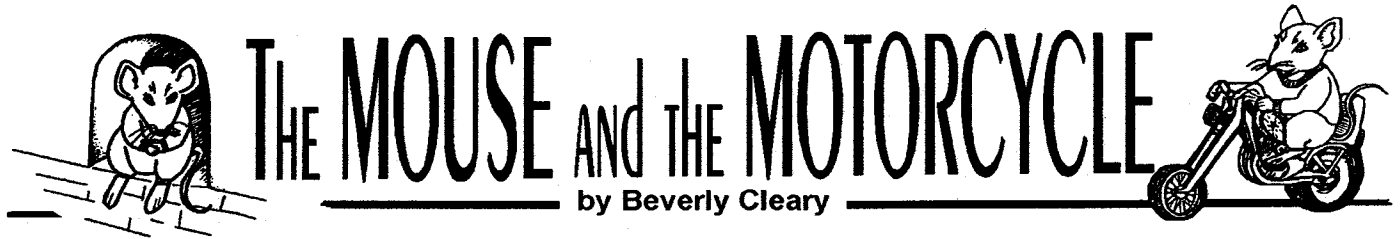




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Expectations

Students will:

1. be introduced to the world of fiction and fantasy through the writings of Beverly Cleary.
2. reinforce various reading skills and techniques.
3. develop and improve student creativity.
4. improve independent reading skills and work habits.
5. improve and develop higher level thinking skills.

Summary of Story

The Mouse and the Motorcycle

Keith Gridley and his parents are on vacation. When they spend their vacation at Mountain View Inn, Keith ends up sharing a room with a mouse named Ralph. After the people leave the room, Ralph finds Keith's toy motorcycle - and it's the perfect size for him!

Keith discovers the mouse; to Ralph's surprise, Keith is pleased to share his motorcycle with him. Keith helps out Ralph and his family by bringing them food, for which all the mice are grateful.

However, Keith's mother soon suspects that there are mice around and the housekeeper orders an extra good cleaning for the rooms. Ralph is almost vacuumed up!

Later, he experiences several other narrow escapes. But, he always survives. Ralph's mother wants to leave Keith a tip for his continued "room service" although she is unsure what is appropriate.

One night, Keith gets very ill. He has a fever and there is no medicine or doctor available. Ralph, after an adventurous night, makes it to the ground floor and finds an aspirin. He manages to bring it up to Keith.

After Keith recovers from his minor illness, he offers to take Ralph home with him. Ralph seriously considers the offer; however, he finally decides that he cannot leave his family behind in order to live in a cage.

Ralph's decision is made easier when he learns that Keith will leave him his motorcycle. The stage is set for Beverly Cleary and other Ralph books.



Author Biography

Beverly Cleary

Beverly Cleary was born in McMinnville, Oregon. She has lived in various American cities. Before becoming a writer, Mrs. Cleary was a children's librarian. She is married and has a set of twins, who are now grown.

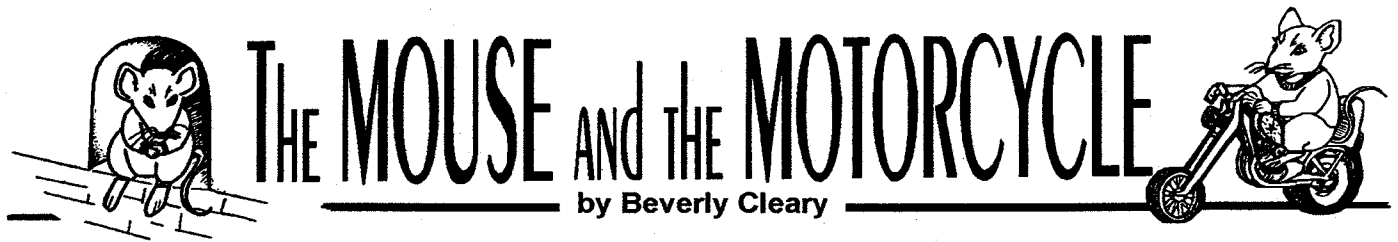
Since her first published work, over a generation ago, she has earned many awards. Dear Mr. Henshaw won the John Newbery Medal in 1984. Ramona and Her Father and Ramona Quimby, Age 8 are Newbery Honor Books. As well, she was presented with the American Library Association's Laura Ingalls Wilder Award. Other books by Beverly Cleary include: Beezus and Ramona, Ellen Tibbits, Henry Huggins, Emily's Runaway Imagination, Mitch and Amy, Muggie Maggie, Otis Spotford, and other books that include the famous mouse, Ralph, Ralph S. Mouse and Runaway Ralph.

Teacher Input Suggestions

NOTE: It is strongly recommended that the teacher read the novel and the material in this unit well in advance of implementing them into the reading program. The teacher's knowledge and interest of the story is essential in order to maintain the enthusiasm of the students.

Introductions for the Unit:

- The Mouse and the Motorcycle can be used in conjunction with themes about mice, friendship, survival skills and family.
- Choose and list the vocabulary words and their meanings that students may have difficulty with and discuss them with your students. Add any other words that they suggest as they read the book.
- Distribute copies of The Mouse and the Motorcycle to the students. Have them examine the cover and discuss the title, characters, author and artist.
- Ask them to make predictions about the story. (ie. Will the book be realistic or a fantasy? What clues does the picture give them? How is the mouse on the cover different than a real mouse?)
- Relate information about the author using the Author Biography in this unit.



- Give each student a copy of the sheet called “Characters in the Novel”. Instruct them to fill out the sheet each time that a new character is mentioned in the book. They are to record information about the character (appearance, personality, relationship to other characters, etc.) and make personal comments.
- Display and read other books written by the author. (See Author Biography for some of Beverly Cleary books - the list is not complete.)
- Display and read fiction and non-fiction books about mice. Some other fictional books that have mice as characters are:

Dr. De Soto, by William Steig
Abel’s Island, by William Steig
Mouse Tales, by Arnold Lobel
Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH, by Robert O’Brien
Stuart Little, by E.B. White
The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse, by Aesop

Decorations:

- Display students’ artwork done on this unit around the class.
- Paint a mural of a scene that would be seen in one of the chapters of The Mouse and the Motorcycle.
- The students can make miniature furniture that would suit a mouse. If the classroom has a pet rodent, approved furnishings may be set up in its cage.

Vocabulary:

- Before asking the students to use the vocabulary words listed below, ensure that they understand how to find the “root word”.
- Look up the (root) words in the dictionary and write the meaning.
- Use the words in sentences.
- Find the word in the chapter that it was used. Write the page number. Copy the sentence from the book.