

big  
**NATE**  
I CAN'T TAKE IT!  
by LINCOLN PEIRCE



**TEACHER'S GUIDE**

**Curriculum Connections and Activity/Discussion Guide**

*The activities in this guide align with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for grades 3–5.*



Andrews McMeel  
Publishing®

## **Big Nate: I Can't Take It**

**Lincoln Peirce**

AMP! Comics for Kids

Andrews McMeel Publishing

ISBN: 9781449429379

**GRADE LEVEL:** 3–7

### **Curriculum Connections**

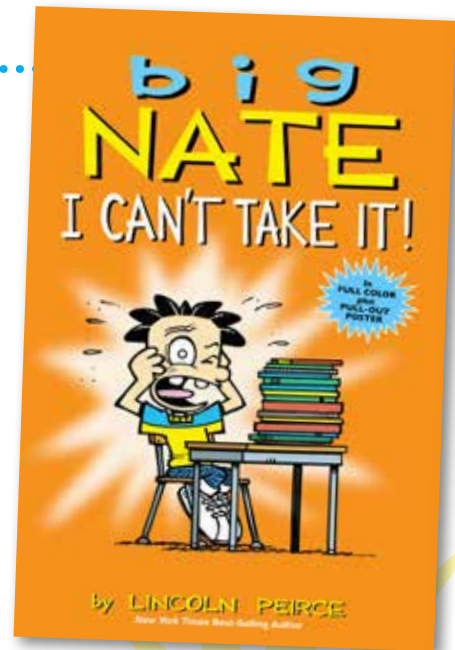
English Language Arts

### **Thematic Connections**

School \* Family \* Friendships \* Humor \* Rivalry \* Sports \* Creativity

### **Overview**

Life can be stressful for Nate Wright. At school, Mrs. Godfrey makes every day a nightmare. At home, he's stuck between Ellen, his incredibly annoying older sister, and Dad, perhaps the most clueless parent of all time. And don't get him started on Gina, the ultimate teacher's pet, or Artur, the unassuming exchange student who bests him at every turn. It's enough to make even a can-do kid like Nate scream: "I CAN'T TAKE IT!"



## **English Language Arts Lesson Plan: Collaborative Discussion and Creative Writing**

### **Objective**

Students will read this comic book, participate in a class discussion, and use the book as a springboard for individual creative writing exercises.

### **Prereading**

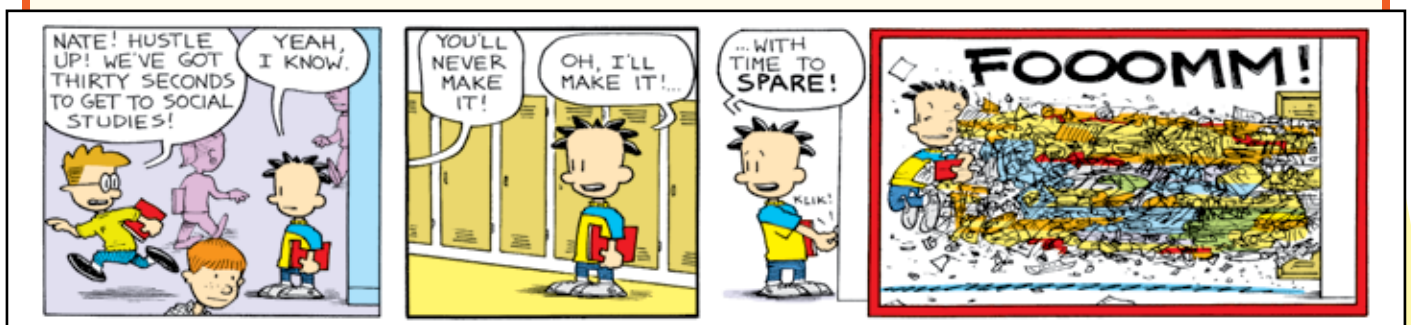
Show the cover of the book to the class. Are students familiar with Big Nate and his adventures? Can they predict what some of the book's themes might be, based on the cover image? Ask if anyone can provide a definition of exaggeration. Do students recognize that the artist has exaggerated Nate on the cover? Ask students to be on the lookout for exaggerated moments while reading the book so that the discussion can be continued.

## Postreading Discussion Questions

- \* Continue your discussion of exaggeration by asking students to share examples from the story. Is the emphasis all done with art, or is it also done with text? Do students agree that things are funnier when exaggerated? (For example, what happens when Nate opens his locker door.) Can students suggest things they could exaggerate about themselves, other students, or their teacher, that would be funny?
- \* In many *Big Nate* stories, school is a central setting. Can students suggest some of the universal “themes” that naturally come up in a school setting? Do they feel that some of these themes are overused? Can they suggest other school storylines that might be exploited in future *Big Nate* comics?
- \* Throughout the book there is a friendly rivalry between Nate and his friends, family, and teachers. Often, Nate finds himself the victim of a prank or joke, but there are times when he triumphs. Can students name a time when he “bests” Mrs. Godfrey or one of his friends? Do they feel gratified when Nate comes out on top? Or do they like to see him get his “due”?

## Independent Creative Writing

- \* Have the students identify the following vocabulary terms, using a dictionary, from the story: initiative, revolutionize, barrage, fulcrum, irreconcilable, compensate, patronize, pre-emptive. After they write the definition, have them use the word in an original sentence about something that happens, or could happen, at school.
- \* Nate interacts with many characters throughout the course of the stories. Have students choose three characters and closely review Nate’s interactions with them, writing a list of descriptive words and phrases (specific ones) that characterize the relationship. Choose one of the three relationships and write a short narrative about something they do together, or a conversation they have, that focuses on showing the differences/similarities in their characters.
- \* Nate is famous for thinking up Big Ideas such as filling the Sno-Tube with helium, playing snow football, and inventing a new extreme sport (page 128). Invite students to dream up their own new extreme sport and write a short essay describing it and telling their friends how to play it.
- \* In the book, two of Nate’s cartoon characters, Biff Biffwell and Chip Chipson, conduct interviews with various faculty and historical characters. Have students act as host and imagine interviewing three of the characters about Nate, asking if they believe that Nate Wright deserves his own holiday. Why or why not? Make sure they choose three characters that would have completely different points of view about Nate.



---

## English Language Arts Standards this guide aligns with:

### Grade 3

**Reading:** RL.3.1, RL.3.3, RL.3.4, RL.3.7

**Writing:** W.3.3, W.3.4

**Speaking and Listening:** SL.3.1, SL.3.1a, SL.3.1b, SL.3.1c, SL.3.1d, SL.3.3, SL.3.6

**Language:** L.3, L.3.2, L.3.3, L.3.4

### Grade 4

**Reading:** RL.4.1, RL.4.2, RL.4.3, RL.4.4

**Writing:** W.4.3, W.4.4

**Speaking and Listening:** SL.4.1, SL.4.1a, SL.4.1b, SL.4.1c, SL.4.1d

**Language:** L.4.1, L.4.2, L.4.3, L.4.4

### Grade 5

**Reading:** RL.5.3, RL.5.4

**Writing:** W.5.1, W.5.1a, W.5.1b, W.5.1c, W.5.1d, W.5.4

**Speaking and Listening:** L.5.1, SL.5.1a, SL.5.1b, SL.5.1c, SL.5.1d

**Language:** L.5.1, L.5.2, L.5.3, L.5.4

Visit the Common Core State Standards website to read about the individual standards:

[www.corestandards.org/the-standards](http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards).

