

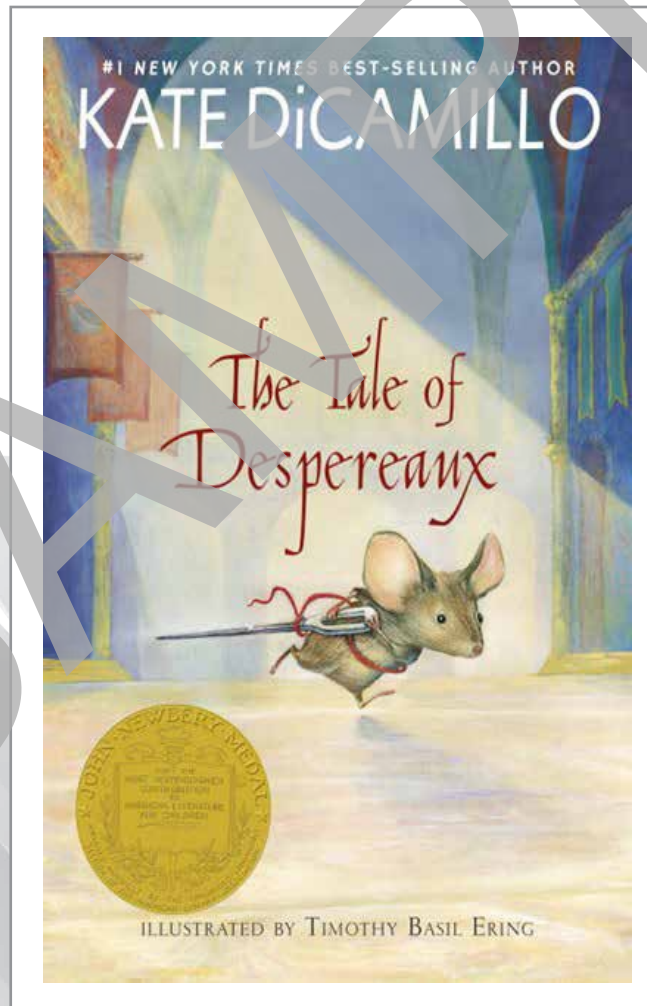


STUDENT PACKET

GRADES 3-5

The Tale of Despereaux

Kate DiCamillo



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The Tale of Despereaux

Kate DiCamillo

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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!

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Name _____

The Tale of Despereaux

Activity #4 • Vocabulary

Book the First, Chapters 1–7, pp. 11–41

disappointment (12)
molding (21)
adoringly (32)

tragedy (12)
indignant (24)
protested (38)

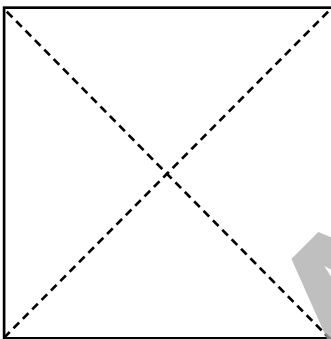
intent (18)
circumstances (27)
ancient (39)

siblings (20)
incredible (30)

Vocabulary Mobile

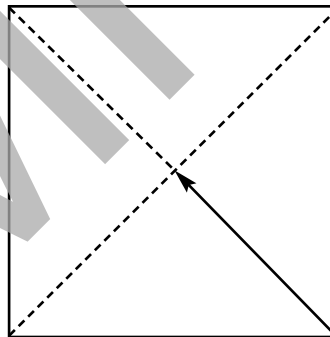
Directions: Cut a nine-inch square out of white construction paper. Fold paper in half diagonally (from corner to corner). Unfold paper. Fold the paper in half again (Figure A). Then cut one fold from the outer corner to the center of the paper (Figure B). Slide one cut piece on top of the other to form a triangular shape with a base and two standing sides. Glue the pieces together (Figure C). On the inside base, write a vocabulary word. On the inside left, write a sentence using the vocabulary word. On the inside right, draw a picture to illustrate the vocabulary word. Repeat the process for at least nine words from the list. Glue the back sides of your completed triangles together and hang them as a mobile.

Figure A



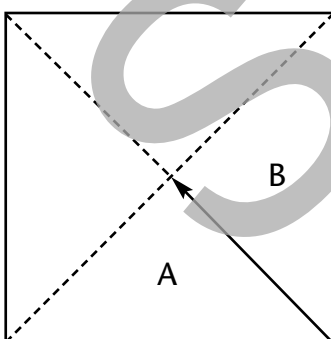
- 1–Fold in half diagonally
- 2–Fold in half again

Figure B

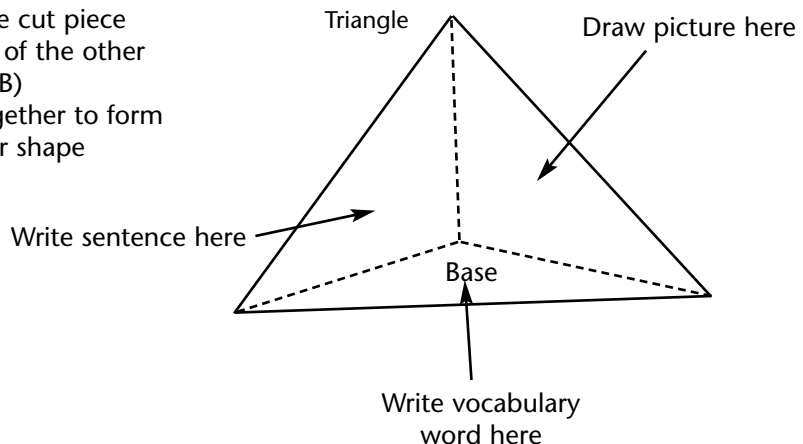


Cut from corner to center in direction of arrow

Figure C



- 1–Slide one cut piece (A) on top of the other cut piece (B)
- 2–Glue together to form a triangular shape



Name _____

Directions: On a separate piece of paper, write a brief answer to each study question. Starred questions indicate thought or opinion questions. Use your answers in class discussions, for writing assignments, and to review for tests.

Book the First, Chapters 1–7, pp. 11–41

1. How does Despereaux get his name?
2. What incident gives the Tillings the first clue that Despereaux is different from other mice?
3. What reason does Antoinette give for not wanting more children?
4. The author describes Despereaux as being sickly. What are his symptoms?
5. *Describe your reaction when you read, on page 25 of the novel, that Despereaux was “destined” to meet the “large” and “mean” rats that lived in the dungeon.
6. What effect does the king’s music have on Despereaux?
7. *Why do you think Furlough feels that Despereaux needs to learn how to scurry?
8. What does Despereaux’s father do when he finds out that his son is interacting with humans?
9. Why does the king fail to kill Despereaux once he realizes he is a rodent?
10. What does Despereaux mean when he tells Princess Pea, “I honor you”?

Chapters 8–15, pp. 42–81

1. Why does the Mouse Council consider Despereaux a mouse that cannot be trusted?
2. What clues are there that many of the mice watching Despereaux’s trial have already made up their mind as to his guilt?
3. What fate is decided for Despereaux?
4. What question does the threadmaster ask Despereaux?
5. *Explain why the author says that the word perfidy becomes “an ever more appropriate word” as the story progresses (p. 69).
6. How does Despereaux try to overcome his fear of the dungeon?
7. *What does Gregory mean when he says, “You are talking to Gregory the jailer, who, in the richest of ironies, is nothing but a prisoner here himself” (p. 77)?
8. What reason does Gregory give for not letting Despereaux get down?
9. What is the real motive behind Gregory’s decision to save Despereaux?
10. What does the author give as a reason for interrupting Despereaux’s story?

Name _____

The Tale of Despereaux
Activity #11 • Character Analysis
Use During Reading

Feelings

Directions: Choose a character from the book and complete the chart below.

Describe the character in the beginning.

Summarize important events in the boxes below. Describe how the character feels after each one.

Event #1:	The character feels ...
Event #2:	The character feels ...
Event #3:	The character feels ...
Event #4:	The character feels ...
Event #5:	The character feels ...
Event #6:	The character feels ...

Describe _____ at the end.

Name _____

Understanding Values

Values represent people's beliefs about what is important, good, or worthwhile. For example, most families value spending time together.

Directions: Think about the following characters from the novel and the values they exhibit. What do they value? What beliefs do they have about what is important, good, or worthwhile? On the chart below, list each character's three most important values, from most important to least. Be prepared to share your lists during a class discussion.

Despereaux

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Princess Pea

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Lester

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Values

Roscuro

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Gregory

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Miggery Sow

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

After you have finished the chart and participated in the class discussion, think about which character seems to have values most like your own. Write a paragraph that explains why you chose this character.