. He hesitates and then tells her he has a good amount. Claudia finds out that Jamie wins money by playing the card game "War." When Jamie finally admits that he has \$24.43, Claudia knows that she picked the right person to accompany her.

During the performance, listen and watch for this scene.



Theatre Companies and Audiences

From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler is brought to you by ArtsPower National Touring Theatre.

Theatre Companies

producers -- supervise all costs and decisions

actors -- audition for parts;
memorize lines and songs

designers -- create sets, costumes, and lighting

director -- rehearses actors;
makes artistic decisions

playwright -- writes the script

composer -- writes the music

stage manager -- oversees all backstage
elements of a production

ArtsPower -- a national touring theatre

The **producers**...

- ✿ research, develop, and oversee each production.

The **actors** and a **stage manager**...

- ✿ present performances all over the United States.
- ✿ stay in hotels when they travel.
- ✿ pack the set, costumes, and sound equipment in a van.
- ✿ set up and move set pieces during the performance.
- ✿ take care of costumes and props (props -- objects handled by actors such as file folders, the Angel statue, instrument cases, and books).
- ✿ sometimes present 12 performances in 12 different places in a week.

The **administrative staff**...

- ✿ books the performances.
- ✿ makes travel arrangements for the touring companies.
- ✿ maintains the entire operation of the organization.
- ✿ serves customers.
- ✿ promotes the organization.
- ✿ raises funding to support the organization.

Audiences

How to best observe any theatre performance:

- ❖ Watch closely.
- ❖ Listen carefully.
- ❖ Laugh or applaud if you enjoy the play.
- ❖ Remember that you and the actors are in the same room.
- ❖ Talking, whispering, or making noise during the performance makes it hard for actors to do their best.
- ❖ Help other audience members with your quiet attention.

Your Thoughts



Like Mrs. Frankweiler, ArtsPower is a collector of facts, figures, and maybe even secrets! After you attend **From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler**, please file your thoughts with ArtsPower by completing and returning this list.

OR, visit ArtsPower on-line at <http://www.artspower.org> and click on "Contact Us."

Date:

To: **ArtsPower National Touring Theatre**
39 South Fullerton Ave.
Montclair, NJ 07042-3354

From:

Your Name:

Your School Address:

Your City, State, and Zip:

Re: **From the Mixed-up Files of**
Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler at: _____

(Theatre Name)

Things I liked about the performance:

Things I would change about the performance:

Why?