

Annie B.,

MADE FOR

TV

STEM and
Language Arts

LESSON PLANS

ANNIE B., MADE FOR TV: STEM & LANGUAGE ARTS LESSON PLANS

LESSON OVERVIEW

In the chapter book **Annie B., Made for TV** by Amy Dixon (Running Press Kids), Annie B. is a “wrinventor,” a writer and inventor, who thinks up new inventions and then writes up commercials for them. Your students can create their own wrinvention and develop the script for a commercial, which can be filmed in front of the green screen.

Understanding Goal: Students will be able to understand and explain what an invention is and why people create them. Students will be able to understand and demonstrate how advertisers market a product.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will identify a problem and imagine an invention that would improve, eliminate, or alleviate the problem.
- Students will create a visual image of their invention.
- Students will design a logo and package for the invention.
- Students will write the script for a commercial that advertises their invention.
- Students will film the commercial using green screen technology.
- Students will vote on which invention from the class should receive funds to be produced and sold. (“Shark Tank” style competition)

ABOUT THE BOOK

Annie B., Made for TV

By Amy Dixon

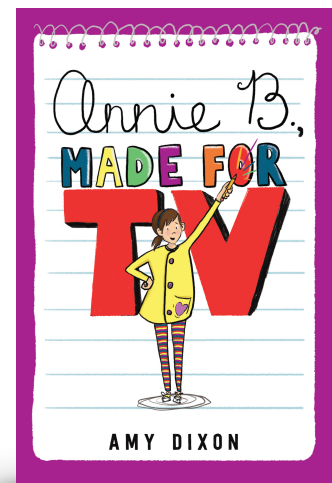
Published by Running Press Book Publishers

ISBN-13: 9780762463855

Age Range: 8 - 12 Years

Eleven-year-old Annie Brown is used to being on the losing end of comparisons to her almost-always best friend Savannah. Savannah is MVP of the track team, has straight As, and, predictably, wins the most coveted school spirit award on the last day of 5th grade. Fortunately, Annie does have one very specialized skill.

Inspired by As Seen on TV commercials, Annie likes to invent products and write clever sales pitches to go along with them. So when an opportunity arises to audition for a local web show called The Cat’s Meow, Annie knows her future is set. She’s going to wow those producers with her fabulous writing and made-for-TV announcer voice. Of course, things don’t happen quite according to plan, and soon Annie is worried about losing both the opportunity she’s been training for her whole life, and her best friend.



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BOOK REVIEWS

“Dealing with themes of self-acceptance and jealousy, Dixon’s story keeps the drama firmly in the middle grade range....A light and humorous story that will be best received by younger middle grade readers seeking gentler fare than **The Dork Diaries**.

—*School Library Journal*

“Annie’s first-person narration is hilariously astute....Readers graduating from **Junie B.** to lengthier stories will find a new book-friend in Annie B.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Amy Dixon is the author of the picture books **Marathon Mouse**, **Sophie’s Animal Parade**, and **Maurice the Unbeastly**. She writes from her home in Clovis, California, where she lives on a steady diet of popcorn and coffee. This is her debut middle grade novel.

LESSON PROCEDURES

These steps may be completed during or after a classroom reading of **Annie B. Made for TV**.

Step 1

Working with the entire class, discuss students’ understanding of inventions. Ask the following questions to frame the discussion:

- What is an invention?
(e.g., a new object or technique that meets a need or solves a problem)
- What are examples of famous inventions?
(e.g., telephone, airplane, camera)

See resources listed under **Building Background Knowledge** for books, websites, and possible reading passages to use in broadening the students’ understanding of inventions and inventors.

Step 2

Explain that in this lesson students will be designing their own invention and creating a commercial to “sell” their invention to viewers. These are some questions to keep in mind as they begin:

1. What is the problem that your invention will solve?
2. Describe your invention: What does it do, what does it look like, and how does it work?



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3. Whom does the wrinvention help? (age group, type of person, setting it would be used in)
4. Who would be most likely to buy and use this wrinvention? Is this the same group that the wrinvention helps? Why or why not?

Step 3

Once students have an initial idea, they will need to focus on the details of their wrinvention.

5. What is the name of the wrinvention? This should be descriptive, catchy, and memorable.
6. Draw an illustration of your wrinvention (or more than one, to show various sides of it or to show it in action). If your wrinvention is digital, like an app or program or website, you will need to think of how it will appear on screen, its features, etc.
7. Draw an illustration of the package for your wrinvention. Think about the color of the package and the wording on it. Will buyers be able to see what's inside, or will there be photos/illustrations to show it in action? If your wrinvention is digital, it will not have a package - but you will need a "blurb" with an icon or symbol for your product and the write-up that would accompany it online.
8. Write up the script for a commercial to encourage people to purchase and use your wrinvention. Important information to include:

- Descriptive language
- List of the uses and possible functions of the wrinvention
- What problem it solves and/or why it is needed
- How it is powered (if necessary)
- Does it need to be refilled, recharged, etc.?
- What is the price?
- Look back over your script. Is there anything to add, any helpful details?
- What will appear in the background of your commercial?

Step 4

Have students practice their script, then film their green screen commercial. They will need to remember NOT to wear green (or colors with green undertones), so thinking of wardrobe ahead of time is important. They may want to include:

- Props or posters to illustrate their wrinvention
- Other students to give testimony on the effectiveness of the product
- Images or video of the problem/situation where the wrinvention would be most helpful (this may involve a second session of green screen to record someone acting out the problem)

Step 5

Once all students have made their presentations, have the group vote on which wrinvention they believe investors would want to fund. Remind them that investors want to make a profit. Investors will need to be convinced that if they support the product, they will earn back their investment and make additional profits.

Present the winning wrinventor with a certificate and/or prize.

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OPPORTUNITIES TO COLLABORATE

If you are teaching in a self-contained classroom, then you may carry out the entire lesson yourself. Or, if you have the cooperation of other teachers on your grade level team or within your Related Arts classes, then you might work together on various phases of the lesson.

- The science teacher might choose to cover famous inventors and inventions, zooming in on engineering and design and how those skills are used to improve life for everyone. There are also several of Annie’s wrinventions that tie in with possible lab activities. (See **Suggestions for Related Activities.**)
- The ELA teacher might help with writing up the script, working on descriptive language, and supporting opinions with details and examples.
- The art teacher might help with drawing the wrinvention and designing the package, pointing out perspective, color usage, and balancing the layout of visual elements.
- The technology teacher might work with the students to film the commercials and use green screen apps to edit it.
- Other classes might like to come in and watch the commercials, then participate in the voting.
- Parents involved in product design, marketing, and television would be great guest speakers to visit the class and share their expertise.



BUILDING BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Annie Brown loves to invent things and write commercials for them. Her father says that she is a “wrinventor. A writer-inventor.” She pays attention to the world around her and makes up inventions to solve problems that she notices. Most inventors have done the same thing over the centuries.

Books About Inventors:

- **100 Inventions That Made History (100 in History)** by DK Publishing
- **Ada Twist, Scientist** by Andrea Beatty
- **Balloons over Broadway: The True Story of the Puppeteer of Macy’s Parade** by Melissa Sweet
- **The Boo-Boos That Changed the World: A True Story About an Accidental Invention (Really!)** by Barry Wittenstein
- **The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind** by William Kamkwamba
- **DK Eyewitness Books: Invention** by Lionel Bender
- **If I Built a Car** by Chris Van Dusen
- **If I Built a House** by Chris Van Dusen
- **Iggy Peck, Architect** by Andrea Beatty
- **Inventions: A Visual Encyclopedia** by DK (in partnership with the Smithsonian)

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- **Iqbal and His Ingenious Idea: How a Science Project Helps One Family and the Planet (CitizenKid)** by Elizabeth Suneby
- **It's a Snap! George Eastman's First Photograph** by Monica Kulling
- **The Marvelous Thing that came from a Spring: The Accidental Invention of the Toy That Swept the Nation** by Gilbert Ford
- **Mistakes that Worked: 40 Familiar Inventions & How They Came to Be** by Charlotte Foltz Jones and John O'Brien
- **The Most Magnificent Thing** by Ashley Spires
- **Neo Leo: The Ageless Ideas of Leonardo da Vinci** by Gene Barretta
- **Now & Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin** by Gene Barretta
- **Rosie Revere, Engineer** by Andrea Beatty
- **So You Want to Be an Inventor?** by Judith St. George and David Small
- **Timeless Thomas: How Thomas Edison Changed Our Lives** by Gene Barretta
- **Whoosh!: Lonnie Johnson's Super-Soaking Stream of Inventions** by Chris Barton

Websites for Further Research:

- Biographyonline.net
- FactMonster
- ScienceNetLinks.com
- Encyclopedia Britannica Quiz
- Historyplex.com
- Library of Congress - Benjamin Franklin
- Library of Congress - Flight and Early Aviators
- Library of Congress - Leonardo's Workshop
- Library of Congress - With Wings as Eagles
- Library of Congress - Inventive Wright Brothers

Reading Passages from ReadWorks.org:

- [Inventions That Changed the World](#)
- [Ideas the Pop](#)
- [Who Invented the Popsicle?](#)
- [Great Ideas!](#)
- [A New Tail](#)
- [Steps to Inventing](#)
- [Inventions Then and Now](#)
- [Inventions of the Future](#)
- [Daily Life Inventions](#)
- [Telephones: Then and Now](#)
- [A Perfectly Sticky Idea](#)
- [Who Invented Earmuffs?](#)

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- [A Brush with History](#)
- [When Television Became Colorful](#)

SUGGESTIONS FOR RELATED ACTIVITIES

Smell Smasher

Annie invents scented accessories for when one is assaulted by unpleasant odors. Create your own scratch and sniff stickers using one of the following methods:

- <https://damasklove.com/diy-printable-scratch-and-sniff-stickers/>
Materials: heat gun, embossing powder, and sugar-free Jello mix
- <http://www.pbs.org/parents/crafts-for-kids/diy-3-ingredient-scratch-sniff-paint/>
Materials: school glue and Jello mix
- <https://www.thecountrychiccottage.net/make-your-own-scratch-and-sniff-stickers/>
Materials: essential oils

Feelings Folder

Annie invents color coded folders to let others know your mood at just a glance.

- Create your own mood ring: <https://www.buzzle.com/articles/how-to-make-mood-rings.html> -
Materials: ring base, craft glue, and thermochromic stone
- Create mood ring color change slime:
<https://www.thoughtco.com/color-changing-slime-recipe-609157>
Materials: school glue, thermochromic pigment, and liquid starch

Hue Guru

Annie invents a machine that creates and names new colors.

<http://www.colourlovers.com/colors/add> - “Name a Color, Create a Palette, Design a Pattern”

Fish Light

Annie invents a tankless, waterless aquarium to hang on your wall.

<https://ideastand.com/diy-night-light-ideas-for-kids/>

KidzHouse

Annie invents a dollhouse big enough for kids to play inside.

<https://www.handmadecharlotte.com/6-ways-make-cardboard-dollhouse/>

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Next Generation Science Skills:

3-5. Engineering Design

Students who demonstrate understanding can:

3-5-ETS1-1. Define a simple design problem reflecting a need or a want that includes specified criteria for success and constraints on materials, time, or cost.

3-5-ETS1-2. Generate and compare multiple possible solutions to a problem based on how well each is likely to meet the criteria and constraints of the problem.

3-5-ETS1-3. Plan and carry out fair tests in which variables are controlled and failure points are considered to identify aspects of a model or prototype that can be improved.

Disciplinary Core Ideas:

ETS1.A: Defining and Delimiting Engineering Problems

Possible solutions to a problem are limited by available materials and resources (constraints). The success of a designed solution is determined by considering the desired features of a solution (criteria). Different proposals for solutions can be compared on the basis of how well each one meets the specified criteria for success or how well each takes the constraints into account. (3-5-ETS1-1)

ETS1.B: Developing Possible Solutions

Research on a problem should be carried out before beginning to design a solution. Testing a solution involves investigating how well it performs under a range of likely conditions. (3-5-ETS1-2)

At whatever stage, communicating with peers about proposed solutions is an important part of the design process, and shared ideas can lead to improved designs. (3-5-ETS1-2)

Tests are often designed to identify failure points or difficulties, which suggest the elements of the design that need to be improved. (3-5-ETS1-3)

ETS1.C: Optimizing the Design Solution

Different solutions need to be tested in order to determine which of them best solves the problem, given the criteria and the constraints. (3-5-ETS1-3)

Crosscutting Concepts:

Influence of Science, Engineering, and Technology on Society and the Natural World

People's needs and wants change over time, as do their demands for new and improved technologies. (3-5-ETS1-1)

Engineers improve existing technologies or develop new ones to increase their benefits, decrease known risks, and meet societal demands. (3-5-ETS1-2)

Common Core Standards for English/Language Arts:

Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

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CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.1.A

Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer's purpose.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.1.B

Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.1.C

Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., consequently, specifically).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.1.D

Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.

CURRICULUM CREATOR

Suzanne Costner is a library media specialist and STEM coordinator in an elementary school. Before finding her perfect home in the library, she taught in other classrooms for 20 years. She loves everything about children's and young adult literature, often reviewing books on her blog or for *School Library Journal*. Suzanne is also a science geek who enjoys building rockets and programming robots with her students. She has won many awards for the STEM program, and in 2017 she was named Tech Innovator Teacher of the Year for her school district and the C.A.P. National Aerospace Education Teacher of the Year.

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I. The Basic Idea - Who, What, Why	Points	Notes
A. Student explained the problem that their wrinvention will solve		
1 point - Gave vague details		
2 points - Gave a few concrete details		
3 points - Gave several clear details		
Subtotal		
B. Student described their wrinvention		
1 point - Told the result of using the wrinvention with vague details		
2 points - Told what the wrinvention looks like and how it works with a few details		
3 points - Described the appearance, function, and results of the wrinvention in detail		
Subtotal		
C. Student identified who would benefit from the wrinvention		
1 point - Named either the age group, type of person, or setting for use		
2 points - Named two of these: the age group, type of person, or setting for use		
3 points - Named the age group, type of person, and setting for use		
Subtotal		
D. Student identified who would be most likely to buy the wrinvention		

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1 point - Named a possible buyer or user, without supporting details		
2 points - Named a possible buyer or user, and offered a few supporting details		
3 points - Named a possible buyer or user with supporting details, and explained if this is the same person that would benefit from the wrinvention and why		
Subtotal		
II. The Nitty Gritty - How		
A. Student has named their wrinvention		
1 point - Name has little descriptive or creative appeal		
2 points - Name is descriptive or catchy, but not both		
3 points - Name is descriptive, catchy, and memorable		
Subtotal		
B. Student has drawn their wrinvention		
1 point - Drawing (or icon for digital product) has few details		
2 points - Drawing or icon has a few clear details		
3 points - Drawing or icon has clear details and may show various views		
Subtotal		
C. Student has designed a package for the wrinvention		
1 point - Package (or online blurb), shows little effort to appeal to buyers		

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2 points - Package or blurb has a few appealing factors (color, wording, images)		
3 points - Package or blurb has thoughtful presentation to impress buyers		
Subtotal		
III. Sell It! - The Commercial		
A. Student has written a script for their commercial - points from 1 - 3 for each of the following criteria:		
1. Includes the name of the invention		
2. Describes the problem it solves/ why it is needed		
3. Lists uses and functions of the invention		
4. Uses descriptive language		
Subtotal		
B. Student has thought out the presentation of the commercial - points from 1 - 3 for each of the following criteria:		
1. Includes an image or model of the product		
2. Gives information in a logical order		
3. Includes a re-enactment of the problem or demonstrates the use of the invention		
4. Uses a background image or video clip that supports the point of the commercial		
Subtotal		
C. Student has rehearsed the presentation and performs well - points from 1 - 3 for each of the following criteria:		

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1. Comes prepared for recording the commercial, dressed appropriately		
2. Speaks clearly and at a moderate pace		
3. Brings all props, models, images, etc. necessary for the presentation		
4. If working with others, has practiced with them for smooth flow of action		
5. Bonus Point for obvious hard work.		
Subtotal		
TOTAL		