

The Invention of Hugo Cabret

• Library Lessons •

by | Lynne Farrell Stover

Grades
3-7

Library Lesson I.D.E.A.s

Lessons using an Index, the Dictionary, Encyclopedias, and Art

Our story takes place in Paris in 1931. Hugo Cabret, a twelve-year-old orphan, is working hard to keep the clocks in a massive train station in good working condition. Survival is the motivation for his constant surveillance. Hugo has been alone since his uncle, the official maintenance man, disappeared. Hugo is afraid if his uncle's absence is discovered, he will be evicted from the small room he lives in at the station. Through a series of suspenseful circumstances, young Hugo becomes acquainted with a girl and her toyshop-owning guardian. Just as it appears that Hugo will lose the few things he holds dear, and possibly even his freedom, a major mystery is resolved and all ends well.

The Invention of Hugo Cabret is the winner of the prestigious 2008 Caldecott Medal. The combination historical fiction-picture book-graphic novel is appealing to both the ardent book lover and the reluctant reader. Selznick proves his writing skills are equal to his artistic gifts.

Lesson I: Interesting Investigations — INDEX

Suggested Grade Levels: 3-6

Time Required: 25-30 minutes

Introduction

Brian Selznick, the author of *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, is an artist and writer. He is also an excellent researcher who knows how to use reference materials well and is probably very skilled in the use of an index.



Objectives:

- The student will be introduced to an index and use it to answer specific questions

McREL Standards

Reading

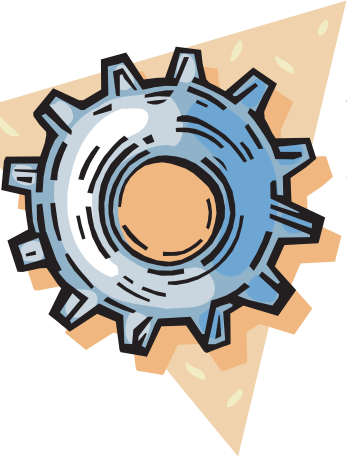
- Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of informational texts

Writing

- Gathers and uses information for research purposes

Materials

- Exploring Indexes visual
- Exploring Indexes activity sheet
- writing tools
- Optional: Selected reference and nonfiction



books from the library's collection that contain good indexes for student examination

Procedure:

1. Prepare the materials prior to class.
2. Display the *Exploring an Index* visual. Read the introduction to the students. (If time allows, show students samples of indexes from books selected from the library's collection.) Then explain that you will be asking several questions based on the displayed index. Ask the following:
 - a. On what pages would information concerning **Mythology** be found? (*Pages 76–79*)
 - b. Would it be possible to see what **Georges Méliès** looked like? (*Probably, there is a photograph of him included in the information of his early years, paged 88–91*)
 - c. The entry words are in bold letters. In what order are they listed? (*Alphabetically*)
 - d. Where would you need to look to find out information about the Man in the Moon? (*The researcher is directed see **moon**. This is called cross-referencing.*)
 - e. Using the information on this index page, what other things do you think Brian Selznick is interested in? (*Answers will vary.*)
3. Distribute the activity sheet **Exploring an Index**.
4. Read the directions to the students. They may work individually or in groups.
5. Check the answers to the activity sheet as a group. Questions 6–10 are open-ended. Accept all reasonable answers.

Answers

- 1) On what pages would you find information about the Eiffel Tower? **38–42**
- 2) On what page would you find a map of the location of the Pantheon Paris? **20**
- 3) Who is illustrated on page 35? **Quasimodo** (*AKA the Hunchback of Notre Dame*)
- 4) True or False: A photograph of the Arc de Triomphe is located on page 39. **True**
- 5) Name two museums in Paris? **Answers may include:** Cite des Sciences et de l'Industrie,

Louvre, Musée National d'Histoire Naturelle, **Paris Aquarium**, **Picasso Museum**.

- 6) In what order are items listed in an index? **Alphabetically**
- 7) In what kind of books are indexes found? **Possible answers: nonfiction, text books, reference books, informational books**
- 8) What purposes do indexes serve? **Possible answers: find if specific information is located in the book, locate page numbers, identify maps**
- 9) What listing in a book is usually more helpful if specific information is needed, an index or a table of contents? **Index** Why? **Possible answer: It is more specific to content and amount of information on a specific topic.**
- 10) Other than page numbers, what kind of information is given in an index? **Possible answers: The location of photographs, illustrations and maps. Correct spelling, cross-references.**

Lesson II: Word Study— DICTIONARY

Suggested Grade Levels: 3–6

Time Required: 30–40 minutes

Introduction

Brian Selznick wrote a tale of mystery, technology, and adventure. The story takes place during 1930, in France, and most of the characters are adults. All of these factors contribute to the book's unique vocabulary. (Reading Level 5.6)

Objectives:

- The student will be introduced unfamiliar vocabulary words
- The student will review dictionary skills
- The students will participate in a word study activity

McREL Standards

Reading

- Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of informational texts

Writing

- Gathers and uses information for research purposes

Materials:

- *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* Word List visual
- *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* Word Study visual
- *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* Word Study activity sheet
- writing tools
- a copy of *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick
- a classroom set of dictionaries
- Optional: Index cards (used in place of displayed Word List visual)

Procedure:

1. Prepare and collect needed materials before class. (Dictionaries may be placed on tables prior to the lesson.)
2. Introduce the lesson by showing the students a copy of the book and ask, "What is the first thing you notice about this book?" Possible student responses include: "It is big." "It is mostly drawings." "It looks the story took place a long time ago." Explain that while it is a big book full of pictures, it does include an interesting and mysterious story. Because the story does take place in the past and in the county of France, the story may contain some words that are unfamiliar.
3. Display the *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* Word List visual. Quickly read the words on the list and allow each student to select the one they would like to use for the activity. (If time is limited, record each word on an index card prior to the lesson to distribute to the students arbitrarily.)
4. Display the *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* Word Study visual. Review the content with the students.
5. Inform the students that the reference tool best suited to help them in this lesson is the dictionary.
6. Review the organization and uses of the dictionary by asking the students:
 - a. What do you use a dictionary for? (*Spelling and word meaning will be the most common answers.*)
 - b. How are the words in a dictionary organized? (*They are in alphabetical order.*)
 - c. What other information can you find in a dictionary? (*Parts of speech, pronunciation, word history etc.*)

7. Distribute the *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* Word Study activity sheet. Students may work independently or in pairs.
8. Encourage students to share their work with the class, if time allows.

Lesson III: Five Fascinating Facts Featuring ... ENCYCLOPEDIA

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Suggested Grade Levels: 4–7

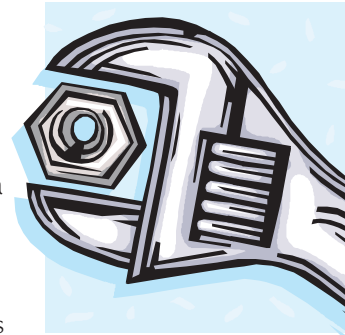
Time Required: 35–45 minutes

Introduction

The history of the first motion pictures is just one of the many topics the students may be curious about after reading about young Hugo Cabret's adventures. It's time to dust off the library's encyclopedias and get them ready for a fun and fast research activity.

Objectives:

- The student will use an encyclopedia to research a specific topic
- The student will list five facts related to the topic
- The student will record the research's citation information

**McREL Standards****Reading**

- Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of informational texts

Writing

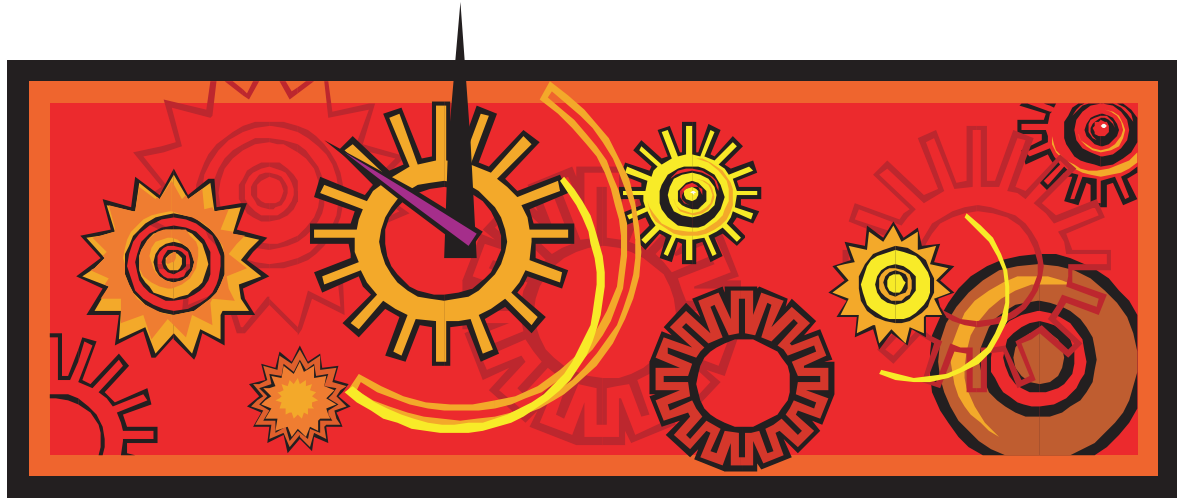
- Gathers and uses information for research purposes

Materials:

- *Five Fascinating Facts Featuring ... Paris, France* visual
- *Five Fascinating Facts* activity sheets
- writing tools
- encyclopedias

Procedure:

1. Prepare materials prior to class.
2. Inform the students that this lesson will be based on research using the "old-fashioned" hard copy encyclopedias. Explain that encyclo-



- pedias are sets of books, organized alphabetically, containing information on many subjects.
3. Display and review the visual *Five Fascinating Facts Featuring ... Paris, France*. Ask the students why it is possible that another student's five facts about Paris might be very different from the displayed example. (**Possible answers:** There's lots of information about Paris. People find different things fascinating.)
 4. Emphasize that an important part of this lesson is the recording of location where the information was found. This is called "Source Citation." Point out the data recorded at the bottom of the visual. Ask the students why it is important to write down where the information on a topic is found. (**Possible answers:** So you can go back and find it again. Because you should give credit to the person who wrote it.)
 5. Allow the students to choose a from the various activity sheet topics. Students may work independently or in groups as large as five, where each student could be responsible for adding one of the fascinating facts. **Note:** Additional, teacher-made activity sheets could include the book related topics: Hans Christian Anderson, Book, Coffee, Eiffel Tower, France, Key, The Louvre, Mona Lisa, Notre Dame, Opera, Robotics, Seine River
 6. Show the students where the encyclopedias are located and encourage them to select the volume they will need to complete the exercise. (You may wish to remind the students that information on Jules Verne will be found in Volume V, for Verne.)

7. Encourage students, toward the end of the session, to share the most interesting fact they discovered with the class.

Lesson IV: The Illustrator— ART

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Suggested Grade Levels: 3–6

Time Required: 25–30 minutes

Introduction

The Invention of Hugo Cabret is a large book, 526 pages in length; 300 of those pages are illustrations. Brian Selznick, the book's author and illustrator, won the 2008 Caldecott Medal for his fantastic artwork and picture book concept.

Objectives:

- The student will be introduced to the Caldecott Medal and its importance in children's literature
- The student will select, study, and sketch an illustration from a picture book

McREL Standards

Visual Arts

- Understands that specific artworks can elicit different responses

Reading

- Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of literary texts

Materials:

- The Caldecott Medal visual
- a selection of picture books (include some Caldecott winners, if possible)
- drawing paper
- colored pencils, markers, and/or crayons
- a copy of *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*

Procedure:

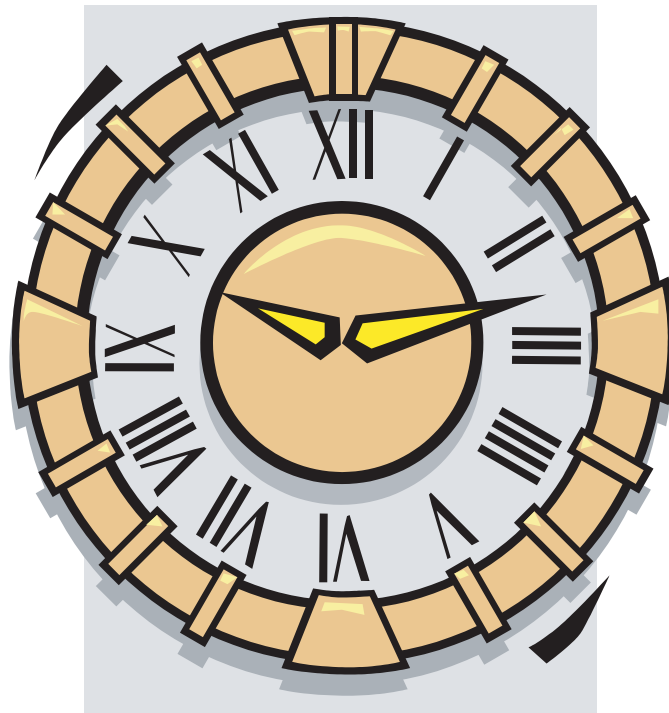
1. Prepare and collect the materials prior to class.
2. Introduce the lesson by showing the students some of the illustrations in *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*. (The details in the bookstore illustration on pages 148–149 especially delightful!)
3. Explain that the author/illustrator, Brian Selznick, won the 2008 Caldecott Medal for this book.
4. Display The Caldecott Medal visual, and read the information to the students.
5. Distribute the art materials and allow the students to choose a picture book.
6. Explain that they are to use their favorite illustration in the book as a guide and create a drawing based on it. They are to include the

name of the book and the illustrator in their work. (Note: Students will often want to check out “their” picture book, so be prepared to restock available titles.)

7. Display the students’ artwork on a bulletin board titled, “Favorite Picture Books.”



Lynne Farrell Stover *has over thirty years of experience as an educator and is currently a Teacher Consultant at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. She has taught many teacher workshops and won Teacher of the Year in 1999 from the Virginia Council of Economic Education and from the Virginia Association for the Gifted. She is the author of Magical Library Lessons, More Magical Library Lessons, Magical Library Lessons: Holiday Happenings, and From Snicket to Shakespeare from UpstartBooks.*



Exploring Indexes

Brian Selznick, the author of *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, said that he has been interested in the history of the early motion pictures for years. He is also interested in many other things, from automatons to Greek Mythology. When he is researching a topic in a reference book, he probably uses an index. He knows an index is located in the back of an informational book, and it is the place to find what facts are in the book and where they are located.

Sample index page from an imaginary book:

Things Brain Selznick Finds Interesting

magic card tricks, 29–36

history of, 29–33

skills required, 34

man in the moon, *see moon*

Méliès, Georges, 88–98

early years *[photo]* 88–91

films *[list]* 98

moon, 91–100

superstitions concerning, 97

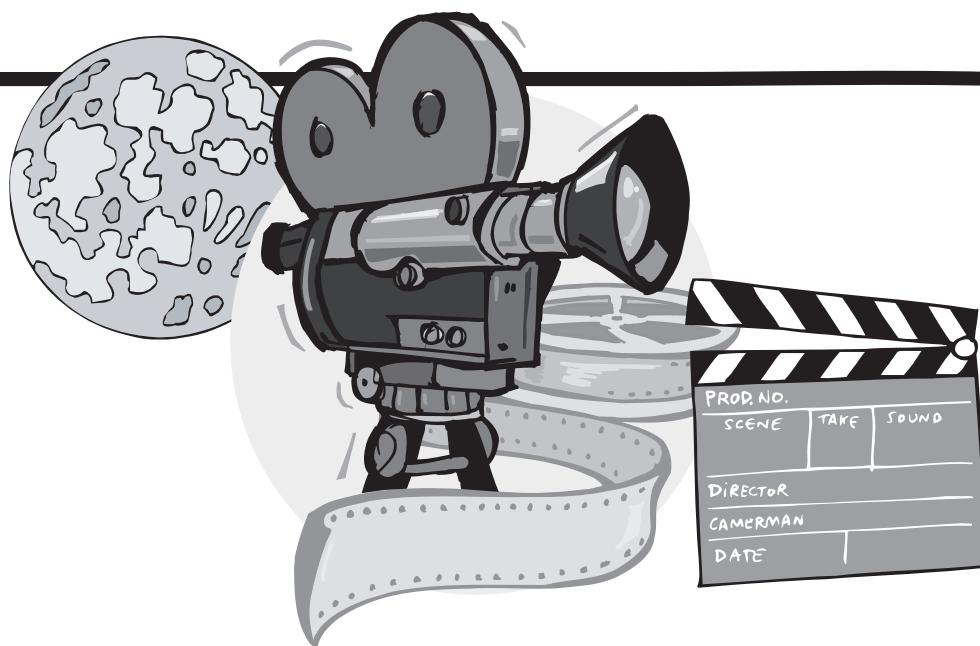
motion pictures, 56–60

silent films, 56–58

award-winning films, 57

mythology, 76–79

Greek Titans, 78



Exploring Indexes

Directions: The box contains a section of an index in an imaginary nonfiction book entitled *Popular Places in Paris*. Use this index to answer the questions below.

1. On what pages would you find information about the Eiffel Tower? _____
2. On what page would you find a map of the location of the Pantheon Paris? _____
3. Who is illustrated on page 25? _____
4. True or False: A photograph of the Arc de Triomphe is located on page 39. _____
5. Name two museums in Paris: _____
6. In what order are items listed in an index? _____
7. In what kind of books are indexes found? _____
8. What purposes do indexes serve? _____
9. What listing in a book is usually more helpful if specific information is needed: an index or a table of contents? _____
Why? _____
10. Other than page numbers, what kind of information is given in an index?

Monuments, 37–50

Arc de Triomphe, [photo], 39

Eiffel Tower, [illus.], 38–42

Museums, 64–73

Cite des Sciences et de l'Industrie, 70

Louvre, 65–67

Musée National d'Histoire Naturelle, 71

Paris Aquarium, [photo], 68

Picasso Museum, 73

Notre Dame, 21–36 also see churches

architecture, 25–28

Quasimodo, [illus.], 35

rose window, [photo], 22

Pantheon Paris, 15—20

history, 18

location, [map], 20

The Invention of Hugo Cabret

Word List

PAGE	WORD	PAGE	WORD
30	1. cautiously	228	14. painstakingly
50	2. furious	232	15. horology
76	3. rickety	240	16. calibrated
76	4. slither	265	17. armoire
77	5. diligently	268	18. dredge
94	6. decrepit	379	19. pharmacy
109	7. frayed	391	20. shimmered
114	8. automaton	405	21. competition
115	9. artificial	458	22. opportunity
152	10. croissant	471	23. extraordinary
186	11. embossed	491	24. tuxedo
202	12. projectionist	493	25. celestial
223	13. disheveled	506	26. podium

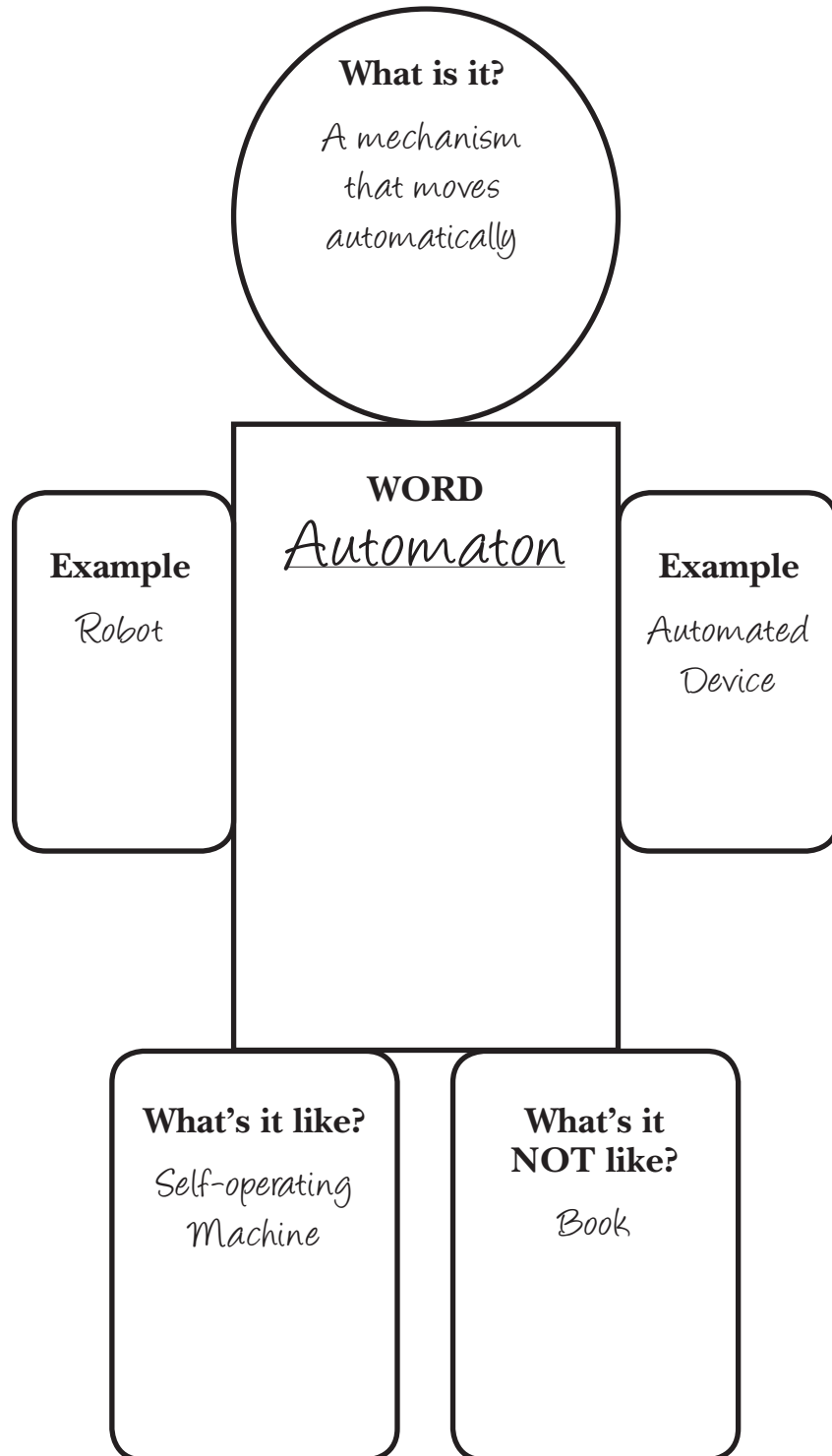


Did you find other unknown words while reading *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*? If so, record them in the grid below to be included in the word study activity.

PAGE	WORD	PAGE	WORD

The Invention of Hugo Cabret

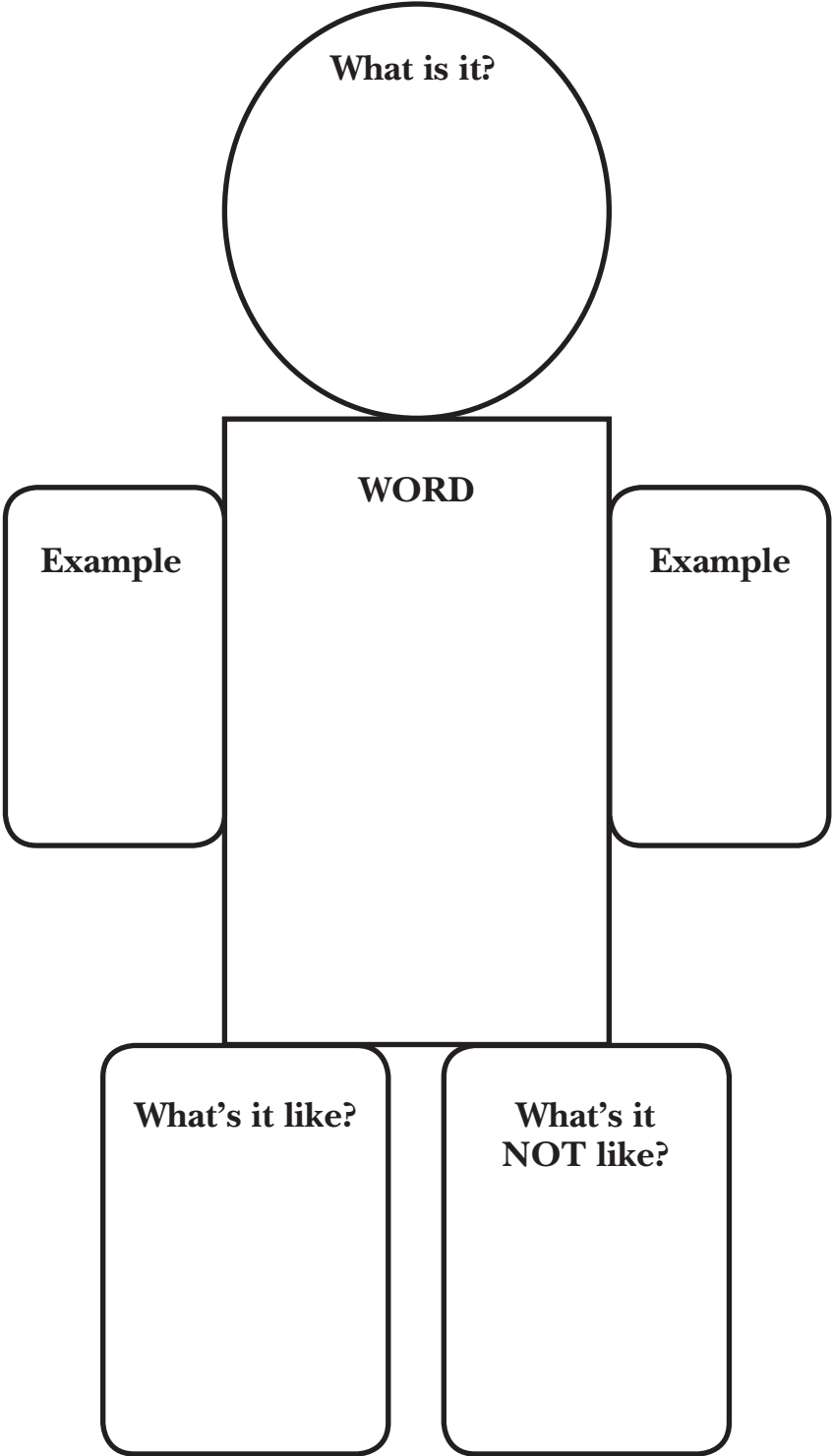
Word Study



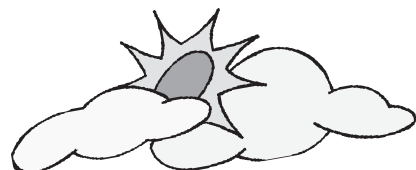
The Invention of Hugo Cabret

Word Study

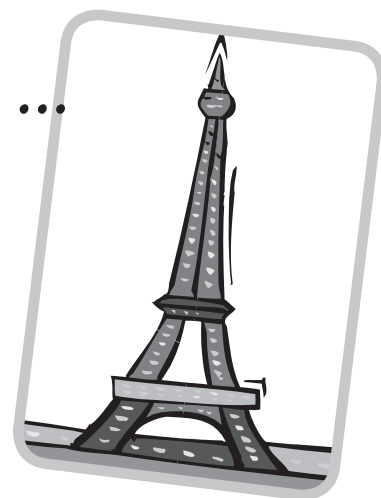
Directions: Using a word found in *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, fill in the missing information. You may use a dictionary as your reference tool.



Five Fascinating Facts Featuring ...



Paris (France)



Fact # 1 Paris is the capital of France and is its largest city.

Fact #2 Paris was the center of the French Revolution.

Fact #3 The Louvre Museum is located in Paris. The famous artworks, Mona Lisa and Venus de Milo can be seen here.

Fact #4 The Bibliothèque National de France is located in Paris. It is one of the largest libraries in Europe.

Fact #5 About 2,000 years ago Julius Caesar said, the people living in Paris were “clever, inventive, and given to quarreling among themselves.”

Source Citation

Name of Encyclopedia: *The World Book Encyclopedia*

Copyright Date: 2005

Volume Number: Vol. 15

Page(s): 160–167

Five Fascinating Facts Featuring...

The MOON



Fact # 1

Fact #2

Fact #3

Fact #4

Fact #5

Source Citation

Name of Encyclopedia: _____

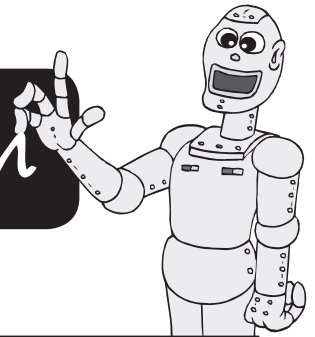
Copyright Date: _____

Volume Number: _____

Page(s): _____

Five Fascinating Facts Featuring ...

The Automaton



Fact # 1

Fact #2

Fact #3

Fact #4

Fact #5

Source Citation

Name of Encyclopedia: _____

Copyright Date: _____

Volume Number: _____

Page(s): _____

Five Fascinating Facts Featuring ...

The Greek Titan
Prometheus



Fact # 1

Fact #2

Fact #3

Fact #4

Fact #5

Source Citation

Name of Encyclopedia: _____

Copyright Date: _____

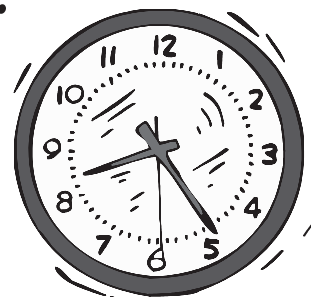
Volume Number: _____

Page(s): _____

Five Fascinating Facts Featuring ...



Clocks



Fact # 1

Fact #2

Fact #3

Fact #4

Fact #5

Source Citation

Name of Encyclopedia: _____

Copyright Date: _____

Volume Number: _____

Page(s): _____

Five Fascinating Facts Featuring ...

Jules Verne



Fact # 1

Fact #2

Fact #3

Fact #4

Fact #5

Source Citation

Name of Encyclopedia: _____

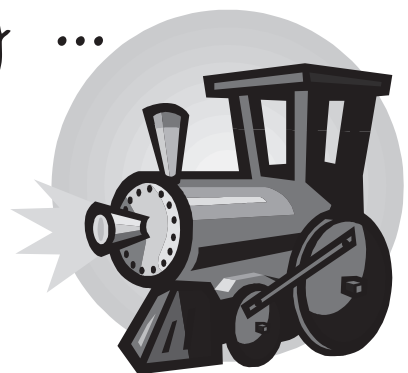
Copyright Date: _____

Volume Number: _____

Page(s): _____

Five Fascinating Facts Featuring ...

Trains



Fact # 1

Fact #2

Fact #3

Fact #4

Fact #5

Source Citation

Name of Encyclopedia: _____

Copyright Date: _____

Volume Number: _____

Page(s): _____

The Caldecott Medal

The Caldecott Medal is the most prestigious award an American illustrator of children's book can receive. It was first awarded in 1938.

Caldecott Medal Winners in the 21st Century

- 2008** *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick. Scholastic, 2007.
- 2007** *Flotsam* by David Wiesner. Clarion Books, 2006.
- 2006** *The Hello, Goodbye Window* by Norton Juster, illustrated by Chris Raschka. Hyperion Books for Children, 2005.
- 2005** *Kitten's First Full Moon* by Kevin Henkes. Greenwillow Books/HarperCollins, 2004.
- 2004** *The Man Who Walked Between the Towers* by Mordicai Gerstein. Roaring Brook Press/Millbrook Press, 2003.
- 2003** *My Friend Rabbit* by Eric Rohmann. Roaring Brook Press/Millbrook Press, 2002.
- 2002** *The Three Pigs* by David Wiesner. Clarion Books, 2001.
- 2001** *So You Want to Be President?* by Judith St. George, illustrated by David Small. Philomel Books, 2000.
- 2000** *Joseph Had a Little Overcoat* by Simms Taback. Viking, 1999.