big NATE

THE CROWD GOES WILD!

by LINCOLN PEIRCE

Big Nate: The Crowd Goes Wild!
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GRADE LEVEL: 3–5

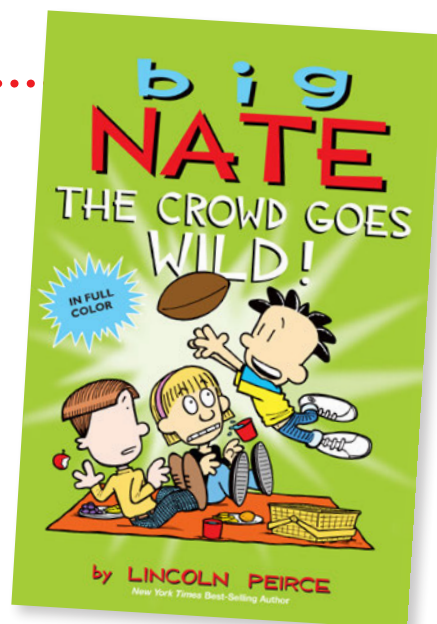**Curriculum Connections:**
Language Arts—Idioms

Content Standards:
Language Arts
Common Core State Standards: www.corestandards.org

Overview:
Students identify and discuss idioms used in *Big Nate: The Crowd Goes Wild!*
Then they learn about the use of text in comics and create their own four-
panel comics featuring idioms.

Grade 3

Reading

✳ Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the
text as the basis for the answers. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.1]

✳ Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal
from nonliteral language. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.4]

✳ Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the
words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting)
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.7]
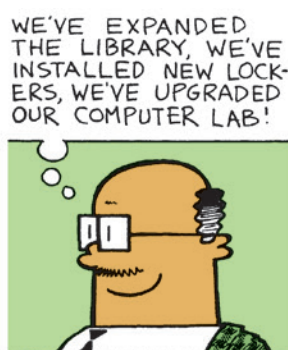
Writing

✱ With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.4]

✱ With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.5]

Speaking and Listening

✱ Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1]

Language

✱ Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.3]

✱ Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning word and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.4]

✱ Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships and nuances in word meanings. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.5]

Grade 4

Reading

✱ Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1]

✱ Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean). [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.4]
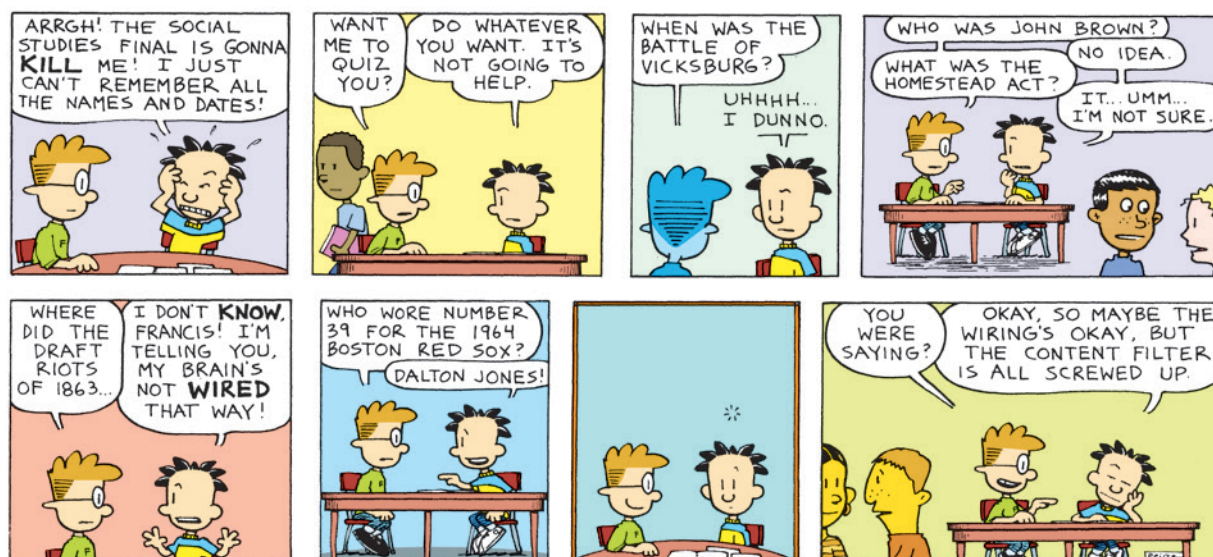
Writing

* Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.4]
* With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.5]

Speaking and Listening

* Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1]
* Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.2]

Language

* Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.4.3]
* Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.4.5]
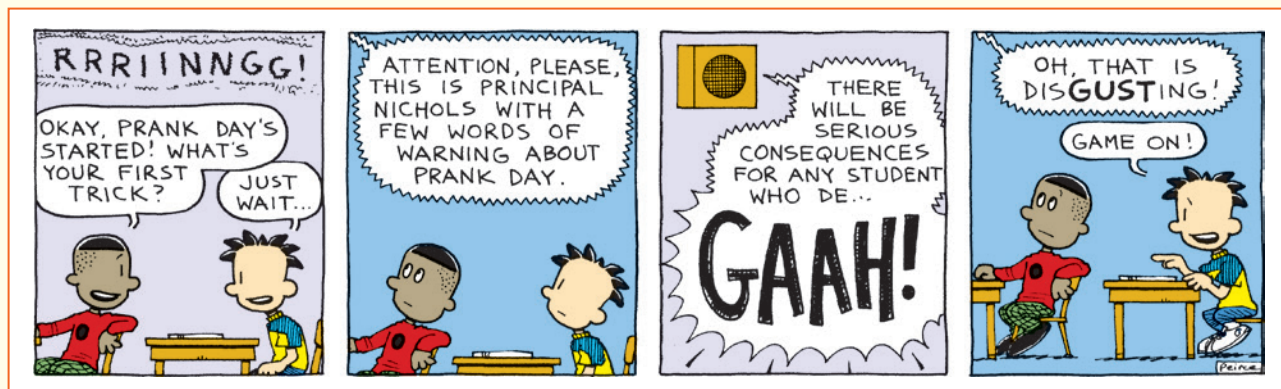

Grade 5

Reading

* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.1]
* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.4]
* Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem). [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.7]

Writing

* Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.4]
* With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.5]

Speaking and Listening

* Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1]

Language

* Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 5 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.5.4]
* Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.5.5]

Objectives

Students will identify and discuss the idioms in *Big Nate: The Crowd Goes Wild!*

* Students will create a four-panel comic in which they correctly use an idiom.
* Students will observe and discuss ways to use text in comics and use what they learn in creating their own comic.

Time Frame

* 3-5 class periods

Materials

* Copies of *Big Nate: The Crowd Goes Wild!*
* Chart paper, whiteboard, or other display
* Big Nate's Idioms worksheet
* Idiom Comic worksheet
* Pencils
* Colored pencils, markers, or other art supplies

Idioms in *Big Nate: The Crowd Goes Wild!*

* Knock yourself out (page 17)
* Play the field (page 26)
* Plenty of other fish in the sea (page 26)
* This place stinks (page 29)
* Hold on to your hats (page 37)
* Trash talk (page 55)
* Lame duck (page 56)
* Cool your jets (page 64)
* Cram session (page 70)
* That ship has sailed (page 96)
* It's no day at the beach (page 118)
* Wingspan (page 129)
* Gimme some skin (page 143)
* If we fall off a horse, we climb right back on (page 145)
* 5 o'clock shadow (page 178)
* Catch and release (page 183)

Procedure

Before Reading

1. Explain to students that an idiom is a word or phrase that doesn't mean exactly what the words say, such as, "It's raining cats and dogs." When someone says this, do they mean that cats and dogs are actually falling from the sky? What does the speaker really mean? (*It is raining very heavily.*)

2. Activate students' prior knowledge by asking them to share idioms that they are familiar with. Create a two-column chart on chart paper, a whiteboard, or other display. In the first column write the idioms that students know, and in the second column write the figurative meaning of each idiom. (Save this chart for later in the lesson.)

3. Take students on a quick book walk through *Big Nate: The Crowd Goes Wild!* without reading the dialogue. Ask students what they think the book is about. If students have read other Big Nate titles, ask them to share what they know about the characters and settings.

4. Tell students that in *Big Nate: The Crowd Goes Wild!* the characters sometimes use idioms. Tell students that their purpose for reading this book will be to find the idioms and determine what they mean.

During Reading

5. Divide students into small groups and distribute a copy of the Big Nate's Idioms worksheet to each group. Direct students to read through the book together and record the idioms they find, then complete the chart. Ask them to use the context of the comics to try to figure out the meanings of the idioms they haven't heard before. Remind students that in comics, information comes from the words as well as the pictures (and the way they work together), so they should look for information in the drawings as well as in the dialogue. *Note:* To shorten this activity, you could assign a section of the book to each group.

After Reading

6. Bring the class together and have each group share the idioms they found in the book. Add these idioms and their meanings to the class chart you created in Step 2. If students are unfamiliar with any of the idioms, discuss what they think the meanings are, explain if necessary, and record the meanings.

Procedure Continued

7. Tell students that they will be creating their own four-panel comic strips featuring idioms. Remind them that a comic is a series of pictures in sequence that tell a story, not just four unrelated pictures. They should use pictures and words together to tell a creative story that includes an idiom.

8. Let students know that one requirement for their idiom comics will be that the idiom appears in text in the comic. To prepare for this assignment, use the following pages in *Big Nate: The Crowd Goes Wild!* to help students learn about using text in a comic.

– Word Balloon Placement (page 97): Tell students that one way they can use text in a comic is in word balloons. Let them know that they need to pay attention to how they place word balloons within the panels of their comics.

o Show students page 97 and ask them to run their fingers across the words as they read. Point out how the author arranged the word balloons in a way that tells the reader what comes next, reading left to right and top to bottom. Tell students that they should carefully place their word balloons to ensure that the reader can easily read them in the right order.

o Give students time to search the book for panels in which the word balloons have interesting configurations and share them with the class.

– Word Balloon Style (pages 15, 107, and 169): Tell students that they can also convey meaning through the shape of the word balloons they use and the appearance of the text that they put inside.

o Show students the first panel on page 15. Why did the author use a dotted line around the word balloon? (*So the reader will know that the characters are whispering.*)

o Next, show students page 107. What is the author telling the reader with the lines around the word balloons? (*The jagged line means the words are coming from the speaker on the wall.*) What does the size and style of the text inside the word balloons tell the reader? (*The large text—GAAH!—means that someone is shouting.*)

Procedure Continued

o Finally, show students page 169. What is the author telling the reader with the style of the word balloon in the final panel? (*The bubbly edges mean Nate is thinking, not speaking, and the shading means he is angry.*)

o Give students time to search the book for interesting word balloons and share them with the class.

- Sound Effects (page 69): Tell students that they can use text to create sound effects in their comics.

o Show students page 69. Point out the sound effects (*Zang!, Honk!, Skwee!, etc.*). Have students read them aloud, using appropriate voice inflection. Point out that larger text usually means that the sound is louder, while smaller text indicates a softer sound.

o Have students analyze the style of lettering (thick or thin lines, messy or neat, shaky or straight, color, etc.) and discuss what each tells the reader about the sound.

o Have students look through the book for interesting sound effects and share them with the class.

- Background and Environmental Text (pages 115 and 219): Tell students that there are other ways they can use text in a comic besides word balloons and sound effects.

o Show students page 115 and ask them to explain the background text in the second and third panels. (*The text shows what Nate is writing.*) Why do students think the author made this choice? How else could he have presented this text? (*It could have been in a thought bubble, or he could have shown the yearbook.*)

Procedure Continued

    o   Show students page 170 and point out Nate's sign. Tell students this is an example of "environmental print," or words that are part of the setting or background, such as signs, books, etc.

    o   Have students look through the book for other examples of text that are not word balloons or sound effects and share them with the class.

9. Distribute a copy of the Idiom Comic worksheet to each student. Ask students to select an idiom from the class list and create a four-panel comic using their idiom. Tell students that this is just a first draft, so they should work loosely in pencil. Encourage students to be creative in their comics, and emphasize that the drawings can be any style they are comfortable with—cartoony, realistic, or even stick figures—as long as the meaning is clear. They can use characters from Big Nate or create their own. If you will be using the assessment checklist (below), share it with students at this time so they will know what is expected.

10. Once students have completed their drafts, ask them to find a partner and read each other's comics. Students should give feedback to help their partners improve their comics. You may want to set expectations and provide positive frameworks for feedback, such as, "I like the way you…," "I wasn't sure about…," and "Can you explain…." Remind students to look carefully at how text is used in word balloons, sound effects, and background/environmental text.

11. Have students switch partners several times and share feedback. Encourage students to take notes on the feedback they receive.

12. Have students make revisions to their draft comics, using peer feedback as they see fit.

13. Collect students' draft comics and provide teacher feedback in writing, then return the strips to students.

14. Have students create final versions of their idiom comic strips, either on paper or digitally. If creating on paper, provide students colored pencils, markers, or other drawing materials. If creating digitally, you can have students use an online comic creator such as Make Beliefs Comix or the Comic Creator from Read Write Think, or the *Big Nate: Comix By U!* app.
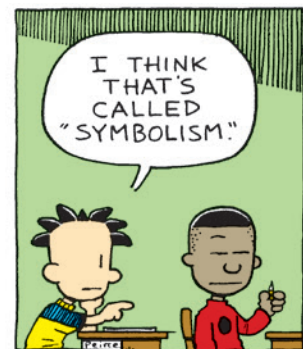
Assessment

Assess students' final comics using the following checklist. Be sure to share the checklist with students at the beginning of the assignment so they will understand what is expected.

Idiom comic assignment checklist:

_____ The comic tells a story that the reader can understand.

_____ The idiom appears in the text of the comic.

_____ The idiom is used correctly (in a way that makes sense) in the comic.

_____ Text used in the comic is readable and clear.

_____ Text is used creatively in word balloons, sound effects, or background/ environmental text.

Differentiation and Extended Learning Activities

❋ **IDIOM SKITS**

Have students create a short skit explaining both the literal and figurative meanings of idioms. Videotape the skits and have students watch their performances and think of improvements. Then have them translate their skits into comics.

❋ **IDIOM COSTUME PARTY**

Celebrate the silliness of idioms by asking students to create and wear costumes that illustrate the literal meaning of idioms. For example, a student could attach fake butterflies to the middle of a shirt for "butterflies in my stomach" or carry a sack with a stuffed cat for "let the cat out of the bag." Have each student write his or her idiom on a card and ask an outside audience, such as another class or parents, to match the cards to the costumes. Then have each student explain the figurative meaning of his or her idiom.
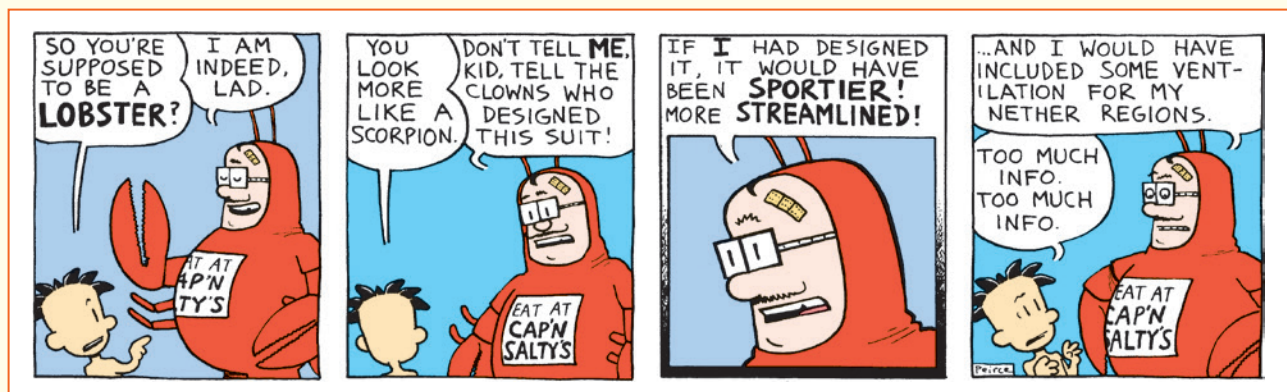
✿ LEARN MORE ABOUT COMICS

Use the following pages in *Big Nate: The Crowd Goes Wild!* to help students learn more about comics. Encourage students to use what they learn in creating their own comics.

- Action From Panel to Panel (page 47): Remind students that in a comic the action in the story moves from one panel to the next. Readers often must use their imaginations to fill in what happens between panels.

  o Have students look at the first and second panels on page 47. What happens between the panels? (*Nate pushes the rest of the junk into his locker and closes the door.*) What happens between the third and fourth panels? (*Nate opens the locker door.*)

  o Point out to students that when they are creating their comic they don't need to show everything that happens. They can show what happens before and after in a way that leads the reader to figure out the action in between.

  o Give students some time to find other examples of action between panels in the book and share them with the class.

- Action Within a Panel (pages 69 and 79): Tell students that symbols or lines are often used to show action within one panel of a comic.

  o Show students page 69, panel 2. What does the small cloud show? (*That Nate has run off the panel to the left. The cloud shows where he used to be standing, and the lines tell you which way he went.*)

  o Show students page 79 and point out the curved line that shows the swing of Nate's bat, as well as the straight lines that show the path of the ball. Ask students to look at the last panel and discuss what the small circle of lines means. (*That Nate hit the ball.*) How would the meaning change if that circle wasn't there?

- o Give students some time to find other examples of action within panels in the book and share them with the class.

- – Setting and Background (pages 13, 69, 89, 118, 119, 157): Tell students that comics can convey the setting of a story through the pictures in many ways.

  - o Show students page 13 and ask them to identify the setting. How do they know? What did the author include in the drawing that tells them where the scene takes place? (*There is snow on the ground, which shows that it is winter and the kids are outside. He shows the front step of the house and the dad leaning out the door, so you know they are outside the house. In addition, the hockey gear shows that they are outside and it is cold. Clothing can indicate setting, too!*)

  - o Next, show students pages 69, 89, 118, 119, and 157. On each page, ask them to identify the setting and explain what the author included that tells them about the setting.

  - o Give students some time to find other examples of settings in the book and share them with the class.

- – Feeling Symbols (pages 84 and 86): Tell students that comics often use symbols to show characters' feelings.

  - o Show students page 84 and point out the black squiggles over Nate's head. What does this symbol mean? (*Nate is angry or upset.*)

  - o Turn to page 86 and ask students to interpret the symbols in panel 3. (*The hearts mean that he loves Jenny.*)

  - o Give students some time to find other examples of feeling symbols in the book and share them with the class.
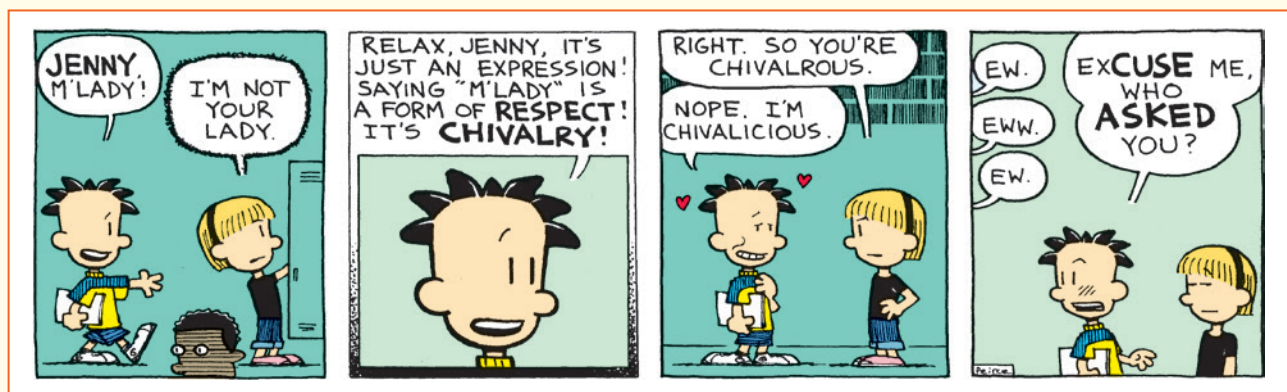
BIG NATE'S IDIOMS

Directions: As you read *Big Nate: The Crowd Goes Wild!*, look for idioms. In the charts below, write the idioms you have heard before and what they mean. In addition, write the idioms you have not heard before and what you think they mean.

Idioms I've Heard Before	What They Mean

Idioms I Haven't Heard Before	What I Think They Mean

IDIOM COMIC

Directions: Using the four-panel comic frame below, sketch out your idea for a comic that uses an idiom. The idiom must appear somewhere in text (words) in the comic. Be creative in your use of word balloons, sound effects, and other text, and make sure it is clear and easy to read.