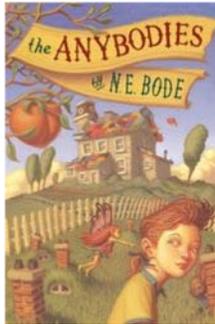
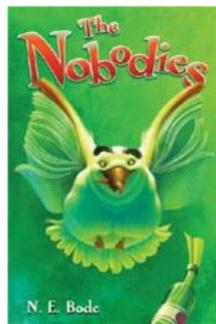


# BRILLIANT MINDS READ N.E. BODE!



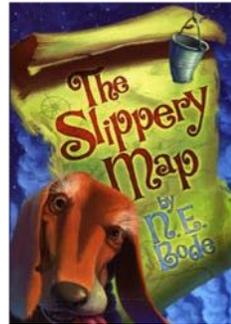
*The Anybodies*



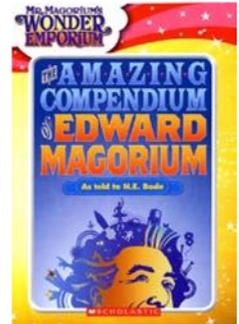
*The Nobodies*



*The Somebodies*



*The Slippery Map*



*The Amazing Compendium of Edward Magorium*

## A Five-Part Guide to Stir the Imagination

**This Five-Part Guide to Stir the Imagination is based on THE ANYBODIES SERIES by N.E. Bode.** Other Bode books are featured above. This guide is designed for classrooms, book groups, academic camps, homeschoolers, and any cluster of readerly, writerly pals. It reimagines the typical Literary Circle and encourages students to take the lead and become creative creators!

### Here are the five parts.

- 1) Wide-Eyed Reading -- with five different student roles.
- 2) Wild Writing Exercises to get the Wild Writing Rampage Up and Running.
- 3) Discussion Questions that Boost and Billow the Imagination
- 4) Thinking Outside the Book with OTHER Subjects -- like Social Studies, Science, Visual Arts ...
- 5) A Bit on author N.E. Bode & illustrator Peter Ferguson

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**AND you can enrich with Freebies:** A Fortune-Telling Anybodies Cootie Catcher (with folding directions) • Anybodies Door-Hangers • A Letter Confirming Your Students' Brilliance • A Letter to Parents (tips for the reluctant reader and the ever-so-writerly child) • To request a Signed Inscription • Info about Bode in your classroom • Set Up a Q & A sessions with N.E. Bode -- Email requests to Dave Scott – [davegwscott@gmail.com](mailto:davegwscott@gmail.com) Subject Line: N.E. Bode



ustrations by Peter Ferguson

# WIDE-EYED READING

Here are five roles to hand out BEFORE you begin: the Big-Idea Detective, the Alarmist, the Book Brain, the Digger, and the Word Thief. Each child should have a role, and so there may be five of each kind or three or one.

## 1. The Big-Idea Detective

The Big-Idea Detective works on the Big Ideas and writes a list of Big Questions. They can be done chapter-by-chapter or for the book as a whole.

**facilitator's Note:** Remember that when looking closely at characters, we are learning empathy. And when looking closely at plot, we are learning strategic thought. Encourage the students to answer the questions in a way that pushes them to be emotionally articulate and that will lead them back to their own lives and their own experiences.



### For Example:

Who is your favorite character and why?

What was the biggest surprise in this chapter?

What parts made you laugh?

Did you have sympathy for any of the characters?

What does the main character learn?

What happened in this chapter? What do you think will happen next?

## 2. The Alarmist!

The Alarmist's role is to pick out the parts of the book that tell us something big is happening or on its way! They point to paragraphs or lines that are foreboding or charged with emotion. They may tell us that something magical is about to happen.

**facilitator's Note:** In the best-case scenario, reading is not a passive activity. Creating an Alarmist or two will get all of the students reading more actively. If students are wondering what may happen next, they are modeling the role of the writer in the act of creation. The writer, too, has to wonder what's going to happen next and how they're going to get there. In this way, they're building the imagination of a strong reader and a strong writer.

**For Example:** On page 5 of *The Anybodies*, Bode begins to list the strange things that have happened to Fern in her life -- magical things: crickets popping out of books, words on snowflakes...

## 3. The Book Brain

In *The Anybodies* series, N.E. Bode mentions many other books and authors. In *The Anybodies* alone, 40 books are referenced. The Book Brain finds the mentions, keeps a list of books and authors, and asks other readers to add to the list as they go.

**facilitator's Note:** When students know a reference, it boosts their confidence as readers. The fact that most of the students will recognize these mentions -- if only from movies -- promotes the idea that reading is communal and social. It's not just something we do alone, holed-up. It's part of our shared culture. Plus, this is a great opportunity for further reading -- especially for those movie

buffs who haven't yet read the books. A complete list of the books in *The Anybodies* can be found at the end of this guide.

**For Example:** *Charlotte's Webb, A Series of Unfortunate Events, Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*

## 4. The Digger

The Digger's role is dig up extra facts -- like getting more information about the mysterious author or finding out if actual places in the books exist. The Digger might also talk about other books or movies that these books are like -- perhaps ones that use magical realism.

**facilitator's Note:** The Digger should be hyped as a spy of sorts, but one who uses the library, the internet, and other resource tools to find information.

**For Example:** N.E. Bode mentions a number of places in *The Somebodies* that may or may not be real: St. Bernadette's outside of Philadelphia and World's End in Massachusetts. Are they real? In *The Anybodies*, Fern's father tries his hand at hypnosis. Does hypnosis actually work? Who invented it?

## 5. The Word Thief

The Word Thief's role is to steal the best words from the book, and, in some cases, define them, and create a master list for the class. When the time comes, these words will be there for the students to incorporate into their own Wild Writing Rampage stories.

**facilitator's Note:** Encourage the Word Thief not only to steal words that are vocabulary boosters, but also words that stir up great images, that rely on the senses. Sensory details are the key to good storytelling.

**For Example:** In *The Anybodies*: swatted (p.4), hummed, beaded (p.5), befuddled (p.6), ominous (p.7)

## Wild Writing Exercises *to Get the Writing Rampage Up and Running*



**A Note from N.E. Bode:** Oh, writing exercises are just like other exercises except you don't have to jump up and down and flail your arms. But if you want to jump up and down and flail your arms -- if this gets blood to your brain -- then by all means: jump up and down and flail your arms!

### Exercise One

Go to the Word Thief's Master List of Words. Choose ten words and use them to start your story. Choose the words that draw on your senses -- words that are dusty or shiny or wet or tasty. Words that hum or glow. Use words that spark your imagination and that lead you to other words. If you don't love the words on the Master List, still choose ten of them and then go to your Thesaurus and choose replacement words OR go through the book again and choose your own set!

## Exercise Two

Rip a piece of paper into twelve pieces, shove these pieces into a pocket or backpack. During the day, jot down the following things—one on each piece.

•3 things you overhear:

**Example:** Today my neighbor was talking to her cat, saying, “You don’t like that ugly pug-dog, do you?” I didn’t hear the cat’s response, because I was just hustling by. I took out a piece of paper and wrote: You don’t like that ugly pug-dog, do you?



•3 things that look or sound like other things:

**Example:** My grandmother snores like child’s toy train – puff, puff, whistle, puff, puff, whistle. So I wrote it down.

•3 mysterious objects: (or maybe think of it this way: things that you or someone you know has lost)

**Examples:** a golf ball, a key, a monocle.

•3 observations:

**Example:** a cloud in the shape of your own head

Pull out all of their pieces of paper and try to stitch together the beginning of a story by using the different things they’ve collected. Move the pieces all around in different orders. Jot bridges down between them. Feel free to make small changes to make things fit with the story that’s taking shape. Now write a little bit of a summary. This isn’t the story itself. It’s a paragraph explaining what you might write about. Finally, write the story itself!

## Exercise Three:

Write answers to the following prompts:

the name of something that can fit in the palm of your hand. the name of something that could fit in the trunk of a car. your favorite color. something that smells really good or really bad. something that is very noisy.

the name of an animal. something that is shiny. something that tastes really wonderful.

something that feels smooth or something that feels rough.

Now take those nine or so words and use them to start a story. Use the words in any order. Change them around some if you need to. Cow, for example, can be cowboy. Rain can be raining or rainstorm. Once you run out of words, keep on going. Finish the story!

## Exercise Four

The main thing about writing is that you put your pen or pencil on the paper and write words. This sounds easy, but it can be tricky. Set the clock for two minutes -- that’s all at first (then work your way up to five ... but don’t start at ten or you’ll risk a hand cramp) -- and write without stopping. Write whatever nonsense flows into your brain. If you need a word to start with, pick a word from the Word Thief’s list



or close your eyes and let your finger fall on a word or illustration in the book. It's easier to use words that are things you can touch instead of words like fear, confusion, sadness. Start instead with bird, creek, icicle. You'll find a creek can talk about sadness even more than the word sadness. This will eventually make sense.

### Exercise Five

Go out and interview someone. Remember, if I hadn't talked to my source (a girl with rooster hair and big eyes), I'd have never come up with *The Anybodies* series. And here's a hint. Older people know a lot. They've lived a long time and know of many really strange, crazy, bizarre things that have happened in the world and to themselves and their neighbors – neighbors! What would writers do without the stories of crazy neighbors? Another good thing about talking to older people is that they often have more time than those people scurrying around in middle age or teen years. They're in a reflective state of mind.

So go out and collect stories by asking questions:

Go up to Gramps, for example and blurt out: What's the strangest thing that ever happened to you? What's made you you?

Or Grammy: What was the happiest thing in your life? The scariest?

The most magical?

Now Gramps and Grammy may not be good storytellers. So keep on asking questions of other folks. Questions are good. You're young. You can probably get away with blurting out questions. People might pat you on the head and call you "precocious," and there are worse things to be. Finally, write down the answers. That's what makes writers writers. They write things down.



### Exercise Six

Bode books have a lot of transformations in them. Make-up an urgent situation in your mind where you need help, and then write a scene in which you change form to save the day. Is it an emergency? Are you coming to someone's rescue? Are you nearly caught?

### Exercise Seven

Choose a passage from one of the books that has a lot of dialogue and action. Rewrite that scene as a short scene in a play. Act it out!

### Exercise Eight

You can get a copy of *The Anybodies Times* by contacting the web site: [www.theanybodies.com](http://www.theanybodies.com).

It's straight from the City Beneath the City in *The Somebodies*. Make your own *The Anybodies Times* newspaper article. If you've only read *The Anybodies*, write a news story based only on it.

### Exercise Nine

Choose an emotional moment in the book. Write a poem or song in the voice of one of the characters.



## Exercise Ten

Write one of the funny letters that the Miser wrote and packed away under his bed. Think of someone you'd like to write an apology letter to. Write it. You can send it if you want to or not.

## Exercise Eleven

Create a board game based on a Bode book -- a giant peach tree, tornados!

## Exercise Twelve

Fern keeps a journal, and her mother did too. Their diaries are very important. Make sure that you're keeping your own journal. And, also, try writing a journal entry – from any point in the books – from the point of view of any of the characters.

# Discussion Questions that Boost and Billow the Imagination

1. The facilitator reads the following scenarios. You must think of a book – and a person, animal, or thing to shake from that book to save the day. For example, in *The Anybodies*, Fern needs to get rid of a spider. She tries to shake *The World of Bats* so a bat will flap out of the book and eat the spider. (Because it's dark, she ends up with a tornado on her hands.) **Here are your scenarios:**  
You are on a desert island with nothing to eat and no fresh water to drink, but you have one book. What book is it? What items will you shake from that book?  
You're lonesome and need someone to play with. What book do you choose to help you? Who will you shake from the book to keep yourself company?  
The key to your house has fallen out of your pocket and into a crack between the boards of your porch. You can see it, but the crack is too small to fit your hand through. What book will you use to help? Who or what will you shake from that book?
2. Think up three scenarios – like the above – on your own.
3. If you could be Anybody for a day, who would you choose?
4. If you could be Anything for a day, what would you choose?
5. If you could be any animal for a day, what would you choose?
6. Fern is a collector of odd things. What does she collect? Are you a collector? If so, what do you collect? If not, what would you collect if you were?
7. When Fern is a little girl, she notices odd things (the crickets from the book, the words written on snowflakes). Have you ever seen anything that you can't explain, that makes no sense? If so, describe it. If not, can you invent something?
8. In *The Nobodies*, Fern and Howard go to a very unusual camp – Camp Happy Sunshine Good Times. Have you ever gone to camp? What was your camp like? If you had a chance to go to Camp Happy Sunshine Good Times, would you?
9. What are your favorite books that aren't mentioned in Bode's books? Could you find a way to fit them in?
10. If you were going to offer up a title for a fourth book in *The Anybodies* series, what would you choose? Any others?

11. Fern sometimes blurts things out when she's nervous. Have you ever blurted nervously? When, how, why?
12. Fern thinks the story behind her name is dull. Where did your name come from? If you don't like that story, make up a new one!



## Thinking Outside the Book with OTHER Subjects

### Science

1. Bode's books talk about hypnosis. What is hypnosis? Does it work? Who invented it? Is it used today? If so, for what purposes?
2. Fern's knowledge of the habits of the oviraptor comes in handy. Are her facts true? Do a little digging.
3. In *The Somebodies*, Fern and Howard go underground to the City Beneath the City. What is under New York City exactly?
4. In *The Nobodies*, there's a character who is a flower-nosed mole. Is there such a thing as a flower-nosed mole?

### Language Arts

Go to the Book Brain's Master List of books mentioned in Bode's book(s). Choose your favorite. What if you could shake yourself into that book? Write an adventure with yourself as the main character inside of that book.

### Social Studies

*The Somebodies* mentions many places that may be real. Go find out if the following actually exist: The Philadelphia Zoo; St. Bernadette's School in Pennsylvania; Manhattan Beach; Lizard's Tale bookshop outside of Boston; World's End in Hingham, Massachusetts; Epstein's Bar in New York City, Bank Street Books, and, of course, Central Park. (Maybe the Digger has already done some digging!)

### Geography

1. Draw a map of Fern's grandmother's house and yard. Where are the hobbits? Where is the giant peach tree? If you've also read *The Nobodies*, where's the rhinoceros, the peach-pit boat? Use the clues you're given and make your best guess.
2. If you've read *The Somebodies*, draw up a fictitious map of all of The City Beneath the City, using all of the places mentioned in the book: Hyun's Dollar Fiesta, Bing Chubb's Ballpark, Willy Fatler's Underground Hotel.

### Visual Arts

There are many transformations in Bode's books. Draw a picture – or use clay or playdough – to show yourself in mid-transformation – half still you and half another person, thing, or animal!

Or choose a section from the book that isn't illustrated and illustrate it!

### ***Physical Education and Theater***

Limbo! Give it a go, but when the limbo gets too hard – it always does – choose something to turn into, acting out by going under or stepping over the limbo stick in a different, fully imagined way.

### ***Miniaturism, Set-Design, Architecture***

Dorothea's boarding house would be a cool set for a play. Set designers usually start with a small model before building a full-sized set for a stage. Architects also build small models. Miniaturists build dollhouses. Be a set designer, architect or miniaturist and build a small version of Dorothea's boarding house.

### ***Logic and Strategy (and some non-required rhyming!)***

Create a Scavenger Hunt in your library using the list of books below and possibly others! The first clue might be: *It's great to have handy a book that's all about candy!* Kids would then zoom to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Within those pages, they would find their next clue. And if you don't want to rhyme each time, the next clue might go something like: *If you step into this closet, you might find more than fur coats!* What do they all find at the end of the Hunt? I don't know! That's up to you!



### **A Bit on N.E. Bode**

Isn't it a strange coincidence that N.E. Bode can be pronounced *anybody*? What if N.E. Bode is a pen name? Do a little research on pen names, and, most of all, come up with one for yourself. If you were to try to find out if Bode is a pen name, how would you do it? Has the Digger already come up with some clues? Find out as much as you can, using all of your resources.

### **A Bit on Peter Ferguson, the illustrious Illustrator**

Peter Ferguson is the brilliant illustrator who worked on *The Anybodies* series. Born in Montreal, Canada, he decided to become an illustrator because he was inspired by seeing Star Wars. He went to the Ontario College of Art and Design. His client list is long and includes Marvel Comics, The Royal Shakespeare Company, The Wall Street Journal, and Los Angeles Times. He's illustrated many brilliant and beautiful books. You can look at his sketchbook by visiting: [www.peterfergusonart/sketchbook](http://www.peterfergusonart/sketchbook). **Take a look and then create a sketchbook of your own!**

# THE ANYBODIES - a book that loves books!

There are 40 (or so!) books mentioned in *The Anybodies*. **Can you find them all?**

*Charlotte's Web; Oliver Twist; Stuart Little; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Peter Pan; A Series of Unfortunate Events; The Chronicles of Narnia; The Indian in the Cupboard; Heidi; Charlie and the Chocolate Factory; From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler; James and the Giant Peach; The Borrowers; The Hobbit; Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl; King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table; Robin Hood; Little House on the Prairie; Anne of Green Gables; The Secret Garden; Fair and Tender Ladies; Alice in Wonderland; The Wizard of Oz; Catherine, Called Birdy; Snow White and The Seven Dwarves; Little Red Ridinghood; Goldilocks and the Three Bears; Green Eggs and Ham; A Bear Called Paddington; Aesop's Fables; The Tale of Peter Rabbit; The Complete Book of Flower Fairies; The World of Bats; The Book of Presidents; The Mouse and the Motorcycle; Harold and the Purple Crayon; The Bible; Admiral Hornblower in the West Indies; The Phantom Tollbooth; Where the Sidewalk Ends.*

**IF YOU ENJOYED THE ANYBODIES SERIES, YOU MAY WANT TO DIVE INTO:  
THE PRINCE OF FENWAY PARK & THE EVER BREATH.**

**To request teacher's guides for these two titles, email Dave Scott, [davegwscott@gmail.com](mailto:davegwscott@gmail.com).**

