# William and Mary

Navigator

A novel study guide for

Jumanji

by Chris Van Allsburg

Navigator Developer: Suzanna E. Henshon
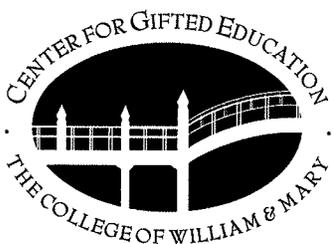
**Center for Gifted Education
School of Education
The College of William and Mary**

Acknowledgement

Special recognition and appreciation go to Dr. Joyce VanTassel-Baska, whose leadership and vision have inspired this *Navigator* series.

Introduction

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This Navigator is a collection of questions and activities intended to support group or independent study of The Caldecott Medal winning picture book *Jumanji* by Chris Van Allsburg. It is one of a series of Navigators developed by the Center for Gifted Education at The College of William and Mary as a language arts resource for teachers and students.

Novel studies should encourage advanced readers to develop their skills at analyzing and interpreting literature through structured questions and activities that highlight themes and concepts, literary elements, and real world connections contained within the books. In addition, novel studies are opportunities for students to develop their own vocabulary and writing skills by exploring and emulating the language and style used by authors.

What are the goals of the Navigator?
The Navigator addresses the following learning goals:
- To develop analytical and interpretive skills in literature.
- To develop understanding of selected literary themes.
- To develop linguistic competency through vocabulary and language study.
- To develop skills in written and oral communication.
- To develop higher level thinking and reasoning skills in language arts.
- To develop research skills.

Who is the audience for the Navigator?
This Navigator is intended for readers of *Jumanji*, a novel appropriate for strong readers in the primary grades. This novel meets many of the criteria identified by Baskin and Harris (1980) for books for gifted readers, including *rich, varied language*; *open-endedness to inspire contemplation*; and *complexity*.

How should the Navigator be used?
The Navigator may be used as an instructional tool by a teacher or as an independent study guide by a student or group of students. The central intent is for teachers to use the Navigator to support a novel study with a group of students, selecting questions and activities to assign as desired, given the context. However, teachers may also choose to make the Navigator available to students at a learning center, with expectations specified for students as to which items they should complete.

The Navigator incorporates several types of questions related to the novel. Some of these, identified as "while you read" questions, are specifically intended to be used for reflection and prediction as students progress through the novel. Other questions are intended for response after the reader has completed the novel, while still others may be answered either during or after reading. All of the questions on pages 13 - 24 of the Navigator may be used for writing and/or discussion.

Additional activities beyond the discussion and reflection questions appear on pages 25 - 40 of the Navigator. Some of these activities support further development of the language arts skills identified in the goals, while others provide interdisciplinary connections and research applications.

***What are the prerequisites for students using the Navigator?***
Students using the Navigator should be able to complete the novel itself independently and should be familiar with the literary and reasoning terms utilized in questions. In addition, students will be asked to complete activities that utilize several specific teaching/learning models: the **Literature Web,** the **Hamburger Model for Persuasive Writing,** and the **Vocabulary Web.** If these terms and models are new to students, teachers may wish to conduct mini-lessons on them either prior to or during use of the Navigator. Some guidance for using the teaching models is provided on the following pages.

The Literature Web

The Literature Web is a model designed to guide interpretation of a literature selection by encouraging a reader to connect personal response with particular elements of the text. The web may be completed independently and/or as a tool for discussion. The recommended use is to have students complete the web independently and then share ideas in a small group, followed by a teacher-facilitated debriefing. The web has five components:

Key Words: interesting, unfamiliar, striking, or particularly important words and phrases contained within the text

Feelings: the reader's feelings, with discussion of specific text details inspiring them; the characters' feelings; and the feelings the reader infers the author intended to evoke

Ideas: major themes and main ideas of the text; key concepts

Images and Symbols: notable sensory images in the text; "pictures" in the reader's mind and the text that inspired them; symbols for abstract ideas

Structure: the form and structure of the writing and how they contribute to meaning; may identify such features as use of unusual time sequence in narrative, use of voice, use of figurative language, etc.; style of writing

Key Words   Feelings

READING

Ideas   Images/Symbols

Structure
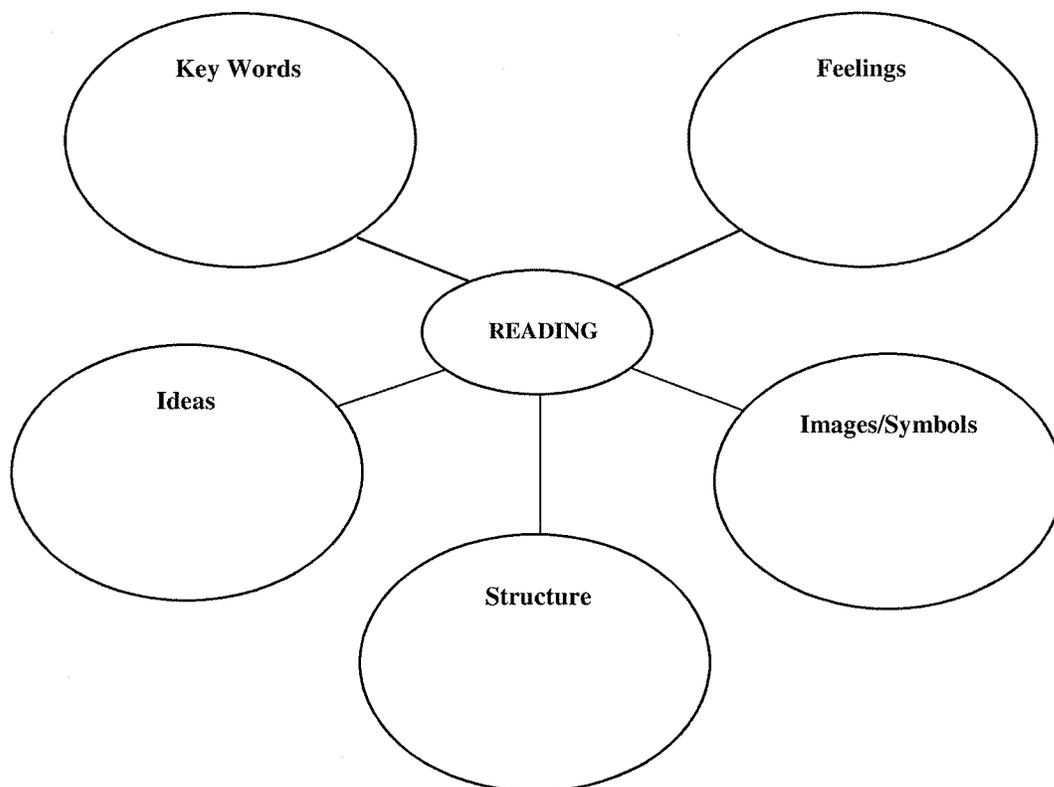
The Hamburger Model for Persuasive Writing

The Hamburger Model uses the familiar metaphor of a sandwich to help students construct a paragraph or essay. Students begin by stating their point of view on the issue in question (the top bun). They then provide reasons, or evidence, to support their claim; they should try to incorporate at least three supportive reasons (the "patties"). Elaboration on the reasons provides additional detail (the "fixings"). A concluding sentence or paragraph wraps up the sandwich (the bottom bun).
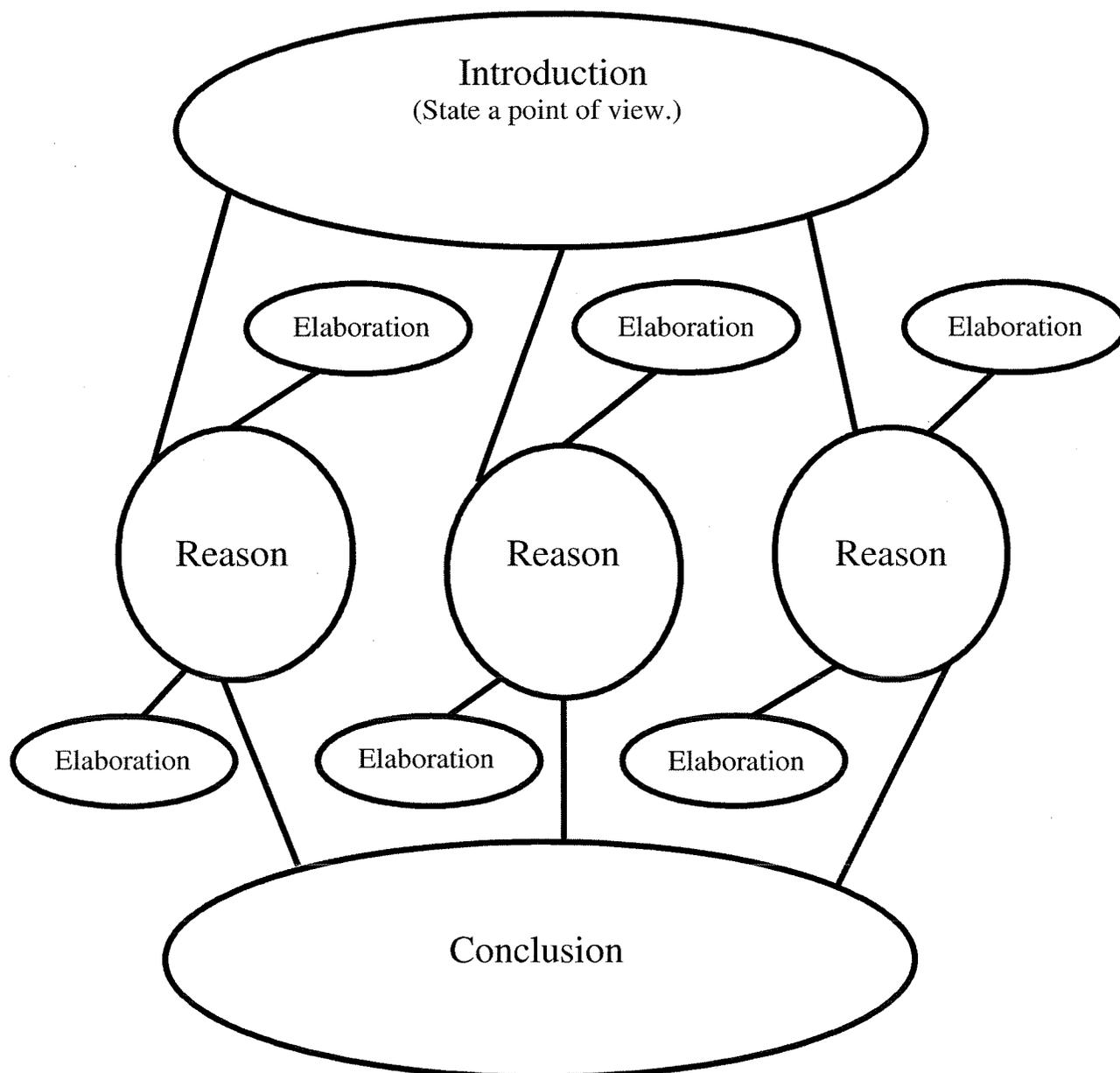
The Vocabulary Web

The Vocabulary Web is a tool for exploring words in depth. It asks students to investigate a single word in detail, finding its definition, synonyms and antonyms, and etymological information. With this information, students then identify "word families," or other words using the same meaning-based stems as the original word; and they provide an example of the word, which may be a sentence or analogy using the word, a visual or dramatic representation, or another creative form.

Synonyms:

Source (sentence where you saw the word):

Definition:

WORD:

Antonyms:

Example:

Analysis

Part of Speech:

Stems:

Word Families:

Origin:
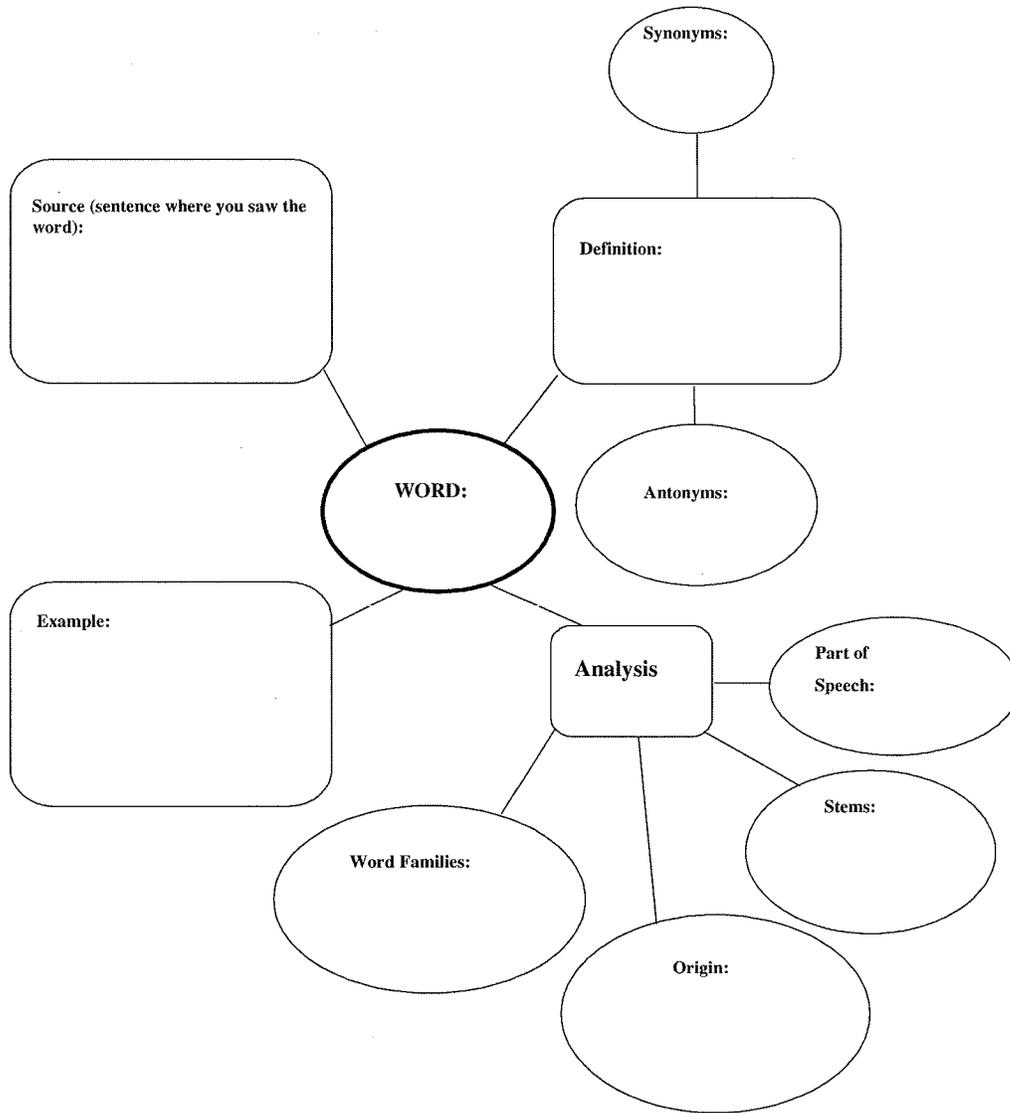
In addition to the models discussed here, Navigator developers also used Paul's (1992) Elements of Reasoning in preparing questions and activities. This model for critical thinking emphasizes the following eight elements: *issue, purpose, point of view, assumptions, concepts, evidence, inferences,* and *implications* or *consequences.* Teachers may wish to introduce these terms to students, using a familiar issue such as something being discussed in the school or community; teachers should then encourage the use of the terms and the model in approaching problems and issues.

The Navigator also contains research assignments that are issue-based and connected to the novel. Students should be encouraged to explore multiple points of view and use human and organizational as well as print resources in their investigations of these real-world issues.

Several resources are listed at the end of the Navigator that may be useful to students and teachers in exploring these models further.

How long does the Navigator take?
Duration of study depends on teacher preference and number of activities and questions assigned.

How does the Navigator address standards for language arts?
The Navigator was designed with an eye to addressing key standards for language arts identified by the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association (1996) as well as standards from several state-level education departments. Specifically, the Navigator reflects standards in the following areas:

Standards Emphases	Navigator
- Use of strategies to understand, interpret and evaluate text	- Provides the student with an organizer for interpreting text (the Literature Web) and guiding questions to support understanding and critical analysis
- Use of writing strategies and writing process elements	- Provides writing prompts, a writing model, and emphasis on steps of the writing process
- Use of spoken and written language for particular audiences and to accomplish particular purposes	- Incorporates activities for writing and speaking that emphasize persuasive, reflective, informative, and narrative communication
- Knowledge of vocabulary, language structure, and language conventions and analysis of how they are demonstrated in text	- Encourages in-depth word study of advanced vocabulary, including emphasis on etymology and usage of words
- Research on issues and areas of interest, with emphasis on utilizing a variety of technological and informational resources to gather data, interpret results, and communicate findings	- Provides several issue-based research assignments for students, emphasizing data collection from print, non-print, and human resources; analysis and synthesis of data; and written and oral communication of findings
- Participation as members of literacy communities	- Encourages discussion within and beyond the classroom about the specified text and invites similar exploration of other texts
- Emphasis on reading a wide range of literature selections to build understanding of the human experience	- Encourages in-depth study of the specified text as well as comparisons to other selected works; suggests specific titles for further reading

How should the Navigator activities be assigned?
Teachers should specify expectations for students about the number and type of activities and questions to be completed, as well as expectations for quality of work. Teachers may choose to assign Navigator questions and activities using a combination of required and optional items. Several sample organizations of assignments follow.

Sample 1 (Teacher-led emphasis):

- Teacher-led discussion of higher-level questions; 1 to 3 questions assigned for journal response

- Required assignments: Literature Web, persuasive essay OR book review, one Vocabulary Web, one research assignment

- Choice assignments: student choice of THREE remaining activities

- Oral presentation of one completed piece

Sample 2 (Small-group emphasis):

- Small-group discussion of higher-level questions, with 4 to 5 questions completed in writing for teacher review

- *Group* assignments: Character detective OR concept map, two Vocabulary Webs, one research assignment with group presentation

- *Individual* assignments: Literature Web, persuasive essay OR book review, student choice of TWO remaining activities

Sample 3 (Individual emphasis):

- Written responses to student choice of 2 to 3 discussion questions per category

- Required assignments: one research assignment; student choice of THREE additional activities, of which one must be a completed writing piece or an oral presentation of one assignment

How should the Navigator activities be assessed?
Teachers should assess student progress based on the quality of individual products and achievement toward the goals of the Navigator. Decisions about which activities to require students to complete should be based on how the selected activities support multiple learning goals.

Question responses should be assessed based on demonstration of insight and ability to use text to support inferences. Writing activities should be assessed based on clarity and insight, and may also be assessed for writing style and mechanics as desired. Oral presentations of completed work should be assessed based on coherence, content, and clarity of the presentation. Teachers may provide rubrics for students related to the required assignments or work with students to develop rubrics for assessment.

Completed Navigator activities should be collected into a folder for assessment, and final assessment may include self-evaluation by the student.

The following chart demonstrates how the Navigator activities support the identified goals:

Alignment of Assignments and Activities to Navigator Goals

	Anal./ Interp. Skills	Literary Themes	Ling. Comp.	Writing/ Oral Comm.	Thinking/ Reas. Skills	Research
Discussion/Writing Questions	X	X		X	X	
Literature Web	X	X			X	
Persuasive Essay	X			X	X	
Concept Map	X	X			X	
Advertisement				X	X	
Book Review	X			X	X	
Character Detective	X			X	X	
Vocabulary Web			X	X		
Movie/Novel Comparison				X	X	X
Author Study and Letter				X	X	
Jumanji Game Board				X	X	
Author Study	X	X		X	X	

What additional resources are required to use the Navigator?
Most of the activities in the Navigator require only the novel itself and regular classroom supplies. Vocabulary activities will require the use of a good dictionary, including etymological information on words. Recommended dictionaries include *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* and the *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary*. Interdisciplinary and research activities may require additional supplies and access to library and Internet resources. The *Guide to Teaching a Language Arts Curriculum for High-Ability Learners* (Center for Gifted Education, 1998) provides guidance in the use of the literature, persuasive writing, and vocabulary study models used in the Navigator as well as other guidelines for language arts with high-ability populations.

A listing of additional resources and suggestions for further reading appears at the end of the Navigator.

NOTE: Page numbers used in the Navigator refer to the 1981 edition of the text, ISBN: 0-395-30448-2.

Technology Integration

Several opportunities for technological connections and development of technical skills are incorporated in the Navigator. Based on the resources available in your classroom or media center, consider the following uses of technology:

- Access to the Internet for research projects. Key websites are listed in the resources section.

- Use of word processing and/or publishing software for writing assignments.

- Use of presentation software for presenting research findings and completed activities.

- Use of *Inspiration* or similar software for creation of concept maps.

Synopsis

Jumanji is a Caldecott award-winning story about a boy and girl who discover a magical board game while their parents are away at the opera. Peter and Judy decide to bring the board game home and play with it, but they quickly discover that Jumanji is far more than an ordinary experience. As the children roll the dice, a jungle begins to emerge in their house. Soon Peter and Judy must make an important decision: whether to play Jumanji through to the end of the game, or to stop playing and return the game to the park where they originally discovered it.

Higher-Level Questions for Discussion and Writing

While You Read...

Why does Judy suddenly have a horrified look on her face? (p. 8) How would you feel if you were in a similar situation?

What do you think Judy and Peter should do to make the lion go away? (p. 10)

Why do you think it suddenly starts raining, right in the middle of the room, as Judy and Peter are playing? (p. 14)

What would a rhinoceros stampede be like? How would you react if it occurred in your house? (p. 18)

What happened when Judy suddenly yells, "Jumanji!"? (p. 22)

Why do you think Judy and Peter decided to return the game to the park, where they originally found it? (p. 24)

What does Mother think about the game? How does she react when Peter describes their afternoon? (p. 26)

What did Danny and Walter find in the park? What do you think they will do with it? (p. 28)

Exploring the Story

How is the physical setting important in the story? Could the story have taken place anywhere? Why or why not?

When does the story take place? What evidence supports your answer?

How do you think Judy and Peter feel when they have the whole house to themselves?

Why does the jungle appear in the house?

How does Jumanji change Judy and Peter's lives? Do you think they will ever want to play it again? Why or why not?

Meeting the Characters

How would you describe Judy, based on the pictures and story? How does she change during the story?

How would you describe Peter, based on the pictures and story? How does he change during the story?

What do we learn about Peter, as the events occurred, that we never would have discovered if the children had not picked up Jumanji?

How are Judy and Peter different? How are they similar?

What are the children's parents like? Do you think they will ever understand what happened while they were at the opera? Why or why not?

Understanding the Ideas

What does this book teach us about board games? What does it teach us about playing according to the rules?

What is an adventure? Is it possible to have a wonderful adventure without leaving your bedroom? How?

Why is rolling the dice so important in this story?

Why do you think Judy and Peter have to keep playing the game? What do you think would have happened if they stopped playing midway through the game?

How do the pictures help tell the story? Would the book have been different without illustrations?

How does Mother explain Jumanji?

How is *change* an important concept in this picture book? What changes play a part in the story?

Connecting to You

Have you ever played a board game? How was your experience similar to Judy's and Peter's? How was it different?

How would you have felt if you had played Jumanji with Judy and Peter? Do you think you would have kept playing, or would you have been too scared to keep rolling the dice?

What do you think will happen when Danny and Walter play Jumanji? Do you think they will read the directions ahead of time?

Would you like to play Jumanji? Why or why not?

Complete a Literature Web about the novel, or a specific chapter in the novel. Fill in responses to each of the bubbles, using the questions below as a guide.

Key Words: What were some words and phrases in the novel that were especially interesting or important?

Feelings: What feelings did you have while reading this novel? What feelings did the characters have? How were those feelings expressed?

Ideas: What was the main idea or theme of the novel? What other major ideas and concepts were important? What message was the author trying to give about those ideas?

Images/Symbols: How did the author use description and imagery in the novel? What sensory images came to your mind? How did the author use symbols?

Structure: What type of writing was this? What literary and style elements did the author use? How did the structure of the writing contribute to the meaning of the novel?

LITERATURE WEB

Key Words

Feelings

READING

Ideas

Images/Symbols

Structure
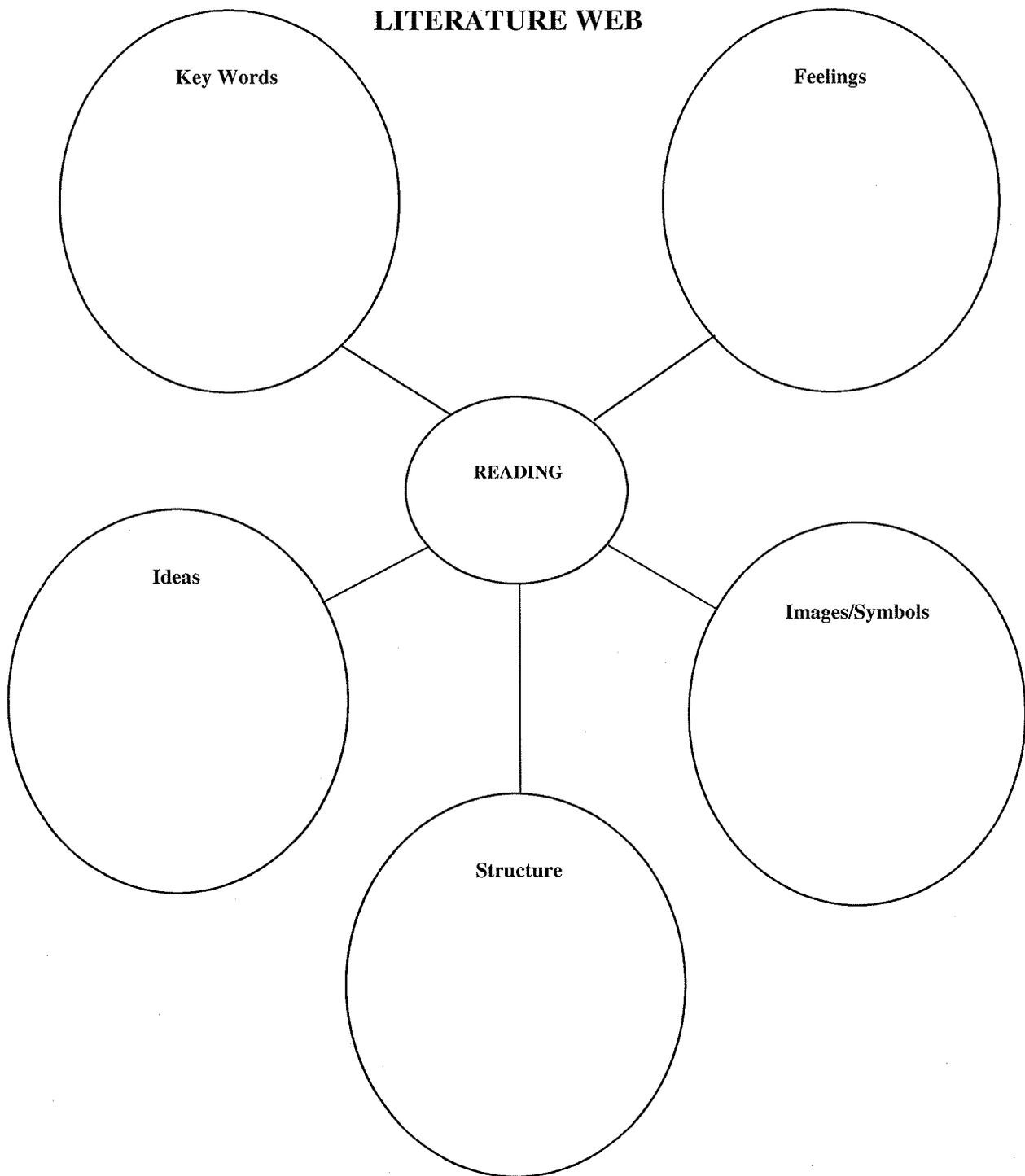
Use the Hamburger Model as a guide to help you organize your responses to the activities on the following pages.

THE HAMBURGER MODEL FOR PERSUASIVE WRITING

Introduction
(State a point of view.)

Elaboration

Elaboration

Elaboration

Reason

Reason

Reason

Elaboration

Elaboration

Elaboration

Conclusion
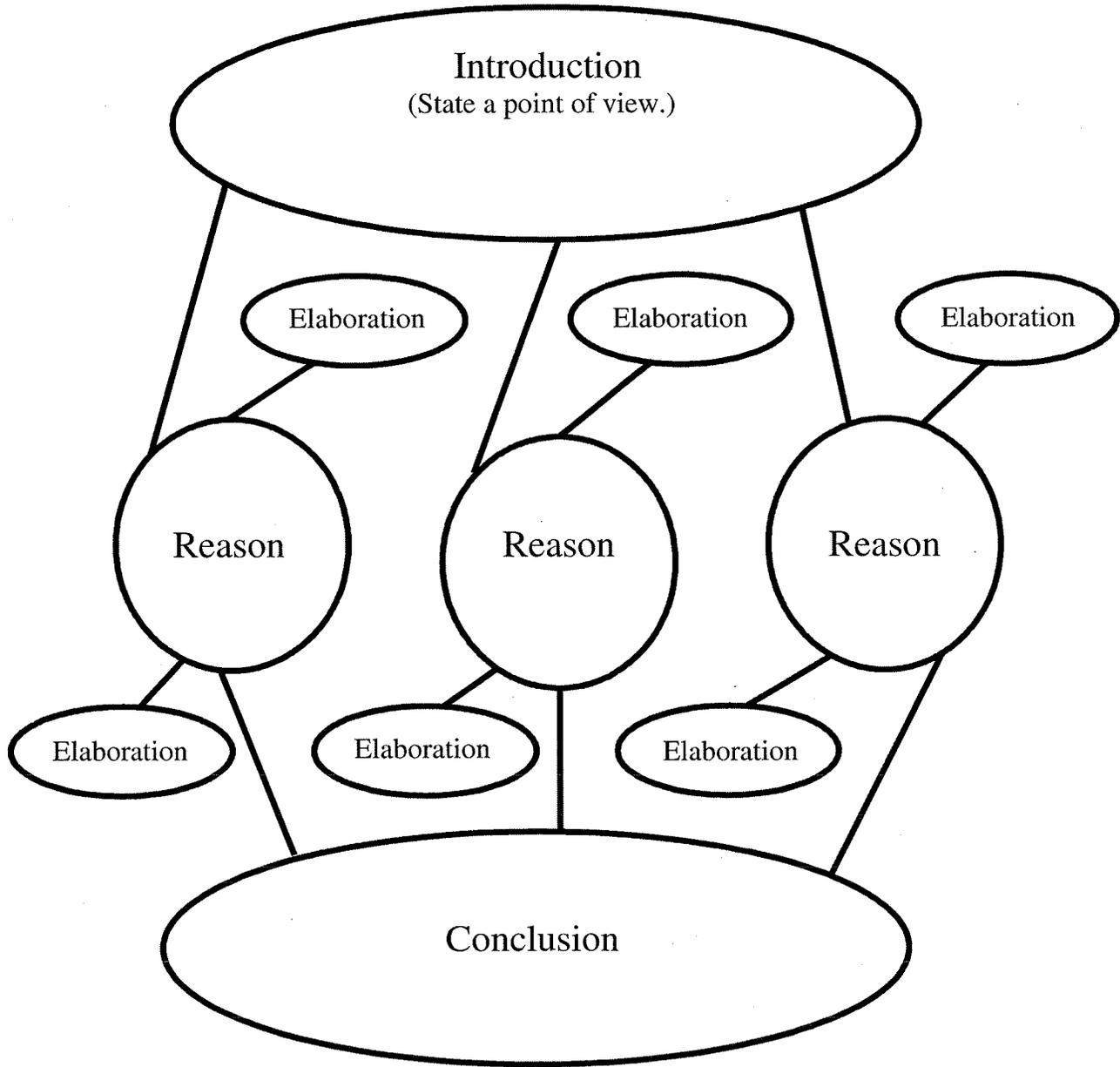
Write a book review about the picture book. In your review, state and explain your point of view about the quality of the story and provide specific details about why you would or would not recommend this book to other students your age. Use the Hamburger Model as a guide, and follow the steps of the writing process to review and revise.

Imagine that you created the game of Jumanji. Write a persuasive letter to Judy and Peter, telling how and why you created a real, live adventure game. Use specific evidence from the story to support your point of view. Use the Hamburger Model as a guide for your writing, and follow the steps of the writing process to review and revise.

Do a "word study" of one or more of the vocabulary words (listed below) from the novel. Find out the definition of the word, synonyms and antonyms, and word stems and origin. Then find at least three other words that use one or more of your word's stems, and create an example to explain your word (a sentence, an analogy, a visual representation, etc.) Use the Vocabulary Web to organize your responses.

silence (p. 2)	absolute (p. 8)	python (p. 20)
handwriting (p. 4)	horror (p. 8)	mantel clock (p. 20)
heel (p. 4)	piano (p. 8)	volcano (p. 22)
adventure (p. 4)	scrambled (p. 10)	fireplace (p. 22)
jungle (p. 4)	gasp (p. 10)	molten lava (p. 22)
card table (p. 6)	instructions (p. 10)	bolted (p. 24)
bored (p. 6)	whisker (p. 10)	exhaustion (p. 24)
restless (p. 6)	game board (p. 12)	flood (p. 26)
golden (p. 6)	monsoon (p. 14)	sleeping sickness (p. 26)
capital (p. 6)	guide (p. 16)	puzzle (p. 26)
dice (p. 8)	stampede (p. 18)	
unexcited (p. 8)	splintering (p. 18)	

VOCABULARY WEB

Synonyms:

Source (sentence where you saw the word):

Definition:

WORD:

Antonyms:

Example:

Analysis

Part of Speech:

Word Families:

Stems:

Origin:
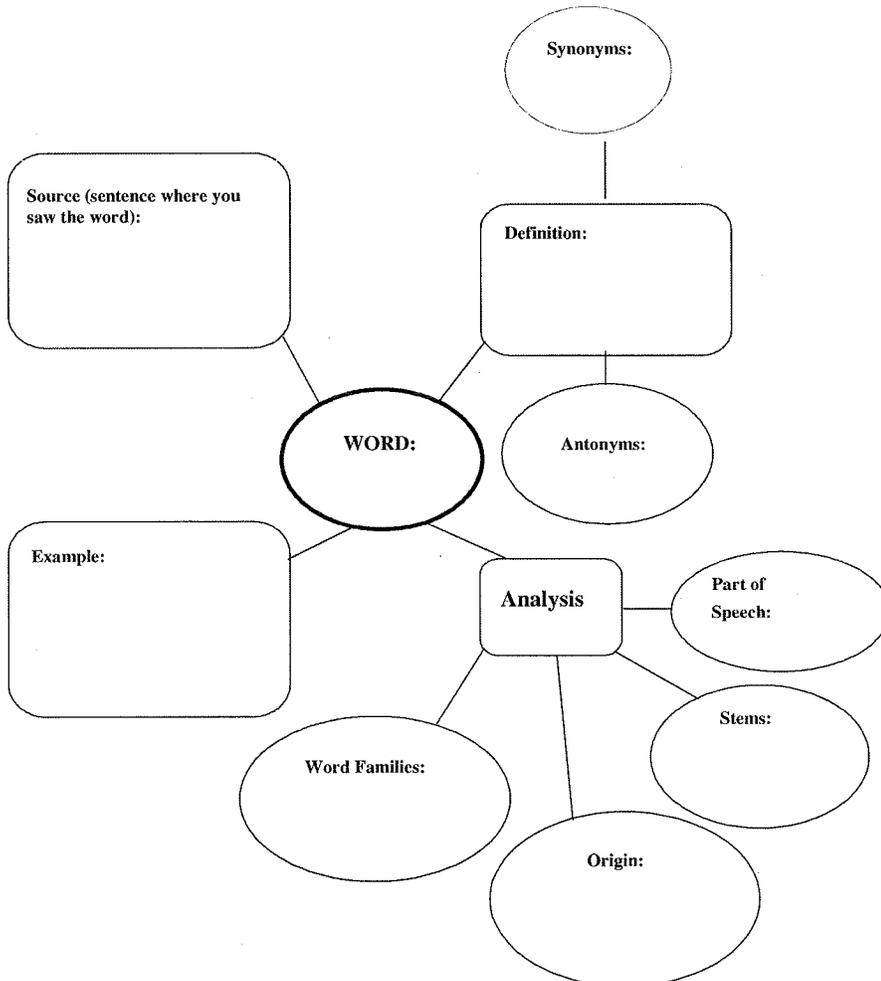
Be an "adventure game detective." Explore the Jumanji game board and how it works. Take notes about how it is played, with careful attention to what happens when the dice are rolled to a certain number. Try to draw a game board for Jumanji, keeping in mind that Judy and Peter did not discover what would have happened if the dice had landed on different numbers.

Be a "character detective." Explore the character of Peter and how we come to know him through the story. Take notes about his words and actions and how Judy and his parents relate to him. How does he react to scary events? Would you like to be his friend? Why or why not?

Write a letter to the author and illustrator, Chris Van Allsburg. Ask him about how he developed the idea for *Jumanji*, and what projects he is currently developing, etc.

Watch the 1995 movie version of *Jumanji* and compare it to Chris Van Allsburg's book. How is the movie different from the book? When you see the story on screen, in full color, does this change the meaning of the story? How?

Write a letter to Peter. Ask him about his adventure, and tell him how you would have reacted if you "were in his shoes."

Pretend that you are a TV reporter covering the story. How would you describe Jumanji to your viewers and the experience of watching a three-dimensional game being played? Prepare a segment for the TV news about Jumanji and the events that took place at Judy and Peter's house that afternoon. When you are writing your article, consider how difficult it is to write a believable report about extraordinary events and circumstances.

Create a concept map about how one of these ideas is demonstrated in the story: *change, adventure, loss,* or *fear*. Use examples of specific events and characters from the story to describe how the concept is explored. Then write at least two generalizations you can make about the concept. A sample concept map is started for you below:

```
        ( Unknown jungle )
        (  environment  )
                                ( Lions )
( Chimpanzees )
                                      ( Rhinoceros )

        ( Against external danger )

              ( ADVENTURE )

        ( Against internal feelings )

  ( Curiosity causes                    ( Overcome fear )
   children to try out                  (  and finish   )
   "Jumanji" board
        game )
                ( The game )
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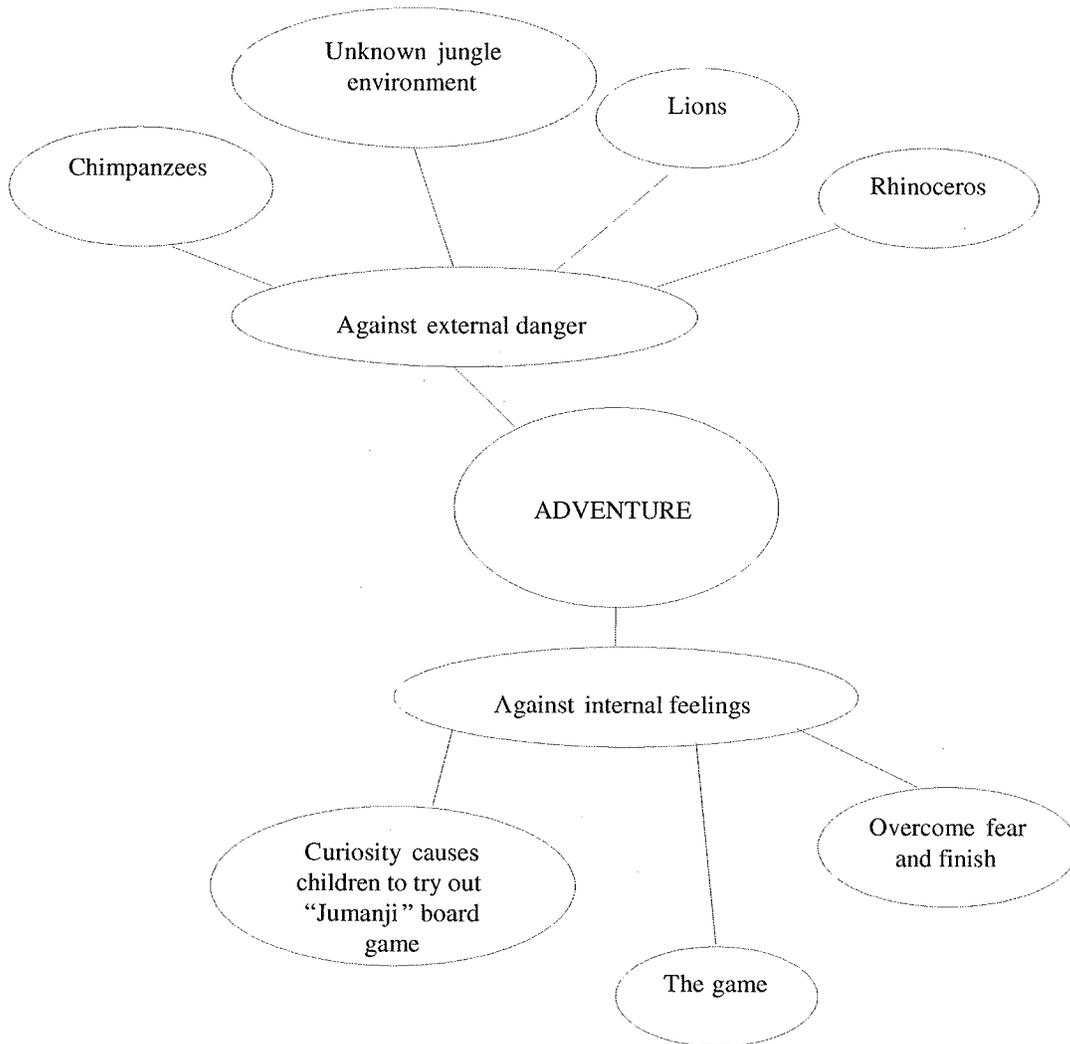
Chris Van Allsburg's *Zathura* is a sequel to *Jumanji*. When you finished reading *Jumanji*, what did you expect would happen to Danny and Walter Budwing? Now read *Zathura*, and see how Van Allsburg's sequel is different than you expected it to be. What did you think would happen to Danny and Walter?

Interdisciplinary and Research Connections

Within the storybook *Jumanji*, several animals appear: a lion, monkeys, rhinoceros, and a few snakes. Describe the animals in real life, and decide if their behavior in the book is realistic. Create a poster or slideshow presentation to explain your findings. Use pictures and descriptive language to aid your presentation.

Judy and Peter find Jumanji, a board game, at a local playground. What kinds of board games do you like to play? What made Jumanji so appealing to the children that they picked it up and took it home, even with the warning sign? Think about a board game you would like to design. Come up with an idea, conceptualize a theme, and figure out a way to make your board game fun to play!

In one scene a man is hunched over a map, trying to find the right direction in the jungle that was once Judy and Peter's home. Imagine that this man is a famous explorer whose life work is to discover new species within the jungle. Describe his character, including his background, education, and his favorite animals. Elaborate on this character, and perhaps allow him to have a story of his own. What sorts of adventures will he have? As you write this explorer's story, do research and try to make sure it is factually correct.

As you read through the book, you have probably noticed that all the illustrations are in black and white. Why do you think Chris Van Allsburg depicted all the scenes without color? How would the story be different with color illustrations? In your explanation, think about the artistic decisions that Van Allsburg made besides using black and white drawings. Do you think he wrote the story and planned the pictures at the same time? What kinds of decisions does a picture book artist make in general? Do you think Van Allsburg's pictures are effective, or do you think he should have drawn different scenes and settings? Develop a report or slideshow to present your conclusions.

Resources
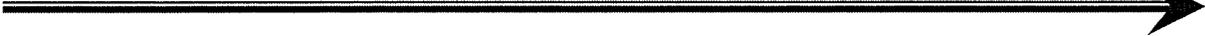
Teacher Resources

Baskin, B. H., & Harris, K. H. (1980). *Books for the gifted child.* New York: Bowker.

Boyce, L. N. (1997). *A guide to teaching research skills and strategies in grades 4-12.* Williamsburg, VA: Center for Gifted Education.

Center for Gifted Education. (1998). *Guide to teaching a language arts curriculum for high-ability learners.* Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.

Miller-Lachmann, L. (1992). *Our family, our friends, our world: An annotated guide to significant multicultural books for children and teenagers.* New Providence, NJ: R. R. Bowker.

National Council of Teachers of English & International Reading Association. (1996). *Standards of learning for the English language arts.* Urbana, IL: Author.

Paul, R. (1992). *Critical thinking: What every person needs to survive in a rapidly changing world.* Rohnert Park, CA: Foundation for Critical Thinking.

VanTassel-Baska, J., & Little, C.A. (Eds.). (2003). *Content-based curriculum for high-ability learners.* Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.

For further reading – some other books by Chris Van Allsburg

Ben's Dream
Just a Dream
The Garden of Abdul Gasazi
The Mysteries of Harris Burdick
The Polar Express
The Stranger
The Sweetest Fig
The Widow's Broom
The Wreck of the Zephyr
The Z Was Zapped
Two Bad Ants
Zathura

Useful websites

http://www.virtualsalt.com/litterms.htm (a glossary of literary terms)

http://www.m-w.com (Merriam-Webster Dictionary site)

http://www.libsci.sc.edu/miller/Jumanji.htm (integrating Jumanji into the curriculum)

http://movieweb.com/movie/jumanji/ (includes pictures and details from the movie)

http://www.carolhurst.com/titles/jumanji.html (discussion questions for children and teachers)

http://www.basd.net/teacherlinks/langarts/vanallsburg/vanallsburg.htm (includes interviews with
Chris Van Allsburg about the process of coming up with ideas and creating books)