Freaky Friday
by Mary Rodgers

Annabel Andrews is tired of her mother always telling her what to do, like doing her homework, cleaning up her room, and being nice to her little brother, Ape Face. But one Friday when she wakes up and discovers she and her mother have switched bodies, she learns firsthand what it's really like to be her mother.

THEMES
humor, problem-solving, empathy, sibling rivalry, responsibility

I. PRE-TEACHING
A. Have the class define and discuss these terms:
- negligee, Mendel, smarmy, phosphates, Pavlov, ASPCA, abducted, hypocrite, pessimistic, fiord, diligent, deplorable, belligerence, sidled, commensurate, karate, pedestrian (adj.), archaic, academic, pretension, infuse, implement, solicitously, monsoon season, dialect, bizarre, ambivalent, mince (v.), yardarm, gobbledygook, pungently, simplistic, grotesque, suppressed, Oedipal, premonition, indignantly, turmoil, monologue, forlorn, derive, adenosid, devastated, sitar, chauvinist

B. Before beginning the story, discuss with the class the following questions:
1. Do you know what your mother does all day? What would it be like to be her?
2. Do you have younger brothers or sisters? How do you feel about them?
3. Have you ever wished you could be someone else? Who would you choose to be? Why?
4. If you could look at yourself through someone else's eyes, what would you see?
5. Do you ever argue with your parents? What about? How do the arguments usually end?

II. PRESENTATION
A. Understanding the Story:
1. Begin with Chapters 1-4: What do Annabel and her mother argue about? What does her mother say? Why is Annabel convinced her mother is the one who switched their bodies? Describe Annabel's room. What does her father say about how his wife handles money? How does this make Annabel, as her mother, feel?
2. Advance to Chapters 5-8: What is wrong with the way Annabel does the wash? Why does she tell Boris her room is really her brother's? What plans does she make with her grandmother for the summer? Why does she fire Mrs. Schmauss? What does she find out about herself when she talks to Ape Face?
3. Complete the story with Chapters 9-11: What do Annabel's teachers and the principal say about her?

B. For Discussion:
1. What things does Annabel dislike about herself? How does she feel about herself at the end of the story? What has changed?
2. Why does Annabel call her father a "male chauvinist pig"? Is he? Find examples to support your opinion.
3. What makes Annabel's English teacher, Mrs. McGirl, cry during the teacher conference? How does Annabel feel when this happens?

III. EXTENDING THE LESSON
Give students the opportunity to work with partners, groups, the whole class, or alone.

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS:
A. Language Arts:
1. Have students go home and look at their rooms if they were a stranger seeing it for the first time, and write a description of what they see. What kind of person would live in this room? Ask them to use descriptive language.
2. Have students write about someone they would like to change places with. Why would they like to be this person?
3. Have the class write from the point of view of one of the other characters. How does Annabel's mother spent her day? What does Boris think about what happens?
4. Have students read Robert Burns' poem "To a Louse" and talk about the last line about seeing ourselves as others see us. Discuss what we would learn if we could see ourselves as others see us.
5. In talking to her grandmother, Annabel thinks about how she hates the expression "passed on" instead of "died." Have students talk about this and other euphemisms. Why do we use euphemisms? They might also look at words that are considered "politically correct" and discuss them.
B. Art and Music:

1. Have students select background music that might be appropriate to some of the scenes. They might find the theme music from *Star Wars* or *The Twilight Zone* for when Annabel wakes up as her mother.

2. Have students make a bulletin board about the story. They could find or draw a picture that could be Annabel and could also be her mother and make a copy, then dress one of them as Annabel and the other as her mother. They might use a mirror, show Annabel’s little brother, add advertisements for soap powder and fish fingers and other items mentioned in the story.

3. Annabel’s father works in advertising. Have groups of students collect advertisements from magazines, and discuss how advertisers try to entice people to buy their product. They could then make a collage of the advertisements for the bulletin board.

4. Show the class the film *Freaky Friday* starring Jamie Lee Curtis and have them compare it with the story. What changes were made in the movie from the book? Which do they prefer—the book or the movie? Why?

C. Social Studies:

1. *Freaky Friday* was originally written in the 1970s when the women’s liberation movement was just beginning. Have students find out about this movement and then discuss ways that things have changed. What gender issues are still not settled? What can be done to make this happen?

2. Mrs. Schmauss makes disparaging comments about what she calls “coloreds,” showing her prejudice. The civil rights movement was in progress during the time the book was written. Have students research the civil rights movement and discuss changes that took place. What things have not changed?

3. Have students look at a map of New York City and find Central Park, the Village (Greenwich Village), and other places mentioned. Do they think they’d like to live in New York? Why or why not?

4. The principal is smoking a cigarette when Annabel comes into his office. Have students find out about laws that have been passed since the book was written regarding smoking. What were the reasons for these laws?

D. Science and Math:

1. One of the products Annabel’s father is promoting is a soap powder with low phosphates. Have students find out about phosphates. What are they? How do they affect the environment? What measures have been taken to curb the use of phosphates?

2. Annabel wears braces to straighten her teeth. Have students find out how braces work and why they are used so often.

3. Annabel is studying Mendel in class. Have students find out about him and what scientific advances in genetics he made. Then have them learn how heredity works. Why are brown eyes usually dominant? What is a recessive gene?

4. Have students learn about household budgets. They might find out how their parents handle their money and make a budget for their own needs.

**USING AUDIOBOOKS IN THE CLASSROOM**

When it comes to teaching today’s students, sometimes books are just not enough. In an increasingly technological and information-savvy world, the ability to read will be critical to every child’s success. The value of audiobooks as a learning tool in the education of children is widely recognized by experts. Audiobooks bring written text to life, adding an interactive quality that can ignite a child’s imagination. They encourage reading by broadening vocabularies, stretching attention spans, and fostering critical-thinking skills. Listening to audiobooks in the classroom can effectively enrich the reading experience and aid your students in understanding and appreciating literature, history, theatre arts, and more!

**Theme-Related Reading and Listening:**

Listening Library offers additional titles that explore similar themes and content areas. Use the information below to purchase audiobooks from our extensive list of award-winning and popular titles to enhance the learning experience for students in every classroom or library.

Other titles students may enjoy:

- *Because of Winn-Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo
- *A Corner of the Universe* by Ann M. Martin
- *Hoot* by Carl Hiaasen
- *The Princess Diaries* by Meg Cabot
- *Ella Enchanted* by Gail Carson Levine
- *The Janitor’s Boy* by Andrew Clements
- *My Louisiana Sky* by Kimberly Willis Holt

For a FREE school and library catalog of Listening Library’s unabridged productions:

- Call TOLL FREE 1-800-733-3000
- FAX us at 1-800-940-7046
- email us at BOTCS@randomhouse.com
- visit our website at www.school.booksontape.com
- or write:
  
  Books on Tape
  1745 Broadway
  New York, NY 10019

© 2008 Listening Library