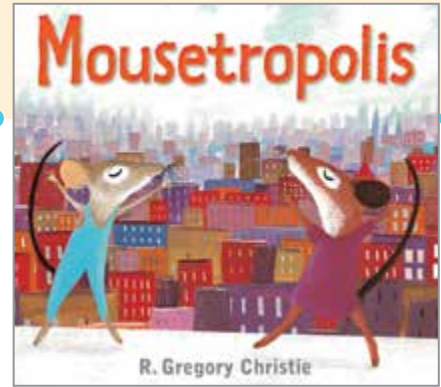


LESSON PLAN

Mousetropolis

written and illustrated by R. Gregory Christie

In this beautifully illustrated, reimagined Aesop fable, City Mouse and Country Mouse are both looking to escape life for a while, thinking that they will find something better, but what they learn is that “there’s no place like home.”



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Objectives: Compare and contrast versions of the same folk tale from Aesop’s fables; identify the moral; compare and contrast country and city life; determine the point of view; sequence events in the story; identify literary devices, including figurative language, metaphor, onomatopoeia and new vocabulary; form comprehension strategies; make connections between the words and illustrations as they appear; make inferences and identify changes from beginning to end of the story.

Guided Reading Level: J

Grade Level: 1

Interest level: Pre-K–2

Instructional Strands in This Guide:

Reading Literature: RL.1.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9/RL.2.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10

Reading Foundational Skills: RF.1–2.3, 4

Writing: W.1–2.1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8

Speaking and Listening: SL.1–2.1, 2, 3, 4, 6

Language: L.1–2.1, 2, 4, 5, 6

BEFORE READING

1. Look at the cover of *Mousetropolis*. Discuss the title. Ask students if they know the word *metropolis*. Explain that a metropolis is a city.
2. How do the pictures in the cover illustration connect with a city? Write *city* on the board. Brainstorm about the city.
3. Discuss the mice on the cover illustration. Predict what the story will be about. Ask the students to think about other stories about mice. (Some may not have read a version of this tale.)
4. What kind of story do you think *Mousetropolis* is? (Ex., fiction, nonfiction, tale, “how to” book)
5. Look at the title page. Read the title and author’s name and discuss the role of each. Have students identify the “City Mouse” and the “Country Mouse.”
6. Write *country* on the board next to city. Brainstorm about the country.
7. Write *compare and contrast* on the board. Discuss with the group that comparing and contrasting explains how things are alike and different.
8. Put up a Venn diagram. Write *city* and *country* above each circle. Ask the students to tell how they are alike. Write the words in the middle of the circle. Have them tell how they are different. (Ex., Both are places people live and work; the city is crowded and has tall buildings; the country is quiet and has farms.)
9. Take a picture walk through the book. The illustrations are vivid and detailed. Tell the students that sometimes the pictures tell us things about the characters, setting and events that the words do not.
10. Read to find out the story of City Mouse and Country Mouse and determine the text type. (tale, fable)



DURING READING

1. Read the book aloud to the group.
2. Discuss how the illustrations enhance the meaning and tone of the story.
3. Discuss with students: What do you do when you come to a word or phrase that you do not know?
4. Make a list of difficult words or phrases from the story. (Ex., *downtown*, *vacation*, “*Quicker than a mouse can nibble through a wedge of cheddar*,” “*quicker than a mouse can nibble through a wheel of provolone*,” *barley*, *dangerous*, *jamboree*, *whoooo*, *swoosh-swoosh*, *chugga-chugga*) Most of these words can be figured out by reading the words around them and by looking at the pictures. Go through the text and find the difficult vocabulary. Tell the students they are word detectives and need to figure out the meanings.
5. Underline the metaphors. Tell students that these are examples of figurative language. They have meanings that are not obvious, and you need to “read between the lines.” *Quicker than a _____* is making a comparison that is exaggerated to make a point.
6. Circle *wedge of cheddar* and *wheel of provolone*. Have students predict what these words mean. Some may be familiar with different types of cheeses. Ask students why they think R. Gregory Christie made this comparison. (CCSS L1–2.5)
7. Circle *Whooooo!*, *swoosh-swoosh*, and *chugga-chugga*. These are also examples of figurative language called *onomatopoeia*. Why do you think the author chose to use these sound words in the story? How do they enhance meaning?
8. Read the story again.
9. Explain how specific illustrations in the book gave you information about the characters, setting and events in the story.

Answer the questions as you read:

10. Where does the story begin? Why is City Mouse angry? Where does he go on vacation? What challenges do the characters encounter? How do the characters respond to challenges? What does Country Mouse do for fun? What does City Mouse miss about home? Describe the setting in the city. Why does Country Mouse leave the city?
11. What are the different points of view of the characters?
12. When done, retell the story as a class. What type of book is *Mousetropolis*? (fable, tale)

AFTER READING

1. What do we call a story with a lesson or moral? Discuss Aesop’s fables and show examples of stories.
2. What is the moral of the story? Do you agree that there is no place like home or that feeling safe is more important than having fun?
3. Read another version of “City Mouse, Country Mouse.” Compare and contrast the title, setting, plot and characters in both versions. Is the moral the same?
4. Expanding sentences: Both City Mouse and Country Mouse say, “home” in the story. What are they really thinking? Write a paragraph from the point of view of each character.
5. Create a figurative language word wall. Put up an *onomatopoeia* and a *metaphor* sign. Have the students go back to the text and find examples. Have students work in small groups to add to the wall.
6. Reimagine your own version of “City Mouse, Country Mouse.”

WORD WORK

7. *City* and *country* are opposites. Find the opposite, or antonym, for the following words from the story: *quick*, *downtown*, *wide-awake*, *morning*, *down*, *first*, *fun*, *on*, *dangerous*, *bad*, *quiet*, *hot*, *same*, *hurry*, *everywhere*.
8. Using the words above, find the compound words. Think of five more compound words.
9. Fill in the blanks using some of the vocabulary words from above.
City Mouse lives _____.
The cat and the owl are _____.
Country Mouse goes to the Jamboree for _____.
It is _____ in the country, but not in the city.
City Mouse wanted to go home. He thought that the country was too _____ and _____.
10. Describe where you live. Do you live in a city, suburb or the country? Draw a map of your neighborhood.

