

Everett Public Schools Assessment of Student Learning

Student Packet



Benchmark Reading Assessment Grade 9 Grading Period 3

“The Country Mouse and the Town Mouse”

“Desert Woodrats”

“freddy the rat perishes”

Student: _____

Date: _____

Teacher: _____

Period: _____

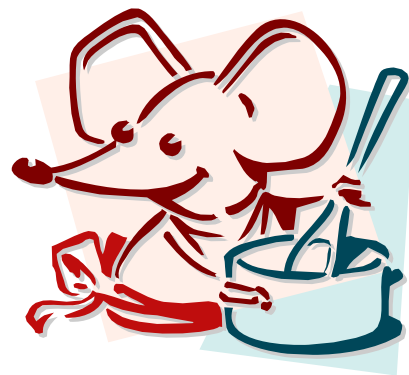
Literary Passage

Directions: Read the following selection and then answer the questions.

The Country Mouse and the Town Mouse

By Æsop

- 1 Once upon a time a Country Mouse who had a friend in town invited him, for old acquaintance's sake, to pay him a visit in the country. The invitation accepted, the Country Mouse, though plain and rough and somewhat frugal in his nature, opened his heart and food supply, in honor of hospitality and an old friend. There was not a carefully stored-up morsel that he did not bring forth out of his pantry, peas and barley, cheese-parings and nuts, hoping by quantity to make up what he feared was wanting in quality, to suit the palate of his dainty guest. The Town Mouse, condescending to pick a bit here and a bit there, while the host sat nibbling a blade of barley-straw, at length exclaimed, "How is it, my good friend, that you can endure the dullness of this unpolished life? You are living like a toad in a hole. You can't really prefer these solitary rocks and woods to streets teeming with carriages and men. On my honor, you are wasting your time miserably here. We must make the most of life while it lasts. A mouse, you know, does not live forever and so come with me and I'll show you life and the town."
- 2 Overpowered with such fine words and so polished a manner, the Country Mouse assented, and they set out together on their journey to town. It was late in the evening when they crept stealthily into the city, and midnight before they reached the great house where the Town Mouse took up his quarters. Here were couches of crimson velvet, carvings in ivory, everything that denoted wealth and luxury. On the table were the remains of a splendid banquet, from all the choicest shops in the town. It was now the turn of the Town Mouse to play the host, and so placing his country friend on the best seat, he ran back and forth to supply all his wants.



- 3 He presented dish upon dish as though he were waiting on a king, and tasted every course prior to placing it before his rustic cousin. Making himself quite at home, the Country Mouse blessed the good fortune that had brought such a change in his way of life. In the midst of his enjoyment, as he was thinking with contempt of the poor fare he had forsaken, suddenly the door flew open, and a party of revelers returning from a late entertainment, burst into the room. The frightened friends jumped from the table in the greatest consternation and hid themselves in the first corner they could reach. No sooner did they venture to creep out again than the barking of dogs drove them back in still greater terror than before. When things seemed quiet, the Country Mouse stole out from his hiding place. Bidding his friend good-bye, he whispered in his ear, “Oh, my good sir, this fine mode of living may do for those who like it; but give me my barley-bread in peace and security before the daintiest feast where Fear and Care are in waiting.”

Selection from-Aesop’s Fables by Jack D. Zipes, Aesop, Signet Classic, 1992.



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“The Country Mouse and the Town Mouse”

Fill in the bubble next to the letter of the best answer.

1. Which sentence tells how the Town Mouse and Country Mouse are similar? [LA06]
 - ☐ A. Both mice are capable of adapting to new situations.
 - ☐ B. Both mice are dissatisfied with their lives.
 - ☐ C. Both mice enjoy experiencing new people and places.
 - ☐ D. Both mice have difficulty understanding the other’s point-of-view.

2. Why does Country Mouse accept Town Mouse’s invitation to visit him in the city? [LA07]
 - ☐ A. Country Mouse feels coerced by Town Mouse’s words and polish.
 - ☐ B. Country Mouse is curious about Town Mouse’s home and city life.
 - ☐ C. Country Mouse regrets the plain meal he served and wants to remedy the situation.
 - ☐ D. Country Mouse is frugal and looks forward to Town Mouse hosting a quality meal.

3. What is wrong with Town Mouse’s reasoning in the story? [LT09]
 - ☐ A. He ate little of Country Mouse’s simple food.
 - ☐ B. He values other’s lifestyles without experiencing them.
 - ☐ C. He doesn’t consider all the factors before choosing the country life.
 - ☐ D. He only looks to luxury without accommodating for fear and danger.

4. Based on the information in the story, what conclusion can the reader draw about being satisfied with life? [LT10]
 - ☐ A. A rustic life of sacrifice is satisfying and desirable.
 - ☐ B. Life is more satisfying with fancy foods and fine living.
 - ☐ C. No life is perfect; the secret is to appreciate your own life.
 - ☐ D. A life of wealth has its drawbacks, but it is preferable to poverty.

5. What is the author’s purpose for writing the story? [LT08]
 - ☐ A. To describe an encounter between two mice
 - ☐ B. To teach readers a lesson using an animal story
 - ☐ C. To explain the variations in the behavior of mice through a story
 - ☐ D. To show readers that unfamiliar things are the most comforting

6. **Short Answer- 2 pts**

Explain why Country Mouse decided to return home after visiting the town. Include **two** details from the story in your answer. [LA07]

Informational Passage

Directions: Read the following selection and then answer the questions.

Desert Woodrats (Pack Rats ~ Trading Rats) By Jerrold J. Feldner



- 1 According to popular wisdom, woodrats are the businessmen of the desert. Stories abound about how the scurrying rodents have stolen one shiny treasure, but always left another of equal value in its place. In reality, while carrying one trophy, the rat may see another that is even more attractive, and so puts down the first to pick up the second – it can carry only one item at a time.
- 2 Woodrats are commonly called Pack Rats or Trade Rats because they collect various objects and bits of material to deposit in, or use in the construction of, their nests. They are especially fond of small, bright, shiny objects that they will readily confiscate.
- 3 Woodrats are pale buff, gray or reddish brown, usually with white undersides and feet. They have relatively large ears and, normally, hairy tails. They range in length from 8 to 20 inches, including their 3- to 9-inch tail.

Range and Habitat

- 4 Woodrats are widely distributed throughout all the North American desert regions, north to Canada. They can be found in gravel desert lowlands, dry plains, brushlands and pinyon-juniper forests, from below sea level to 8,000 feet. There are 22 species of Woodrats in North and Central America. Seven of these species are found in the North American deserts.

Behavior

- 5 Woodrat nests reflect their environment. Some rats live in nests built of plant material like branches, twigs, sticks and other debris. These huge, beaver-dam-shaped structures may be up to 4 feet across. Often nests are constructed in a tree or on the ground at the base of a tree or rocky ledge.
- 6 In the deserts, woodrats often nest in or around cactus, particularly cholla and beavertail cacti. These sites help keep the nest much cooler than the surrounding desert floor in summer, while helping retain the animals' body heat in winter. Further, woodrats build in protection from predators by using cactus pads and cactus spines in the construction. The woodrat is most vulnerable when out foraging for food, at which times a coyote, fox, snake or owl may prey upon it.
- 7 Primarily nocturnal and vegetarian, desert woodrats survive on a diet of spiny cactus, yucca pods, bark, berries, pinyon nuts, seeds and any available green vegetation. They rely on succulent plants for their water, since they do not have the refined metabolic and water conservation capabilities of Pocket Mice and Kangaroo Rats. They are one of the few animals that can navigate with impunity between cactus spines to feed on the juicy pads.

Life Cycle

- 8 The reproductive habits of rodents are extremely variable in the wild and can become even more so when domesticated. Most are born naked and helpless. Some desert female woodrats have been known to deliver up to five litters per year with as many as five young per litter.
- 9 The young may open their eyes at 10-12 days and are usually weaned between 14 and 42 days. Most become sexually mature after 60 days. If the litter is especially large, the mother woodrat may die after weaning. Most rodents are polygamous and some mate for the duration of a single breeding season.

Common Desert Woodrat Species

Name	Description	Nesting	Location	Size
Desert Woodrat	smallest of the three species – buff-gray above, gray below, with hind feet white tail is distinctly bi-colored	sometimes takes over the burrow of a ground squirrel or Kangaroo Rat, and will fortify the entrance with sticks and cactus spines	Great Basin, Sonoran and Mojave deserts from southern Oregon and Idaho, south through Nevada, western and southern Utah, and southern California to Baja	8.5 to 15 inches
White-throated Woodrat	brownish gray above, white or gray below; feet are white	chooses the base of a prickly pear or cholla cactus as the site for its home more rarely use rocky crevices or underground chambers in extremely hot desert regions	Sonoran and Chihuahuan deserts from extreme southeastern California, across Arizona and New Mexico to west Texas and south to Mexico	11 to 16 inches
Dusky-footed Woodrat	grayish, with pale underside tail is about half its length and faintly bi-colored	builds its nest on the ground in open areas or in a tree up to 50 feet high in woodlands nest often built over several generations of woodrats	all but desert region of California and in northwestern region of Baja California peninsula	10 to 17 inches

Selection from- www.desertusa.com/mag99/apr/papr/packrats.html

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“Desert Woodrats”

Fill in the bubble next to the letter of the best answer.

7. How are the Desert Woodrats and the White-throated Woodrats in the selection different? [IA16]
- ☐ A. White-throated Woodrats are smaller than Desert Woodrats.
 - ☐ B. White-throated Woodrats are gray below while Desert Woodrats are not.
 - ☐ C. Desert Woodrats live in the desert while White-throated Woodrats do not.
 - ☐ D. Desert Woodrats’ back feet are white while all four of the White-throated Woodrats’ feet are white.
8. Which sentence best explains why desert woodrats sometimes leave shiny objects behind? [IA17]
- ☐ A. They are attracted to shiny objects.
 - ☐ B. They are the businessmen of the desert.
 - ☐ C. They are only able to carry one item at a time.
 - ☐ D. They are packrats and collect miscellaneous objects.
9. Which sentence from the selection is an opinion? [IT18]
- ☐ A. “The woodrat is most vulnerable when out foraging for food . . .”
 - ☐ B. “. . . few animals can navigate with impunity . . .”
 - ☐ C. “Most rodents are polygamous . . .”
 - ☐ D. “. . . they do not have the refined metabolic and water conservation capabilities . . .”
10. Which statement is the most important conclusion that the reader may draw from the selection? [IT19]
- ☐ A. Woodrats rely on other animals for their safety.
 - ☐ B. Woodrats’ reproductive habits vary according to their environment.
 - ☐ C. Woodrats have adapted their behaviors to endure desert conditions.
 - ☐ D. Woodrats collect a variety of objects.
11. After reading the selection, what generalization can the reader make about wildlife in the desert? [IT20]
- ☐ A. Desert wildlife is most vulnerable when hunting food.
 - ☐ B. Desert wildlife depends on the ability to become domesticated.
 - ☐ C. Desert wildlife develops strategies to conserve or obtain water to survive.
 - ☐ D. Desert wildlife is widely distributed throughout all the North American regions.

12. Extended Response– 4 pts

What is the author’s purpose for writing the selection? Provide **three** details from the selection to support your answer. [IT18]

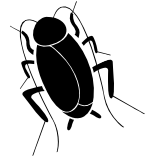
Literary Passage: Poem

Directions: Read the following selection and then answer the questions.

freddy the rat perishes

by Don Marquis

The scene is a newspaper office after working hours when all the insects and rodents come out from hiding. The report is written for Don Marquis (the daytime occupier of the office) by Archy the cockroach, who types by jumping from key to key



listen to me there have
been some doings here since last
i wrote there has been a battle
behind that rusty typewriter cover
5 in the corner
you remember freddy the rat well
freddy is no more but
he died game the other
day a stranger with a lot of
10 legs came into our
little circle a tough looking kid
he was with a bad eye

who are you said a thousand legs
if i bite you once
15 said the stranger you won t ask
again he he little poison tongue said
the thousand legs who gave you hydrophobia
i got it by biting myself said
the stranger I m bad keep away
20 from me where i step a weed dies
if i was to walk on your forehead it would
raise measles and if
you give me any lip i ll do it

they mixed it then
25 and the thousand legs succumbed
well we found out this fellow
was a tarantula he had come up from
south america in a bunch of bananas
for days he bossed us life
30 was not worth living he would stand in
the middle of the floor and taunt
us ha ha he would say where i
step a weed dies do
you want any of my game i was



35 raised on red pepper and blood i am
so hot if you scratch me i will light
like a match you better
dodge me when i m feeling mean and
i don t feel any other way i was nursed
40 on a tabasco bottle if i was to slap
your wrist in kindness you
would boil over like **job***and heaven
help you if i get angry give me
room i feel a wicked spell coming on

45 last night he made a break at freddy
the rat keep your distance
little one said freddy i m not
feeling well myself somebody poisoned some
cheese for me i m as full of
50 death as a drug store i
feel that i am going to die anyhow
come on little torpedo come on don t stop
to visit and search then they
went at it and both are no more please
55 throw a late edition on the floor i want to
keep up with china we dropped freddy
off the fire escape into the alley with
military honors



—archy

Selection from- www.donmarquis.org/freddy

***Job:** *a biblical character who had to overcome many difficulties*

Benchmark Reading Assessment

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“freddy the rat perishes”

Fill in the bubble next to the letter of the best answer.

13. Which sentence tells how the cockroach from the poem and the Country Mouse from “The Country Mouse and The Town Mouse” are similar? [LA06]

- ☐ A. Both hate violence.
- ☐ B. Both want a quiet life in the country.
- ☐ C. Both believe that they have the most desirable life.
- ☐ D. Both are observers of what is happening around them.

14. Which sentence best describes the poet's feelings about freddy in the poem? [LT08]

- ☐ A. freddy died bravely.
- ☐ B. freddy deserved to die.
- ☐ C. freddy was a mean, sneaky rat.
- ☐ D. freddy was flighty and needed to think before acting.

15. Which sentence best describes freddy's response to the tarantula in the poem? [LA07]

- ☐ A. freddy was afraid of the tarantula.
- ☐ B. freddy was angry that the tarantula was threatening his friends.
- ☐ C. freddy was curious about the tarantula.
- ☐ D. freddy felt sorry for the tarantula because it was so far from home.

16. Why does the tarantula threaten freddy? [LT09]

- ☐ A. The tarantula was a bully.
- ☐ B. freddy flaunted his friendships in front of the tarantula.
- ☐ C. freddy was a bully who fought with everyone.
- ☐ D. The tarantula wanted to have freddy's spot in the newsroom.

17. Based on the information in the poem, what conclusion can the reader draw about a reporter? [LT10 Generalize]

- ☐ A. A reporter needs to be frugal.
- ☐ B. A reporter needs to be organized.
- ☐ C. A reporter needs to be emotional.
- ☐ D. A reporter needs to be accurate.

18. Short Answer– 2 pts

Was the rat's decision to fight the tarantula a good idea? Provide **two** details from the poem to support your answer. [LT09]
