

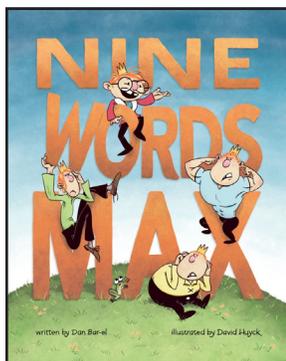


CRUCHLEY'S COLLECTION

Diana Cruchley is an award-winning educator and author, who has taught at elementary and secondary levels. Her workshops are practical, include detailed handouts, and are always enthusiastically received.

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NINE WORDS MAX



Max is very verbal, and his two brothers are not. Tired of his constant chatter, they obtain a wizard whose spell limits Max to 9 words. This works well for the brothers, until they are visited by Queen Spark of the land of Flint, who must be treated in a very specific way. Without Max's knowledge war may erupt.

Dan Bar-el, Tundra Books, 2014,
978-1-77049-562-3

THE NINE WORD SENTENCE STORY

First ask students to create a story, or take one they have already written. Then ask them to re-write it so that each sentence has exactly 9 words, and no more. Here is a sample.

Max was playing with his truck in the yard. He sat happily in the dirt getting totally filthy. His hands, arms, legs, clothes, and face were grimy. Occasionally he poured water into a shallow corner depression. Clutching his truck, he drove downhill through the "flood."

MORE WIZARD STORIES WHERE THE SPELL GOES WRONG

Two other excellent picture books where the wizard's spell does not work quite as expected are:

- *Cinderella's Rat*
- *The Frog Principal*

Students could be asked to create another "it all went wrong" wizard tale.

PERSONAL WRITING

A springboard from a picture book to personal writing should provide at least three topics if possible. Here are some ideas:

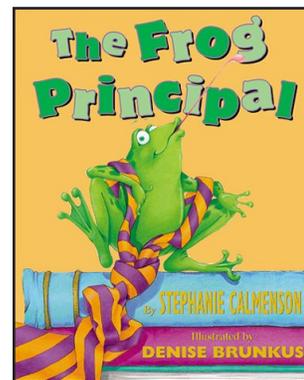
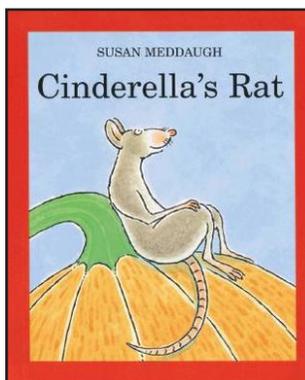
1. Max is ultimately chosen to rule because he is knowledgeable, listens, and asks questions. Tell stories about any time you showed leadership.
2. Max talks about what friendship is to the Queen of Flint. Tell stories about being a true friend.
3. Max's brothers are irritated by his knowledge of trivia. Tell stories about things you do that might be irritating, or things that irritate you.

FRIENDSHIP SONGS

It's kind of fun to have theme music for the book.

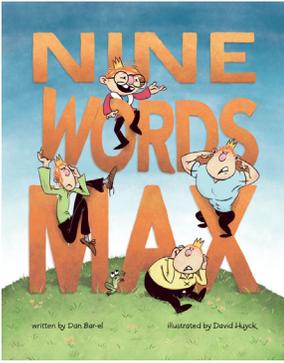
Try;

- *Stand By Me*
- *He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother*
- *You'll Always Have a Friend In Me*



THE AUTHOR DAN BAR EL

Dan Bar El's website has a great introductory page for himself as an author. He says what he is NOT, he tells a few brazen lies, and is generally very amusing. (Two other pluses. ONE - he was born in Edmonton, Alberta. TWO - there is another book by him, *Such a Prince*, for which I have already done teaching ideas on dianacruchley.com.) Read his introduction of himself to the students, or project it to show them so that they can analyze how he produces his effects. Then, on their next piece of finished writing, ask students to write an amusing introduction to themselves as an author.



NINE WORDS MAX, CONT.

LISTEN FOR MAX'S INSTRUCTIONS

After you have read the story aloud, read it a second time, and ask students to listen and complete the nine word sentences for what the ending needed to be:

MAX'S NINE WORDS	ANSWER
1. Flags must point	1. west, toward the setting sun
2. Cannons must blast every 2	2. minutes
3. Flintian flatbread must have	3. grasshoppers
4. Never serve any	4. macaroni with cheese
5. Do not sing songs about	5. sad things
6. Never juggle	6. cats
7. for greetings and goodbye, wiggle	7. your fingers

LEADERSHIP

Ask students what they think the qualities of leadership are. Then give them a list of the most common qualities others have thought leaders have:

- honesty, integrity
- ability to delegate and support your team
- sense of humour
- confidence
- commitment to a task
- decisiveness
- positive attitude
- creativity
- ability to inspire
- knowledgeable
- intelligent

Give them a list of recognized leaders, (ask them), and then identify which of those qualities they think they have and why.

In a group, ask them to identify the top 5 qualities of a leader, and be prepared to defend their choices.

HELLO AND GOODBYE

Max's kingdom signals goodbye to Queen Spark by wiggling their fingers. Ask students to brainstorm the hello/goodbye signals with which they are familiar.

They may come up with;

- handshake
- hugging and kissing one cheek
- a light bump on the shoulder
- waving -hello or goodbye
- rock on - small finger and thumb out, others in, and rock slightly
- peace symbol. Make a v with the palm out
- fist bump

VOCABULARY FROM SNICKERED TO GUFFAWED

The three princes "*snickered with delight*" when the spell worked. Ask students to brainstorm all the synonyms and expressions they know for variations on smiling and laughing. Add to the list as needed. Then ask them to sort their list from the simple smile to shrieking with laughter. They might come up with:

smile, grin, beam, giggle, chuckle, chortle, laugh, guffah, crack up, be in stitches, howl, roar, shriek, and roll in the aisles.

A list of false laughs or smiles might include: *smirk, snicker, titter, crow with laughter.* Talking about the different connotations of those words builds a comprehensive vocabulary.

PUNCH AND JUDY

On page 6, Max is watching a puppet show with his brothers and says, "*Why is that puppet hitting the other puppet with lumber?*" For cultural knowledge, you could introduce students to the Punch and Judy show which started in Italy with itinerant puppeteers doing Punchinella and Joan shows in the Comedia Dell'Arte of the 1500's. The concept travelled across the continent, eventually becoming beach entertainment in England. Continuing characters include Punch, Judy, Baby, and the Police. Punch wears jester clothes, a sugarloaf hat with a tassel, is hunchbacked with a hooked nose, and carries a "*slapstick*" (hence the name for that type of humour) with which he hits other characters.



There are several YouTubes of Punch and Judy shows. Talk about: Is it still funny? Is it OK for Punch to hit Judy if Judy also hits Punch? How do we feel about the baby's role? The police?