

Level
1

Penguin Young Readers Factsheets

Town Mouse and Country Mouse

Teacher's Notes

Summary

Town Mouse and Country Mouse are good friends although they live in very different places. When Town Mouse visits Country Mouse for lunch, he sees fruit trees and farm animals for the first time and he eats home-grown food. When Country Mouse goes to the town for lunch, Town Mouse introduces him to parks, buses and a food store. They each prefer their own homes, but remain the best of friends.

Background to the story

The first known appearance of the story of the town mouse and the country mouse was in Scotland in the 15th century, when Robert Henryson (c.1425–c.1508) first wrote the story in verse, inspired by the moral fables told by Aesop. The story has since become a children's classic. Aesop (c.620-560 BC) was a Greek writer believed to have been a freed slave. He wrote numerous moralistic beast fables and these were largely transmitted orally for many years.

Topics and themes

Animals Mice are animals found everywhere, both in the wild (in towns or countryside) and as pets. The topic can therefore be used for factual information. Mice are also very popular in stories. *Town Mouse, Country Mouse* can also be used for work on comparative adjectives by asking the pupils to think of animals that are 'bigger than' or 'smaller than' mice, for example.

The country and the town Town Mouse and Country Mouse discover new things when they visit each other. What are town/country differences that the pupils can think of? Perhaps the pupils could have a class vote to find out who would rather live in the country and who would rather live in a town and then justify their decisions based on the merits or disadvantages of each. Using the illustrations in the Reader, ask the pupils to think also of the differences between their countryside and towns and those found in other countries.

Food Country Mouse eats the food that is produced in or near his home, but Town Mouse buys his food

in a large town store. Several topics can be developed from this, including how food (either in general, or keeping to cheese and apples) is made, how it is brought to stores from farms around the world. Pupils may like to research what mice eat in the wild and say what their pets eat. Are there other stories about cheese that the pupils know? Penguin Young Readers *Aesop's Fables* has one story about a fox who likes cheese.

World/environment Food from around the world is one topic that can be worked on. Also for discussion is the one of mice as spreading disease, and being pests in people's homes. The Penguin Young Readers *Pied Piper of Hamelin* (actually on rats) is a story on this theme.

Friendships Town Mouse and Country Mouse have very different lifestyles but they are still the best of friends. The pupils may like to describe their own friends, perhaps focusing on similarities and differences or discussing trips to friends' homes.

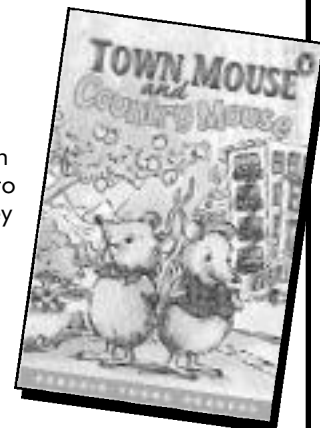
Making use of the Reader

Finger Puppets (About 20 minutes) Cut out a semi-circular piece of card (around 20 cm in diameter) for each pupil. Tell the pupils they will make either a Town Mouse or a Country Mouse and to illustrate the card as appropriate, based on the illustrations in the book. Collect the cards and join the ends, securing with a staple, or tape, before redistributing the finger puppets.

These can then be used as props in a small play based on the Reader. Here are two suggestions:

Mice on vacation (About 30 minutes or over several lessons) Pre-prepare some large pieces of

cardboard (around 35cm sq) with flaps on the bottom to ensure they stand up. These will be made into small backdrops for the puppet play. With the whole class, brainstorm town and country vocabulary, beginning with the vocabulary from the Reader and progressing to less familiar words. Divide the pupils into pairs with their finger puppets. In each pair there should be a Town Mouse and a Country Mouse. Distribute the backdrop cards, one for each pair. The pupils then work together in pairs to decorate their backdrop, either as a country scene or a town scene, illustrating it with as many of the brainstormed items as possible. When these are completed, the pupils re-enact the Town



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Mouse's visit to the country or vice versa, speaking the words 'what's this?' 'it's a ...' and so on.

Alternatively, begin the lesson by brainstorming other environment vocabulary, focusing on either 'the beach' or 'the mountains' or 'a safari'. The pupils then decorate their backdrops and take the mice on vacation together!

Listen and color (20 minutes) Using photocopiable activity number 2. When the pupils have completed the photocopiable exercise, ask them to cut out the town scene and the country scene. One partner should then secretly color the town scene and the other should color the country scene, making sure they cannot see each other's work. When they have finished, explain to the pupils

that they must dictate to their partner the way the unfinished scenes should be colored ('the bus is red', for example) and that the aim is to have matching pictures in the end.

Questionnaire: Are you a Town Mouse or a Country Mouse? (About 15 minutes) Pre-prepare a small collection of multiple choice questions. For example: 'Do you like (or prefer) a) animals, b) shops' / 'Do you like (prefer) a) climbing trees, b) riding on buses'. Make sure that if the answers are mostly 'a' the pupil will be a 'Country Mouse' and mostly 'b', the pupil will be a 'Town Mouse'. Hand out the questionnaires and ask the pupils to interview each other in order to find out their preferences. Collect the questionnaires and give the pupils the results.

Using the accompanying audio cassette

During listening The pupils can complete photocopiable activity number one while listening to the cassette. Alternatively, play sections of the cassette at random, isolating phrases such as 'it's a bus', or 'it's an apple tree' and ask the pupils to respond 'town' or 'country'.

As there are so few words in the Reader, pupils may like to work together to add more script. There could be a narrator, who speaks between pages 2-3 for example: 'Town mouse goes to see his friend, Country Mouse on Thursday. Country Mouse shows him the farm.' The tape can be re-recorded.

Chants

Chants help pupils become familiar with the sounds and rhythm of English. The language in each chant recycles language from the Reader.

Suggested procedure

Pupils listen to the chant on cassette one or two times, clapping their hands or tapping their desks in time with the rhythm.

Pupils then say the chant, verse by verse, together with the cassette, beating the rhythm as they speak, until they are familiar with the words and the rhythm.

You can then split the class into 2 or 3 groups and each group can say one verse of the chant in turn.

Chant 1

What's this?
It's a cow
What's this?
It's an apple tree

Milk and cheese are from.....
The cow
Apples are from.....
The trees

What's this?
It's a cow
What's this?
It's an apple tree

Chant 2

Come to the country for lunch!
Thank you

What shall we have?
Cheese and apples

I'm hungry.
Let's have lunch!

Chant 2

Are the milk and cheese from the cow?
Are the apples from the trees?
Country mouse asks

Milk and cheese are not from the cow
And apples are not from the trees
Town mouse says

Where in the town is the cow?
Where in the town are the trees?
Country mouse asks

Notes on the activities in the Factsheet

- 1 The pupils write either TM (Town Mouse) or CM (Country Mouse) next to the sentences.
- 2 First the pupils write the words next to the pictures in the spaces provided. Then they cut out (or you can do this for them) the pictures and stick them either in the town or the country scene below.

Answers to the activities

In the back of the Reader

2. There are 38 apples on the tree.

In the Factsheet

Activity 1 1. TM, 2. CM, 3. TM, 4. TM, 5. CM.

Activity 2

The town: bus, train, stores

The country: apple tree, sheep, hen, horse, duck

Activity 3 1. 1, 2. 2, 3. 2, 4. 2, 5. 7, 6. 1.



Town Mouse and Country Mouse

Name.....

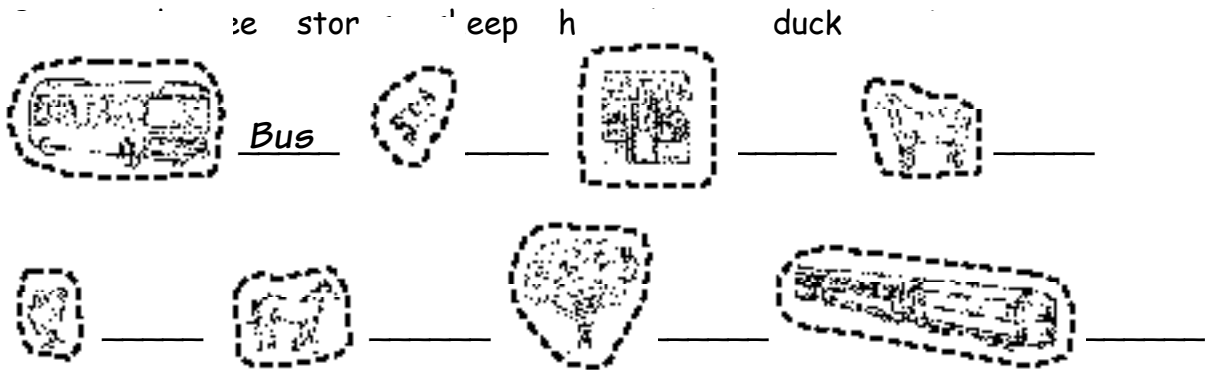
Activity 1

What does Town Mouse do? And what does Country Mouse do?
Write TM or CM.

1. He travels on a bus. *TM*
2. He eats apples from his garden.
3. He goes to the park.
4. He goes to the food store.
5. He sees cows every day.

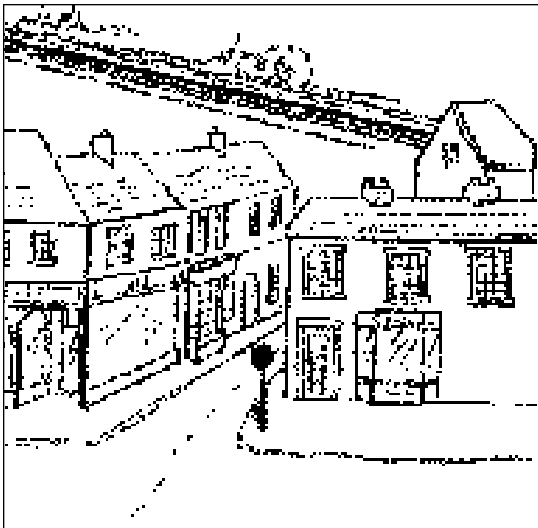
Activity 2

Write these words next to the pictures.

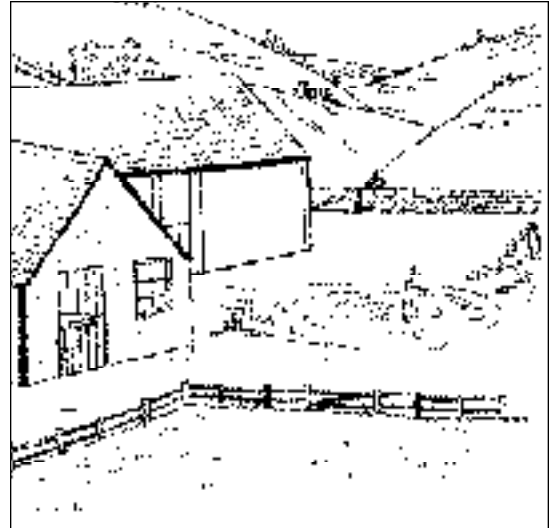


Now cut them out and put them in the town or in t

The town



The country

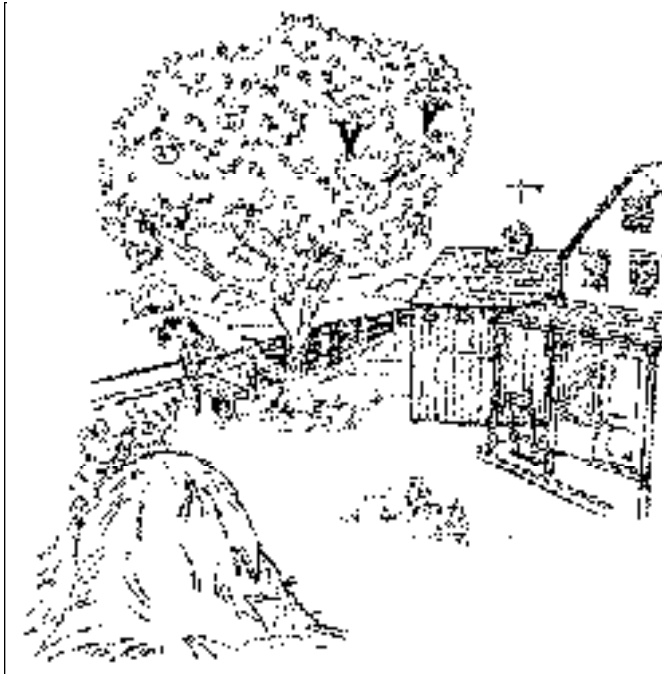


Town Mouse and Country Mouse

Name.....

Activity 3

Color the picture and answer the questions.



1. How many cows are there?
There is one cow
2. How many hens are there?

3. How many mice are there?

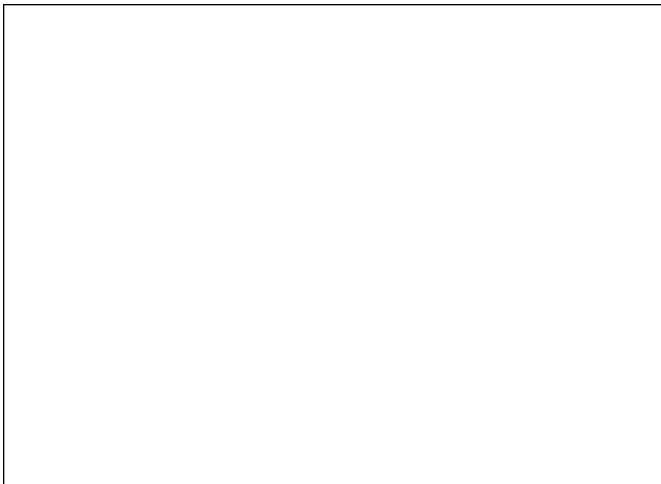
4. How many trees are there?

5. How many windows are there?

6. How many chairs are there?

Activity 4

Draw a picture of your friend. Does your friend live in the town or the country? What does your friend like to eat? Write the answers next to the picture.



My friend lives in the

