

Name: _____

Date: _____

Homeroom: _____

Class: _____

***Freak the Mighty* (100-107) “A Chip off the Old Block”**

Lesson Objective: Explore possible symbolism in this chapter.

Do Now

Directions: Reread the excerpt below from p. 98 and answer the questions that follow.

I figure it will take forever to fall asleep, because my head is full of stuff. Grim and his written-down lump of coal, the pyramid with the special book inside, and how fat, wet flakes of snow were falling when the Fair Gwen towed Freak home in his American Flyer wagon, and the way he was pretending to boss her by saying, “On Donner! On Dasher!¹ On Guinevere!” and she’s telling him to shut up or she’ll leave him outside until he turns into a snowman.

Which must be why I’m dreaming about a little snowman who looks like Freak. The snowman keeps saying, “Cool. Cool.” And when I wake up, I can feel the cold coming into my bedroom. Which is weird, because it’s always warm in the down under, with the furnace right next door.

I think I hear the wind right there in the room.

Except it’s not the wind.

¹**Donner** and **Dasher** are two of the reindeer who pull Santa’s sleigh in the poem “‘Twas the Night Before Christmas”



1. What might Max mean when he says his “head is full of stuff”? What kind of “stuff” is his head full of?

2. In the excerpt above, Max wakes to feel “the cold coming into [his] bedroom.”

- a. Literally, why might his room be colder than usual?

- b. What might “the cold” symbolize or represent? Explain your thinking.

Vocabulary: Deprive, Kin

Word	Definition	Related Parts of Speech	Situations	Image
deprive <i>verb</i>	to take something away or keep from having something	deprivation <i>noun</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our dog begs so much at every meal, you'd think we deprive him of food! _____ _____ _____ 	
kin <i>noun</i>	a person's relatives or family	kinship <i>noun</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I could tell they were kin because they looked so much alike. _____ _____ _____ 	

Vocabulary Active Practice

As we apply our new word knowledge, be sure to use the vocabulary word in your answer!

1. Why might parents decide to **deprive** their kids of technology (e.g., a cell phone or video games)?
2. Has this ever happened to you? If so, how did that **deprivation** make you feel?
3. Imagine all of your **kin** gathered in one place for a family reunion. Describe what you might see and hear.
4. A friend of yours says he is going on vacation with his **kin**, but he cannot **abide** spending time with them. What advice would you give him? **Challenge:** What are his **obligations** in this situation?
5. **Kinship** can mean either a state of being related to someone or a feeling of being close and connected to other people. Is Kevin Max's **kin**? Does he feel **kinship** with him?


6. Who seems more **sentimental** about **kin**, Grim or Gram? What makes you think this?

Pages 100-102

Annotation Task: As we read, annotate any descriptions of size and/or power. What do these descriptions reveal about the way Max sees this character?

Notes

1. **Turn and Talk:** Who has come into Max’s room? Does Max call him by name in the narration? Why might this be?

 2. Recall this excerpt from p. 98:

I think I hear the wind right there in the room. Except it’s not the wind. Someone breathing.

Reread the moments Max has mentioned the wind in this section:

- *Like I’m paralyzed and my head is empty and all there is in the world is that big hand and this cool breath like the wind.* (p. 100)
- *Someday the rerun will come to an end and you’ll see the stars start to flick off, like a billion little flames blown out by the wind.* (p. 102)

What might the wind represent or symbolize to Max? Explain your thinking.

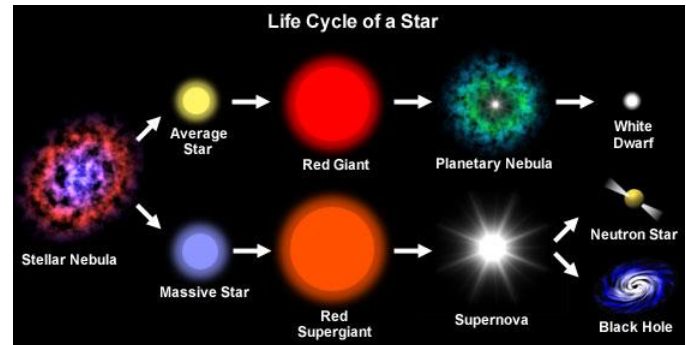
Looking into Space is Looking Back in Time

Adapted from Slate.com and Ducksters Education Site

When you go outside at night and gaze up into the sky, the stars seem eternal¹ and unchanging. But that's our human experience shaping our perception. While we live on a much shorter time scale than the stars, stars are actually much like us. They are born, they live for an amount of time, and they inevitably² die.

The Life and Death of Stars

Stars are giant spheres of gas formed in clouds of gas and dust. Nuclear reactions at the center of stars provide enough energy to make them shine brightly for their lifetime. The exact lifetime of a star depends on its size: the larger a star, the shorter its life. Very large, massive stars burn their fuel much faster than smaller stars and may only last a few hundred thousand years. Smaller stars, however, will last for several billion years, because they burn their fuel much more slowly.



Though all stars form the same way, a star's life cycle and death depend on its size

The Speed of Light

When you turn on the light in your room, the light seems to instantly illuminate your entire room. However, even though there is nothing faster than light, light still travels at a finite, or limited, speed. That speed is known as the speed of light. The speed of light is 299,792,458 meters per second. To put it another way, light travels 186,000 miles in a second. Astronomers use the speed of light to measure how far away stars and other galaxies are from Earth. A light year is the distance that light travels in one year. It is equal to 5,900,000,000,000 miles. That is five trillion, nine hundred billion miles.

¹**eternal**: lasting or existing forever

²**inevitably**: unavoidably, as is certain to happen

3. **Turn and Talk:** Why does a small star live longer than a large star? Underline evidence from the text to support your thinking.

4. Consider these two lines from the article:

- *When you go outside at night and gaze upon the sky, it seems eternal and unchanging.*
- *When you turn on the light in your room, the light seems to instantly illuminate your entire room.*

What similarities do you notice in these lines? Why might the author have included them?


Looking into Space is Looking Back in Time (cont'd)
Adapted from Slate.com and Ducksters Education Site

Looking into the Past

Because the speed of light is constant and objects in the universe are so far apart, it can take a long time for the light leaving a star to reach Earth. Some stars and galaxies are so far away that the light we are seeing left those stars billions of years ago. The Sun is the closest star to Earth, and it still takes light more than eight minutes to reach us; you can think of it as seeing the Sun as it was eight minutes ago. The bright star Sirius is 8.6 light years away. That means the light hitting your eye tonight has been traveling for 8.6 years. Put another way: When you look at Sirius tonight, you see it as it was 8.6 years ago. As you look at more distant objects, the effect intensifies. When you gaze up into the night sky, you are actually “looking into the past.”

Light from Dead Stars

Because of the vast distances light must travel to reach Earth, it’s possible that a distant star could die before we ever saw its light. However, even though light may take thousands of years to reach us, stars typically live much longer than that. The Sun will continue on as it is now for many billions of years. Even the largest stars, which use up their fuel far more quickly, can live for 1 million years or more. That means the odds of a star happening to die while its light is already on its way to Earth are very small; in terms of the star’s lifetime, a few thousand years is the blink of an eye. A star would have to be near its own death after a very long life for this to happen.

 5. Reread this excerpt from p. 101:


Some people think the stars look close enough to touch, but Freak says the sky is like a photograph from a billion years ago, it’s just some old movie they’re showing up there and lots of those stars have switched off by now. They’re already dead, and what we’re seeing is the rerun. Which makes sense if you think about it. Someday the rerun will come to an end and you’ll see the stars start to flick off, like a billion little flames blown out by the wind.

a. Would the author of the article agree with Freak that the sky is “like a photograph from a billion years ago”? Why or why not? **Challenge:** Is there any **hyperbole** in this description?

b. In the excerpt above, Max says, “They’re already dead and what we’re seeing is the rerun.” What might he mean by this? **Note:** A rerun is an episode of a TV show that is replayed again after the show is no longer on the air.

c. Max explains that some stars have “switched off,” and one day others will “flick off.” How would the **tone** of this section change if he used phrases like “burn out” or “die” instead?

6. On p. 102, what is Max describing as “this dream [he] was having for a long time”? Why might he feel this way?

 7. Why might Max have hoped to see lights on at Freak’s house on p. 102? Consider the lights both literally and figuratively.

Pages 102-105

8. The phrase “chip off the old block” describes a child who is very similar in appearance or character to his or her parent. How does Kenny see Max? What does he want with him?

9. Why might Max think his father “doesn’t need a suit of armor” on p. 103?

10. Reread these excerpts from pp. 103-104:

- *I’m standing there under the streetlight and it’s amazing how quiet it is. Like everybody went away or died.* (p. 103)
- *Tomorrow morning a bunch of kids will probably take their new sleds and skates out there, and probably lose their new mittens and scarfs and get yelled at by their moms and dads, but tonight the pond is as empty as the moon, as empty as my head.* (p. 104)
- *Once a car goes by real slow around the pond, and I’ve got this strange feeling there’s no one at the wheel.* (p. 104)

a. Recall that in the passage from p. 98 we reread in our Do Now, Max described his head as “full of stuff.” How does he describe his head now? Why might this be?

b. What similarity do you notice in all three excerpts? What does this similarity reveal about how Max is feeling?

Pages 105-107: On Your Own

The idiom “turning over a new leaf” refers to a person changing his or her behavior to act in a better way. The proverb “a man’s home is his castle” refers to the idea that a person should expect privacy and security in his or her own home.

11. Reread Loretta’s dialogue on p. 106:

“Oh right...turned over a new leaf, Preacher Kane turned over a new leaf so there’s no booze for anybody on Christmas Eve, even in our own house where a man is his castle.”

Why might she refer to Kenny as “Preacher Kane”? What does she see as his “new leaf”? **Challenge:** Where do you see a **malapropism** in the quote above?

12. On p. 102, Max describes looking at his father:

He’s got these big eyebrows that make it hard to see his eyes and that’s fine, I don’t want to see them, looking at those eyes is asking to have a bad dream.

However, on p. 107, the chapter closes with these lines:

He looks right at me. “Come on, boy.”

Why might Philbrick have ended the chapter in this way?

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Summative Writing

Directions: Reread this excerpt from pp. 101-102:

Some people think the stars look close enough to touch, but Freak says the sky is like a photograph from a billion years ago, it's just some old movie they're showing up there and lots of those stars have switched off by now. They're already dead, and what we're seeing is the rerun. Which makes sense if you think about it. Someday the rerun will come to an end and you'll see the stars start to flick off, like a billion little flames blown out by the wind.

"This way," he says. "Quiet as a mouse."

There's snow on the ground. Not a lot, enough to cover the ground. I can tell how cold the air is, but I can't feel it, even without a jacket, which I didn't have time to put on. The cold doesn't matter. Nothing does, really, not Grim or Gram or the old stars in the sky or Freak and the Fair Gwen. They're all just make-believe, this dream I was having for a long time, and now I'm awake again and he's still filling the room somehow, even though we're outside.

The lights are out at Freak's house and I'm thinking: The stars clicked off and I don't even know why I'm thinking that, it's like a dead voice in my head or something.

In a response of 5-6 sentences, interpret Max's thoughts on stars in this excerpt.

- What might the stars represent or symbolize?
- Include evidence from the article "Looking into Space is Looking Back in Time" in your response.

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Homework

Directions: Read the article and excerpt and respond to the questions that follow.

The Star of Bethlehem

The birth of Jesus is the basis for the Christian holiday of Christmas. According to the gospel of Luke (part of the New Testament) Jesus's mother, Mary, and her husband, Joseph, traveled to Bethlehem while Mary was pregnant. Because there was no room for them at the inn, when Jesus was born, Mary placed him in a manger¹. According to the gospel of Matthew, a star in the East marked the place of Jesus's birth and guided three wise men to find him and bring him gifts.



¹manger: a trough for feeding animals

"You know about Mary and Joseph, how they sought shelter in Bethlehem, and how the baby Jesus was born in a manger? ... That's what we're doing, seeking shelter," he says. "Except this isn't exactly a manger we're going to."

"No, sir." I say. "It sure isn't."

He touches me real soft on the back of the neck and says, "I didn't ask you a question, boy. Rule number one, don't sass your old man."

1. Why might Kenny have mentioned Mary and Joseph? What could this indicate about his perspective on the way he's been treated?

2. What contrast do you notice in the way Kenny interacts with Max?

3. Why might it be **ironic** that Kenny Kane appears in Max's room on Christmas Eve?
