

Packet #6

Week of May 25

Contents:

1. Freak the Mighty
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Due Date: Tuesday, May 26, 2020

Please also drop off with your packets the book: The Hunger Games by the due date of May 26, 2020.

Read

Chapter Three: American Flyer

- 1 OK, back to the down under, right? My room in the basement. Scuttle into your dim hole in the ground, Maxwell dear. Big goon like you, growing about an inch a day, and this midget kid, this crippled little humanoid, he actually *scared* you. Not the kind of scare that makes your knee bones feel like water, more the kind of scare where you go whoa! I don't understand this, I don't get it, what's going on?
- 2 Like calling me "earthling." Which by itself is pretty weird, right? I already mentioned a few of the names I've been called, but until the robot boy showed up, nobody had ever called me *earthling*, and so I'm lying on my mattress there in the great down under, and it comes to me that he's right, I *am* an earthling, we're all of us earthlings, but we don't call each other earthling. No need. Because it's the same thing that in this country we're all Americans, but we don't go around to people and say, "Excuse me, American, can you tell me how to get to the nearest 7 Eleven?"
- 3 So I'm thinking about that for a while, lying there in the cellar dark, and pretty soon the down under starts to get small, like the walls are shrinking, and I go up the bulkhead stairs into the back yard and find a place where I can check it out.
- 4 There's this one scraggly tree behind the little freak's house, right? Like a stick in the ground with a few wimped out branches. And there he is, hardly any bigger now than he was in day care, and he's standing there waving his crutch up at the tree.
- 5 I kind of slide over to the chain-link fence, get a better angle on the scene. What's he *doing* whacking at that crummy tree? Trying to jump up and hit this branch with his little crutch, and he's mad, hopping mad. Only he can't really jump, he just makes this jumping kind of motion. His feet never leave the ground.
- 6 Then what he does, he throws down the crutch and he gets down on his hands and knees and crawls back to his house. If you didn't know, you would think he was like a kindergarten creeper who forgot how to walk, he's that small. And he crawls real good, better than he can walk. Before you know it, he's dragging this wagon out from under the steps.
- 7 Rusty red thing, one of those old American Flyer models. Anyhow, the little freak is tugging it backwards, a few inches at a time. Chugging along until he gets that little wagon under the tree. Next thing he picks up his crutch and he climbs in the wagon and he stands up and he's whacking at the tree again.
- 8 By now I've figured out that there's something stuck up in the branches and he wants to get it down. This

small, bright-colored thing, looks like a piece of folded paper. Whatever it is, that paper thing, he wants it real bad, but even with the wagon there's no way he can reach it. No way.

- 9 So I go over there to his back yard, trying to be real quiet, but I'm not good at sneaking up, not with these **humongous** feet, and he turns and faces me with that crutch raised up like he's ready to hit a grand slam on my head.
- 10 He wants to say something, you can tell that much, but he's so mad, he's all huffed up and the noise he makes, it could be from a dog or something, and he sounds like he can hardly breathe.
- 11 What I do, I keep out of range of that crutch and just reach up and pick the paper thing right out of the tree. Except it's not a paper thing. It's a plastic bird, light as a feather. I have to hold it real careful or it might break, that's how flimsy it is.
- 12 I go, "You want this back or what?"
- 13 The little freak is staring at me bug-eyed, and he goes, "Oh, it talks."
- 14 I give him the bird-thing. "What is it, like a model airplane or something?"
- 15 You can tell he's real happy to have the bird-thing back, and his face isn't quite so fierce. He sits down in the wagon and he goes, "This is an ornithopter. An ornithopter is defined as an experimental device propelled by flapping wings. Or you could say that an ornithopter is just a big word for mechanical bird."
- 16 That's how he talked, like right out of a dictionary. So smart you can hardly believe it. While he's talking he's winding up the bird-thing. There's this elastic band inside, and he goes, "Observe and be amazed, earthling," and then he lets it go, and you know what? I *am* amazed, because it does fly around like a little bird, flitting up and down and around, higher than I can reach.
- 17 I chase after the thing until it boinks against the scrawny tree trunk and I bring it back to him and he winds it up again and makes it fly. We keep doing that, it must be for almost an hour, until finally the elastic breaks. I figure that's it, end of ornithopter, but he says something like, "All mechanical objects require **periodic maintenance**. We'll schedule **installation** of a new **propulsion** unit as soon as the Fair Gwen of Air gets a replacement."
- 18 Even though I'm not sure what he means, I go, "That's cool."
- 19 "You live around here, earthling?"
- 20 "Over there." I point out the house. "In the down under."
- 21 He goes, "What?" and I figure it's easier to show him than explain all about Gram and Grim and the room in

the cellar, so I pick up the handle to the American Flyer wagon and I tow him over.

22 It's real easy, he doesn't weigh much and I'm pretty sure I remember looking back and seeing him sitting up in the wagon happy as can be, like he's really enjoying the ride and not embarrassed to have me pulling him around.

23 But like Freak says later in this book, you can remember anything, whether it happened or not. All I'm really sure of is he never hit me with that crutch.

Excerpted from *Freak the Mighty* by Rodman Philbrick, published by Scholastic Inc.

Annotations

Name:

Date:

Think Questions: Freak the Mighty

Instructions: Remember to use complete sentences and evidence from the text.

1. Refer to one or more details from the text to describe how Maxwell (the larger boy) reacts to Kevin (the smaller boy) upon first meeting him—both from evidence that is directly stated and from ideas that you infer from clues in the text.

2. Use details to explain how Maxwell confronts his fear of Kevin. Cite specific evidence from paragraphs 3, 5, and 11.

3. Write two or three sentences explaining how Maxwell and Kevin begin a friendship. Include evidence from the text to support your explanation.

4. Use context clues to determine the meaning of the word **humongous** as it is used in paragraph 9 of Freak the Mighty. Write your definition of “humongous” and tell how you determined the meaning of the word.

5. Determine the meaning of **propulsion**. Write your definition of “propulsion” and tell how you figured out the word’s meaning. Then verify your definition in a print or digital dictionary.





This week's journal entry is the following questions:

1. What's the first thing you plan to do after quarantine? What are you wanting to do? Who are you most looking forward to seeing in person?
2. What are your hopes for Summer 2020? What are your worries? How do you think this summer will be different from others? What are you still looking forward to doing this summer? What possible changes are you concerned about?

Pick 1 or 2 and answer all the questions in your journal.

