



TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES K-3

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Once a Mouse

Marcia Brown

READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Once a Mouse

Marcia Brown

TEACHER GUIDE

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

ISBN 978-1-50204-052-7

Copyright infringement is a violation of Federal Law.

© 2020 by Novel Units, Inc., St. Louis, MO. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any way or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise) without prior written permission from Novel Units, Inc.

Reproduction of any part of this publication for an entire school or for a school system, by for-profit institutions and tutoring centers, or for commercial sale is strictly prohibited.

Novel Units is a registered trademark of Conn Education.

Printed in the United States of America.

To order, contact your
local school supply store, or:

Toll-Free Fax: 877.716.7272

Phone: 888.650.4224

3901 Union Blvd., Suite 155

St. Louis, MO 63115

sales@novelunits.com

novelunits.com

Table of Contents

Summary	3
About the Author	3
Initiating Activities	4
Bulletin Board Ideas	6
Prereading Activity	6
Procedure	6
Three Sections	12
Each section contains: Vocabulary, Discussion Questions, and Supplementary Activities	
Recipes	19
Puzzles	22
Teacher Information	28
Bibliography	31

Summary

A hermit is sitting in the forest, thinking about big and little, when he sees a mouse about to be snatched up by a crow. Saving the mouse from certain death, the hermit takes the mouse to his hut in the forest, and cares for it there. As larger animals threaten the pet, the hermit changes the mouse into a cat, a dog, and a majestic tiger. As the tiger struts about the forest, he is reminded of his humble beginning by the hermit. Offended and humiliated, the tiger sulks off, and decides to kill the hermit. However, the hermit, reading the tiger's mind, turns the tiger back into a humble mouse that is never seen again.

About the Author

Marcia Brown was born July 13, 1918, in Rochester, New York. She studied at the Woodstock School of Painting during the summer of 1938, and attended the New York College for Teachers, now the State University of New York at Albany, and received a B.A. degree in 1940. She later studied at New School for Social Research, Art Students' League, and Columbia University. In 1985, she studied at Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts in Hangzhou, China.

Brown is an artist and author of children's books. She taught English and drama from 1940-43 at Cornwall High School, Cornwall, NY. She was a library assistant for the rare book collection at the New York Public Library from 1943-48. In 1953 she taught puppetry at the University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, British West Indies.

She received the Caldecott Medal for *Once a Mouse...* in 1962. The same book was selected for the American Institute of Graphic Arts Children's Book Show, 1961-62. Her children's books are all self-illustrated.

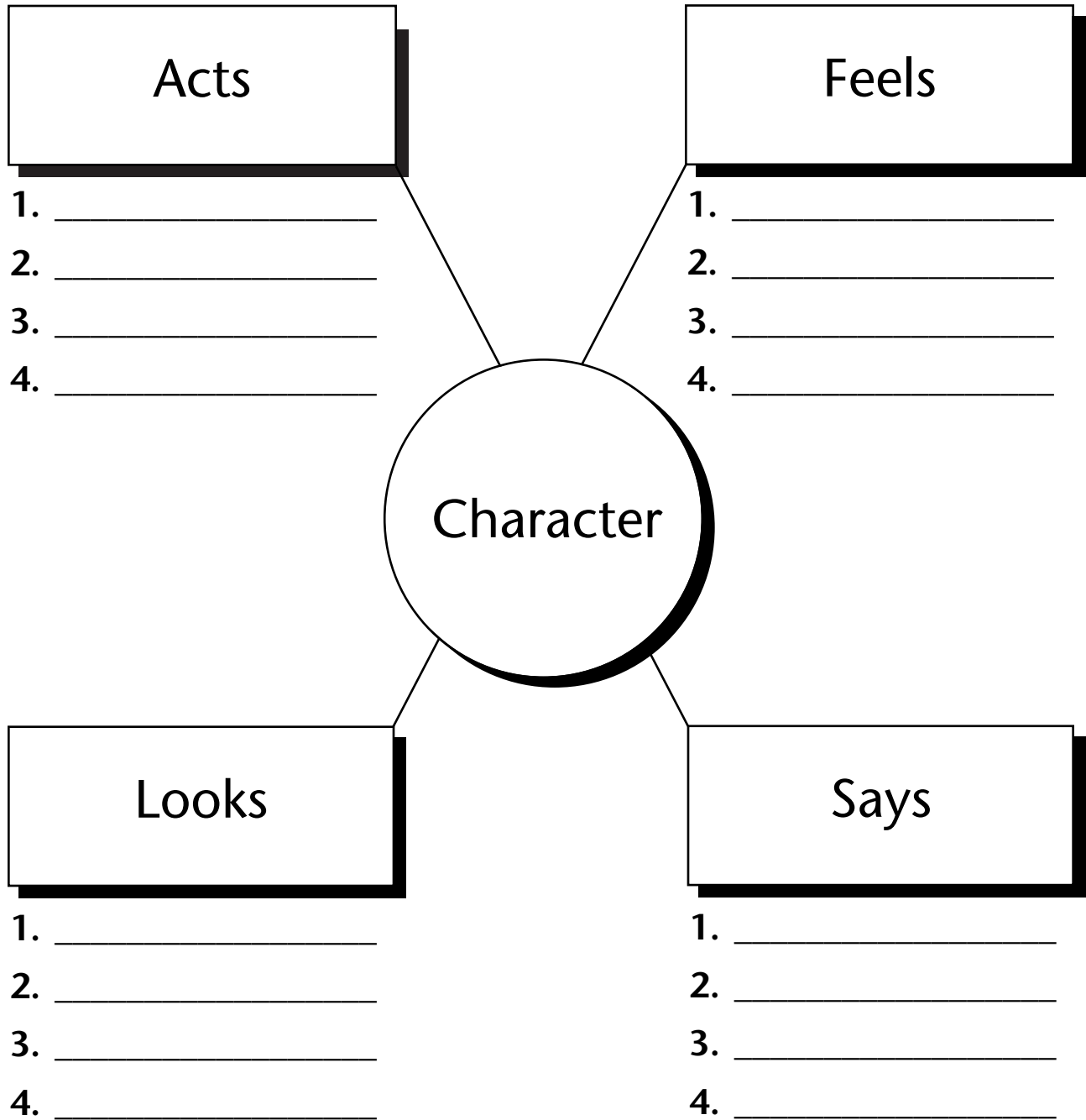
She has said, "My interest in making picture books comes in an almost unbroken line from the constant reading and drawing of my childhood. Pictures popped into my head as I read, and I read voraciously. Very early I discovered that music and drawing could sometimes speak more clearly than words. My sisters and I were brought up to take enormous pleasure in the visual world; and since our childhood was spent in small towns with beautiful natural settings, we had plenty of opportunity to do so. Reading books and listening to music were as normal parts of my childhood as eating and playing.

"From the time when I first wanted to illustrate books, and that was quite early in my life, I was interested in books for younger rather than older children. I remember a keen resentment that a book was illustrated at all when the pictures were inadequate compared to those pictures that formed in the mind. I like making books for young children whose imaginations are vivid and whose associations are few.

"A picture book really exists only when a child and a book come together, when the stream that formed in the artist's mind and heart flows through the book and into the mind and heart of the child. Before starting to make the book, an artist must be sure the story is worth the time, his time and love spent in illustrating it, and the child's time to be spent in looking at it."

Attribute Web

The attribute web below will help you gather clues the author provides about a character in the novel. Fill in the blanks with words and phrases which tell how the character acts and looks, as well as what the character says and what others say about him or her.



Pages 1 through 11 (From “One day a hermit sat thinking about big and little—” to “he quickly changed him into a stout cat. But...”)

Vocabulary

hermit 1

snatched 2

greedy 4

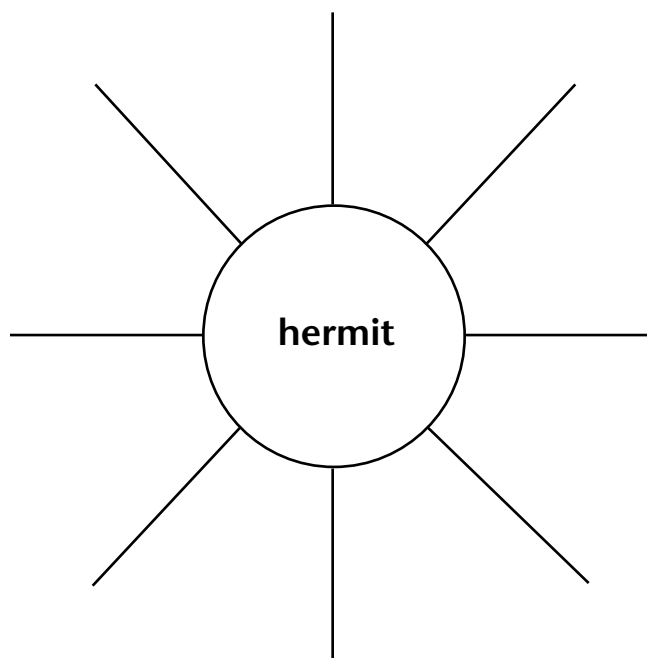
comforted 7

Vocabulary Activity

Some of the characters in this story are a hermit, a mouse, and a crow. Pretend to be the hermit. Show how you would comfort the mouse. Pretend to be the crow. Show how you would try to snatch something. Pretend to be the mouse. Show how you would be greedy.

Discussion Questions and Activities

1. What is the hermit thinking about as he sits beneath the tree? (*Page 1, He is thinking about big and little.*) If you were to think about big and little also, what would you think? Make a list.
2. Brainstorm the word *hermit*. What are some things that you know about hermits?



3. Why do you think that the crow is chasing after the mouse? (pages 2, 3, 4) What is the crow going to do? Make a list of some of the things that crows eat.
4. What does the hermit do to comfort the mouse? (*Page 7, The hermit takes the mouse to his hut in the forest, and gives the mouse milk and grains of rice.*) How do you like to be comforted? Is there some food that makes you feel better? Is there some story or song that makes you feel better?

-
5. What other kind of animal comes to the hut? (*Page 8, A cat comes to the hut.*)
 6. What does the hermit do to protect the mouse? (*Page 11, The hermit changes the mouse into a stout cat.*)
 7. Page 11 ends with the word "But..." Make some predictions. What will happen next?
 8. Start a story map. (See page 9 of this guide.)
 9. Start an attribute web for the hermit. (See pages 10-11 of this guide.) What words best describe him?
 10. What animal would you like to be? Let's pretend that the hermit is going to change you into an animal. Make a picture of yourself as that animal, and explain why you chose to be that one.

Pages 12 through 21 (From "that night a dog barked in the forest." to "lording it over the other animals.")

Vocabulary

prowling 16

gesture 18

lording 20

Vocabulary Activity

Look at the letters in the word *prowling*. How many different words can you make from those letters? (*Here are a few: prowl, growl, plow, row, low, wing, ring, go, ping, win, etc.*)

Discussion Questions and Activities

1. What kind of animal barks in the forest? (*Page 12, A dog barks in the forest.*)
2. What is the hermit's reaction to the dog barking? (*Page 15, He changes the cat into a big dog.*) Do you think that this is the end of changing animals?
3. What kind of animal pounces on the dog? (*Page 16, A tiger pounces on the dog.*)
4. What happens next? (*Pages 18-19, The hermit, with a gesture, changes the dog into a large tiger.*) How do you think that the other tiger feels when he starts out by looking at a dog, and then all of a sudden sees a very large tiger? Draw a picture showing the face of the tiger, and how it feels.
5. The author says that the tiger is "lording it over the other animals." What do you think that means? (Notice the illustration on pages 20 and 21. Look at the face of the tiger.) Have you ever done something similar? What was it, and why?
6. Make a prediction as to what may happen next. Is there any animal that is larger than the tiger?
7. Make illustrations of the animals, remembering that the cat is larger than the mouse, the dog is larger than the cat, and the tiger is the largest of all.