

# 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors

## Literature and Composition

### *Freak the Mighty*

## Summer Reading Assignment

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Page 16 Quote Analysis Answer Sheet (optional)

## **Pre-reading Activity**

Students must obtain the novel; *Freak the Mighty* by Rodman Philbrick. The summer reading assignment should be completed before the first day of school. We recommend pacing yourself throughout the summer so that you are not rushing to finish at the last minute. There are three sections to the assignment: the reading, the projects and the preparation seminar questions.

- Familiarize yourself with the concepts of theme and heroism. **Read the two pages included on those topics**. There are no specific assignments associated with this information, but it will provide background knowledge to assist you with the other assignments in this class.
- These questions are designed to make you think. In short answer form, a paragraph or less, **answer the following questions** based on your own opinion. There is no right or wrong answer, as long as you can justify your reasoning:

1. What is the difference between **heroism** and **fame**?

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2. Is there a difference between **heroism** and **leadership**? Explain.

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3. Society expects perfection from its heroes. What do we do when our hero fails to live up to our image of them?

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4. Is heroism determined by a one-time event (for example, saving a life), or is it an achievement over a lifetime?

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## Pre-reading Activity

### Theme

**\*Note: This article is for informational and study purposes only. There is no specific writing assignment associated with this piece.**

#### What does the word “theme” mean?

In general, theme is a unifying idea with a distinctive quality or characteristic. It is also often known as the “main idea.” Imagine you are invited to a birthday party, and the invitation states that you are to dress up in a cowboy or cowgirl costume. In this example, the **theme** of the birthday party is most likely “The Old West.” Likewise in literature, the theme can be viewed as the “main idea.”

#### Analyzing Theme in Literature

What exactly is this elusive thing called “theme” in literature?

The theme of a fable is its moral or its life lesson. The theme of a parable is its teaching. The theme of a piece of literature is its **view about life and how people behave**.

In fiction, the theme is not intended to teach or preach. In fact, it is not presented directly at all. You extract or imply it from the characters, action, and setting that make up the story. In other words, you must figure out the theme yourself.

The writer’s task is to communicate on a common ground with the reader. Although the particulars of your experience may be different from the details of the story, the general underlying truths behind the story may be just the connection that both you and the writer are seeking.

#### Finding the Theme in Literature

Here are some ways to uncover the theme in a story:

- ❖ Check out the **title**. Sometimes it provides hints with regard to theme.
- ❖ Notice **repeating patterns and symbols**. Sometimes these lead you to the theme.
- ❖ What **allusions** are made throughout the story?
- ❖ What are the **details** and **particulars** in the story? What **greater meaning** may they have?

Remember that theme, plot, and structure are inseparable, all helping to inform and reflect back on each other. Also, be aware that a theme we determine from a story never completely explains the story. It is simply one of the elements that make up the whole.

For more information on theme type the following link into an Internet web browser and study the PowerPoint Presentation on Theme:

- [handouts4msbsclass.pbworks.com/f/Theme.ppt](http://handouts4msbsclass.pbworks.com/f/Theme.ppt)

<http://www.learner.org/interactives/literature/read/theme1.html>

## Pre-reading Activity

### Heroes and Heroism

#### What is a hero?

The Random House Collegiate Dictionary defines a **hero** as “a man of distinguished courage or ability, admired for his brave deeds and noble qualities.” A heroine is his female equivalent. **Heroism**, then, exemplifies the qualities or attributes of a hero or heroine. Many people regard the members of the **New York City Fire Department** as heroes for their self-sacrificing deeds during the September 11 attacks. Others consider a **family member** to be a hero if he or she has overcome a great illness or other tremendous obstacle. Still others believe that the ultimate hero is the “**superhero**,” a fictional character that possesses extraordinary superhuman or supernatural powers, such as Superman or Wonder Woman. In Greek mythology and folklore, the hero was originally a demigod (half god, half human). Later “hero” and “heroine” came to refer to **characters who, in the face of danger and adversity or from a position of weakness, display courage and the will for self-sacrifice – that is, heroism – for some greater good of all humanity.** This definition originally referred to warrior-like courage or excellence, but extended to more general moral excellence. As such, stories of heroism may serve as moral examples. This is the most familiar and universal definition of a hero.

#### The Hero “Archetype” in Literature

An **archetype** is a universally-understood symbol or pattern of behavior, a prototype upon which others are copied, patterned, or emulated. Archetypes are often used in myths and storytelling across different cultures. The **archetypal hero** appears in all religions, mythologies, and epics of the world. He or she is an expression of our personal and collective unconscious, as theorized by psychiatrist Carl Jung and mythologist Joseph Campbell. All archetypal heroes share certain characteristics.

#### *Common Characteristics* (followed by popular examples)

1. Unusual circumstances of birth; sometimes in danger or born into royalty: *Luke Skywalker in “Star Wars”*
2. Leaves family or homeland and lives with others: *Simba in “The Lion King”*
3. An event, sometimes traumatic, leads to adventure or quest: *William Wallace in “Braveheart”*
4. Hero has a special weapon only he can wield: *King Arthur and his sword, “Excalibur”*
5. Hero always has supernatural help: *Moses and the Ten Commandments*
6. The Hero must prove himself many times while on adventure: *Beowulf*
7. The Journey and the Unhealable Wound: *Luke Skywalker loses his hand to Darth Vader in “Star Wars”*
8. The Hero experiences atonement (Amends or reparation made for an injury or wrong): *Moses and God*
9. When the hero dies, he is rewarded spiritually: *Valhalla in Norse Mythology*

#### What is an Antihero?

In fiction, an **antihero** is generally considered to be a protagonist (main character) whose character is, at least in some regards, conspicuously contrary to that of the archetypal hero, and is in some instances its antithesis. (Antithesis is a direct contrast, a contrary meaning, or an opposite.) Antiheroes can be villains, but more often they are simply imperfect humans who don’t always possess heroic characteristics. Examples include Grendel in “Beowulf,” Gollum in “Lord of the Rings,” and Captain Jack Sparrow in “Pirates of the Caribbean.”

<http://www.fatsbox.com/hero/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hero>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_fictional\\_antiheroes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_fictional_antiheroes)

## **During Reading**

- Activity 1-

While you are reading the novel, look for examples where the author has used literary devices like figurative language, characterizations, point of view....

Using the “Literary Terms” handout on pages 6-7, record (write) the passage where the author used the terms listed and the page number that the passage was found on.

Challenge yourself and explain how your answer matches the meaning of the literary term.

- Activity 2-

As you read the novel, think about the quest a hero takes.

Using the handout provided on pages 8-9, track “The Hero’s Quest” in the novel. Fill out the handout as it relates to the novel.

See the example provided on pages 10-11, if you are unsure of what to do.

## **Reading Activity #1**

### ***FREAK THE MIGHTY* Literary Terms**

These are common terms that we will be using in the sixth grade. Answer the questions by finding an example in the novel and citing the page number that your example was found on.

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**Foreshadowing:** This is when the author gives a clue about what will happen next in the story.

Find an example of where the author uses foreshadowing and write the page number it was found on.

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**Flashback:** This is when the author goes back in time to talk about a previous event.

Find an example of where the author uses flashback and write the page number it was found on.

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**Analogy:** This is a general comparison between two ideas.

Find an example of where the author uses an analogy and write the page number it was found on.

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**Personification:** This is when the author gives nonliving objects human characteristics.

Find an example of where the author uses personification and write the page number it was found on.

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**Hyperbole:** This is an EXTREME exaggeration the author makes

Find an example of where the author uses a hyperbole and write the page number it was found on.

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**Theme:** This is the overall big idea in the story.

Find an example of where the author shows theme and write the page number it was found on.

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**Protagonist:** The leading character, hero, or heroine of a drama or other literary work.

Find an example of where the author describes the protagonist and write the page number it was found on.

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**Antagonist:** A person who is opposed to, struggles against, or competes with the protagonist.

Find an example of where the author describes the antagonist and write the page number it was found on.

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**Point of View:** This is the perspective from which the author tells the story (first or third).

Find an example of where the author demonstrates point of view and write the page number it was found on.

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**Suspense:** The uncertainty or anxiety you feel about what will happen next in a story.

Find an example of where the author uses suspense and write the page number it was found on.

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**Alliteration:** When the author makes the same sound over and over in a sentence.

Find an example of where the author uses alliteration and write the page number it was found on.

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**Tone:** The feeling the author makes you feel while reading.

Find an example of where the author uses tone and write the page number it was found on.

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**Irony:** When something happens that you would not expect in a story.

Find an example of where the author uses irony and write the page number it was found on.

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**Onomatopoeia:** When a word sounds exactly like it is spelled.

Find an example of where the author uses onomatopoeia and write the page number it was found on.

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**Simile:** A comparison using “like” or “as.”

Find an example of where the author uses a simile and write the page number it was found on.

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**Imagery:** When the author uses vivid description that makes you get a picture or image in your head of the scene.

Find an example of where the author uses imagery and write the page number it was found on.

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**Metaphor:** A comparison not using “like” or “as.”

Find an example of where the author uses a metaphor and write the page number it was found on.

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**Connotation:** Thoughts or images that come to your head when you hear a word.

Find an example of where the author uses a connotation and write the page number it was found on.

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**Denotation:** The dictionary definition of a word.

Find an example of where the author uses denotation and write the page number it was found on.

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**Idiom:** When the author makes a play on words that doesn't mean exactly what it might seem.

Find an example of where the author uses an idiom and write the page number it was found on.

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**Reading Activity #2****Hero's Quest**

Directions: While reading *Freak the Mighty*, identify events from the novel that show how the hero in *Freak the Mighty* reaches each step in the Hero's Quest.

<b>Hero's Quest Steps</b>	<b>Description of Step</b>	<b>Event from Novel</b>
The Ordinary World	The ordinary world is shown in order to provide a contrast with the "new" world the hero is about to enter.	
The Call to Adventure	The hero is presented with a problem, challenge, or adventure to undertake. As soon as they know about this call they can no longer be comfortable in the ordinary world. The hero's goal is made clear: to win treasure, get revenge, right a wrong, confront a challenge or achieve a dream.	
Refusal of the Call	The hero becomes reluctant to take on the challenge and may start to think of turning back. Advice from a mentor or some other circumstance is needed to enable the hero to overcome their fear.	
Mentor	The mentor helps the hero prepare for the adventure. He or she gives guidance and sometimes magical equipment, the <i>talisman</i> . They can only travel part of the journey with the hero and at this point can give stern advice to the hero to get the adventure going.	
Crossing the First Threshold	The hero commits to the adventure, agrees to face the consequences of the challenge and enters the special world of the story. This is where the adventure starts.	

Tests, Allies, and Enemies	The hero comes to the edge of a dangerous place where the object of the quest is hidden. When the place is entered, the hero crosses the second threshold. Often the hero pauses at the gate to prepare and plan.	
The Supreme Ordeal	The hero has to face the greatest fear. They will also face death and will battle with the enemy.	
Reward	The hero wins the treasure. This treasure could be knowledge and reconciliation with the enemy.	
The Road Back	The hero must face the consequence of the battle with the enemy. If there has been no reconciliation with the enemy the enemy may return to chase the hero as they make their way back to the ordinary world.	
Resurrection	The hero must be re-born in order to return to the normal world. The hero faces another brush with death. The lessons learned for the supreme ordeal help the hero to win through.	
Return with Elixir	The hero returns to the ordinary world bringing back some elixir, treasure, or knowledge from the journey.	

# Example Hero's Quest

## Shrek

Hero's Quest Steps	Description of Step	Event from Novel
The Ordinary World	The ordinary world is shown in order to provide a contrast with the "new" world the hero is about to enter.	The ordinary world begins in the woods. Shrek is an ogre and everyone hates him. He wants to be alone.
The Call to Adventure	The hero is presented with a problem, challenge, or adventure to undertake. As soon as they know about this call they can no longer be comfortable in the ordinary world. The hero's goal is made clear: to win treasure, get revenge, right a wrong, confront a challenge or achieve a dream.	Lord Farquaad sends fairy tale creatures to Shrek's swamp, so Shrek leaves the swamp to go to Lord Farquaad. To get his swamp back, Shrek has to rescue the princess Fiona.
Refusal of the Call	The hero becomes reluctant to take on the challenge and may start to think of turning back. Advice from a mentor or some other circumstance is needed to enable the hero to overcome their fear.	Shrek doesn't really refuse the call because he really wants his swamp back, but he is a little reluctant to go.
Mentor	The mentor helps the hero prepare for the adventure. He or she gives guidance and sometimes magical equipment, the <i>talisman</i> . They can only travel part of the journey with the hero and at this point can give stern advice to the hero to get the adventure going.	Shrek meets Donkey, who is a trickster mentor. Donkey loves to talk. Donkey teaches Shrek through humor.
Crossing the First Threshold	The hero commits to the adventure, agrees to face the consequences of the challenge and enters the special world of the story. This is where the adventure starts.	When he first goes to Farquaad, the king orders his men to kill Shrek. Whoever kills him gets a chance to rescue the princess. Shrek defeats all the men. Farquaad wants to marry the princess so he can become king, so he tells Shrek if he can rescue the princess he'll get the swamp back.

Tests, Allies, and Enemies	The hero comes to the edge of a dangerous place where the object of the quest is hidden. When the place is entered, the hero crosses the second threshold. Often the hero pauses at the gate to prepare and plan.	The donkey is a test because he drives Shrek crazy, fighting Farquaad's men is a test, rescuing the princess from the dragon is a test, and Shrek's ugliness is a test because people make fun of him. Fiona says "How could someone like someone so ugly? Pretty and ogre don't go together." Shrek thinks she's talking about him.  Farquaad is an enemy because he only wants the princess.  Donkey and the fairyland creatures are allies.
The Supreme Ordeal	The hero has to face the greatest fear. They will also face death and will battle with the enemy.	The biggest ordeal Shrek faces is when he hears Fiona talking about herself being ugly. He's prepared himself to tell her he loves her, but then he overhears her saying he's ugly, or so he thinks. Heartbroken, he turns her over to Lord Farquaad. When he finds out from Donkey, she wasn't talking about him, he goes to stop the wedding and tell her he loves her.  Farquaad is about to marry Fiona and Shrek wants to apologize to her. By spending time with Fiona, Shrek has become a better person with a heart and is able to apologize. Farquaad's men attack Shrek. All the people laugh at Shrek being ugly. Shrek doesn't care and still tells Fiona he loves her.
Reward	The hero wins the treasure. This treasure could be knowledge and reconciliation with the enemy.	After Shrek kisses Fiona, the spell is broken and she turns into love's true form which just happens to be an ogre.
The Road Back	The hero must face the consequence of the battle with the enemy. If there has been no reconciliation with the enemy the enemy may return to chase the hero as they make their way back to the ordinary world.	Farquaad says, "Arrest them both and now, that makes me king!" The dragon, sent by Donkey, swallows Farquaad coming in through the window.
Resurrection	The hero must be re-born in order to return to the normal world. The hero faces another brush with death. The lessons learned for the supreme ordeal help the hero to win through.	The two ogres go off together on the dragon.
Return with Elixir	The hero returns to the ordinary world bringing back some elixir, treasure, or knowledge from the journey.	The elixir is the layers of the onion - which shows we are all more than the way we look. If Shrek can find true love, anyone can.  Everyone celebrates at the wedding.

## **Post Reading Projects**

### • **Project #1**

Complete “The Quote Analysis” assignment on page 13. You will have a total of **six quotes to analyze**. See the attached “Quote Analysis” handout and answer sheet\*\*.

\*\* See page 16 for a blank answer sheet for the quote analysis. Either write your answers on a blank sheet of paper or make copies of the Quote Analysis answer sheet.

### • **Project #2**

#### **Part 1-**

Choose either Freak or Max and explain how they fit into the characteristics of the epic hero in a well-developed paragraph, citing the novel for support.

- View the slide show at <http://www.slideshare.net/esalona/elements-of-the-epic-epic-hero-6051693> for a great explanation of what an epic hero is.

#### **Part 2-**

Now think about the characteristics of the modern hero. Define what you believe a hero is. Who is your hero and how do they align with what you believe a hero is? Explain your reasoning in a well-developed paragraph.

**Post Reading Project #1****Quote Analysis**

An author can describe important events in a story by telling you about them:

*"...Fair Gwen grabs Freak and puts him in the wagon and I swear, she almost runs home, like if she doesn't get away quick something really bad is going to happen."*

Sometimes, though, what characters say is just as important, telling us what the speaker is like, and often telling us what has happened or what to expect.

You can explain what a quote means in four parts called a "quote analysis."

1. Write the quote.
2. Explain who said the quote and to whom they are talking.
3. Paraphrase the quote. That is, put it in different words that mean the same thing, which you understand.
4. The thinking part:

Explain what this quote says about either the character, or the plot of the story, that you might not have known without it. What kind of person would say these things? Why would they say that? What might they know, or be thinking about? What important things are they talking about that affect the story?

**Example:****Quote:**

"Grim would be, I suppose, a sobriquet for your grandfather, based on his demeanor."

**Characters:**

Freak says this to Max, when Max tells him that he eats "upstairs with Grim and Gram."

**Paraphrase:**

"You gave your grandfather the nickname Grim because he's always acting so serious, right?"

**What does this tell you?**

This tells me that Freak uses words most people his age wouldn't know (maybe to show off so they realize that just because he is in a wheelchair, he is still smart), and that he's listening to what Max says and trying to figure it out.

**Your Turn!****1. Complete a "quote analysis" for the following quotes\*\*.**

- ✓ "Oh, it talks." (Freak, Ch. 3, p. 12.)
- ✓ "The design limitations of the human body. You know, like we're not bullet-proof and we can't crush rocks with our bare hands." (Freak, p. 18)
- ✓ "Huh?" (Max, p. 18)
- ✓ "Books are like truth serum -- if you don't read, you can't figure out what's real." (Freak, p. 19)
  - Write the quote.
  - Explain who said the quote and to whom they were talking.
  - Paraphrase the quote
  - Explain what this quote says about either the character, or the plot of the story, that you might not have known without it.

**2. Then choose two other quotes from the novel that deal with our theme, *heroism*, and create quote analysis for your choices.**

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 \*\* See page 16 for a blank answer sheet for the quote analysis. Either write your answers on a blank sheet of paper or make copies of the Quote Analysis answer sheet.  
 .....

**Post Reading Project #2**

**Pre-Seminar Preparation**

Answer the following questions, citing the novel to support your reasoning. Students will seminar using these questions during the first few weeks of school.

1. **Focus Question**: Why is Max convinced he does not have a brain? What happens in our lives that can influence our self-image? Is his assessment of himself as a "butthead" correct? Do our opinions of ourselves affect what others think of us? Do others' opinions of us affect how we feel about ourselves?

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*A place in the story that makes me think this:* On page \_\_\_\_\_ the story states: \_\_\_\_\_

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*The above text proves my opinion because* \_\_\_\_\_

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2. **Focus Question**: Why do we care about what happens to Max and Kevin? How does the author make us care about them?

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*A place in the story that makes me think this:* On page \_\_\_\_\_ the story states: \_\_\_\_\_

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*The above text proves my opinion because* \_\_\_\_\_

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3. **Focus Question**: How are Kevin and Kenny similar in how they deal with the world? How are they different?

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*A place in the story that makes me think this:* On page \_\_\_\_\_ the story states: \_\_\_\_\_

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*The above text proves my opinion because* \_\_\_\_\_

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4. **Focus Question**: With whom is Max angry with at the end of the novel? Why? What helps him get over his anger?

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*A place in the story that makes me think this:* On page \_\_\_\_\_ the story states: \_\_\_\_\_

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*The above text proves my opinion because* \_\_\_\_\_

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