

A Classroom Guide to the **George Brown,** **CLASS CLOWN** series

By Nancy Krulik

Author of the bestselling Katie Kazoo, Switcheroo series

One magical
burp and
trouble's in
the air!



**Curriculum Connections,
Discussion Questions
& Classroom Activities**

Illustrated by
Aaron Blecha

You'll find the following teaching materials included in this guide:

- **Curriculum Connections**

Welcome George Brown into your classroom with these fun and easy to execute lesson plan ideas.

- **Meet Author Nancy Krulik!**

Author studies are a great way to introduce books and writers to your students. Use Nancy's bio and links to her website to begin your unit on George Brown, Class Clown and Katie Kazoo, Switcheroo. And teachers, don't miss the special letter Nancy wrote just for you!

- **Discussion Questions & Activities for Books #1-4**

Get your students involved with the series during free reading time or literature circles. Use the discussion questions included to get them talking and extend the lesson by letting them choose an activity to complete individually, with a partner, or in a small group.

- **Combining Katie Kazoo, Switcheroo & George Brown, Class Clown in Your Lesson Plans**

There's truly something for everyone—boys and girls—with these two series. Use these joint series activity prompts to bring your Katie and George readers together.

- **Cause . . . *BURRRRRP!* and Effect**

George Brown, Class Clown is a great series to use to demonstrate and explain cause and effect to your students. Use the chart provided to track George's adventures (and misadventures!).

- **WANTED: Good Advice**

George has had a number of super burps and has tried a few strategies to control them. What advice do you have for him to control his burp-instigated behaviors? Use this creative writing prompt to see if you can help George.

B-U-U-U-R-P!

Curriculum Connections

Welcoming George into Your Classroom

Katie's pal George is living in a new town, starting a new school, and is determined to turn over a new leaf! No more pranks, no more trips to the principal's office; he's ready to let somebody else be the class clown. But a little bit of mischievous magic can mess up even the best of intentions!

When his parents take him out for ice cream, George makes a wish to be good so he can leave his trouble-making ways behind. Unfortunately, he only gets half of the wish finished and he ends up with a crazy sort of magic instead: a super burp that not only takes over his body but his actions as well. You never know what to expect from the joke-telling friend of Katie Kazoo, but readers are sure to delight in the zany and unexpected adventures of a boy who can't stay out of trouble.



Hey Everyone!

It's me, George Brown. Maybe you know me from the Katie Kazoo, Switcheroo books. Well, I've got a new series of my own now!

Getting in trouble is something I've always been really good at. I can't help it! Somebody has to be the class clown, right? And that somebody has always been me. But moving to a new town and starting a new school has made me want to change. I am trying hard to be responsible and stay away from trouble. There's just one problem — magic burps. You've never heard of magic burps? Neither had I, until they started happening to me. I'm not talking about normal burps. Oh no. These are massive mega-burps that sneak out of my body. **BURRRRRP!** They make me do wild and crazy stuff, stuff I can't control, honest!

Do you have any idea how much trouble a burp can get you in? You'll find out when you read the books in my George Brown, Class Clown series. I'm still making the kids in my school laugh. And I hope I can make the kids in your school laugh, too.

Your Pal,
George



Meet Author Nancy Krulik!

Nancy Krulik is the author of more than 100 books for children and young adults, including three *New York Times* bestsellers. She is best known, however, for being the author and creator of the Katie Kazoo, Switcheroo series. Nancy currently lives in Manhattan with her husband, composer Daniel Burwasser, and their two children, Amanda and Ian.

Visit her at www.katiekazoo.com or www.penguin.com/georgebrown

Hello Educators!

I am so proud to have the chance to personally introduce you to my new series, *George Brown, Class Clown*. I've written it to attract those kids who haven't yet discovered the magic of reading.

Someone once told me that a reluctant reader is really just a child who hasn't found the right book yet. It's my hope that the *George Brown, Class Clown* series offers the right books at the right time. I'm a firm believer that once a child discovers a character who makes him laugh, he will curl up in a corner with book in hand and go off on a literary journey. (And, I assure you, George Brown's journeys are unlike any others!)

George has moved to a new town and is starting a new school. He's determined to turn over a new leaf. No more class clown, he's going to be a new, improved George—responsible and well-behaved.

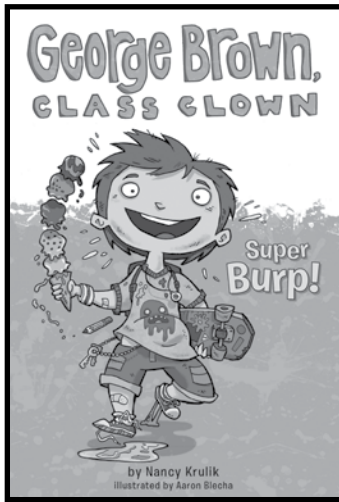
As with Katie, the heroine of my long-standing series *Katie Kazoo, Switcheroo*, George's life is turned upside down by wacky magic. He's afflicted with gigantic, super-powered, **BU-U-U-RPS!** The minute one leaves George's lips, he starts doing all sorts of wild and crazy things—and he's powerless to control himself. He juggles raw eggs in the middle of class, he does the hokey pokey on a tabletop at the local ice cream parlor, and during a talent show he dive bombs from the stage straight into the principal's lap. Poor George, it's not his fault—the magic burp made him do it!

I have filled each story with as much slapstick humor as can fit between the covers of a 128—page novel. In the end, I want my readers—your students—to think of this series as a gas-powered launching pad into the wonderful world of reading. And, by the way, I hope you enjoy the books, too!

Thanks so much,
Nancy Krulik



B-U-U-U-R-P!



George Brown, CLASS CLOWN #1 Super Burp!

The first day of school is always the hardest, right? No, not always as George finds out. On the second day at Edith B. Sugarman Elementary School, he is suddenly seized by uncontrollable burps, burps so loud they practically break the sound barrier, burps that make him do wild and crazy stuff and land him in trouble with a capital T. One thing is for sure: These are not normal burps, they are magic burps—and they must be stopped! But how?

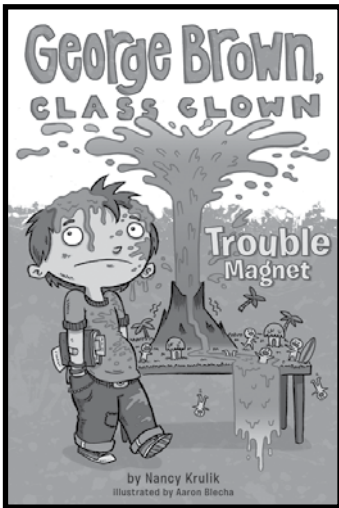


Discussion Questions:

1. George's family moves away from his school and friends, including Katie Kazoo, and he has to go to a new school where he doesn't know anyone. George decides that a new move and a new school call for a new George. What does he do to reinvent himself? Why can he do that? If you could change your name, what would you change it to?
2. How would you feel if you had to change schools? What advice do you have for someone who is the new kid in school?
3. Wishing is something that many people do. When George and his family visit Ernie's Ice Cream Emporium after the first day of school, they see a shooting star and his mother tells him to make a wish. George decides that he wants to "make kids laugh but not get in trouble." What would you wish if you saw a shooting star?
4. When the gym teacher is absent, Mrs. Kelly takes the students into the gym where she teaches them traditional folk dances such as American Square dancing. How do you think the students feel about square dancing? Have you even tried this in gym class?
5. As George is cleaning up his egg-juggling mess and thinking about what happened, he figures out that the wish he made on the shooting star only came half true. Would George Brown be a class clown if his wish had totally come true? How would this story have changed if that had happened?

Activities:

1. Draw a comic strip of one of the scenes in the book or develop your own super burp comic scene for George. You may want to use an online free application such as the Comic Creator at <http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/comic/> or Comic Strip Creator at <http://www.comicstripcreator.org/>.
2. When the gym teacher is absent, Mrs. Kelly takes the students into the gym where she teaches them traditional folk dances such as American square dancing. Locate the directions for square dancing and see if you can learn how! If possible, you may want to videotape the dance to teach others how to do it.
3. George loves to skateboard and he is particularly fond of his red and black skateboard with the painting of a skeleton. What makes this a good image for a skateboard? Develop criteria to determine what makes a good image and then design your own!
4. Perform a Readers' Theater of the first chapter of *Super Burp!* Write a scene from the book as a play and then choose classmates to help act it out. Get the whole class involved by assigning the parts of director, stage hands, and set designers.



George Brown, CLASS CLOWN #2 Trouble Magnet

The annual talent show at Edith B. Sugarman Elementary School is in just a few weeks, and George signs up to be a stagehand. He is determined to do a good job because the new, improved George is responsible and helpful and glad to pitch in. But what happens when unexpected disaster strikes—in the form of a magical burp, of course!—and threatens to bring down the curtain?



Discussion Questions:

1. Why is *Trouble Magnet* a good title for this book? Brainstorm other titles.
2. One of the other fourth graders invented a game called “killer ball.” It is a game similar to dodge ball. What do you think the rules are for killer ball? Why do you think they call it killer ball?
3. George and Louie have an interesting relationship. Do you think that they are friends? Why or why not? What qualities would you want in a friend?
4. The students at Edith B. Sugarman Elementary School are going to put on a talent show. George is going to play the guitar as part of a band with Louie. Chris is going to act out a scene from his comic book. What would you do for a talent show?

Activities:

1. For the talent show, Julianna says that she is going to perform the poem “Casey at the Bat.” Locate a copy of the poem on the Internet or in a book and read and perform it for your class.
2. George’s class is studying the fiftieth state, Hawaii. All the students are doing research and creating projects. George and Alex decide to research about volcanoes and make a model of an erupting volcano for their project. What do you know about Hawaii and/or volcanoes? Go to the library and use books and the Internet to research them. There are a few ways to make a model volcano erupt, such as using baking soda or Mentos candies and Diet Coke. Try it out!
3. A proverb is a memorable saying that expresses a commonly recognized truth. Specifically, proverbs that are rules are known as maxims. Write your own maxims for George. Here are some examples of well-known proverbs to get you started:

Accidents will happen.

All good things come to those who wait.

All things are difficult before they are easy.

Better late than never.

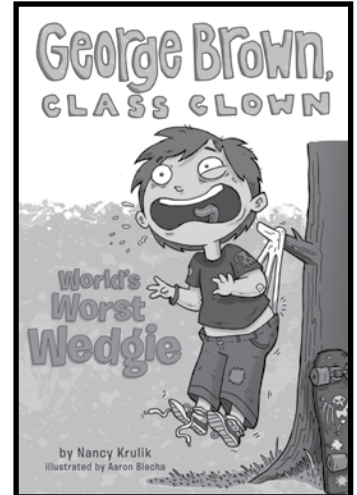
Don’t judge a book by its cover.



George Brown, CLASS CLOWN

#3 World's Worst Wedgie

In his continuing—but mainly disastrous—efforts to be an upstanding, responsible ten-year-old, George Brown decides it's time to earn some money. (There's also an expensive remote-controlled toy he's been coveting.) But no matter what he tries—whether it's working at his mother's craft shop, opening a lemonade stand, or setting up a backyard circus for neighborhood kids—the magic burps erupt at exactly the wrong times and wreak havoc on George's entrepreneurial plans.

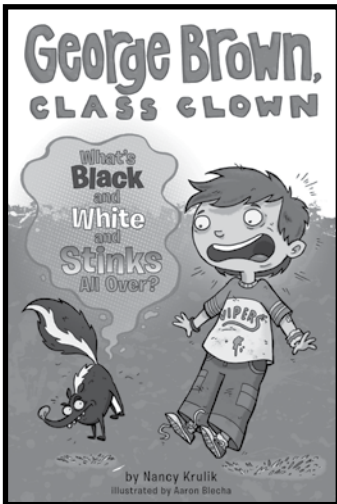


Discussion Questions:

1. George and his friends want to earn \$15.00 to buy an RC Dude-on-a-Skateboard toy. To earn the money, they open a lemonade stand, perform in a circus, and attempt to raise hamsters. Do you think any of these were good ideas? What might you do to earn money to buy a new toy?
2. George and his friends buy hamsters and hope that the hamsters will have babies so that they can sell them. However, they don't realize that hamsters can be trouble. Why might it be difficult for George and his friends to take care of hamsters? Research hamsters and create a poster that explains how to take care of them.
3. For the backyard circus, Alex dresses up as a pig but George says that he is a wild boar. Why would you want a wild boar in the circus instead of a pig? If you were to plan and host a one-ring circus in your backyard, what acts would you perform and what animals/animal characters would you include?

Activities:

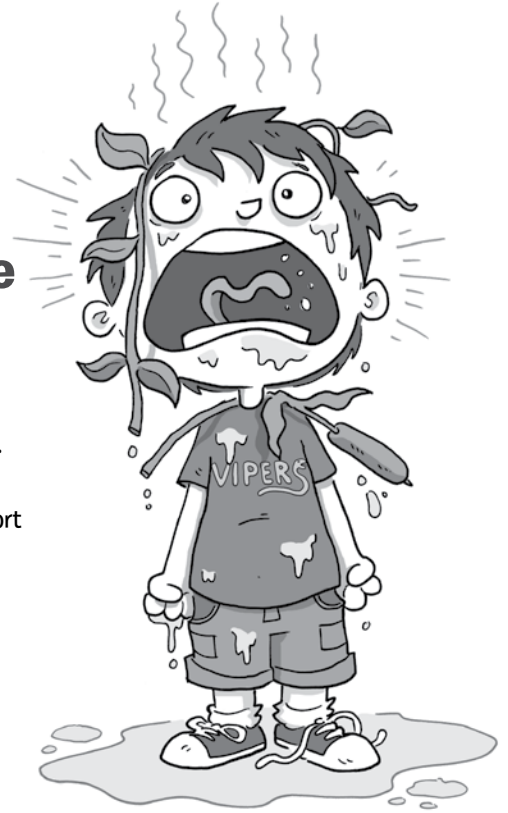
1. George and his classmates in Mrs. Kelly's class are studying the state of Alaska. Choose one of the fifty states and research that state to learn about the people, culture, and geography of the state. Then make a game, brochure, video, or another project to teach your classmates about the state.
2. George is a spender and not a saver, so whenever he has money, he buys something. Make a list of strategies that George might be able to use to help him save money. George gets \$2 a week for his allowance. How long would it take him to save for the RC Dude-on-a-Skateboard if he were to save $\frac{3}{4}$ of his allowance every week? If he saved $\frac{1}{4}$ of his allowance? If he saved $\frac{1}{2}$ of his allowance? $\frac{1}{10}$ of his allowance?
3. Another way that George and his friends try to raise money is by hosting a one-ring circus in his backyard. Identify what performers you want to have in the circus and then draw patterns for the costumes that you would create. Create a flyer that announces your circus and gives details about the acts.



George Brown, CLASS CLOWN

#4 What's Black and White and Stinks All Over?

When his school announces a student-run news show, George is certain that he'd be a perfect sportscaster. Not only would it help him to improve his image at Edith B. Sugarman Elementary, but he'd get to be on TV! And what better way to prove he'd be the best than to film and report on the fourth grade field day activities? But when Louie wants the same job, and the super burps start bubbling up at just the wrong time, will it be the end of George's sportscasting career?



Discussion Questions:

1. As a part of his mission to no longer be a class clown, George decides he wants to be a sportscaster for his school news station. Why do you think he believes this is a good idea? What would his classmates think of George if he did get the sportscasting job?
2. There are a lot of students who want the sportscasting job, but there are lots of other jobs available, too. What skills or personality traits do you think would help make a good newsperson? What about some of the other positions, like cameraperson or director?
3. George's super burps sometimes lead him to do really embarrassing things—like when George jumps into the pond during field day! Have you ever had something really embarrassing happen to you? Did anything make you feel better afterwards? What would you say to George to help him feel better?

Activities:

1. As a part of field day, George and his classmates are assigned a scavenger hunt, where they have to find things in nature that match certain colors. Think of your favorite color, and then using a nature guide or the internet, find something in nature that matches your favorite color. Write a report on the animal, plant, or mineral you choose. Can you figure out why what you chose comes in that color? What might some of the advantages of being a certain color be?
2. For field day, George and his classmates participate in a bunch of different activities. Plan a field day for your own class! Make a schedule of events, brainstorm some great prizes, and make a poster advertising your field day.
3. George really wants to be the fourth grade sportscaster. If your school had a news program, what role would you like: anchor, weatherperson, sportscaster? Something entirely new? Write a newscast for an activity going on in your school. Don't forget the five Ws of journalism: who, what, where, when, and why! Perform your newscast for your classmates.

B-U-U-U-R-P!

Combining **Katie Kazoo, Switcheroo & George Brown, Class Clown**

in Your Lesson Plans

1. Pretend you're one of George's friends from the Katie Kazoo, Switcheroo series, and write your own good-bye letter to George.

2. George used to go to school with Katie and the gang from the Katie Kazoo, Switcheroo series. Choose a scene from one of the books in the George Brown, Class Clown series and write a letter to Katie or one of George's old friends, like Kevin Camilleri, describing what happened.

3. Imagine what would happen if Katie Kazoo visited George in his new town! What would happen if their magic collided? What would George's friends think of Katie? Who or what would the magic wind turn her into at George's school? Write a short story and share it with your class.



4. And what would happen if George were to go on vacation and be able to go back to visit his friend Katie Kazoo? What stories would he tell? What activities would he do with them now that he has the super burp? Write the first chapter of a new Katie Kazoo, Switcheroo book where George returns to Cherrydale.

5. What would happen if Katie and George somehow switched magic? Write a play that demonstrates this situation and act it out in front of your class!

B-U-U-U-R-P!



Cause... *BURRRRP!!* and Effect

George's super burp is the cause and his actions as a result of the burp are the effect. Complete the cause and effect chart below, listing the details of George's adventures and misadventures.

CAUSE

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

EFFECT

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

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9. _____

10. _____

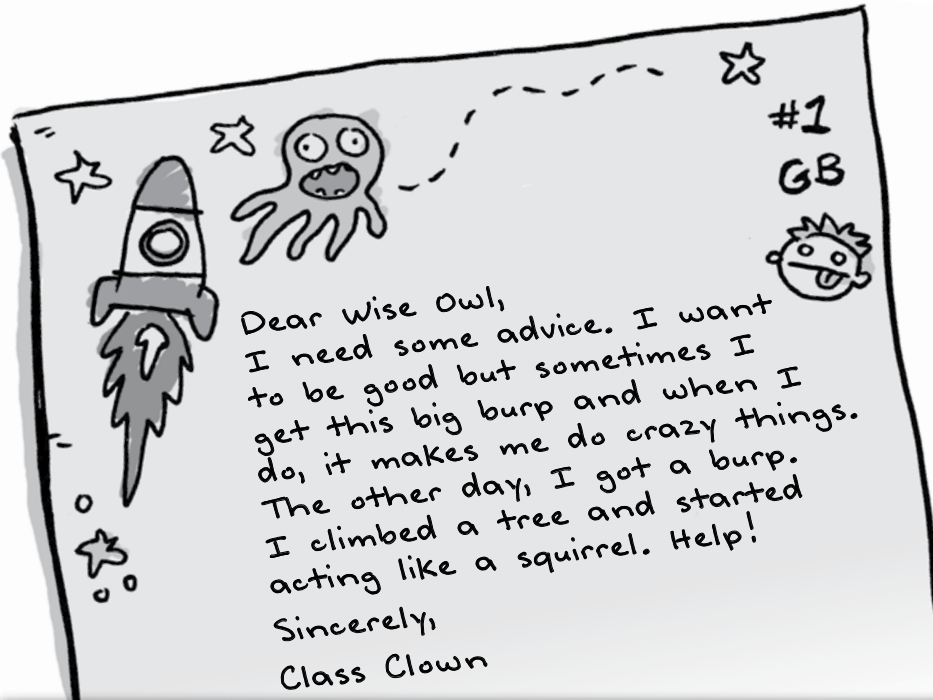
WANTED: Good Advice

George has had a number of super burps and has tried a few strategies to control them.

What advice do you have for him to control his burp-instigated behaviors?

Imagine that George has written a letter to an advice columnist.

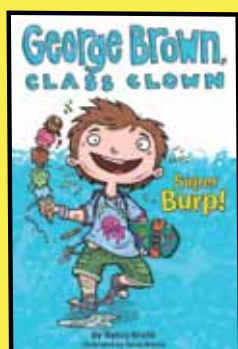
Below, write a response that you think Wise Owl might give to George.





Introducing George Brown, CLASS CLOWN

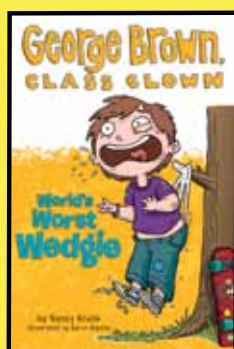
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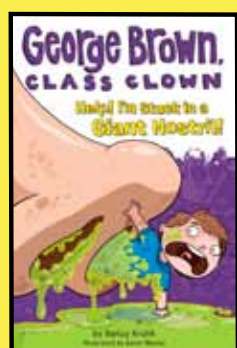
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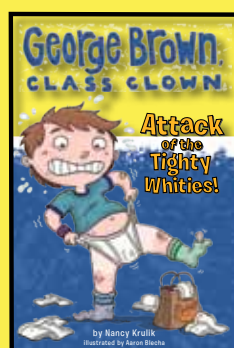
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