

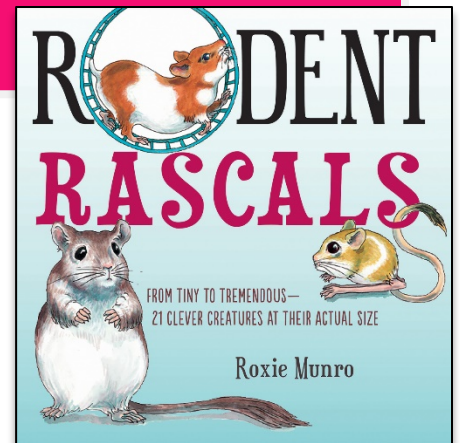
# LESSON PLAN

STEM

## Rodent Rascals

From Tiny to Tremendous—  
21 Clever Creatures at  
written and illustrated by Roxie Munro

*Rodents are the single largest order of mammals. Learn about the varieties, behaviors and characteristics, astounding abilities, and the intelligence of these Rodent Rascals (in actual size).*



9780823438600 • Ages 6–10 • E-book available

**Objectives:** Students will be able to read for purpose and understanding, identify text type, answer comprehension questions using text support, summarize, compare and contrast, and report on a topic by drawing evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

**Guided Reading Level:** Q

**Grade Level:** 4

**Interest Level:** 3–5

### Instructional Standards

**Reading Informational Text:** RI.3-5.1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8

**Reading Foundation Skills:** RF.3-5.3,4,4a,4c

**Writing:** W.3.1,2,3,7,8,10/W.4-5.1,2,3,7,8,9,9b,10

**Speaking and Listening:** SL.3-5.1,2,3,4,5

**Language:** L.3-5.1,2,3,4,4a,6

### NGSS

3-LS2 Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics

3-LS3 Heredity: Inheritance and Variation of Traits

3-LS4 Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity

4-LS1 from Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes

### BEFORE READING

1. Write the title of the book on the board (*Rodent Rascals*).
2. Create a KWL chart.
3. Chart what we know about rodents. What is a rodent?
4. What do you know about rodents?
5. Give some examples of rodents.
6. Where do they live?
7. What words would you use to describe rodents?
8. Do you think they are “clever creatures”?
9. What is your opinion of rodents? Write a sentence or two on your point of view.
10. What is a rascal? Why would someone call a rodent a rascal?
11. Share experiences the students have had with rodents.
12. Show the book to the group. Discuss the front and back cover illustrations.
13. Why would Roxie Munro create the illustrations in actual size?



14. Skim the book. How do the illustrations in actual size enhance the meaning and tone of the book?
15. Think about what you want to learn more about. Fill in the KWL chart.
16. Identify the **text type** of *Rodent Rascals*. Why it is important to think about the text type before reading a book?
17. Nonfiction vs. fiction:
  - Nonfiction texts give us information that is true.
  - Nonfiction is organized around a specific idea or topic.
  - Nonfiction teaches facts through reading.
  - Nonfiction books are based on firsthand and secondhand accounts.
18. What informational text features does *Rodent Rascal* contain? How will these help you find information?
 

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|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• introduction</li> <li>• headings</li> <li>• bold type</li> <li>• diagrams</li> <li>• labels</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• side text</li> <li>• photographs</li> <li>• illustrations</li> <li>• captions</li> <li>• maps</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• time line</li> <li>• glossary</li> <li>• index</li> <li>• sources</li> <li>• websites</li> </ul> |
|---|---|---|
19. Read *Rodent Rascals* to learn about rodents. Does this book change your opinion?

## DURING READING

Think about:

1. What is the point of view of the author on rodents?
2. How does the author use reasons and evidence to support her claim that rodents have astounding abilities and are very intelligent? How does she structure the book?
3. Write down difficult new vocabulary words and infer the meaning as you read the words in context.
4. As you read, jot down notes on interesting facts about each animal.
5. Does knowing that the illustrations are actual size have any impact on your understanding of the animal? How do the actual-size illustrations affect you?
6. How do the rodents in the book act like rascals?
7. How do rodents help people? How are they like humans? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
8. Now what do you think about rodents?

## AFTER READING

### Make Connections

1. Create a summary for each animal. What did you learn about? Complete the KWL chart.
2. What are the unique characteristics of the 21 rodents in the book? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
3. Describe the different lifestyles and habitats of the rodents.
4. Choose one of the rodents. Create a poem.
5. If you could be any one of the rodents in this book, which would you choose? Write a narrative explaining why you chose this animal.
6. Go back to the book and find some of the animal names that you found interesting or humorous.
7. If you were a rodent, what would you be called?
8. What is something funny that you learned? Interesting? Sad? Scary? Surprising?
9. Use the vocabulary words to describe specific rodents from the book. Ex: Arboreal. Name rodents from the book that live in trees.
10. How did reading *Rodent Rascals* change your opinion of these animals?
11. Compare and contrast two different varieties of rodents that interest you.
12. Chose one of the rodents to report on. Create a presentation using audio and visual aids.

Guide written by Marla Conn, reading/literacy specialist and educational consultant

4.18

