

Novel·Ties

Ralph S. Mouse

Beverly Cleary



A Study Guide

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LEARNING LINKS

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For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide consists of lessons to use in conjunction with a specific novel. Written in chapter-by-chapter format, the guide contains a synopsis, pre-reading activities, vocabulary and comprehension exercises, as well as extension activities to be used as follow-up to the novel.

In a homogeneous classroom, whole class instruction with one title is appropriate. In a heterogeneous classroom, reading groups should be formed: each group works on a different novel on its reading level. Depending upon the length of time devoted to reading in the classroom, each novel, with its guide and accompanying lessons, may be completed in three to six weeks.

Begin using NOVEL-TIES for guided reading by distributing the novel and a folder to each child. Distribute duplicated pages of the study guide for students to place in their folders. After examining the cover and glancing through the book, students can participate in several pre-reading activities. Vocabulary questions should be considered prior to reading a chapter or group of chapters; all other work should be done after the chapter has been read. Comprehension questions can be answered orally or in writing. The classroom teacher should determine the amount of work to be assigned, always keeping in mind that readers must be nurtured and that the ultimate goal is encouraging students' love of reading.

The benefits of using NOVEL-TIES are numerous. Students read good literature in the original, rather than in abridged or edited form. The good reading habits will be transferred to the books students read independently. Passive readers become active, avid readers.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Preview this book by reading the title and the author's name and by looking at the illustration on the cover. What do you think the book will be about? Do you think it will be funny or serious? Will it be a fantasy or a realistic story? Have you read any other books by the same author? Have you read any other books about Ralph S. Mouse? If so, discuss the story lines of each of these books with your classmates.
2. The book *Ralph S. Mouse* is a sequel to Beverly Cleary's book *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*. Brainstorm with your classmates who have read this book to find out about Ralph, his human friend Ryan, and the Mountain View Inn where they live.
3. Part of *Ralph S. Mouse* takes place at an inn, a kind of hotel. Before you read the book, find out what each hotel worker, listed in the chart below, does at work. Use a dictionary or ask an adult for information.

Job Title	Job Description
desk clerk	
housekeeper	
bellboy	
manager	
maid	
handyman	

4. **Science Connection:** Do some research about mice. Find out about the habits and lifecycle of fieldmice and house mice.
5. Create a classroom display of toy vehicles, such as cars, trucks, and motorcycles. Determine which ones a mouse could drive. If possible, place toy mice in the vehicles. This will help you understand the activities of Ralph S. Mouse as you read the book.
6. Assemble a "We Like Mice" bulletin board. Include drawings, photocopies of book illustrations, magazine and Internet photos, fables, folk and fairy tales, nursery rhymes, song lyrics, and poems about mice.
7. Conduct a class survey to find out what kinds of pets your classmates own. Which kind of pet is most popular? Which pet is most unusual? Does anyone have a pet mouse?

With a partner, list your favorite mouse characters in books and movies. Write a one-sentence description of each. As you read *Ralph S. Mouse*, think about ways that Ralph's personality and adventures are similar to those of other fictional mice.

8. As you read *Ralph S. Mouse*, fill in the following story map.

CHAPTER 1

Vocabulary: Draw a line from each word on the left to its definition on the right. Then use the numbered words to fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 1. rodents | a. went to bed |
| 2. keen | b. dare to go |
| 3. retired | c. showing a refusal to obey |
| 4. defiant | d. animals such as rats, mice, or squirrels |
| 5. venture | e. very sharp or sensitive (in seeing, hearing, smelling, or tasting) |
| 6. reproach | f. polite; taught to have good manners |
| 7. winced | g. pulled or moved away from something painful or dangerous |
| 8. civilized | h. blame |

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- Like other _____, beavers have strong front teeth that they use for gnawing.
- When I accidentally touched the hot frying pan, I _____ in pain.
- Rabbits will not _____ out of their burrows until they are sure it is safe.
- We were so tired Friday night that we _____ early.
- Warthogs cannot see very well, but they have _____ senses of smell and hearing.
- My grandma says that _____ people do not eat with their elbows on the table or speak with their mouths full.
- When I called my little sister a brat, she stared at me with an expression of _____.
- Even when their captain gave them a direct order to fire, the _____ soldiers did not raise their weapons.

Read to find out why Ralph wants to leave home.