

About Andrew

Then to Now

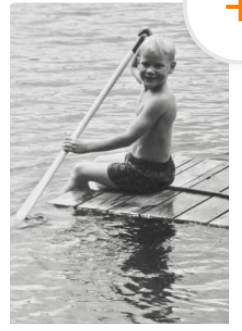


Chapter 1

Growing Up



I was born in Camden, New Jersey in 1949 and lived in Oaklyn and Cherry Hill until the middle of sixth grade. Then we moved to Springfield, Illinois. My parents were avid readers and they gave that love of books and reading to me and to



all my brothers and sisters. I didn't think about being a writer at all back then, but I did love to read. I'm certain there's a link between reading good books and becoming a writer. I don't know a single writer who wasn't a reader first. Before moving to Illinois, and even afterwards, our family spent summers at a cabin on a lake in Maine. There was no TV there, no phone, no doorbell—and email wasn't even invented. All day there was time to swim and fish and mess around outside, and every night, there was time to read. I know those quiet summers helped me begin to

think like a writer.



Chapter 2

Writing in School

During my senior year at Springfield High School my English teacher handed back a poem I'd written. Two things were amazing about that paper. First, I'd gotten an A—a rare event in this teacher's class. And she'd also written in large, scrawly red writing, "Andrew—this poem is so funny. This should be published!"

"Andrew—this poem is so funny. This should be published!"

—Mrs. Bernice Rappel, my 12th grade English teacher

That praise sent me off to Northwestern University feeling like I was a pretty good writer, and occasionally professors there also encouraged me and complimented the essays I was required to write as a literature major. But I didn't write much on my own—just some poetry now and then. I learned to play guitar and began writing songs, but again, only when I felt like it. Writing

first son, and then school enrollments began declining in our area. I was fired a couple of times—they called it “Reduction in Force.” I was rehired both times, but it didn’t make me feel like teaching was a career I could depend on at that time. And so we sold our home, packed up our two-and-a-half year old son, and moved to New York City so that I could develop a truly stable career as a singer-songwriter. It didn’t work out that way, of course, but during that year-and-a-half, I did learn how to make myself sit and think and write things down—a discipline that’s important for every writer.



Chapter 4

The Publishing Business



After the songwriting came my first job in publishing. I worked for a small publisher who specialized in how-to books, the kind of books that have photos with informative captions below each one. The book in which my name first appeared in print is called *A Country Christmas Treasury*. I’d built a number of the projects featured in the book, and I was listed as one of the “craftspeople” on the acknowledgements page, in tiny, tiny type.

After about a year in the photo-caption-how-to

world, a friend I'd met during college called and invited me help him launch a new company that imported high quality children's books from Europe. It was while working for this company--first called Alphabet Press and then Picture Book Studio--that I began writing picture book texts. As sales manager, I got to work with a terrific crew of people who quickly taught me about the publishing business. As editorial director, I got to work with wonderfully talented authors, illustrators, and author-illustrators. I met people there who became life-long friends. And while there, my own first picture books were published, and they kept coming.

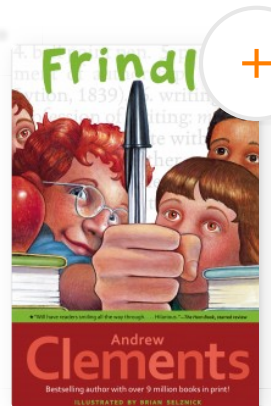


Chapter 5

Full Time Writer

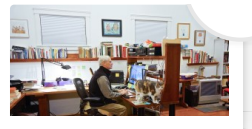
In 1990 I began trying to write a picture book about a boy who makes up a new word. That book eventually became my first novel, *Frindle*, published in 1996, and you can read the whole story of how it developed on the *Frindle* page of this website. *Frindle* became popular, more popular than any of my books before or since—at least so far. And it had the eventual effect of turning me into a full-time writer.

I've learned that I need time and a quiet place to





think and write. My wife and I now live in Maine —not far from where I spent my earliest summers. These days I spend a lot of my time in a room attached to the far side of the garage—just far enough from the rest of our home to make me feel like I've gone to work. The room is larger than the small garden shed I worked in for almost twenty years, but it's the same desk, same chair, same paper and pencils, same keyboard and screen. And I'm grateful to say that the books keep coming.



Sometimes kids ask how I've been able to write so many books. The answer is simple: one word at a time. Which is a good lesson, I think. You don't have to do everything at once. You don't have to know how every story is going to end. You just have to take that next step, look for that next idea, write that next word. And growing up, it's the same way. We just have to go to that next class, read that next chapter, help that next person. You simply have to do that next good thing, and before you know it, you're living a good life.

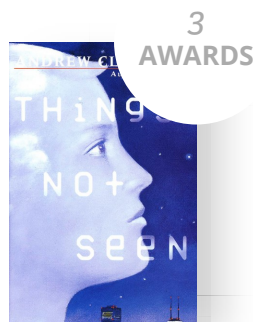
Awards and Accolades

Below are some of the awards my books have received. Notable awards

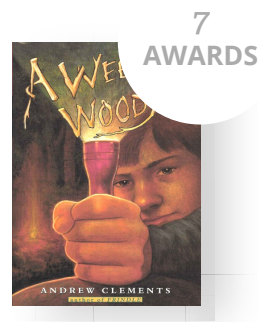
include a **Phoenix Award** for *Frindle*, a **Christopher Award** for both *Frindle* and *Extra Credit*, and an **Edgar Award** for *Room One: A Mystery or Two*. *Frindle* is my most awarded work, receiving more than 35 literary awards and nominations.



Frindle



Things Not Seen



A Week in the Woods

ALA Schneider Family Book Award

Awarded 2004 for [Things Not Seen](#)

ALA/YALSA Best Book For Young Adults

Awarded 2002 for [Things Not Seen](#)

Arizona Young Readers' Award

Nominated 1998-1999 for [Frindle](#)

ASPCA Henry Bergh Children's Book Honor

Awarded 2001 for [Brave Norman: A True Story](#)

Bank Street Best Books of the Year

Awarded 2005 for [Lunch Money](#)

Bank Street Best Books of the Year

Awarded 2007 for [Dogku](#)

Bank Street Best Books of the Year - with Outstanding Merit

Awarded 2009 for [Extra Credit](#)

Battle of the Books Reading List

Nominated 1998 for [Frindle](#)

Best Fiction for Teenagers--China Times, Taiwan

Awarded 2015 for [The Map Trap](#)

Best Kids Books – Family Fun Magazine Noted 1998 for Frindle

Black Eyed Susan Book Award -- Maryland Awarded 2009 for No Talking

Black Eyed Susan Book Award -- Maryland Awarded 1999 for Frindle

Black-Eyed Susan Book Award-Maryland Awarded 1998-1999 for Frindle

California Young Reader Medal Awarded 2010 for No Talking

California Young Reader Medal Nominated 2006-2007 for A Week in the Woods

California Young Reader Medal Awarded 2005 for Things Not Seen

California Young Reader Medal Nominated 1999-2000 for Frindle

California Young Reader Medal Awarded 2004 for The School Story

California Young Readers Medal
Nominated 2019-2020 Intermediate for The Losers Club

Capitol Choices list, best books for ages 7-10 Noted 1999 for Frindle

CBC/Children's and Teen Choice Book Award, grades 5 & 6 Awarded 2018 for The Losers Club

CBC/NCSS Notable Social Studies Trade Book Awarded 2007 for Extra Credit

CBC/NCSS Notable Social Studies Trade Book Awarded 2005 for Lunch Money

Charlie May Simon Book Award (AR) Nominated 2019-2020 for The Losers Club

Charlie May Simon Children's Book Award Awarded 1998-1999 for Frindle

Charlie May Simon Honor Book (AR) Awarded 2005 for Lunch Money

Chicago Public Library's Best of the Best	Noted 1998 for <u>Frindle</u>
Children's Choices, ILA/CBC	Awarded for <u>A Week in the Woods</u>
Children's Crown Award	Awarded 2010 for <u>No Talking</u>
Christopher Award	Awarded 1997 for <u>Frindle</u>
Christopher Award	Awarded 2007 for <u>Extra Credit</u>
Common Sense Media Best Book Award	Awarded 2004 for <u>The Last Holiday Concert</u>
Dorothy Canfield Fisher Book Award	Nominated 1997-1998 for <u>Frindle</u>
Edgar Award	Awarded 2007 for <u>Room One: A Mystery or Two</u>
Garden State Children's Book Award	Nominated 1999 for <u>Frindle</u>
Garden State Children's Book Award (NJ)	Awarded 2004 for <u>The Last Holiday Concert</u>
Garden State Children's Book Award (NJ)	Awarded 2005 for <u>Lunch Money</u>
Georgia Children's Book Award	Awarded 1998-1999 for <u>Frindle</u>
Great Stone Face Book Award	Awarded 1997-1998 for <u>Frindle</u>
Horn Book Magazine Fanfare Book	Noted 1997 for <u>Frindle</u>
Indiana Read-Alouds Too Good to Miss	Noted 1997-1998 for <u>Frindle</u>
Iowa Children's Choice Award	Awarded 2004-2005 for <u>A Week in the Woods</u>
Iowa Children's Choice Award	Nominated 1999-2000 for <u>Frindle</u>
Judy Lopez Memorial Honor Book	Awarded 1997 for <u>Frindle</u>
Kentucky Bluegrass Award	Nominated for <u>A Week in the Woods</u>

Kentucky Bluegrass Award	Awarded 2007 for <u>Dogku</u>
Kentucky Bluegrass Award	Nominated 1997-1998 for <u>Frindle</u>
Keystone to Reading Book Award	Awarded 2005 for <u>A Week in the Woods</u>
Land of Enchantment Book Award	Nominated 1999-2000 for <u>Frindle</u>
Land of Enchantment Children's Master List	Nominated for <u>A Week in the Woods</u>
Maine Student Book Award	Nominated 1997-1998 for <u>Frindle</u>
Mark Twain 4-6 Award, Missouri Assn. of School Librarians	Nominated 2019-2020 for <u>The Losers Club</u>
Massachusetts Children's Book Award	Awarded 1998-1999 for <u>Frindle</u>
Maud Hart Lovelace Award (MN)	Nominated 2019-2020 for <u>The Losers Club</u>
Maud Hart Lovelace Award (MN)	Awarded 1998-1999 for <u>Frindle</u>
Nebraska Golden Sower Award	Nominated 1998-1999 for <u>Frindle</u>
Nebraska Golden Sower Award	Nominated 2019-2020 for <u>The Losers Club</u>
Nebraska Golden Sower Award	Nominated 2006 for <u>A Week in the Woods</u>
NENE Award	Nominated 1998 for <u>Frindle</u>
Nevada Young Readers' Award	Awarded 1998-1999 for <u>Frindle</u>
New York Public Library – 100 titles for reading & sharing	Noted 1996 for <u>Frindle</u>
North Carolina Children's Choice Award	Awarded 1998-1999 for <u>Frindle</u>
Nutmeg Children's Book Award	Nominated 1999-2000 for <u>Frindle</u>

**Oregon Reader's Choice Award,
Elementary Division**

Nominated 2020 for **The Losers Club**

**Pacific North West Library Association –
Young Reader's Choice**

Awarded 1999 for **Frindle**

Parents' Choice Award

Awarded 2007 for **Extra Credit**

Parents' Choice Honor Book

Noted 1997 for **Frindle**

**Pennsylvania Young Reader's
Choice Award**

Awarded 1999-2000 for **Frindle**

Phoenix Award

Awarded 2016 for **Frindle**

Prairie Pasque Award (SD)

Awarded 2006 for **A Million Dots**

**Premio Cassa di Risparmio di Cento di
Letteratura per Ragazzi**

Awarded 1998 for **Frindle**

Rebecca Caudill Young Readers Award

Awarded 1999 for **Frindle**

Rhode Island Children's Book Award

Nominated 2019 for **The Losers Club**

Rhode Island Children's Book Award

Awarded 1998 for **Frindle**

Sasquatch Children's Book Award

Awarded 1999 for **Frindle**

Sequoyah Children's Book Award

Nominated 1998-1999 for **Frindle**

South Dakota Prairie Pasque

Awarded 1999 for **Frindle**

SSLI Book Award Honor Book

Awarded 2006 for **A Million Dots**

Sunshine State Young Readers Award

Nominated 1998-1999 for **Frindle**

Texas Bluebonnet Award

Nominated 1998-1999 for **Frindle**

Texas Children's Crown Award

Awarded 1999 for **Frindle**

Utah Children's Choice Award

Awarded 2000 for [Frindle](#)

Virginia Young Readers Award

Nominated 1998-1999 for [Frindle](#)

West Virginia Children's Book Award

Nominated 1998-1999 for [Frindle](#)

William Allen White Award (KS)

Nominated 2019-2020 for [The Losers Club](#)

William Allen White Children's Book Award

Awarded 2002 for [The Landry News](#)

William Allen White Children's Book Award

Awarded 1999 for [Frindle](#)

William Allen White Children's Book Award

Awarded 2005 for [The Report Card](#)

Wyoming Indian Paintbrush Book Award

Nominated 1998-1999 for [Frindle](#)

Young Hoosier Book Award

Awarded 2000 for [Double Trouble in Walla Walla](#)

Young Hoosier Book Award

Awarded 1998-1999 for [Frindle](#)

Young Hoosier Book Award (IN)

Awarded 2007 for [Room One: A Mystery or Two](#)



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