

Ruby and the White Rat



Written by Janette Johnstone
Illustrated by Betty Greenhatch

Level	15
Word Count	339
Text Type	Narrative
High Frequency	
Word/s Introduced	

We have designed these lesson plans so that, if you wish, you can have the plan in front of you as you teach, rather than a copy of the book. Each page of the book is illustrated in the plans together with some suggestions for teaching. These have been divided into questions and discussion that you may have before the children read the book and after the children have completed the reading. This is not an arbitrary division. Some of you may prefer to explore the meaning and the language in more detail before the children read. Your decisions will depend on the gap between the children's current knowledge and the content, vocabulary, and language of the book they are about to read. Remember that the more information the children have up front, the easier it will be for them to read the text. However, this does not mean that you should read the text to them first.

We have addressed four areas that we think are important in developing good readers. As well as comprehension and decoding, we have addressed the issue of children being able to analyse and use the texts they read. The symbols below guide you to the type of question or discussion.



This symbol relates to comprehension (meaning maker)



This symbol relates to decoding (code breaker)



This symbol relates to critical analysis (text critic or analyser)



This symbol relates to use (text user)

BEFORE READING

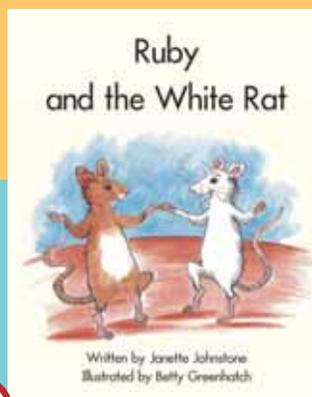
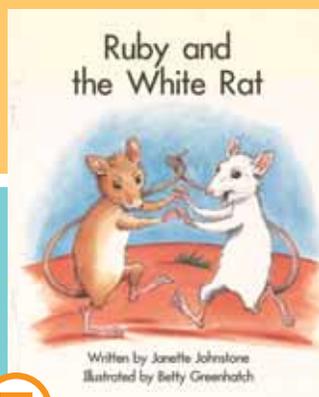
Cover & Title Page



Read and look at the cover illustration and title. Discuss what the story is about. Discuss what kind of characters are in the story.



Explain to the children that they are going to read a fiction story. What is a fiction story? What is a nonfiction story? How are they different/the same?



Ask the children to respond to the book. What did they learn about narratives?



Ask the children to analyse the book. Do they think the author chose an appropriate title for the book? Can they suggest other titles?

AFTER READING

Invite the children to look at the illustrations. Discuss what is happening in the illustrations. Predict what the story is about.

Explain to the children that pages 2 and 3 contain paragraphs. Ask the children to think about the information in each paragraph when reading. What do they tell us about the story?

Ruby Rat lived in the desert. In the day time, when it was not too hot, Ruby had fun in the desert. If it was very hot, she went to sleep.



At night, Ruby looked for food. She looked for food in the desert and she looked for food in a little desert town.

One night, when Ruby went into a house to look for food, she saw a white rat. The white rat was in a cage.



Explain to the children that they are reading a narrative text. The first pages introduce the character and setting. What information did they find out?

Invite the children to analyse the text. How does the life of a rat in the desert compare with other plants or animals? What is the same/different?

Ask the children to look at the two rats. How are they different? How are they the same? What kind of life does each rat live?

Ask the children what the purpose of speech marks is. Explain the use of speech marks in direct speech. Look closely at the use of speech marks in the text.

"You look sad," said Ruby to the white rat. "What makes you so sad?"

"I don't like it in this cage," said the white rat. "The children don't play with me. I want some fun!"

"Would you like to come with me?" said Ruby. "We could have fun."

"Yes, please," said the white rat.

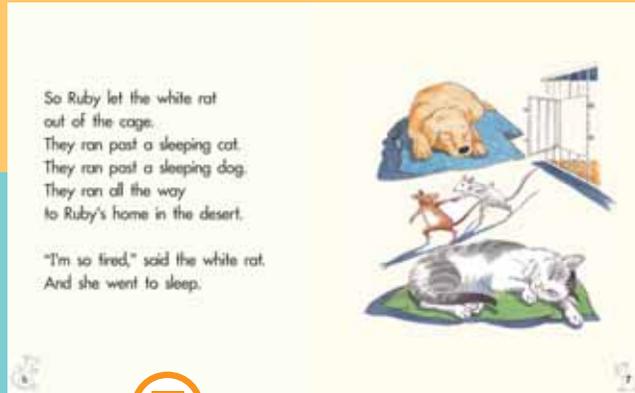


Ask the children to think about the two rats. What kind of fun would Ruby have in the desert? What fun things will Ruby do with the white rat?

Explain to the children that often narratives have a problem. What could the problem in the story be? How does this affect the main character Ruby?

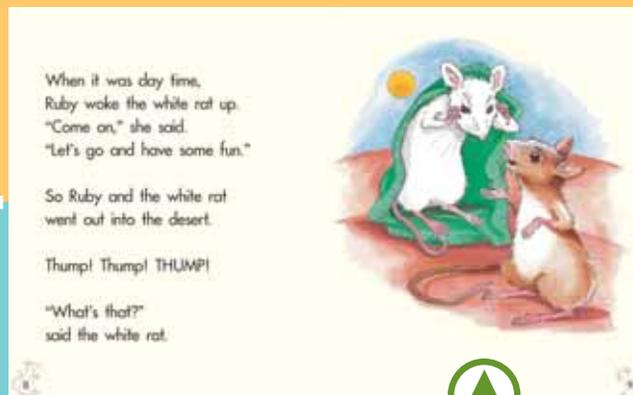
Look at the illustrations. What do the children think the rats are doing? What do they think would happen if the other animals woke up?

Explain to the children how adjectives make a book more interesting. Discuss how adjectives help create images. Look through the text for adjectives.



Discuss with the children why the white rat was so tired at the end of the day? Why was the white rat more tired than Ruby?

Ask the children to analyse the text so far. Ask them to relate the experience of going to a new place with that of the white rat. How do they feel in new places?

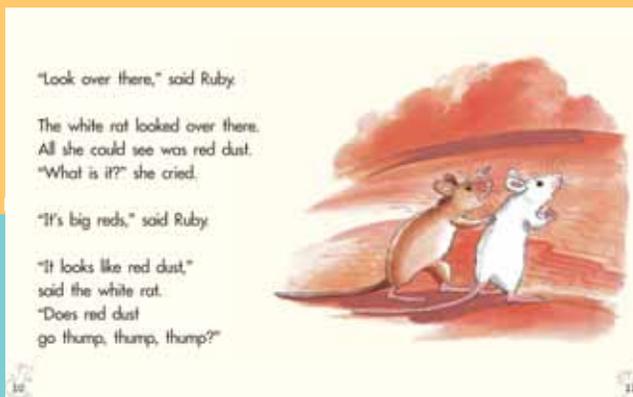


Discuss with the children the feeling of being somewhere unknown. Discuss how the white rat is feeling compared to Ruby Rat.

Discuss the word *thump*. Explain that onomatopoeia is the use of words as sounds. Why did the author put the last *THUMP* in capitals?

BEFORE READING 10/11

Ask the children to look at the illustrations. What do they think is happening? What clues does the illustrator give them?



Ask the children what big reds do? Why do they make the *thump, thump, thump* noise?

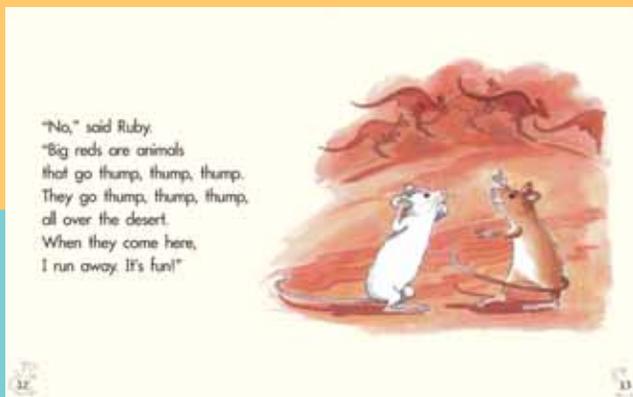
Ask the children to comment on any difficulties they had reading the text so far. What did they do to sort out their reading problems?

AFTER READING

BEFORE READING 12/13

Ask the children to look at the illustration and see what made the thumping sound. Can they think of another word to replace *thump*?

Ask the children to scan the pages for adjectives. Did they make the story more interesting?



Ask the children why Ruby refers to the animals as big reds. Can they think of any other names? Use the illustration to decide how the white rat feels compared to Ruby.

AFTER READING

Ask the children to look at the illustration. What do they think is happening? Why do they think it is happening?

Write the words *cage* and *desert* on the board. Invite the children to brainstorm adjectives for these words on the board. How do these words affect the story?

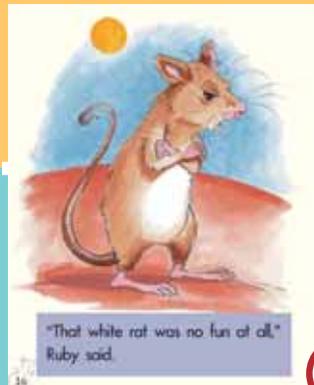


Have the children think back to the problem in the story. Was the problem solved? How did the story change with the characters' actions?

Ask the children why the white rat thought the desert was no fun? Why did the white rat go back to its cage?

Ask the children to look at the final illustration. What do you think has happened? How do they think Ruby is feeling?

Remind the children that their reading needs to make sense. Make sure that words sound and look right.



Discuss with the children how one rat is a pet and the other is a wild rat. How does the character's personality reflect in each type of rat?

Invite the children to analyse the text. How would the story have been different if the white rat had stayed in the desert? How would the story have finished?

15 g Ruby and the White Rat

Name _____

1. Answer the following with a **Yes** or **No**.

Ruby Rat lived on an island.

The white rat was in a cage.

The rats ran to Ruby's home in the desert.

The big reds make a mumble grumble sound.

The white rat liked playing with the big reds.

Ruby decided the white rat was no fun.

2. List the differences between an animal kept as a pet and an animal in the wild.

Pets

Wild Animals

3. Draw the big reds thumping past the two rats in the desert.

15 g Ruby and the White Rat

Name _____

1. Write the words that describe the sounds made by the following:

A leaking tap

Thunder in the sky

A needle popping a balloon

A racing car

2. Write three sentences using words made from sounds.
Use some of the sounds listed above.
