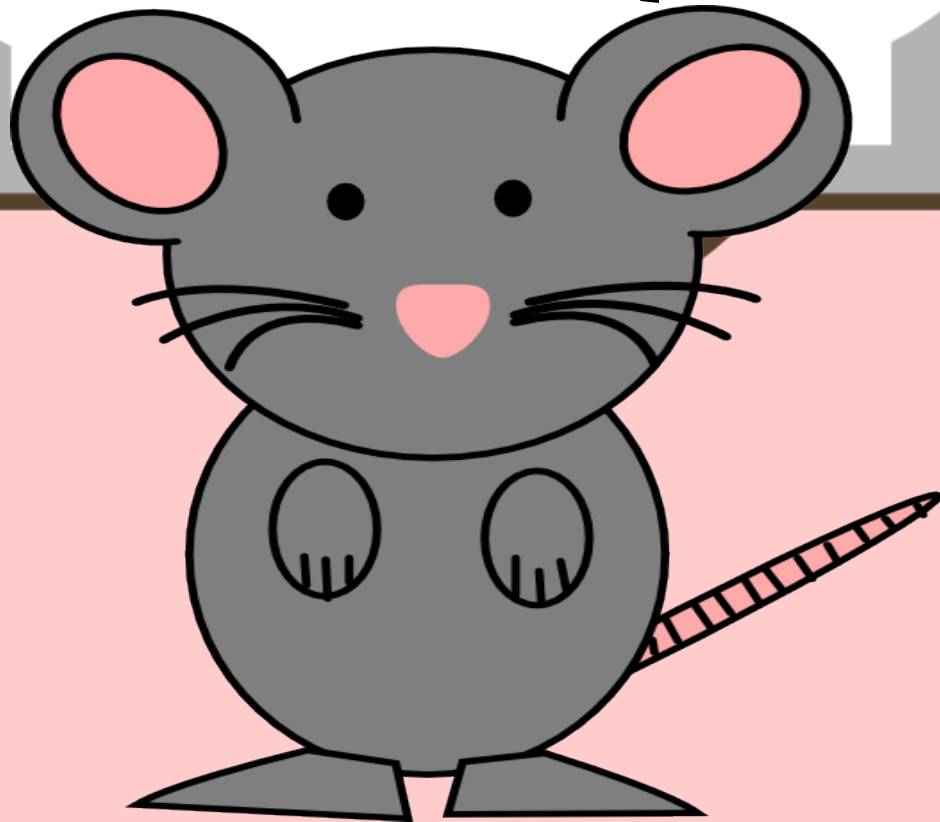


**A Teaching Unit  
For  
The Tale of Despereaux**



**ELA Core Plans**

Teacher-Written Standards-Based Lesson Plans

# A Teaching Unit

## *The Tale of Despereaux*



Tammy D. Lewis & Shannon B. Temple

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Note: This teaching unit was produced to accompany the wonderful novel *The Tale of Despereaux* by Kate DiCamillo. The author nor publisher of *The Tale of Despereaux* was involved in the production of these lessons, and neither endorse this teaching unit.

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## The Tale of Despereaux ~ Table of Contents

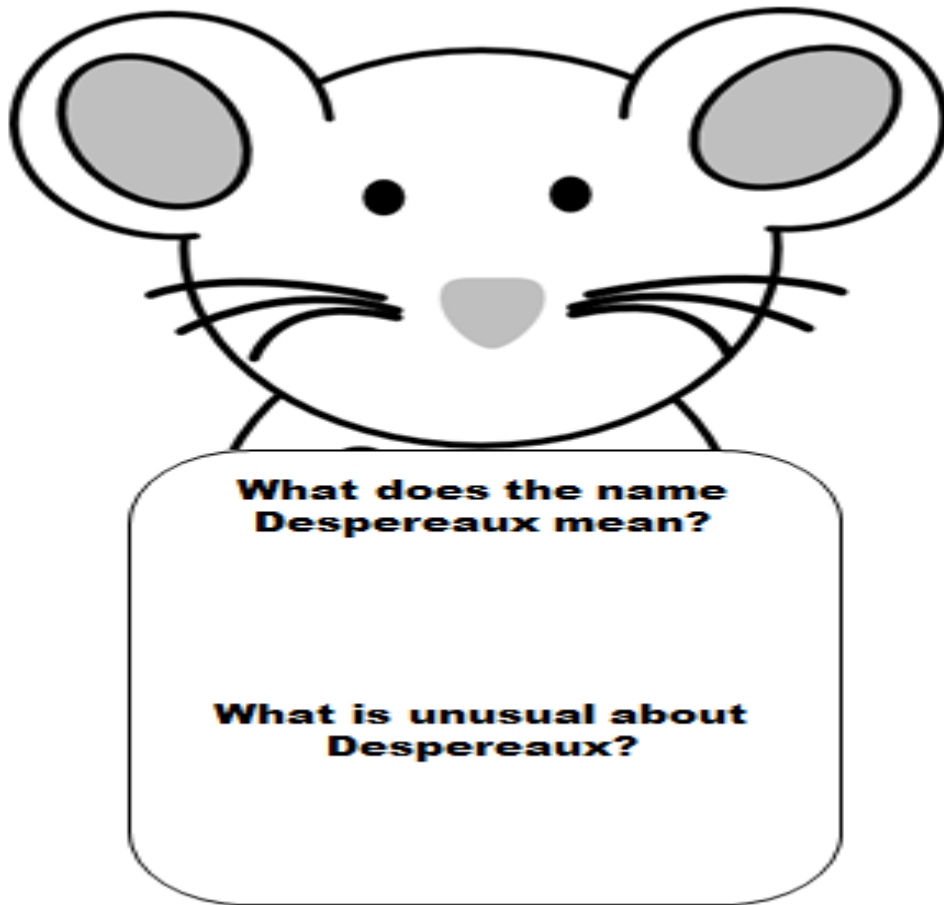
|                        |                                   |         |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------|
| Chapters 1 & 2         | Meet the Mice                     | page 5  |
| Chapters 3 & 4         | Foreshadowing, Discussion, Simile | page 6  |
| Chapter 5              | Writing Opportunity               | page 8  |
| Chapters 6 & 7         | Expanding on Quotes               | page 9  |
| Chapter 8              | Examine a Word                    | page 10 |
| Chapter 9              | Discuss and Predict               | page 11 |
| Chapter 10             | Meaning of Words                  | page 12 |
| Chapter 11             | Despereaux's Feelings             | page 13 |
| Chapter 12             | Acrostic Poetry                   | page 14 |
| Chapter 14             | Setting                           | page 15 |
| Chapter 15             | Point of View                     | page 16 |
| Test ~ Book the First  |                                   | page 17 |
| Chapter 16             | Summarizing & Compare/Contrast    | page 21 |
| Chapter 17             | Discussion                        | page 22 |
| Chapter 18             | Literal vs. Figurative Meanings   | page 23 |
| Chapter 19             | Context Clues                     | page 24 |
| Chapter 20             | Tone                              | page 25 |
| Chapter 21             | Discussion                        | page 26 |
| Chapter 22             | Silent Conversation               | page 27 |
| Chapter 23             | Cause & Effect                    | page 28 |
| Test ~ Book the Second |                                   | page 30 |
| Chapters 24 & 25       | Writing Opportunity               | page 34 |

|  |                            |             |
|--|----------------------------|-------------|
| Chapter 26                                   | Poetry / Comparison        | page 35     |
| Chapter 27                                   | Song Lyrics                | page 36     |
| Chapter 28                                   | Comprehension / Discussion | page 37     |
| Chapter 29                                   | Reader's Theater           | page 38     |
| Chapter 30                                   | The Dungeon                | page 39     |
| Chapter 31                                   | Mig                        | page 42     |
| Chapters 32 & 33                             | Words to Know              | page 43     |
| Test ~ Book the Third                        |                            | page 44     |
| Chapters 34 & 35                             | Emotions                   | page 48     |
| Chapter 36                                   | Discussion                 | page 49     |
| Chapters 37 & 38                             | The Heart                  | page 50     |
| Chapter 39                                   | News Report                | page 52     |
| Chapter 40                                   | Forgiveness                | page 53     |
| Chapter 41                                   | Characterization           | page 54     |
| Chapter 42                                   | A Quest                    | page 55     |
| Chapters 43 & 44                             | Discussion / Poem          | page 56     |
| Chapter 45                                   | Personification            | page 57     |
| Chapter 48                                   | Imagery                    | page 58     |
| Chapters 49 & 50                             | Title Analysis             | page 59     |
| Chapters 51 & 52                             | Fate                       | page 60     |
| Test ~ Final                                 |                            | page 61     |
| ABCs of <i>The Tale of Despereaux</i>        |                            | page 65     |
| Movie watching guide to compare and contrast |                            | page 69     |
| Test comparing movie to novel                |                            | page 73     |
| Test on solely the movie                     |                            | page 76     |
| Answer Keys                                  |                            | page 80-124 |

*The Tale of Despereaux*  
Chapters 1 & 2  
**Meet the mother mouse.**

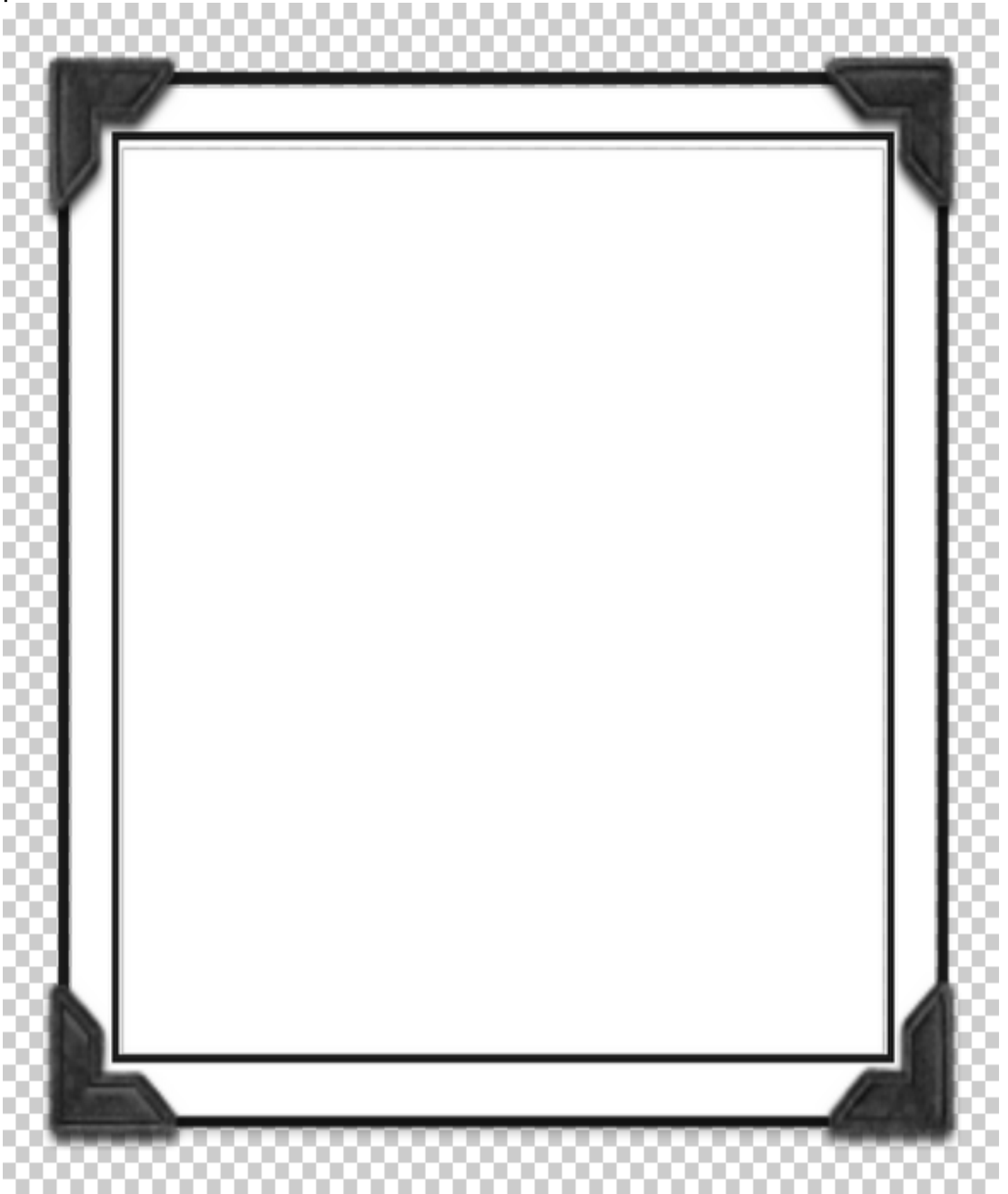
**Answer the following questions about the mother mouse.**

1. Where is she from? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How did she arrive at the castle? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What was one of her favorite words? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is her name? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How does the mother mouse react to Despereaux's birth? \_\_\_\_\_



In the box below, list the things that most mice are interested in.

Use the descriptions of Despereaux in chapters one and two to draw a picture of him in the box below.



*The Tale of Despereaux*

Chapters 3 & 4

In this chapter, Despereaux's siblings try to "educate him on the ways of being a mouse." Go back and read the beginning of chapter three to complete the following chart.

| Sibling teaching Despereaux | What the sibling is trying to teach Despereaux | The instructions given to Despereaux |
|-----------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Furlough                    |  |                                      |
| Merlot                      |  |                                      |

Now, answer the following questions about how Despereaux responds to the things that his siblings are trying to teach him.

1. What did Despereaux do instead of trying to scurry the way that Furlough was instructing him to?
2. Why wouldn't Despereaux eat the paper the way that his sister Merlot was instructing him to?

**Foreshadowing** occurs when the author provides a clue or a hint of something that a character will face later in the story. Which of the following lines from chapter three is an example of foreshadowing?

- a. *Despereaux looked down at the book, and something remarkable happened.*
- b. *"This way, small brother," she said as she crawled onto the pages of the book.*
- c. *He shivered. He sneezed. He blew his nose into his handkerchief.*
- d. *Despereaux did not know it, but he would need, very soon, to be brave himself.*

**Discussion**

Reread the last line to the reader in chapter three. Do you agree with the narrator's comment about fate? Explain what this means, and why you believe it to be true or not.

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When Despereaux finds out where the music is coming from in chapter four, it makes him very happy.

“Oh,” he said, “it sounds like heaven. It smells like honey.”

**A simile** is a type of figurative language used to compare two things using the words *like* or *as*.

Despereaux compares music to heaven and honey. It is interesting that he compares the sound of music to a smell because music is something that does not have a smell. However, for a mouse, everything is most likely related to this sense. Pretend that you are Despereaux and you want to continue your description of this music. Try to come up with two of your own similes for Despereaux to compare this music to.

It sounds like \_\_\_\_\_. It smells like \_\_\_\_\_.

## Princess Pea

What is your first impression of the Princess Pea? Explain why you have this opinion. Defend your answer by supporting it with something that she says.

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Where does Despereaux find himself sitting at the end of chapter four? \_\_\_\_\_

How did he end up in this place? \_\_\_\_\_

**Good readers keep pictures in their minds while they are reading. In the box below, draw a picture of what is happening at the end of chapter four.**





*The Tale of Despereaux*

Chapter 5

To whom does Despereaux compare the Princess Pea? \_\_\_\_\_

What happens after The Princess Pea smiles at Despereaux and he smiles back at her? \_\_\_\_\_

## Love

In this chapter, the narrator declares that love is ridiculous, wonderful, and powerful.

Prompt: Write a five paragraph essay explaining how love is all three of these things. Use the following graphic organizer to gather your thoughts, reasons, and examples. Then, write your essay on notebook paper. Your essay should include an introduction, body, (three paragraphs – one discussing how love is ridiculous, one telling how love is wonderful, and one explaining how love is powerful) and a conclusion.

### Paragraph 1 – Your introduction ~ A beginning statement + thesis statement

Beginning statement: Make sure you first tell the reader the title and author of the book. It can be written like this: In chapter five of the novel *The Tale of Despereaux* by Kate DiCamillo, a bold statement is made about love.

\*Note: Titles of books must always be underlined or italicized. ☺

A thesis statement is a main idea. It tells the reader of your paper what you will be writing about. The thesis statement should always be included in your introduction. Look at your prompt, and then write the thesis statement for this essay in the following box. (Basically, you will quote what the narrator says about love.)

### Paragraphs 2 – 4 The Body

In each box below, explain how love is each of these things.

Love is ridiculous.

Love is wonderful.

Love is powerful.

**Paragraph 5 – Conclusion** ~ Restate the importance of the thesis statement. Leave your reader with something to think about.

Expanding on Quotes

In these chapters we learn more about some characters based on things that they believe. Read each of the following quotes. Then, explain what each quote reveals about the character. Last, explain what it means to you.

1. (page 35) *...one thing I have learned in this world,” said Lester, “it is that mice act like mice or else there is bound to be trouble.*

What does this reveal about Lester? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What does this mean to you? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. (page 39) *...the king said, “has many responsibilities. And one of them is not becoming involved personally with even the distant relatives of one’s enemies...*

What does this reveal about the king? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What does this mean to you? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. (page 41) *“I honor you,” whispered Despereaux...He put his paw over his heart....He was alas, a mouse deeply in love.*

What does this reveal about Despereaux? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What does this mean to you? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Examine a Word

Look at the dictionary entry below for the word perfidy.

Perfidy (**pur** fi dee)n: the quality or state of being faithless or disloyal [Latin *perfidia*, from *perfidus* “faithless”, from *per fidem decipere* “to betray”, literally, “to deceive by trust”]

There are a few things other than a meaning that we can learn about a word in the dictionary. We can learn all of the following:

- How to pronounce the word
- How to spell the word
- The part of speech of the word ~ What part of speech is the word perfidy? \_\_\_\_\_
- The definition of the word
- The etymology of a word

## Etymologies

An etymology is not a definition. Etymologies are explanations of where our words come from, what our words meant, and how they sounded 600 or 2,000 years ago. You can find etymologies inside brackets. Look at the etymology for the word perfidy.

From what language did this word originate? \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you understand the word?** Complete the graphic organizer below.

|                                     |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| write the definition of the word    | • Perfidy:  |
| Write two synonyms for the word     | • Synonyms: |
| Use the word Perfidy in a sentence. | • Sentence: |

Now, explain Lester’s “act of perfidy”. \_\_\_\_\_

Tale of Despereaux  
Chapter 9

The title of this chapter is “the right question”.

Find the question in this chapter that Furlough refers to as “the wrong question”. Write the “wrong question” on the line below.

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Answer Despereaux’s question yourself. What would you say if he asked you that?

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What is the question that Furlough tells Despereaux he should be asking?

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## Predict

Reread the last line of chapter nine.

Explain what the word *fate* means.

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Make a prediction. What do you think Despereaux's fate will be?

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Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 10

*First, we will give you a chance to defend yourself against these rumors of your egregious acts. Did you or did you not sit at the foot of the human king?*

What do you think that the word *egregious* means? \_\_\_\_\_

Look up the word in the dictionary. Answer the following information about this word using the dictionary.

1. What is the etymology of the word?
2. What part of speech is the word?
3. What is the definition of the word?

*Despereaux marveled at his own bravery.*

*He admired his own defiance.*

What do you think that the word *defiance* means? \_\_\_\_\_

Look up the word in the dictionary. What is the dictionary definition of this word?

\_\_\_\_\_

What qualities do you think a person or character should have to be considered a hero?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What makes Despereaux brave?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Tale of Despereaux

## Chapter 11

*“...You love her with a courtly love, a love that is based on bravery and courtesy and honor and devotion. Just so.”*

These words spoken by the threadmaster describe the fairy tale kind of love. Let's examine what each of these words mean.

|  | Bravery | Courtesy | Honor | Devotion |
|--|---------|----------|-------|----------|
| What are some synonyms for this word?  |         |          |       |          |
| Has Despereaux demonstrated this word with his love for the princess? If so, tell how. |         |          |       |          |

*Reader, do you believe that there is such a thing as happily ever after?*

Just as Despereaux begins to question the possibility of a happily ever after, the narrator asks you to consider this too. Answer the question. First tell whether you believe there is such a thing as happily ever after. Then, explain your answer by giving at least three reasons that support your opinion.

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Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 14

The setting of a story includes the time and place. It also includes the environment.

Study the following chart to understand what setting might include.

| Place  | Time  | Environment   |
|--|---|---|
| The physical location<br>The country, state, or city<br>Mountains? Lake? Forest?<br>Beach? Under a bridge? | Calendar and clock times<br>Day, month, year<br>Season<br>Future<br>Past<br>Present | Details in the surroundings<br>What else is going on around the characters? Is it crowded?<br>Isolated? What does it smell like?<br>What is the weather or atmosphere like? |

Describe the setting in which Despereaux finds himself in chapter fourteen. Look back at the chapter and complete the following chart by describing the place, the time, and the environment of this new place that he has been thrown into.

| Place | Time | Environment |
|-------|------|-------------|
|       |      |             |

Read the following passage again from page 36.

*And it was so dark. Despereaux had never before encountered darkness so awful, so all-encompassing. The darkness had a physical presence as if it were a being all its own.*

Darkness is personified in the dungeon. The imagery created by this personification helps the reader to “feel” and “sense” just how dark and scary the dungeon was for Despereaux. Find the example of personification on page 74. Write it on the following lines.

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Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 15

Who is Gregory? \_\_\_\_\_

How does the rope help Gregory? \_\_\_\_\_

**Point of view**

The point of view of a story makes all the difference in the world. If a character is telling the story, the first person point of view is used. If none of the characters are telling the story, and an unseen narrator is telling it, the third person point of view is being used. If the narrator focuses on only one character, the limited third person point of view is used. If the narrator allows the reader to know thoughts and feelings of one character, then another's, then another's, the third person omniscient point of view is used.

This novel has an interesting point of view. Answer the following questions

1. Are any of the characters telling this story? \_\_\_\_\_
2. The answer to question number one tells us that this novel is **not** written in the \_\_\_\_\_ person point of view.

It is interesting that Gregory speaks in the third person point of view! When you speak, you use the first person point of view by using the pronouns *I, me, we*, etc. Imagine if we all went around speaking in the third person point of view like Gregory does. It sounds so funny, doesn't it? Try it on the lines below. Write three sentences telling about what you did yesterday. Use the third person point of view as you write about what you did. This means you cannot use the first person pronouns like *I, me, or we*.

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In this novel, the unseen narrator does not focus on just one character; therefore the point of view is not \_\_\_\_\_.

Also, the author does something very cool in this book. From time to time, the narrator steps out of the story to talk to the reader using the pronoun *you*. This is the second person point of view. Pay attention to how this affects the story!

## The Tale of Despereaux Book the First

### Test

1. How does Despereaux get his name?
  - a. His father names him this after his great uncle.
  - b. His mother names him this because of all of the despair she feels.
  - c. The mouse council decides his name.
  - d. The other mice in the castle name him.
2. What is unusual about Despereaux?
  - a. He has very large ears.
  - b. He was born with his eyes open.
  - c. He was very small.
  - d. All of these
3. Which of the following best describes Despereaux's relationship with his mother and father?
  - a. loving
  - b. aggravating
  - c. forgiving
  - d. distant
4. Despereaux *showed no interest in the things a mouse should show interest in*. According to the story, which of the following is **not** something that a mouse should show interest in?
  - a. thinking constantly of food
  - b. staying nearby a mouse hole
  - c. staying intent on tracking down crumbs of food
  - d. learning the art of scurrying
5. Who is Furlough?
  - a. the king
  - b. a rat
  - c. Despereaux's father
  - d. Despereaux's brother

*Reader, you must know that an interesting fate (sometimes involving rats, sometimes not) awaits almost everyone, mouse or man, who does not conform.*

6. What does it mean to conform?
  - a. to become like everyone else
  - b. to run a hard race
  - c. to stand out
  - d. to be polite to everyone
7. Despereaux compares the Princess Pea to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. his mother
  - b. the fair maiden in the book he read in the library
  - c. the most beautiful woman in the world
  - d. his aunt who was once the queen of the mice
8. Which of the following two things does Despereaux love?
  - a. eating and music
  - b. light and music
  - c. the Princess and the dungeon
  - d. playing music and reading

9. Which of the following characters speaks in the third person point of view by referring to himself by saying his own name rather than *I*?
- Despereaux
  - The princess
  - Gregory
  - Furlough
10. Who decides what must be done to Despereaux after he is found sitting at the foot of a human?
- Despereaux's mother
  - The Mouse Council
  - Despereaux's entire family
  - The king
11. In this story, the light and the darkness are mentioned several times. What might the light symbolize?
- evil
  - color
  - goodness
  - the sun
12. What punishment is given to Despereaux?
- He must have his tail chopped off.
  - He is sentenced to the dungeon.
  - He is exiled to another castle.
  - He is only to be fed once a day.
13. Which of the following does the red thread that is tied around Despereaux's neck most likely symbolize in the story?
- blood
  - death
  - light
  - darkness
14. What is there to fear in the dungeon?
- spiders
  - rats
  - ghosts
  - secret passageways
15. What does the word perfidy mean?
- being disloyal
  - being angry
  - being jealous
  - being unfair
16. Who is Gregory?
- the head rat in the dungeon
  - a jailer in the dungeon
  - the head of the Mouse Council
  - a ghost who dwells in the dungeon
17. How does the rope help Gregory?
- It provides him company.
  - It helps him to walk.
  - It keeps him from getting lost.
  - It helps him find rats.

18. What does Gregory ask Despereaux to do for him?
- a. feed him his cheese
  - b. tell him a story
  - c. lead him to the light
  - d. tell him about the castle
19. Despereaux can be described as being all of the following except \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. brave
  - b. loving
  - c. unique
  - d. shy
20. Where is Despereaux at the end of the first book?
- a. lost and alone in the dungeon
  - b. in Gregory's hand
  - c. with the Princess Pea
  - d. under a hat

Book  
The Second  
Chiaroscuro



**Roscuro**

Real name \_\_\_\_\_

He was drawn to \_\_\_\_\_

He said, "I think that the meaning of life is \_\_\_\_\_"



**Botticelli**

Last name \_\_\_\_\_

One word to describe him \_\_\_\_\_

He said "The meaning of life is the  
\_\_\_\_\_"

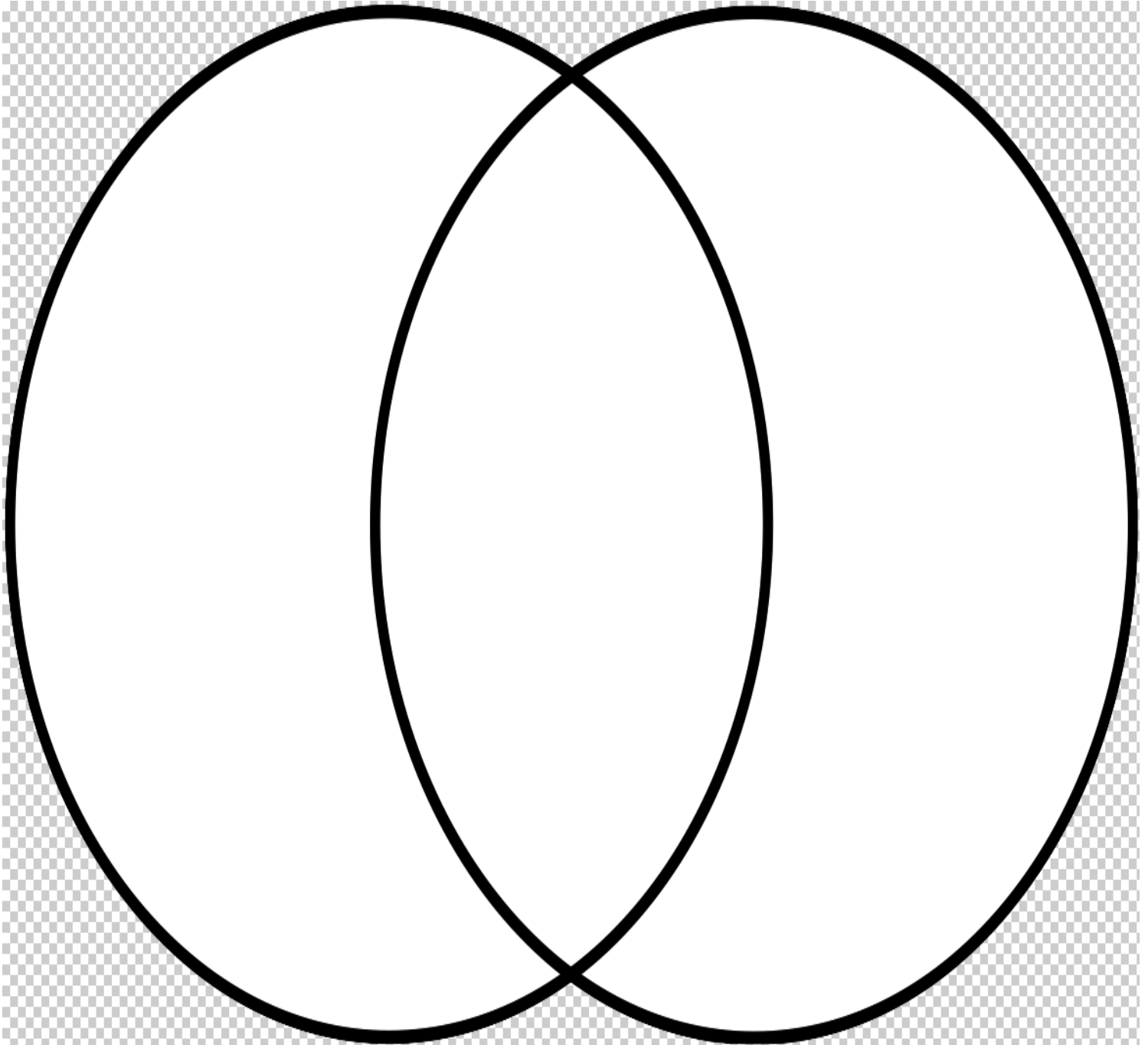
In the box below, summarize the directions that Botticelli says to torture a prisoner. Look on page 89.

## Chapter 16

Compare and contrast Roscuro and Despereaux. Use this chapter to help you.

**Roscuro**

**Despereaux**



Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 17

According to Botticelli, how do rats view mice? Explain, and use text in your answer.

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According to Botticelli, what will satisfy Roscuro's cravings from the world?

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Botticelli can be described as manipulative and controlling. Find two statements from this chapter that prove this. Write the passages below.

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Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 18

In your own words, explain how Roscuro is able to take the red cloth from the prisoner.

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What does Roscuro learn at the end of this chapter? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

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What do you think that the prisoner learns at the end of this chapter?

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**“You dirty rat!” shouted the prisoner. (page 102)**

Explain the literal meaning of these words and also the figurative meaning. What connotations are in the name rat?

Literal meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

Figurative meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

Connotations: \_\_\_\_\_

**Context Clues**

*Gregory the jailer and those who were consigned to his domain did not laugh or smile or clink glasses with the person sitting next to them. (page 104)*

Using context clues, which two words would best replace the two underlined words in the above passage?

- a. assigned, house
- b. forced, laughter
- c. assigned, environment
- d. forced, thoughts

*Roscuro was enchanted. Everything glittered. Everything. (page 104)*

What is another word for enchanted? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the setting in this chapter. How does this new setting affect Roscuro?

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**Verbs and Adjectives that help create tone**

Look on the first page of this chapter. Find the four verbs that are used to describe the movement of the crystals on the chandelier. Write the verbs in the box below.

Find the adjectives that describe the chandelier and the crystals. Write the adjectives in the box below.

What tone do these words create? \_\_\_\_\_

**Discussion**

How do these descriptions of the chandelier and the party contrast with the way that Roscuro feels about himself at the end of the chapter? Use textual evidence to support your answer.

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Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 21

At the end of this chapter, the narrator speaks directly to the reader about Roscuro's heart. Look back at the last page of this chapter and explain how the narrator causes the reader to feel sympathy for Roscuro. Use text to support your answer.

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Write an Acrostic poem using the word RAT. In your poem, you can either point out the unsavory truth about rats or try to create sympathy for rats. The choice is yours. You only have three letters, so that means three lines. Make each line count! Use a dictionary and thesaurus to help you.

R

A

T

### Teacher Instructed Activity

#### Silent Conversation

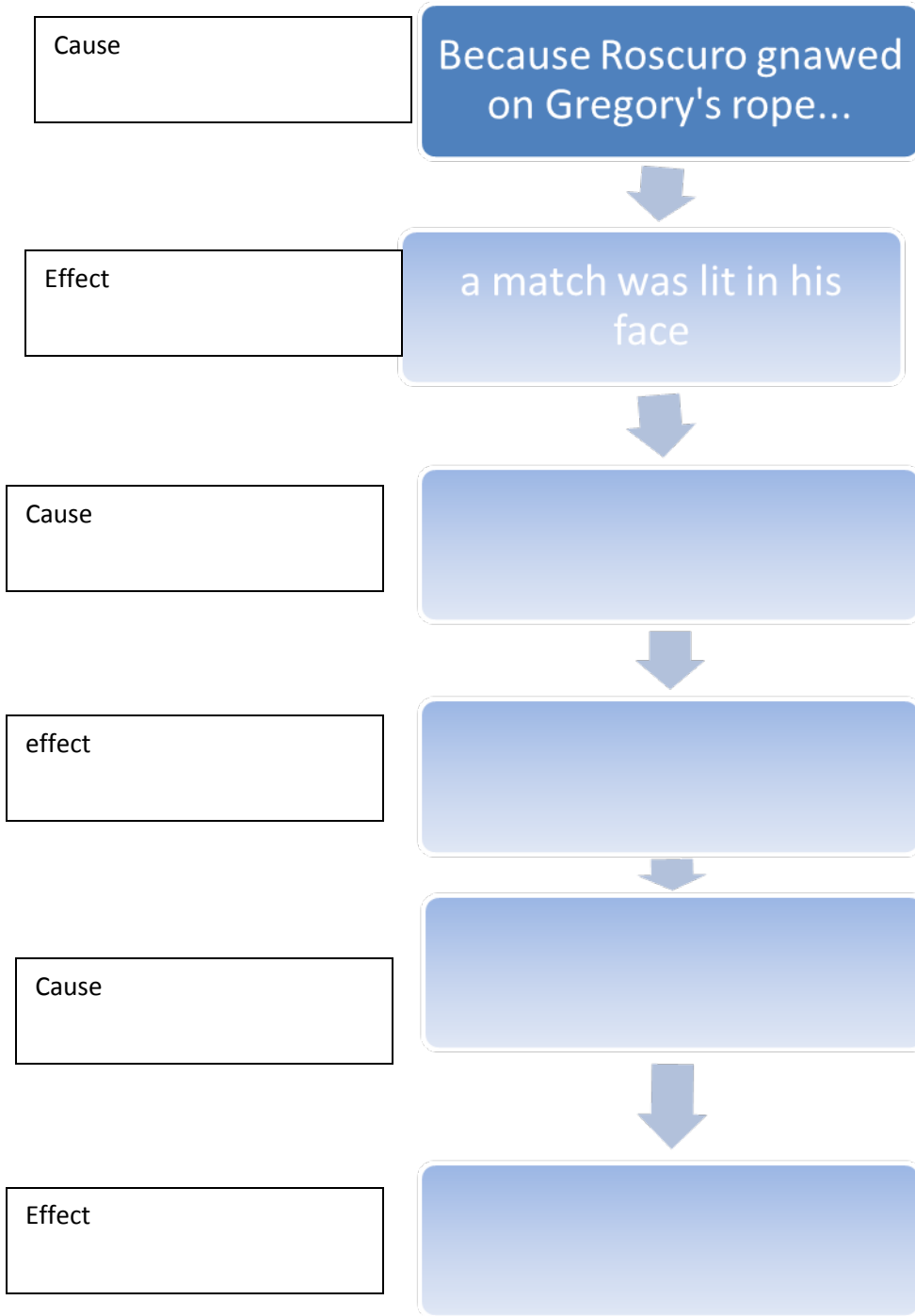
Divide the students into pairs, and give each pair a sheet of paper. Give students ten minutes to conduct a silent, written conversation. They can only “talk” on paper. No whispering either! In this conversation, students can “talk” about Roscuro’s broken heart. They may make predictions about what will happen next, ask questions to one another like, “What would you do if...” or simply discuss the tragedy. Enforce the silence. During the last two minutes, have the partners individually scan the chapter looking for the most memorable sentence or passage and record it. For example, a student may choose the passage on the last page of the chapter that begins: *There are those hearts, reader, that never...*

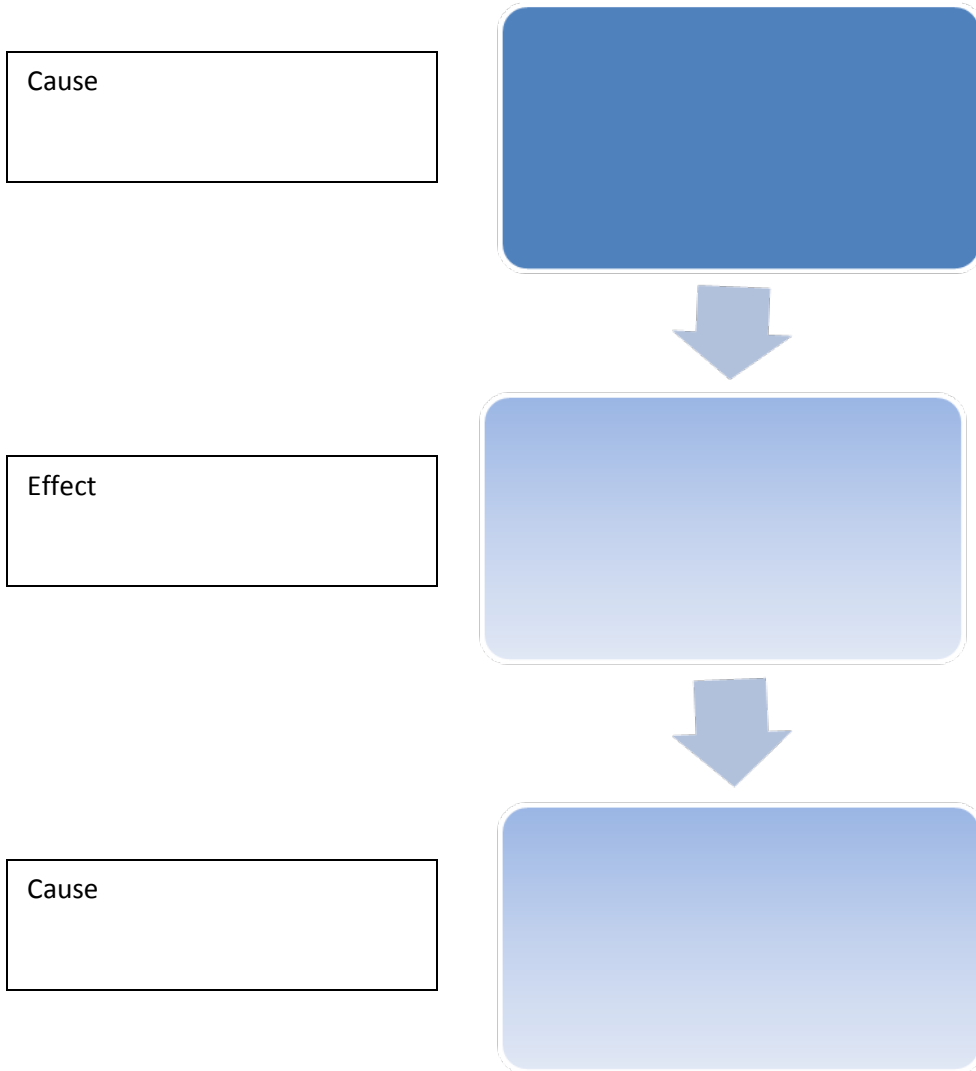
When the ten minutes are up, you may want to have a class discussion about the students’ chosen passages. This is a good central idea/theme lesson.

Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 23

The title of this chapter is *Consequences*. This is because one thing happens because of another. Complete the graphic organizer below to chart the cause/effect pattern that the plot is built upon.





## Discussion

Find the passage on page 119 that states the danger of love. It begins... *This is the danger of loving.*

On a separate sheet of paper, write a response to this passage. Explain how you think this is true. Also, do you believe that we must forgive the king as the narrator suggests? Explain your answer.

## Tale of Despereaux

### Test 2 Book The Second

1. Roscuro, unlike most rats, likes the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. dungeon
  - b. light
  - c. jailer
  - d. dampness of the dungeon
2. When Botticelli speaks to other characters, he swings a heart-shaped locket. The reader can infer that Botticelli does this to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. hypnotize them into strongly listening and believing what he says
  - b. distract them from the light that shines near him
  - c. encourage them to think about what he is saying
  - d. make them dizzy
3. Which of the following best describes Botticelli Remorso?
  - a. evil
  - b. kind hearted
  - c. forgetful
  - d. quiet
4. How are Roscuro and Despereaux alike?
  - a. They both love the Princess Pea.
  - b. Both of them enjoy reading.
  - c. They both like being in the dungeon.
  - d. They both go against what is “normal”.
5. According the Botticelli, rats should be about \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. stealing and killing
  - b. darkness and suffering
  - c. eating and hiding
  - d. running and scaring people
6. What is Botticelli’s locket rope made of? Look back at chapter seventeen if you have forgotten.
  - a. twine
  - b. fishing line
  - c. mice whiskers
  - d. the tails of mice
7. Botticelli convinces Roscuro to take the \_\_\_\_\_ from the new prisoner.
  - a. red cloth
  - b. rope
  - c. food
  - d. bowl



8. Botticelli Remorso believes that rats should not be concerned with \_\_\_\_\_.
- rats
  - mice
  - prisoners
  - the dungeon
9. Because the narrator is not a character and is able to follow several different characters in the book instead of just one character, the \_\_\_\_\_ point of view is used.
- first person
  - second person
  - third person limited
  - third person omniscient
10. Why does the king outlaw rats, soup, and the utensils used to eat soup?
- because of his hurt and anger
  - because of his deep love of the queen
  - because he is tired of rats and soup
  - because of his desire to control things
11. What happens to the queen?
- She faints.
  - She dies.
  - She goes to live in the dungeon.
  - She forgets who she is.
12. Who spotted Roscuro hanging from the chandelier?
- Despereaux
  - The king
  - The queen
  - Princess Pea
13. What does Roscuro use for a crown?
- a spoon
  - a baker's hat
  - the top of an apple
  - a shoe
14. Who is on her way to the castle at the end of book two?
- Gregory's mother
  - Despereaux's cousin
  - Princess Pea
  - Miggery Sow
15. Roscuro is delighted when he goes upstairs to the castle for all but which of the following reasons?
- Everything is shiny and glittery.
  - He has never seen happy people.
  - The princess looked so lovely.
  - There was lots of cheese on the tables.

*And not until he heard it from the mouth of the princess did Roscuro realize that he did not like being a rat, that he did not want to be a rat.*

16. Why does Roscuro most likely realize that he did not like being a rat only after the princess called him one?
- a. because he is in love with the princess
  - b. because he knows that the princess is the only one who tells the truth
  - c. because the princess represents light and everything that is good in the castle
  - d. because the princess says the word rat with such force

17. Which of the following issues is included in this novel?
- a. good versus evil
  - b. darkness versus light
  - c. love
  - d. all of the above

*...the heartbroken king outlawed soup; and because soup was outlawed, so were all the instruments involved in the making and eating of soup...*

18. What type of organizational pattern is used in this passage?
- a. compare/contrast
  - b. order of importance
  - c. cause/effect
  - d. chronological order

19. If you had to describe Botticelli with one word, what word would you choose?

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20. Explain why you would choose this word to describe Botticelli by providing examples from the text. You may use Botticelli's actions or words to support your answer. Make sure you quote the text using quotation marks, and provide the page number.

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Book  
The Third

The Tale of Miggery Sow

Tale of Despereaux

Chapters 24 & 25

In your own words, tell what happened to Miggery Sow when she was a child.

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How does the narrator make the reader feel sympathy for Miggery? Use specific examples from these two chapters to help you explain your answer.

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What does the word clout mean as it is used in reference to Miggery? Use context clues first. Then, use a thesaurus and make a list of synonyms for this word.

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Explain why chapter twenty-five is titled *a vicious cycle*. Use text to support your answer.

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Writing Assignment

On a separate sheet of paper, write an essay explaining what you would do if you could plan a day for Miggery Sow. Where would you take her? What would you do? How would you treat her? Use this page to plan.

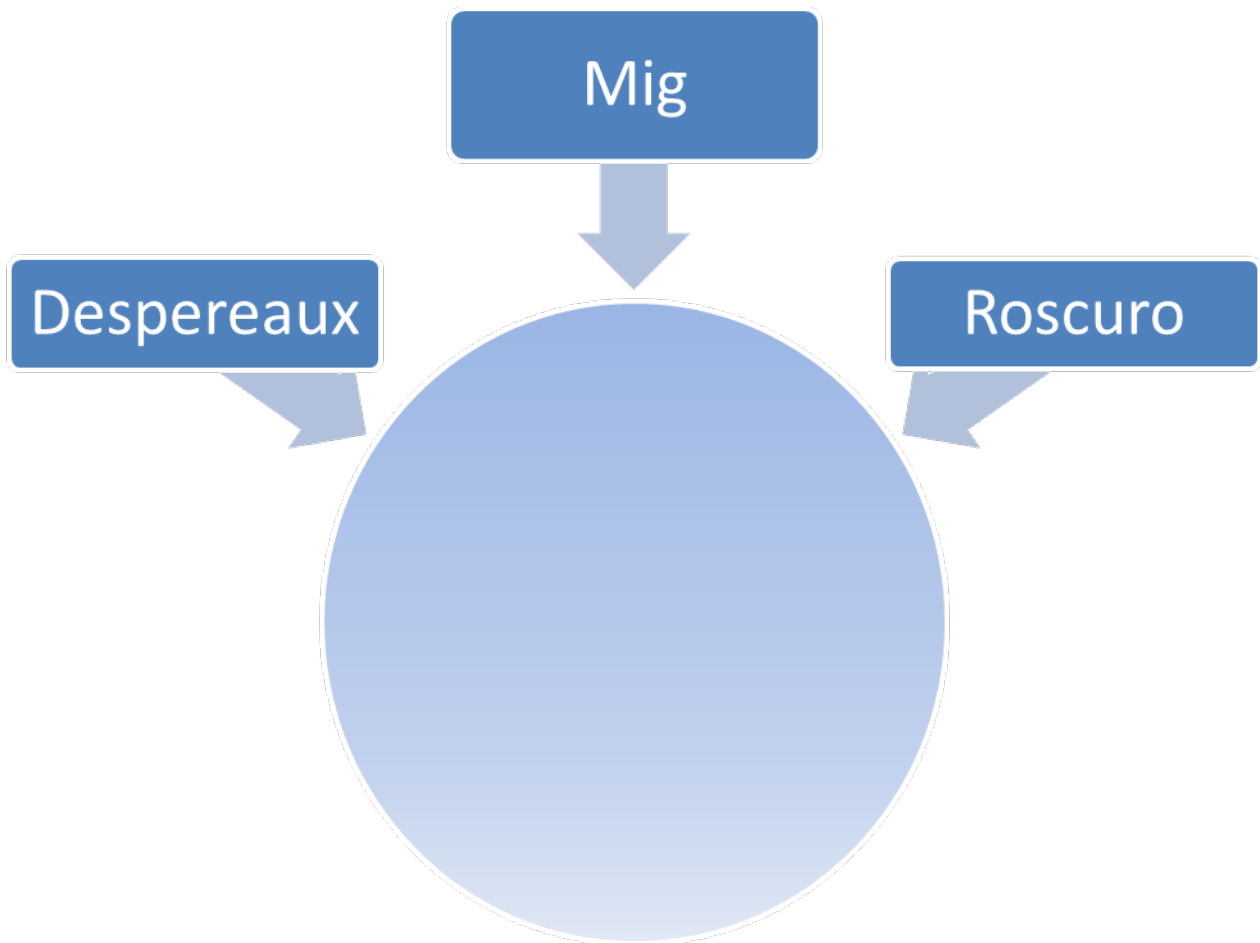
## Tale of Despereaux

### Chapter 26

*...the hope blooming inside of her, felt exactly the opposite of a good clout.*

Write a poem about hope and Miggery Sow. Your poem may rhyme or be free verse. It should be at least six lines long. It can tell the story of Miggery or just be about hope. Make sure you give your poem a title.

How can Mig be compared to Despereaux and Roscuro? Complete the following chart to make your comparisons.



**Teacher Notes ~ Creative and Fun Idea**

Find lyrics to the country song “*All you are is Mean*” by Taylor Swift. Have students listen to the song and read the lyrics. Discuss how this song fits perfectly for Mig and her uncle. Next, have your students analyze how each line of the song fits with Mig’s life.

You could also have students choose another song that would be appropriate for these two characters and write a written explanation as to why. Of course, make sure students understand that they must choose songs that have lyrics appropriate for the classroom. This could be a group assignment. Groups could choose a song, print off or write down the lyrics, and together explain why this song would be a good fit for Mig and her uncle.

Another option would be to allow groups to write their own song for the characters. 😊 Students should enjoy this assignment!

### Comprehension Check

1. Where is Mig going?
2. What does the soldier tell Mig that she will be?
3. How old is Mig when the soldier comes to take her?

### Discussion

Find and reread the paragraph at the bottom of page 143 that begins *Reader, do you think that it is a terrible thing to hope...*

Analyze this passage. Then, take a stance on what you believe about hope. Is there no reason to hope or is it something that everyone should do? Write a paragraph. Defend your answer by using Mig and her situation as an example.

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## Readers' Theater

Students build fluency through reading out loud, and at the middle school level, what better way to allow this than with readers' theater! Chapter twenty-nine of *The Tale of Despereaux* is perfect for this activity!

If you want to get your students' attention, read the beginning of this chapter with a monotone voice until they stop you and ask you why you are doing this. Explain that when reading aloud, you should always read with expression. Next, reread the section changing your voice to match each character.

Not only will readers' theater be a fun way to incorporate oral reading, it will also promote cooperation and team work. Each group will create speaking parts by breaking down this chapter into dialogue. Narrators will need to be added.

Provide your students with the directions page to help them know what to do.

Once your students understand what they will be doing, they will be eager to begin. Use the following steps to instruct them.

- In groups of five or six have students prepare their script. It is a good idea to have each student write the script on his/her own notebook paper unless you are allowing them to type it so that multiple copies can be printed.
- Once the script is complete, each member of the group will need to read over it silently.
- Students should work together to decide who will read each part. If there are more parts than students in the group, have one person read both of the narrators' parts.
- Have groups practice reading the script several times. With readers' theater there is no need to act out. The focus should be on the way that they read it. It should be read with lots of expression, and tell them that character "voices" are great as long as they match the character well.
- Students can use highlighters to highlight their individual parts.
- After practicing it several times, groups can "perform" their read aloud for the other groups.

Most students greatly enjoy readers' theater. The key is making sure they feel comfortable with the part that they will be reading. Have fun!



## Create Readers' Theater

### Directions

You will create a readers' theater script for chapter \_\_\_\_\_.

Your script should have \_\_\_\_\_ parts including two narrators.

1. Silently, each member of the group must read the chapter taking notice and counting how many characters have dialogue.
2. After the silent read, make sure that everyone in the group came up with the same number of "speaking parts".
3. You will add two narrators to your script to read everything that is not dialogue of a character.
4. Whenever possible, turn indirect speech into direct speech. The following is indirect speech: *Sheka asked her mom if she could go, but her mom said no.* To turn this into direct speech, you would write it this way:  
Sheka: Can I go?  
Mom: No.
5. You may eliminate words that are not needed, such as *she said*, however, do not eliminate other parts unless they are totally unnecessary. You will not need quotation marks around what a character says since you are turning this into a skit.
6. Write the character's name on the left-hand side of the page. Underline the character's name. Put a colon (:) after the character's name, and then write what that character will say.
7. Call the narrators *Narrator 1* and *Narrator 2*.
8. Go back and forth between narrator 1 and 2 giving each equal amounts of narration.
9. Underline or use all CAPS for words that need to be stressed.
10. Use parenthesis to provide directions for how something should be said.

**Look at the example on the following page. Pay close attention to how lines are divided between the narrators, how quotation marks are no longer needed, and how directions are given in parenthesis for how something should be said or to tell to whom it should be said.**

"Let's go to Seashell Island!" Meg begged her mother. Meg had been saving her money for the trip for some time, and wanted more than anything to take the ferryboat to the island well known for its beautiful hidden shells and sand dollars.

"I think today is a perfect day to go," her mother said.

"I'm going too!" shouted Dayne from upstairs. Dayne and Meg threw on their bathing suits, and grabbed their sand buckets. The trip to the island would take about thirty minutes.

"Welcome aboard," announced the captain of the boat. "The waves are a little rough today, so I'm going to ask that all passengers wear a life jacket for precautionary reasons." Meg and Dayne thought nothing of danger as they strapped on the orange jackets, but their mother immediately began to worry.

"Excuse me, sir", she said talking to the captain. "Is it perhaps too rough to make the trip today?"

**Meg:** (begging voice) Let's go to Seashell Island!

**Narrator 1:** Meg had been saving her money for the trip for some time and wanted more than anything to take the ferryboat to the island well known for its beautiful hidden shells and sand dollars.

**Mother:** I think today is a perfect day to go.

**Dayne:** (shouting) I'm going too!

**Narrator 2:** Dayne and Meg threw on their bathing suits, and grabbed their sand buckets. The trip to the island would take about thirty minutes.

**Captain:** Welcome aboard. The waves are a little rough today, so I'm going to ask that all passengers wear a life jacket for precautionary reasons.

**Narrator 1:** Meg and Dayne thought nothing of danger as they strapped on the orange jackets, but their mother immediately began to worry.

**Mother:** (to the captain) Excuse me, sir. Is it perhaps too rough to make the trip today?

Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 30

Reread the paragraph on page 154 that begins...*Reader, you know that the mice of the castle feared...*

How does the dungeon, which is a major part of the setting of this novel, affect the characters?

| <b>Character</b> | <b>How does dungeon affect this character?</b> | <b>Passage to prove this</b> |
|------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Gregory          |  |                              |
| Despereaux       |  |                              |
| Roscuero         |  |                              |
| Botticelli       |  |                              |

Predict

On page 156, the narrator asks the reader, *Do you believe that this will be Mig's fate?* On page 157, the cook asks, *What's to become of someone who goes into the dungeon smiling, I ask you?* What do you predict will happen to Mig? How will she do in the dungeon?

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## The Dungeon Does Not Frighten Her

What has once been a hindrance or problem for Mig is now helping her. Explain how this is so. Use text from chapter thirty-one to support your answer.

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## Mig's Song

Reread Mig's song on page 159. Create another song for Mig. Make sure it rhymes. Your song should be at least six lines long.

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## Words to Know

Look back through chapters 32 and 33 and find the following words. Use context clues to figure out what the words mean. Then, check your own understanding by looking them up in a dictionary.

### 1. Detain (page 166)

I think the word means \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Portentous (page 167)

I think the word means \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Aspirations (page 169)

I think the word means \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Diabolical (page 171)

I think the word means \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition \_\_\_\_\_

## Tale of Despereaux

### Test 3 Book The Third

1. Which of the following is something that the narrator of this book believes?
  - a. Every action has a consequence.
  - b. Nothing is ever related in life.
  - c. Your actions do not cause consequences.
  - d. All rats deserve a chance to live in castles.
2. Miggery Sow was named after \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. her great aunt
  - b. her father's favorite prize-winning pig
  - c. the goat that ate the grass in the castle garden
  - d. a neighboring princess
3. Miggery's father sold his daughter into service for \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. cigarettes, a red tablecloth, and a hen
  - b. eggs, a frying pan, and a candle
  - c. two goats, a field, and a cottage
  - d. a horse, a chicken and a ring
4. What did Miggery call the man who purchased her?
  - a. Henry
  - b. Father
  - c. Uncle
  - d. Bubba
5. What caused Mig's ears to resemble pieces of cauliflower on her head?
  - a. Her ears were burned severely.
  - b. Her ears began to look like this because she was constantly being hit in the ear.
  - c. Mig had a skin infection on her ears.
  - d. Mig wore large earrings in each ear.
6. Why did Mig not wave at the princess pea when she first saw her?
  - a. because she was stunned
  - b. because she was angry that the princess was on her land
  - c. because she was afraid
  - d. because she didn't want to draw attention to herself
7. How can Mig be compared to the Princess Pea?
  - a. Both of them have a hard time hearing.
  - b. They are the same age.
  - c. Both of them lost their mothers.
  - d. Both b and c
8. Mig believes that one day she will be \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. rich
  - b. a princess
  - c. a queen
  - d. a servant

9. What task does the cook decide for Mig to do?
- clean the dungeon
  - clean the princess' room
  - take the jailer his meal
  - go to school to learn to cook
10. Whose voice could Mig hear clearly?
- Gregory's
  - Cook's
  - Princess Pea's
  - Roscuro's
11. What does Roscuro wear on his head?
- a crown
  - a golden spoon
  - a leaf
  - an old sock
12. When Mig tells Gregory about her deepest wish of what she wants to be one day, why does Chiaroscuro most likely do "a small, deliberate jig of joy?"
- because he knows that Mig will actually have her wish come true some day
  - because he begins to create a plan to get what he wants by using Mig
  - because he knows that Mig will lead him to the light
  - because he understands that Gregory is making fun of Mig
13. Why is Mig not bothered by the dungeon?
- She has always slept in a dungeon.
  - She loves rats and once had one as a pet.
  - She thinks that the dungeon will make her beautiful.
  - She is not able to hear or smell well.
14. When the narrator says in chapter thirty that Mig is "not the sharpest knife in the drawer", the narrator means that she \_\_\_\_\_.
- seems to be very bright
  - says things she does not mean
  - is not very smart
  - appears to misunderstand what he is saying
15. The descriptions of the dungeon serve to illustrate \_\_\_\_\_.
- the despair and hopelessness associated with it
  - the true filth of the rats
  - the reason Mig is at the castle
  - closeness of Gregory to the rats
16. At the end of the third book, the reader can infer that \_\_\_\_\_ is under the napkin on the tray.
- rotten food
  - a key to the dungeon
  - Despereaux
  - a soup spoon

17. What word best describes the actions of Roscuro at the end of the third book?

- a. evil
- b. compassionate
- c. cowardly
- d. friendly

18. Roscuro tells Mig that her dream coming true begins with \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. the removal of the King
- b. the chewing of a rope
- c. the ability to find a certain mouse
- d. pretending to be afraid

19. In this section of the novel, how does Mig's uncle treat Mig? Use **two** details from the text to support your answer. Write your answer in complete sentences.

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20. How does the narrator of the story cause the reader to feel sympathy for Miggery Sow? Use two specific details from the text to support your answer. Write your answer in complete sentences.

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# The Fourth Book

## Recalled to the Light

Tale of Despereaux

Chapters 34 & 35

What does Miggery Sow take away from Despereaux in the kitchen?

At the top of page 181, find the passage that begins *So Despereaux wept with joy...*The emotions listed in this passage have all been felt by Despereaux. These emotions describe his journey so far. Beside each emotion, explain why Despereaux has felt that way.

| <b>Emotion</b> | <b>What made Despereaux feel this way?</b> |
|----------------|--|
| joy            |  |
| pain           |  |
| gratitude      |  |
| exhaustion     |  |
| despair        |  |
| hope           |  |

In Despereaux's dream, the dark represents different members of his family and one rat. List those that dark represented and tell why each represented the dark.

| <b>Those who dark represented</b> | <b>Reason</b> |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
|                                   |               |
|                                   |               |
|                                   |               |
|                                   |               |

## Tale of Despereaux

### Chapter 36

#### **Discussion**

Summarize Roscuro's plan according to what Mig thought was going to happen.

Now summarize Roscuro's real plan. It is "*more simple and more terrible.*"

How does Roscuro manipulate Mig?

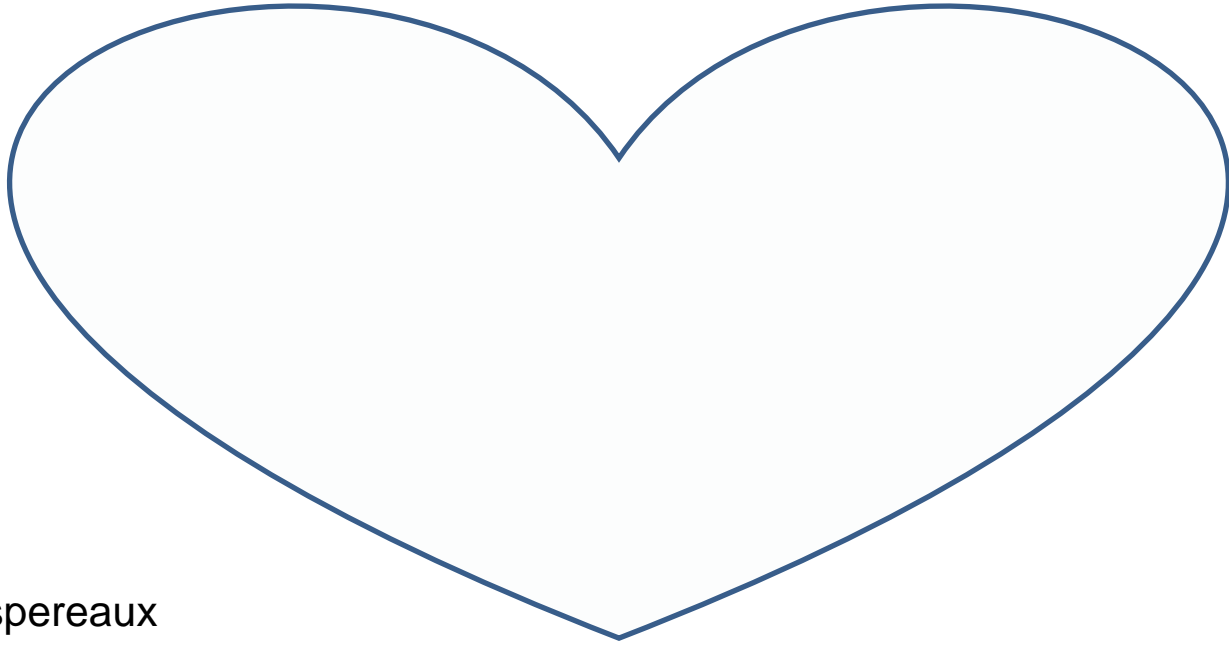
Why does Mig believe in Roscuro's plan?

What do you predict will happen?

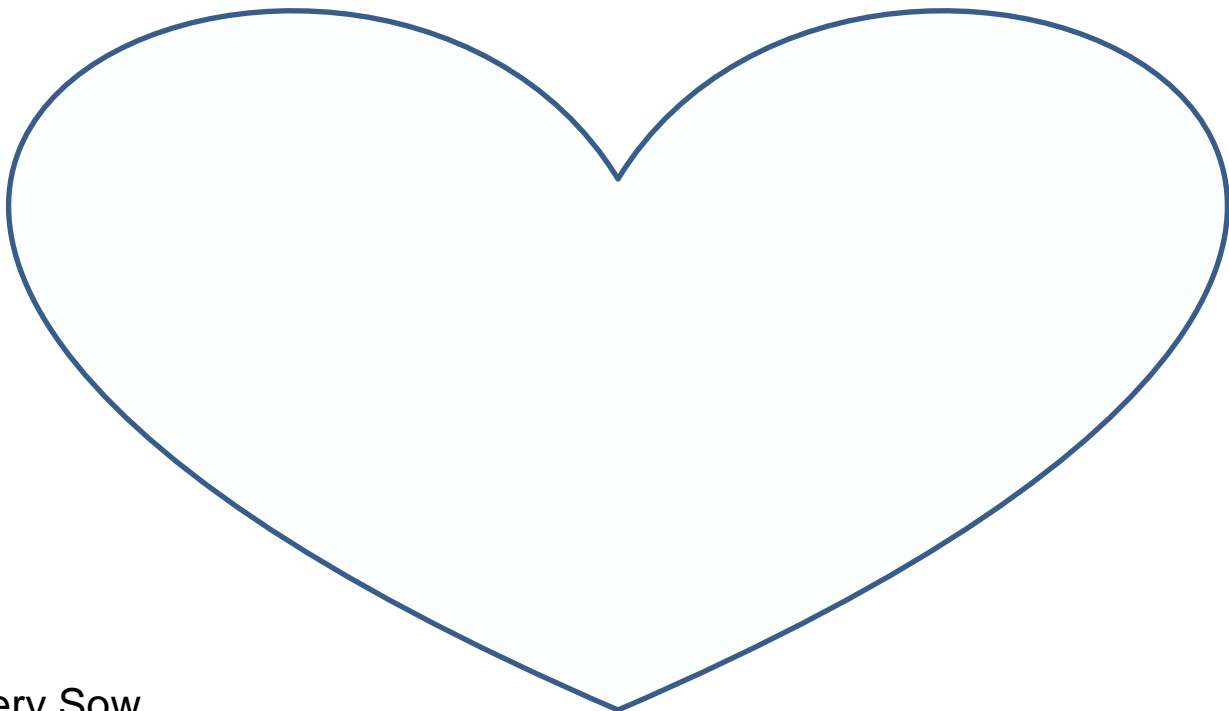
**The heart**

*In this story, reader, we have talked about the heart of the mouse and the heart of the rat and the heart of the serving girl Miggery Sow, but we have not talked about the heart of the princess. (197)*

Inside each heart, write what you know to be true about that character. Use this chapter to help you write the characteristics of Princess Pea.

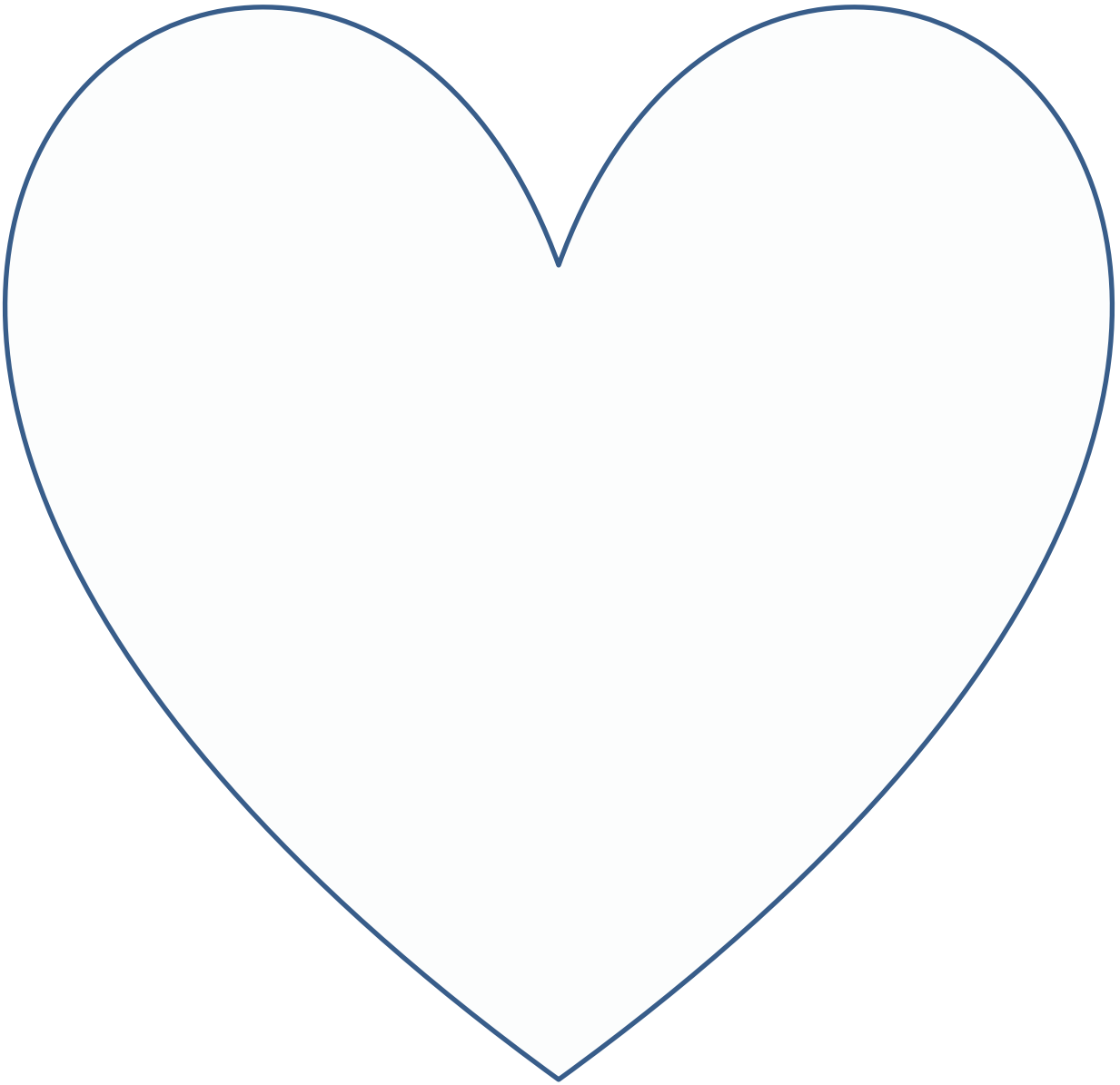


Despereaux



Miggery Sow

## Princess Pea



*Like most hearts, it was complicated, shaded with dark and dappled with light.*

Do you agree with this statement? Is your own heart shaded with dark and dappled with light?

## Tale of Despereaux

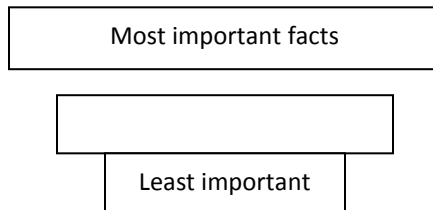
### Chapter 39

### News Report

**Pretend that you are a news reporter reporting on the death of Gregory and the missing princess.**

**Create a headline and write the report. Read the following information on writing a news report before you start.**

- A news report is based on facts. Do not include your opinions.
- The first paragraph contains the most important information: Who? What? When? Where? and How?
- A news report is arranged in an “inverted pyramid” style. This means that the facts are arranged from most important to least important.



**Answer these questions in the lead of your news report:**

- 1. Who is it about?**
- 2. What happened?**
- 3. When did it happen?**
- 4. Where did it happen?**
- 5. Why did it happen?**
- 6. How did things end up?**

You can quote things that the characters said about the event. You may want to “quote” the cook or Louise. Make sure you introduce these quotes by identifying the person who said it, and make sure that you use quotation marks.

Your headline should grab the reader’s attention, and sum up your article. Put some thought into your headline before writing your article.

**My headline** \_\_\_\_\_

# Tale of Despereaux

## Chapter 40

Go back to page 207 where the narrator talks to the reader about forgiveness. Like hope and love, forgiveness is a major theme in this novel.

How does forgiving his father help Despereaux?

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How has Despereaux changed?

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How does the forgiveness that Despereaux gives his father change his father?

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What do you believe about forgiveness?

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Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 41

Reread the paragraph on page 210 that begins *Reader, have you ever seen a king cry?* Explain what this passage means.

**DIRECT CHARACTERIZATION** - The writer makes direct statements about a character's personality and tells what the character is like.

**INDIRECT CHARACTERIZATION** - The writer reveals information about a character and his personality through that character's thoughts, words, and actions, along with how other characters respond to that character, including what they think and say about him.

**The author uses a great deal of direct characterization about the king in this chapter. Go back and look for what the author directly says about the king, and complete the following chart.**

| <i>The King's Traits</i> | <i>Evidence (Write down an action that shows this is true about the king.)</i> | <i>Type of characterization<br/>Direct or indirect?</i> |
|--------------------------|--|---|
|                          |  |   |
|                          |  |   |
|                          |  |   |



## Tale of Despereaux

### Chapter 42

#### A Quest

In mythology and literature, a **quest**, a journey towards a goal, serves as a plot device and (frequently) as a symbol. Quests appear in the folklore of every nation and also figure prominently in non-national cultures. In literature, the objects of quests require great exertion on the part of the hero, and the overcoming of many obstacles, typically including much travel. The aspect of travel also allows the storyteller to showcase exotic quest objects, locations, and cultures (an objective of the narrator, not of the character).

The hero normally aims to obtain something or someone by the quest, and with this object to return home. The object can be something new, that fulfills a lack in his life, or something that was stolen away from him or someone with authority to dispatch him.

### **Despereaux's Quest**

Who is the hero in this quest?

What is Despereaux's goal?

What obstacles might Despereaux face?

Where will Despereaux "travel"?

What/who does Despereaux aim to "obtain"?

Tale of Despereaux

Chapters 43-44

1. Why was the cook glad to see a mouse in her kitchen?
2. Despereaux thought that the cook would kill him. Instead she laughed. Why do you think the cook laughed?
3. Why do you think the cook was cooking soup even though it was against the rules?
4. Why did the cook's laughter hurt Despereaux's feelings?

Write an acrostic poem using the word soup. Make sure your poem is about the characters, setting, theme, or conflict in the novel.

**S**

**O**

**U**

**P**

Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 46

**Define personification** \_\_\_\_\_

Find the personification of the spool in this chapter. In the box below, write the words that personify the spool.

**Learn a Word!**

Find the word cornucopia on page 238. Use context clues to figure out what this word means.

Based on context clues, I think the word means \_\_\_\_\_.

Now, look up the word cornucopia in a dictionary. Write the dictionary definition (denotation) on the line below.

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What is the one thing that red thread means to a rat? \_\_\_\_\_

**Predict**

What do you think will happen next? Write your prediction in the box below.

Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 48

Why do you think Botticelli swings the locket back and forth?

How does Botticelli trick Despereaux?

**Imagery** is language that creates a sensory impression within the reader's mind. It allows the reader to see, hear, feel, smell, or even taste what is happening in the story – all in the mind, of course. Imagery makes the reader feel like he/she is there, in the story, experiencing the same things that the character is experiencing.

In this chapter, the author uses a great deal of imagery to describe what Despereaux sees in the dungeon. **Go back and find the descriptions as Despereaux is led by the rat Botticelli. Copy one sentence that contains imagery in the box below.**

**How does the setting- the dungeon- affect Despereaux? Find a passage from this chapter to support your answer.**

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## Tale of Despereaux

### Chapters 49-50

After reading chapter forty-nine, explain what the title of the chapter means.

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Draw a picture of the scene at the end of chapter forty-nine. Use details from the novel to help you. Write a caption to go along with your illustration.



**Infer** What happens at the end of chapter fifty?

Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 51 - 52

Find and reread the passage in chapter fifty-one that begins...

*I think, reader, that she was feeling the same thing that Despereaux had felt when he was faced...*

What was it that the princess had to do to save her own heart?

Record the fate of each of the main characters in the following chart.

| Character  | Fate |
|------------|------|
| Roscuro    |      |
| Mig        |      |
| Despereaux |      |

# The Tale of Despereaux

## Final Test

- Which of the following is the best overall tone of this novel?
  - factual and informative
  - serious and stern
  - lighthearted YET adventurous
  - angry and critical
- What did Miggery do to Despereaux?
  - She singed his fur with fire.
  - She snuck him in to see the princess.
  - She taught him how to cook.
  - She cut off his tail.
- This novel falls most closely under the genre of a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - mystery
  - myth
  - fairy tale
  - short story
- Roscuro tricked Mig into believing that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - she was already a princess
  - she and the princess pea would trade places
  - the dungeon was a wonderful place to live
  - Despereaux was really a rat
- Which of the following is **not** one of the main issues in this novel?
  - light versus darkness
  - good versus evil
  - the power of love and hope
  - power versus money
- Throughout the novel, characters are forced into the dungeon because of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - other's evil intentions
  - the need to be alone
  - Despereaux's love of the princess
  - the limited space in the castle
- While in the dungeon, darkness corrupts Roscuro until all he thinks about is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - love
  - revenge
  - cheese
  - fear

8. Many of the characters in this story experience forgiveness. For example, Pea forgives Roscuro. Who does Despereaux forgive?
- the princess
  - Gregory
  - his father
  - Miggery
9. Which of the following characters is the hero of this story?
- The King
  - Princess Pea
  - Roscuro
  - Despereaux
10. The power of a story is emphasized in *The Tale of Despereaux*. Which of the following is **not** an example of how storytelling affects the characters?
- The first time Despereaux enters the dungeon, he tells himself a story to battle his fear.
  - Gregory decides to rescue and help Despereaux because of his ability to tell a story.
  - When Despereaux goes on his quest to save Princess Pea, he tells himself a story for courage.
  - Miggery learns to tell stories from Despereaux and tells them to the cook.
11. All of the following words describe Despereaux except \_\_\_\_\_.
- brave
  - athletic
  - determined
  - motivated
12. Which of the following best describes Despereaux's attitude toward Princess Pea?
- loving
  - turbulent
  - unsupportive
  - one-sided
13. Which of the following passages from the book could be considered the **best** overall theme?
- Reader, you must know that an interesting fate (sometimes involving rats, sometimes not) awaits almost everyone, man or mouse, who does not conform.*
  - The dungeon was quiet, but it was not quiet in a good way.*
  - There are those hearts, reader, that never mend again once they are broken.*
  - Stories are light.*
14. In the novel, the use of the third person omniscient point of view allows the author to \_\_\_\_
- share only Despereaux's inner thoughts and feelings.
  - concentrate on creating unusual characters.
  - share what many of the characters are thinking and feeling.
  - describe the story's setting in vivid details.



15. The narrator in this book often pauses to speak directly to the reader. When doing this, the narrator sometimes \_\_\_\_\_.
- allows us to learn about a character's past
  - reassures the reader during suspenseful moments
  - foreshadows future events
  - all of these
16. When the cook first sees Despereaux, she orders him to be killed. However, at the second meeting, the cook offers Despereaux soup. Why does the cook's attitude toward Despereaux most likely change?
- The disappearance of the princess has had an effect on the cook.
  - The cook has learned that mice are the best taste testers of soup.
  - The cook has gotten married and is a happier person.
  - The cook is afraid of Despereaux because he is missing his tail.
17. Which of the following words best describes the relationship between Princess Pea and Miggery Sow at the end of the novel?
- rocky
  - acquaintances
  - sisterly
  - one-sided
18. Which of the following elements of a fairy tale are in *The Tale of Despereaux*?
- a princess
  - a knight
  - a happy ending
  - all of these
19. Roscuro tells Miggery Sow that aspirations are "those things that make a serving girl want to be a princess." The dictionary defines aspiration as *a strong desire to do something great or important*. Choose two characters from the story and describe their aspirations. Then, tell which character's aspirations you admire most.

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20. What are two life lessons that you believe the author of this book wanted her readers to take away from it? Explain how the author uses the characters and plot to teach these lessons.

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## ABCs of *The Tale of Despereaux*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Directions: Think of words that are important in the novel *The Tale of Despereaux*. Then, place the word in the appropriate box. Make sure you are able to explain why each word relates to the novel.

|   |   |    |    |
|---|---|----|----|
| A | B | C  | D  |
| E | F | G  | H  |
| I | J | K  | L  |
| M | N | O  | P  |
| Q | R | S  | T  |
| U | V | WX | YZ |

## Comparing the Movie to the Novel

The movie and the book both begin differently. Before watching the movie, write what happens at the beginning of the book. As you watch the movie, jot down how things are different in the beginning of the movie.

|                                |                                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>The book begins with...</b> | <b>The movie begins with...</b> |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|

As you watch the movie, jot down differences from the novel for each of the following characters. You do not have to write complete sentences. Just quickly, take notes.

| <b>Despereaux</b> | <b>Roscuro</b>    | <b>Princess Pea</b> |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
|                   |                   |                     |
| <b>Cook</b>       | <b>Antoinette</b> | <b>Furlough</b>     |

**As you watch the movie, jot down differences from the novel for each of the following characters. You do not have to write complete sentences. Just quickly, take notes.**

| <b>Gregory</b> | <b>Botticelli</b> | <b>Miggery</b> |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
|                |                   |                |

**As you watch the movie, jot down differences from the novel for each of the following parts of the setting. You do not have to write complete sentences. Just quickly, take notes.**

| Castle | Dungeon | Kingdom of Dor |
|--------|---------|----------------|
|        |         |                |

**After the movie, sit and think about other differences that you may not have written down already. Jot these differences down in the box below.**

**Now, think about how the movie and the book are similar. In the following box, jot down things that are the same in both the movie and the novel.**

**The Tale of Despereaux**  
**Comparing the Movie and the Novel**  
**Test**

1. The beginning of the novel focuses on the birth of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Roscuro
  - b. Despereaux
  - c. Miggery
  - d. Princess Pea
2. At the beginning of the movie, we see \_\_\_\_\_ on a ship.
  - a. Roscuro
  - b. Botticelli
  - c. Miggery
  - d. Despereaux
3. In the movie, there is one very special day in the Kingdom of Dor. This day is known as \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Pea Day
  - b. Royal Day
  - c. Soup Day
  - d. Story Day
4. True or false? The narrator in the book also tells us about this special day.
  - a. True
  - b. False
5. In the movie, we see that Roscuro is a sea rat and is not born in the dungeon but falls into the dungeon. However, in the book \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Roscuro is born in the dungeon at the same time that Despereaux is born in the castle.
  - b. Roscuro was a rat born into the darkness of the dungeon several years before Despereaux was born.
  - c. Roscuro is a sea rat who willingly goes to the dungeon because he wants to be there.
  - d. Roscuro is born on the sea but is transported to the dungeon.
6. Which of the following is true of how the cook can be contrasted in the book and the movie?
  - a. In the movie, the cook is a man, but in the book, the cook is a woman.
  - b. In the movie, the cook relies on magic to help him, but in the book, this magic is not included.
  - c. In the book, the cook secretly has rats help make soup, but in the movie, the cook does not.
  - d. Both a and b
7. In the movie, Roscuro goes from the castle to the dungeon, but in the book, Roscuro \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. goes from the ship to the castle.
  - b. goes from the dungeon to the castle
  - c. goes from the chandelier to the library
  - d. goes from the kitchen to the dungeon
8. In the book, Botticelli is described as an old, one-eared rat. In the movie, Botticelli is portrayed as a tall, old rat who is a leader in "Ratworld". What is something significant that is left out in the movie?
  - a. Botticelli does not yell very loudly in the movie like he does in the book.
  - b. Botticelli does not use magic spells in the movie like he does in the book.
  - c. Botticelli does not wear a red cloth around his neck in the movie like he does in the book.
  - d. Botticelli does not swing a locket when he speaks to Rosucro in the movie like he does in the book.



9. Which of the following happens in both the book and the movie?
- Soup is outlawed.
  - There is no rain in Dor for a long time.
  - The Princess Pea sings every night.
  - Miggery receives clouts to the ear.
10. In the movie, when Despereaux first meets the Princess Pea, she is crying. Which of the following is Princess Pea doing in the book when she first meets Despereaux?
- She is writing a song about her mother.
  - She is listening to her father play his guitar and sing.
  - She is talking about bugs to her father.
  - None of these
11. How is Hovis, the threadmaster, portrayed in the movie?
- He is blind and creepy looking.
  - He is tall and handsome.
  - He has a hood over his face.
  - He is small and has a patch over his left eye.
12. Which of the following is a major difference in Despereaux in the movie and the book?
- In the movie, Despereaux has large eyes and is very small, but in the book, Despereaux has large ears but is average height.
  - In the movie, Despereaux is born with his eyes open, but in the book he is not.
  - In the movie, Despereaux reads the story of a knight, but in the book, he does not.
  - In the movie, Despereaux has no fear of going to the dungeon, but in the book, Despereaux is often afraid and even feints when he finds out he must go to the dungeon.
13. In the book, Despereaux's mother is portrayed as being dramatic and somewhat selfish. How is she portrayed in the movie?
- as mean and hateful
  - as brave
  - as overly intelligent
  - as meek and concerned
14. In the movie, what is the dungeon called?
- Dungeonworld
  - Ratworld
  - The Deep Downs
  - The Underworld
15. True or false. Despereaux is put into an arena to fight a cat in both the movie and the book.
- true
  - false
16. Which of the following is a significant difference in the story of Miggery Sow?
- In the movie, Mig is raised by a mean uncle, but in the book, she is raised by a mean stepmother.
  - In the movie, Mig cannot hear well, but in the book, she has a keen sense of hearing.
  - In the book, Mig's father sells her, but in the movie, Mig's father did not want to give her up.
  - In the book, Mig's heart-shaped birthmark is on her hand, but in the movie, it's on her neck.

17. The story of Roscuro is different in a lot of ways when comparing and contrasting the book to the movie. Which of the following is true in both the book and the movie?
- a. Roscuro begins to help with evil plans after being ridiculed by the princess.
  - b. Roscuro is a sea rat.
  - c. Roscuro saves Despereaux from the vicious cat.
  - d. Roscuro wants to be like Boticelli.
18. In the book, Miggery and Roscuro take the princess to the dungeon and hold her captive there together, but in the movie\_\_\_\_\_.
- a. only Miggery takes the princess captive
  - b. Roscuro takes the princess, but Mig tries to stop him.
  - c. Miggery and Roscuro take the princess to the dungeon, but lock her up with alligators.
  - d. Miggery and Roscuro take the princess to the dungeon, and then Roscuro locks Mig up by herself.
19. In the movie, which of the following happens to the Princess Pea?
- a. She is locked up in a cell all alone.
  - b. She is attacked by tons of rats.
  - c. She is tied up and brought into the arena in Ratworld.
  - d. She escapes the dungeon by herself and makes her way back to the castle.
20. Which version of the story portrays Roscuro in a more positive way?
- a. the movie
  - b. the book

**Discussion**

21. Which did you like better, the movie or the book? Explain why by using specific examples in your answer.

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22. Think of one part of the plot that was either not included in the movie or that was changed in the movie. What do you think of this? Do you think the movie was better because of the change, or do you think that this part of the plot should have been kept the same way as it was written in the book? Explain your answer.

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## Movie Test

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Use the information in this box to help you keep the characters straight in your mind.**

Roscuro – The rat with the earring in his ear that falls in the bowl of soup

Boticelli – The tall rat who seems to be the head of the other rats

1. At the beginning of the movie, we see \_\_\_\_\_ on a ship.
  - a. Roscuro
  - b. Botticelli
  - c. Miggery
  - d. Despereaux
2. In the movie, there is one very special day in the Kingdom of Dor. This day is known as \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Pea Day
  - b. Royal Day
  - c. Soup Day
  - d. Story Day
3. How is Despereaux's mother portrayed in the movie?
  - a. as mean and hateful
  - b. as brave
  - c. as overly intelligent
  - d. as meek and concerned
4. What happens when Roscuro falls in the queen's soup?
  - a. Roscuro is burned.
  - b. The queen dies.
  - c. The table falls apart.
  - d. The queen is unaware of the rat in her soup.
5. In the movie, what is the dungeon, or place where the rats live, called?
  - a. Dungeonworld
  - b. Ratworld
  - c. The Deep Downs
  - d. The Underworld
6. Which of the following **best** describes Despereaux as a young mouse?
  - a. lazy and slow
  - b. athletic and kind
  - c. adventurous and unique
  - d. nice and giving
7. Despereaux's parents are worried because Despereaux \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. does not know how to write
  - b. does not like cheese
  - c. is not afraid
  - d. does not like his brothers

8. What does the cook use to help him cook?
  - a. a gigantic spoon
  - b. magic
  - c. lots of spices
  - d. the help from rats
  
9. When Despereaux reads the book in the library, we see his “thoughts” of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. a knight in shining armor fighting
  - b. a frog kissing a princess
  - c. a battle between a mouse and a rat
  - d. his fear of the king
  
10. Despereaux introduces himself to the princess as \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. a mouse
  - b. a friend
  - c. a knight
  - d. a gentleman
  
11. True or false. The Princess wishes it would rain again.
  - a. true
  - b. false
  
12. Miggery Sow always wanted to be a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. servant girl in the castle
  - b. friend to the princess
  - c. princess
  - d. queen
  
13. How did Miggery get to the castle?
  - a. She was sold as a servant with a bunch of pigs.
  - b. She applied for a job as a servant.
  - c. She was picked up by a knight on his horse.
  - d. She walked.
  
14. Despereaux strongly believes in \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. courage
  - b. honor
  - c. decency
  - d. all of these
  
15. Who rescues Despereaux from the big cat in the arena?
  - a. the princess
  - b. Gregory
  - c. Roscuro
  - d. Boticelli

16. After Miggery is caught with the princess' crown, how is she punished?
  - a. She must take food to the jailer in the dungeon.
  - b. She must scrub all of the floors three times a day.
  - c. She must feed the pigs.
  - d. She must iron all of the princess' clothes.
17. How does Roscuro manipulate Miggery?
  - a. He tells her that a crown awaits her in the dungeon.
  - b. He lies to Miggery and tells her that she should be the princess and the actual princess should be put in the dungeon.
  - c. He forces her to steal a knife from the kitchen.
  - d. He tricks her into believing she is already a princess.
18. Once Despereaux finds the princess in the dungeon, what does she give him to take to her father?
  - a. her necklace
  - b. a lock of her hair
  - c. her crown
  - d. her shoe
19. Why do Despereaux's father and brother most likely think Despereaux is dead when he asks them for help rescuing the princess?
  - a. because they had seen his ghost before
  - b. because he is covered in flour
  - c. because he has a sheet on his head
  - d. because he tells them he is a ghost
20. What happens towards the end of the movie when the cook makes soup again?
  - a. Everyone in the kingdom comes to eat.
  - b. The bowls and spoons start to be collected again.
  - c. It starts raining.
  - d. The princess smells the soup from the dungeon.
21. Who accompanies Despereaux to the dungeon to find and rescue the princess?
  - a. the king
  - b. the cook's magic helper
  - c. Boticelli
  - d. Despereaux's father
22. How does Miggery's father recognize that Miggery is his daughter?
  - a. He remembers her curly hair.
  - b. He sees her birthmark.
  - c. He remembers her voice.
  - d. He sees the scar on her arm.
23. At the end when the princess is tied up and all the rats are cheering, Roscuro is given the chance to end her. Why does Roscuro decide not to do it?
  - a. because he chooses to forgive her
  - b. because he is afraid
  - c. because he wants to allow Despereaux to save her
  - d. because he wants the cat to finish the princess

24. How does Roscuro help save the princess?
- He fights Boticelli with his sword.
  - He shines the light toward Boticelli
  - He throws rocks at Boticelli and the other rats.
  - He uses the cat to trick Boticelli.
25. What happens to Boticelli in the end?
- He is eaten by the cat.
  - He is banished from the kingdom by the other rats.
  - He disappears into the castle.
  - He is killed by Despereaux's sword.
26. Who apologizes at the end of the movie?
- Roscuro
  - Miggery's father
  - The king
  - All of the above
27. What happened to Miggery in the end?
- She became a princess.
  - She continued to be a servant for the princess.
  - She returned to her farm with her father.
  - She founded her own kingdom.
28. What happened to Roscuro?
- He went back to sea.
  - He lived in the kitchen with the cook.
  - He became a knight.
  - He took Boticelli's place as the head rat.
29. True or false. This movie ends happily ever after.
- true
  - false
30. Which of the following elements of a fairy tale does the movie include?
- magic
  - good versus evil
  - love
  - all of these

# The Tale of Despereaux

## Answer Key

*The Tale of Despereaux*

Chapters 1 & 2

**Meet the mother mouse.**

Answer the following questions about the mother mouse.

1. Where is she from? **France**
2. How did she arrive at the castle? **In the luggage of a visiting French diplomat**
3. What was one of her favorite words? **Disappointment**
4. What is her name? **Antoinette**
5. How does the mother mouse react to Despereaux's birth? **She is upset and disappointed.**

**Despereaux**

What does the name Despereaux mean? **Sadness, despair**

What is unusual about Despereaux? **He was born with his eyes open. He has big ears. He is very small. He showed no interest in things that a mouse should show interest in.**

Use the descriptions of Despereaux in chapters one and two to draw a picture of him in the box below.

Accept drawings that are based on descriptions provided in the chapter.

In the box below, list the things that most mice are interested in.

**Think constantly of food  
Intent on tracking down every  
crumb**

*The Tale of Despereaux*

Chapters 3 & 4

In this chapter, Despereaux's siblings try to "educate him on the ways of being a mouse." Go back and read the beginning of chapter three to complete the following chart.

| Sibling teaching Despereaux | What the sibling is trying to teach Despereaux | The instructions given to Despereaux   |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Furlough                    | <b>The art of scurrying</b>                    | <b>"Move side to side", "Look over your shoulder" "Don't stop for anything."</b> |
| Merlot                      | <b>How to nibble paper</b>                     | <b>"First a bite of glue and then follow it with a crunch of paper"</b>          |



Now, answer the following questions about how Despereaux responds to the things that his siblings are trying to teach him.

1. What did Despereaux do instead of trying to scurry the way that Furlough was instructing him to? **He was staring at the light from the window.**
2. Why wouldn't Despereaux eat the paper the way that his sister Merlot was instructing him to? **He said it would ruin the story. Despereaux began to read the story.**

**Foreshadowing** occurs when the author provides a clue or a hint of something that a character will face later in the story. Which of the following lines from chapter three is an example of foreshadowing?

- a. *Despereaux looked down at the book, and something remarkable happened.*
- b. *"This way, small brother," she said as she crawled onto the pages of the book.*
- c. *He shivered. He sneezed. He blew his nose into his handkerchief.*
- d. ***Despereaux did not know it, but he would need, very soon, to be brave himself.***

### Discussion

Reread the last line to the reader in chapter three. Do you agree with the narrator's comment about fate? Explain what this means, and why you believe it to be true or not. **Accept reasonable answers.**

When Despereaux finds out where the music is coming from in chapter four, it makes him very happy.

*"Oh," he said, "it sounds like heaven. It smells like honey."*

**A simile** is a type of figurative language used to compare two things using the words *like* or *as*. Despereaux compares music to heaven and honey. It is interesting that he compares the sound of music to a smell because music is something that does not have a smell. However, for a mouse, everything is most likely related to this sense. Pretend that you are Despereaux and you want to continue your description of this music. Try to come up with two of your own similes for Despereaux to compare this music to.

It sounds like \_\_\_\_\_. It smells like \_\_\_\_\_.

### Princess Pea

What is your first impression of the Princess Pea? Explain why you have this opinion. Defend your answer by supporting it with something that she says. **Accept reasonable answers.**

Where does Despereaux find himself sitting at the end of chapter four? **Right at the foot of the king**

How did he end up in this place? **He crept closer and closer to get to the music.**

Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 5

To whom does Despereaux compare the Princess Pea? **To the fair maiden in the book in the library**

What happens after The Princess Pea smiles at Despereaux and he smiles back at her? **He falls in love.**

*The Tale of Despereaux*

Chapters 6 & 7

ARA

Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 8

- How to pronounce the word
- How to spell the word
- The part of speech of the word ~ What part of speech is the word perfidy? **noun**
- The definition of the word
- The etymology of a word

**Etymologies**

From what language did this word originate? **Latin**

**Do you understand the word?** Complete the graphic organizer below.

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| write the definition of the word    | • Perfidy: <b>state of being faithless or disloyal</b>           |
| Write two synonyms for the word     | • Synonyms: <b>treachery, betrayal, treason, disloyal</b>        |
| Use the word Perfidy in a sentence. | • Sentence: <b>The king was so shocked by his son's perfidy.</b> |

Now, explain Lester's "act of perfidy". **He did not vote against his own son being sent to the dungeon.**

Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 9

Find the question in this chapter that Furlough refers to as “the wrong question”. Write the “wrong question” on the line below.

“Do you Know what love is?”

Answer Despereaux’s question yourself. What would you say if he asked you that?

ARA

What is the question that Furlough tells Despereaux he should be asking?

Why does the Mouse Council want to see you?

## Predict

Reread the last line of chapter nine.

Explain what the word *fate* means. destiny

Make a prediction. What do you think Despereaux’s fate will be? **Accept reasonable predictions.**

Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 10

Look up the word in the dictionary. Answer the following information about this word using the dictionary.

1. What is the etymology of the word? **Latin**
2. What part of speech is the word? **adjective**
3. What is the definition of the word? **Conspicuously**

*Despereaux marveled at his own bravery.*

*He admired his own defiance.*

What do you think that the word defiance means? **standing up to someone, showing resistance, being rebellious**

Look up the word in the dictionary. What is the dictionary definition of this word?

**Intentionally contemptuous behavior or attitude**

What qualities do you think a person or character should have to be considered a hero? **ARA**

What makes Despereaux brave? **He refuses to renounce the princess even though it means he will be sent to the dungeon. His defiance makes him brave. A character must be courageous, unashamed, and determined to be a hero, and Despereaux has all of those traits.**

# Tale of Despereaux

## Chapter 11

|  | Bravery  | Courtesy  | Honor   | Devotion   |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| What are some synonyms for this word?  | fearlessness<br>courage<br>valor<br>heroism                                      | politeness<br>good manners<br>consideration<br>gentility                  | integrity<br>decency<br>righteousness<br>nobility     | dedication<br>commitment   |
| Has Despereaux demonstrated this word with his love for the princess? If so, tell how. | Yes He refuses to renounce her and because of that is being sent to the dungeon. | Yes, he holds out his handkerchief to the princess when he begins to cry. | Yes, he repeatedly says to the princes "I honor you". | Yes, his commitment to the princess is evident as he refuses to speak against her or to agree not to speak to her again. |

*Reader, do you believe that there is such a thing as happily ever after?*

Just as Despereaux begins to question the possibility of a happily ever after, the narrator asks you to consider this too. Answer the question. First tell whether you believe there is such a thing as happily ever after. Then, explain your answer by giving at least three reasons that support your opinion. **Accept reasonable answers.**

## Tale of Despereaux

## Chapter 12

The word *Adieu* is the French word for farewell. Write an acrostic poem about Despereaux's present situation using the word *farewell*.

First, brainstorm a list of words and phrases that have to do with Despereaux's farewell. Think about his feelings for the princess, his mother and family, his feelings, and what he is facing to help you come up with words. Try to begin some of your words with the letters in the word *farewell*.

### My Words

| farewell  |
|---|
| Adieu, follow your heart, love, dungeon,<br>rats, exit, enter another world, welcome<br>the challenge, hurt, sad, tears, goodbye,<br>hero |

Now, use the words that you brainstormed to help you write your acrostic poem. You do not have to use all of the words in your list. You may come up with new ones that you didn't list. Your poem should be about Despereaux's farewell and each line should begin with a letter from the word.

**F**ollowing your heart, to love you are a slave

**A**dieu, farewell, Despereaux, be brave.

**R**ats await you, that is what you hear.

**E**xiting this castle, you must have no fear.

**W**elcome the challenge that lies ahead.

**E**nter the dungeon without tears shed.

**L**ove outweighs your woe.

**L**ittle Despereaux, you're a hero.

Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 14

The setting of a story includes the time and place. It also includes the environment.

Study the following chart to understand what setting might include.

| Place  | Time  | Environment   |
|--|---|---|
| The physical location<br>The country, state, or city<br>Mountains? Lake? Forest?<br>Beach? Under a bridge? | Calendar and clock times<br>Day, month, year<br>Season<br>Future<br>Past<br>Present | Details in the surroundings<br>What else is going on around the characters? Is it crowded?<br>Isolated? What does it smell like?<br>What is the weather or atmosphere like? |

Describe the setting in which Despereaux finds himself in chapter fourteen. Look back at the chapter and complete the following chart by describing the place, the time, and the environment of this new place that he has been thrown into.

| Place  | Time     | Environment   |
|--|----------|---|
| Dungeon under the castle<br>Royalty lives in the castle along with a mouse community.<br>He is there for punishment so it's like a prison. | Long ago | Foul smell<br>Complete and utter darkness<br>Isolated, lonesome place |

Read the following passage again from page 36.

*And it was so dark. Despereaux had never before encountered darkness so awful, so all-encompassing. The darkness had a physical presence as if it were a being all its own.*

**Darkness is personified in the dungeon. The imagery created by this personification helps the reader to “feel” and “sense” just how dark and scary the dungeon was for Despereaux. Find the example of personification on page 74. Write it on the following line.**

**“Pea,” said Despereaux, and the name of his beloved was immediately swallowed up by the darkness.**

## Tale of Despereaux

### Chapter 15

Who is Gregory? **a jailer, who has been in the dungeon for a very long time**

How does the rope help Gregory? **It is tied to his ankle and keeps him from getting lost because it guides him back to “the beginning”.**

Point of view

This novel has an interesting point of view. Answer the following questions

1. Are any of the characters telling this story? **no**
2. The answer to question number one tells us that this novel is **not** written in the **first** person point of view.

It is interesting that Gregory speaks in the third person point of view! When you speak, you use the first person point of view by using the pronouns *I, me, we*, etc. Imagine if we all went around speaking in the third person point of view like Gregory does. It sounds so funny, doesn't it? Try it on the lines below. Write three sentences telling about what you did yesterday. Use the third person point of view as you write about what you did. This means you cannot use the first person pronouns like *I, me, or we*.

### **ARA**

In this novel, the unseen narrator does not focus on just one character; therefore the point of view is not **limited**

Also, the author does something very cool in this book. From time to time, the narrator steps out of the story to talk to the reader using the pronoun *you*.

Test

1. How does Despereaux get his name?
  - a. His father names him this after his great uncle.
  - b. His mother names him this because of all of the despair she feels.
  - c. The mouse council decides his name.
  - d. The other mice in the castle name him.
2. What is unusual about Despereaux?
  - a. He has very large ears.
  - b. He was born with his eyes open.
  - c. He was very small.
  - d. All of these
3. Which of the following best describes Despereaux's relationship with his mother and father?
  - a. loving
  - b. aggravating
  - c. forgiving
  - d. distant
4. Despereaux *showed no interest in the things a mouse should show interest in*. According to the story, which of the following is **not** something that a mouse should show interest in?
  - a. thinking constantly of food
  - b. staying nearby a mouse hole
  - c. staying intent on tracking down crumbs of food
  - d. learning the art of scurrying
5. Who is Furlough?
  - a. the king
  - b. a rat
  - c. Despereaux's father
  - d. Despereaux's brother

*Reader, you must know that an interesting fate (sometimes involving rats, sometimes not) awaits almost everyone, mouse or man, who does not conform.*

6. What does it mean to conform?
  - a. to become like everyone else
  - b. to run a hard race
  - c. to stand out
  - d. to be polite to everyone
7. Despereaux compares the Princess Pea to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. his mother
  - b. the fair maiden in the book he read in the library
  - c. the most beautiful woman in the world
  - d. his aunt who was once the queen of the mice
8. Which of the following two things does Despereaux love?
  - a. eating and music
  - b. light and music
  - c. the Princess and the dungeon
  - d. playing music and reading



9. Which of the following characters speaks in the third person point of view by referring to himself by saying his own name rather than *I*?
- Despereaux
  - The princess
  - Gregory**
  - Furlough
10. Who decides what must be done to Despereaux after he is found sitting at the foot of a human?
- Despereaux's mother
  - The Mouse Council**
  - Despereaux's entire family
  - The king
11. In this story, the light and the darkness are mentioned several times. What might the light symbolize?
- evil
  - color
  - goodness**
  - the sun
12. What punishment is given to Despereaux?
- He must have his tail chopped off.
  - He is sentenced to the dungeon.**
  - He is exiled to another castle.
  - He is only to be fed once a day.
13. Which of the following does the red thread that is tied around Despereaux's neck most likely symbolize in the story?
- blood
  - death**
  - light
  - darkness
14. What is there to fear in the dungeon?
- spiders
  - rats**
  - ghosts
  - secret passageways
15. What does the word perfidy mean?
- being disloyal**
  - being angry
  - being jealous
  - being unfair
16. Who is Gregory?
- the head rat in the dungeon
  - a jailer in the dungeon**
  - the head of the Mouse Council
  - a ghost who dwells in the dungeon
17. How does the rope help Gregory?
- It provides him company.
  - It helps him to walk.
  - It keeps him from getting lost.**
  - It helps him find rats.

18. What does Gregory ask Despereaux to do for him?
- a. feed him his cheese
  - b. tell him a story
  - c. lead him to the light
  - d. tell him about the castle
19. Despereaux can be described as being all of the following except \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. brave
  - b. loving
  - c. unique
  - d. shy
20. Where is Despereaux at the end of the first book?
- a. lost and alone in the dungeon
  - b. in Gregory's hand
  - c. with the Princess Pea
  - d. under a hat

## Tale of Despereaux

### Chapter 16

Roscuro's real name – **Chiaroscuro** What does Roscuro say is the meaning of life? **light**

Botticelli's last name – **Remorso** One word - **Evil** What does Botticelli say is the meaning of life?  
**suffering**

Summarize the directions that Botticelli says to torture a prisoner. Look on page 89.

**Botticelli says that first one must talk the prisoner into being one's friend. He tells Roscuro to listen to him, encourage him, promise forgiveness, and gain trust. Then, he instructs Roscuro to deny him. He says to "refuse to offer the very thing he wants."**

Compare and contrast Roscuro and Despereaux. Use this chapter to help you.

**Comparisons: They are both different from most. They are attracted to things that most rats and mice are not. They are both determined.**

**Contrasts: Roscuro was born in the filth and darkness of the dungeon. Despereaux was born in the clean, light-filled castle. Roscuro is a rat. Despereaux is a mouse.**

## Tale of Despereaux

### Chapter 17

According to Botticelli, how do rats view mice? Explain, and use text in your answer.

Mice are afraid of everything. “They are despicable, laughable, the opposite of everything we strive to be.”

According to Botticelli, what will satisfy Roscuro’s cravings from the world? The cloth

Botticelli can be described as manipulative and controlling. Find two statements from this chapter that prove this. Write the passages below.

Sample passages: “The meaning of life,” said Botticelli, “is suffering, specifically the suffering of others.” (page 88) “Good,” said Botticelli. “Do as I say and your life will be full of meaning. This is how to torture a prisoner... (page 89)

## Tale of Despereaux

### Chapter 18

In your own words, explain how Roscuro is able to take the red cloth from the prisoner.

He tells the prisoner he has come to keep him company and to allow him to confess his sins. Roscuro claims to be “a voice that cares” and listens to him. He asks if the cloth brings him comfort. Then, he takes it.

What does Roscuro learn at the end of this chapter? Support your answer with evidence from the text. He learns that Botticelli was wrong. He finds out that what he wanted and needed was the light, not the red cloth. “*What Roscuro wanted, what he needed was not the cloth, but the light that had shone behind it.*”

What do you think that the prisoner learns at the end of this chapter?

The prisoner learns not to trust so easily and maybe that rats are “dirty” or untrustworthy

**“You dirty rat!” shouted the prisoner. (page 102)**

Explain the literal meaning of these words and also the figurative meaning. What connotations are in the name rat? Literal meaning: **A wretched-acting person**

Connotations – **dirty, conniving, sneaky, filthy, dishonest, disloyal**

## Tale of Despereaux

### Chapter 19

#### Context Clues

Using context clues, which two words would best replace the two underlined words in the above passage?

- a. assigned, house
- b. forced, laughter
- c. assigned, environment
- d. forced, thoughts

*Roscuro was enchanted. Everything glittered. Everything.* (page 104)

What is another word for enchanted? **captivated**

Describe the setting in this chapter. How does this new setting affect Roscuro?

Upstairs in the castle is the opposite of the dungeon. It is a world of “bright windows, polished floors.” Roscuro is “happy, delighted, amazed to find himself standing in so much light. It makes him want to “waltz” instead of walk. He had never seen happy before. “Roscuro was enchanted.”

### Verbs and Adjectives that help create tone

Look on the first page of this chapter. Find the four verbs that are used to describe the movement of the crystals on the chandelier. Write the verbs in the box below.

danced, swaying, twinkling, beckoning

Find the adjectives that describe the chandelier and the crystals. Write the adjectives in the box below.

beautiful, ornate

What tone do these words create? happy, jubilant, festive

### Discussion

How do these descriptions of the chandelier and the party contrast with the way that Roscuro feels about himself at the end of the chapter? Use textual evidence to support your answer.

The narrator states at the end of chapter twenty that the word rat “immediately became clear. That it was an extremely distasteful syllable”. Roscuro feels like a rat is a “curse”, “insult”, or “word totally without light”.

## Tale of Despereaux

### Chapter 21

At the end of this chapter, the narrator speaks directly to the reader about Roscuro's heart. Look back at the last page of this chapter and explain how the narrator causes the reader to feel sympathy for Roscuro. Use text to support your answer.

The narrator asks the reader, *“Do you think that rats do not have hearts?” Wrong. All living things have a heart and the heart of any living thing can be broken*”. This statement asks the reader to look at the rat in a different light, and in thinking of a rat as having a heart like we do and all living creatures do. We feel sympathetic.

### Sample Poem

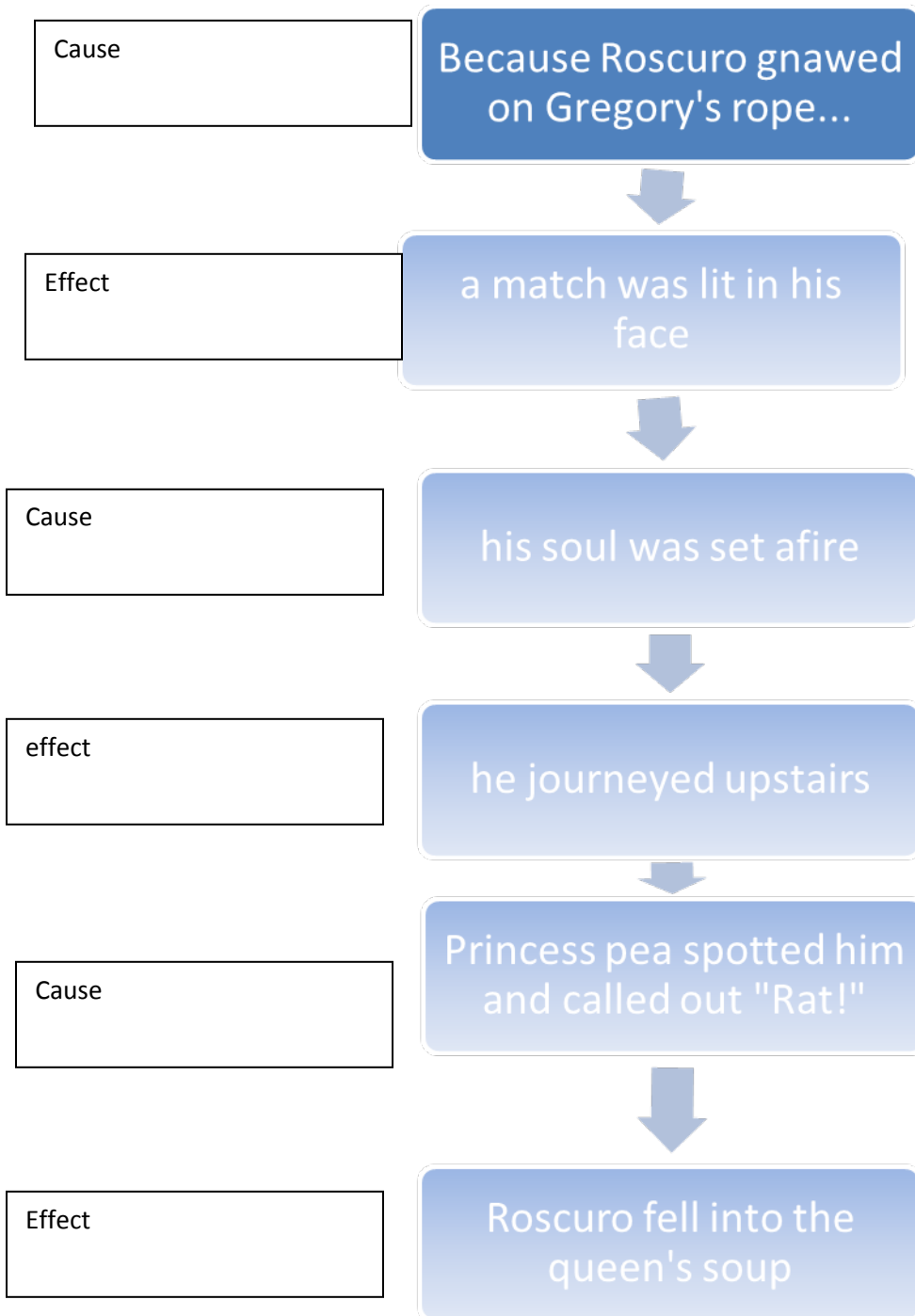
**R**ancid, rotten, rats

**A**dversary of cleanliness

**T**errible threat to goodness

Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 23



The queen died.



The heartbroken king  
outlawed soup,  
spoons, bowls and  
kettles.



He also ordered the  
death of every  
rat in the land.

Discussion - **ARA**



## Tale of Despereaux

### Test 2 Book The Second

1. Roscuro, unlike most rats, likes the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. dungeon
  - b. light**
  - c. jailer
  - d. dampness of the dungeon
2. When Botticelli speaks to other characters, he swings a heart-shaped locket. The reader can infer that Botticelli does this to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. hypnotize them into strongly listening and believing what he says**
  - b. distract them from the light that shines near him
  - c. encourage them to think about what he is saying
  - d. make them dizzy
3. Which of the following best describes Botticelli Remorso?
  - a. evil**
  - b. kind hearted
  - c. forgetful
  - d. quiet
4. How are Roscuro and Despereaux alike?
  - a. They both love the Princess Pea.
  - b. Both of them enjoy reading.
  - c. They both like being in the dungeon.
  - d. They both go against what is "normal".**
5. According the Botticelli, rats should be about \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. stealing and killing
  - b. darkness and suffering**
  - c. eating and hiding
  - d. running and scaring people
6. What is Botticelli's locket rope made of? Look back at chapter seventeen if you have forgotten.
  - a. twine
  - b. fishing line
  - c. mice whiskers**
  - d. the tails of mice
7. Botticelli convinces Roscuro to take the \_\_\_\_\_ from the new prisoner.
  - a. red cloth**
  - b. rope
  - c. food
  - d. bowl

8. Botticelli Remorso believes that rats should not be concerned with \_\_\_\_\_.
- rats
  - mice**
  - prisoners
  - the dungeon
9. Because the narrator is not a character and is able to follow several different characters in the book instead of just one character, the \_\_\_\_\_ point of view is used.
- first person
  - second person
  - third person limited
  - third person omniscient**
10. Why does the king outlaw rats, soup, and the utensils used to eat soup?
- because of his hurt and anger
  - because of his deep love of the queen**
  - because he is tired of rats and soup
  - because of his desire to control things
11. What happens to the queen?
- She faints.
  - She dies.**
  - She goes to live in the dungeon.
  - She forgets who she is.
12. Who spotted Roscuro hanging from the chandelier?
- Despereaux
  - The king
  - The queen
  - Princess Pea**
13. What does Roscuro use for a crown?
- a spoon**
  - a baker's hat
  - the top of an apple
  - a shoe
14. Who is on her way to the castle at the end of book two?
- Gregory's mother
  - Despereaux's cousin
  - Princess Pea
  - Miggery Sow**
15. Roscuro is delighted when he goes upstairs to the castle for all but which of the following reasons?
- Everything is shiny and glittery.
  - He has never seen happy people.
  - The princess looked so lovely.
  - There was lots of cheese on the tables.**

*And not until he heard it from the mouth of the princess did Roscuro realize that he did not like being a rat, that he did not want to be a rat.*

16. Why does Roscuro most likely realize that he did not like being a rat only after the princess called him one?
- a. because he is in love with the princess
  - b. because he knows that the princess is the only one who tells the truth
  - c. because the princess represents light and everything that is good in the castle
  - d. because the princess says the word rat with such force

17. Which of the following issues is included in this novel?
- a. good versus evil
  - b. darkness versus light
  - c. love
  - d. all of the above

*...the heartbroken king outlawed soup; and because soup was outlawed, so were all the instruments involved in the making and eating of soup...*

18. What type of organizational pattern is used in this passage?
- a. compare/contrast
  - b. order of importance
  - c. cause/effect
  - d. chronological order

19. If you had to describe Botticelli with one word, what word would you choose? **Selfish, controlling, conniving, evil**

20. Explain why you would choose this word to describe Botticelli by providing examples from the text. You may use Botticelli's actions or words to support your answer. Make sure you quote the text using quotation marks, and provide the page number. **Accept reasonable answers.**

## Tale of Despereaux

### Chapters 24 & 25

In your own words, tell what happened to Miggery Sow when she was a child.

Her mother died when she was six. Her father sold her for a handful of cigarettes, a red tablecloth, and a hen. She lived with an abusive and mean uncle.

How does the narrator make the reader feel sympathy for Miggery? Use specific examples from these two chapters to help you explain your answer. The narrator addresses the readers' emotions when he pauses to ask, "Can you imagine it?" Can you imagine your father selling you for a table cloth, a hen, and a handful of cigarettes? Close your eyes, please and considerate for just a moment.

What does the word clout mean as it is used in reference to Miggery? Use context clues first. Then, use a thesaurus and make a list of synonyms for this word.

Punch or hit

Punch, blow, strike

Explain why chapter twenty-five is titled *a vicious cycle*. Use text to support your answer.

Day in and day out, Mig's life with her uncle is the same. In chapter twenty-five, the narrator explains, Mig's uncle "seemed to be as entirely unconcerned with what Mig wanted as her mother and father had been."

## Tale of Despereaux

### Chapter 26

How can Mig be compared to Despereaux and Roscuro? Complete the following chart to make your comparisons.

All of them want something more in life. All of them have hope. All are determined.

## Tale of Despereaux

### Chapter 28

## Comprehension Check

1. Where is Mig going? **to the castle**
2. What does the soldier tell Mig that she will be? **a paid servant**
3. How old is Mig when the soldier comes to take her? **12 years old**

## Discussion

Find and reread the paragraph at the bottom of page 143 that begins *Reader, do you think that it is a terrible thing to hope...*

Analyze this passage. Then, take a stance on what you believe about hope. Is there no reason to hope or is it something that everyone should do? Write a paragraph. Defend your answer by using Mig and her situation as an example.

Accept reasonable answers.

### Tale of Despereaux

#### Chapter 30

Reread the paragraph on page 154 that begins...*Reader, you know that the mice of the castle feared...*

How does the dungeon, which is a major part of the setting of this novel, affect the characters?

| Character  | How does dungeon affect this character?  | Passage to prove this |
|------------|--|-----------------------|
| Gregory    | He is lonely. He feels buried.   | Page 77               |
| Despereaux | The dungeon makes Despereaux feel afraid. He felt all-encompassed by the darkness. The narrator says "Despereaux had never encountered darkness so awful, so all-encompassing" the darkness also forces him to be brave. | Page 75               |
| Roscuro    | Roscuro longs for the light. The dungeon makes him hope for something more.  | Page 88               |
| Botticelli | Maybe it is the darkness that has helped to corrupt his heart and make it evil. Botticelli delights in the darkness.   | Page 91               |

Predict Accept reasonable answers.

## The Dungeon Does Not Frighten Her

What has once been a hindrance or problem for Mig is now helping her. Explain how this is so. Use text from chapter thirty-one to support your answer.

The clouts to Mig's ear once hurt her. These punches caused her to lose some of her sense of hearing. This also caused her sense of smell to be weakened. That hurt is now helping her because the sounds and smells in the dungeon do not hinder her as they do most people.

## Mig's Song

Reread Mig's song on page 159. Create another song for Mig. Make sure it rhymes. Your song should be at least six lines long.

### Sample song

Gor, I know one day

I'll be a princess, hey!

No more clouts to my ear

I'll simply want to cheer!

Tale of Despereaux

Chapters 32 & 33

## Words to Know

Look back through chapters 32 and 33 and find the following words. Use context clues to figure out what the words mean. Then, check your own understanding by looking them up in a dictionary.

### 1. Detain (page 166)

I think the word means **hold you up**

Dictionary definition **stop or halt**

### 2. Portentous (page 167)

I think the word means **big, monumental, strange**

Dictionary definition **of momentous or ominous significance**

### 3. Aspirations (page 169)

I think the word means **dreams or wishes**

Dictionary definition **a will to succeed – a desire**

### 4. Diabolical (page 171)

I think the word means **evil, mean, bad**

Dictionary definition **wicked, extremely evil or cruel**

## Tale of Despereaux

### Test 3 Book The Third

1. Which of the following is something that the narrator of this book believes?
  - a. **Every action has a consequence.**
  - b. Nothing is ever related in life.
  - c. Your actions do not cause consequences.
  - d. All rats deserve a chance to live in castles.
2. Miggery Sow was named after \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. her great aunt
  - b. **her father's favorite prize-winning pig**
  - c. the goat that ate the grass in the castle garden
  - d. a neighboring princess
3. Miggery's father sold his daughter into service for \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. **cigarettes, a red tablecloth, and a hen**
  - b. eggs, a frying pan, and a candle
  - c. two goats, a field, and a cottage
  - d. a horse, a chicken and a ring

4. What did Miggery call the man who purchased her?
  - a. Henry
  - b. Father
  - c. Uncle
  - d. Bubba
5. What caused Mig's ears to resemble pieces of cauliflower on her head?
  - a. Her ears were burned severely.
  - b. Her ears began to look like this because she was constantly being hit in the ear.
  - c. Mig had a skin infection on her ears.
  - d. Mig wore large earrings in each ear.
6. Why did Mig not wave at the princess pea when she first saw her?
  - a. Because she was stunned
  - b. Because she was angry that the princess was on her land
  - c. Because she was afraid
  - d. Because she didn't want to draw attention to herself
7. How can Mig be compared to the Princess Pea?
  - a. Both of them have a hard time hearing.
  - b. They are the same age.
  - c. Both of them lost their mothers.
  - d. Both b and c
8. Mig believes that one day she will be \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. rich
  - b. a princess
  - c. a queen
  - d. a servant
9. What task does the cook decide for Mig to do?
  - a. clean the dungeon
  - b. clean the princess' room
  - c. take the jailer his meal
  - d. go to school to learn to cook
10. Whose voice could Mig hear clearly?
  - a. Gregory's
  - b. Cook's
  - c. Princess Pea's
  - d. Roscuro's
11. What does Roscuro wear on his head?
  - a. a crown
  - b. a golden spoon
  - c. a leaf
  - d. an old sock



12. When Mig tells Gregory about her deepest wish of what she wants to be one day, why does Chiaroscuro most likely do “a small, deliberate jig of joy?”
- because he knows that Mig will actually have her wish come true some day
  - because he begins to create a plan to get what he wants by using Mig**
  - because he knows that Mig will lead him to the light
  - because he understands that Gregory is making fun of Mig
13. Why is Mig not bothered by the dungeon?
- She has always slept in a dungeon.
  - She loves rats and once had one as a pet.
  - She thinks that the dungeon will make her beautiful.
  - She is not able to hear or smell well.**
14. When the narrator says in chapter thirty that Mig is “not the sharpest knife in the drawer”, the narrator means that she \_\_\_\_\_.
- seems to be very bright
  - says things she does not mean
  - is not very smart**
  - appears to misunderstand what he is saying
15. The descriptions of the dungeon serve to illustrate \_\_\_\_\_.
- the despair and hopelessness associated with it**
  - the true filth of the rats
  - the reason Mig is at the castle
  - closeness of Gregory to the rats
16. At the end of the third book, the reader can infer that \_\_\_\_\_ is under the napkin on the tray.
- rotten food
  - a key to the dungeon
  - Despereaux**
  - a soup spoon
17. What word best describes the actions of Roscuro at the end of the third book?
- evil**
  - compassionate
  - cowardly
  - friendly
18. Roscuro tells Mig that her dream coming true begins with \_\_\_\_\_.
- the removal of the King
  - the chewing of a rope**
  - the ability to find a certain mouse
  - pretending to be afraid
19. In this section of the novel, how does Mig’s uncle treat Mig? Use **two** details from the text to support your answer. Write your answer in complete sentences.  
**ARA**
20. How does the narrator of the story cause the reader to feel sympathy for Miggery Sow? Use two specific details from the text to support your answer. Write your answer in complete sentences. **ARA**

Tale of Despereaux

Chapters 34 & 35

What does Miggery Sow take away from Despereaux in the kitchen? **his tail**

| <b>Emotion</b> | <b>What made Despereaux feel this way?</b>   |
|----------------|--|
| joy            | He feels joy because he is out of the dungeon. He can also now help rescue the princess.                                 |
| pain           | He experienced pain when he lost his tail. This was probably physical pain and emotional pain.                           |
| gratitude      | He is thankful for his life and that it was only his tail that he lost.  |
| exhaustion     | Despereaux is tired from the ordeal that he has been through in the dungeon. He is exhausted emotionally and physically. |
| despair        | He was sent to his death. This caused despair.   |
| hope           | He feels hope for what is to come. He hopes to find and rescue the princess.   |

In Despereaux's dream, the dark represents different members of his family and one rat. List those that dark represented and tell why each represented the dark.

| <b>Those who dark represented</b> | <b>Reason</b>   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| His mother                        | She didn't want him from birth. She never believed in him. She was disappointed in him. |
| His father                        | He didn't stand up for Despereaux. He watched him be sent to the dungeon.               |
| Furlough                          | He betrayed Despereaux.   |
| Rat (Roscurio)                    | He has an evil plan to bring the princess to darkness.                                  |

## Tale of Despereaux

### Chapter 36

#### Discussion

Summarize Roscuro's plan according to what Mig thought was going to happen.

Mig thought that they would go into the princess's room while she sleeps. They would wake her with a knife and take her on a "little journey".

Now summarize Roscuro's real plan. It is *"more simple and more terrible."*

*"He intended to take the princess to the deepest, darkest part of the dungeon. He intended to have Mig put chains on the princess's hands and her feet, and he intended to keep the glittering, glowing, laughing princess there in the dark. Forever. (page 187)"*

How does Roscuro manipulate Mig?

Her weakness is her desire to become a princess. He uses this weakness to use her in his plan.

Why does Mig believe in Roscuro's plan?

She is simple minded. She wants to become a princess so bad that she is willing to believe this plan.

What do you predict will happen?

Accept reasonable predictions.

## Tale of Despereaux

### Chapter 40

Go back to page 207 where the narrator talks to the reader about forgiveness. Like hope and love, forgiveness is a major theme in this novel.

How does forgiving his father help Despereaux? It saved his own heart. It kept it from breaking in two.

How has Despereaux changed?

He has been to the dungeon. He has faced death and returned. He realizes that what the other mice think of him does not matter.

How does the forgiveness that Despereaux gives his father change his father?

He does not do what other members of the mouse council do. He is no longer a follower, but now has stood up for what is right.

What do you believe about forgiveness? Accept reasonable answers.

Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 41

Reread the paragraph on page 210 that begins *Reader, have you ever seen a king cry?* Explain what this passage means.

It is frightening to see those who are in power cry because they are perceived as the strong ones who should always be “in charge”.

| <i>The King's Traits</i>                         | <i>Evidence (Write down an action that shows this is true about the king.)</i>     | <i>Type of characterization<br/>Direct or indirect?</i> |
|--|--|---|
| He was nearsighted                               | He thought Despereaux was a bug.   | direct  |
| He made ridiculous laws and was not intelligent. | He outlawed soup and rats.   | direct  |
| He was loving. He loved with his whole heart.    | He was very upset about the princess. He went to extremes over death of the queen. | direct  |

Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 42

A Quest

Who is the hero in this quest? **Despereaux**

What is Despereaux's goal? **to rescue the princess**

What obstacles might Despereaux face? **the dungeon, rats**

Where will Despereaux “travel”? **the depths of the dungeon**

What/who does Despereaux aim to “obtain”? **the princess**

Tale of Despereaux

Chapters 43-44

1. Why was the cook glad to see a mouse in her kitchen? **because he was not a king's man there to punish her for making soup**
2. Despereaux thought that the cook would kill him. Instead she laughed. Why do you think the cook laughed?  
**She is relieved.**
3. Why do you think the cook was cooking soup even **though** it was against the rules?  
**She is nervous about the princess.**
4. Why did the cook's laughter hurt Despereaux's feelings?  
**ARA**

Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 46

**Define personification Giving something human traits**

Find the personification of the spool in this chapter. In the box below, write the words that personify the spool.

**eager, leapt, had a head start, faster**

**Learn a Word!**

Find the word cornucopia on page 238. Use context clues to figure out what this word means.

Based on context clues, I think the word means **mixture - plenty**

Now, look up the word cornucopia in a dictionary. Write the dictionary definition (denotation) on the line below. **abundance**

What is the one thing that red thread means to a rat? **the blood of a mouse**

**Predict ARA**

## Tale of Despereaux

### Chapter 48

Why do you think Botticelli swings the locket back and forth? **to hypnotize**

How does Boticelli trick Despereaux? **He told Despereaux that he knew exactly where the princess was. He said he would do this to do his part "for humanity." He wants to end the terrible "myth of evil" that surrounds rats everywhere."**

How does the setting- the dungeon- affect Despereaux? Find a passage from this chapter to support your answer.

**It frightens him to tears. "Mr. Remorso," said Despereaux. And he was crying now. He couldn't help it. Please. The princess.**

## Tale of Despereaux

### Chapters 49-50

After reading chapter forty-nine, explain what the title of the chapter means.

**For the first time in her life, someone asks Miggery what she wants.**

Draw a picture of the scene at the end of chapter forty-nine. Use details from the novel to help you. Write a caption to go along with your illustration.

**Illustration should include Roscuro, Mig, and Princess sitting in a dungeon.**

**Infer** What happens at the end of chapter fifty? **Some will predict that Mig kills Roscurro with the**

**knife. Others will say that Mig cuts his tail off.**

Tale of Despereaux

Chapter 51 - 52

What was it that the princess had to do to save her own heart?

She was kind to him. She offered him soup.

Record the fate of each of the main characters in the following chart.

| Character  | Fate   |
|------------|--|
| Roscuro    | He was given free access to the upstairs of the castle. He was allowed to go back and forth from the dungeon to the light. He did lead Mig's father to his daughter. |
| Mig        | She met her father and he treated her like a princess for the rest of his days.  |
| Despereaux | He did not marry the princess, but they became friends and had many adventures.  |

# The Tale of Despereaux

## Final Test

- Which of the following is the best overall tone of this novel?
  - factual and informative
  - serious and stern
  - lighthearted YET adventurous**
  - angry and critical
- What did Miggery do to Despereaux?
  - She singed his fur with fire.
  - She snuck him in to see the princess.
  - She taught him how to cook.
  - She cut off his tail.**
- This novel falls most closely under the genre of a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - mystery
  - myth
  - fairy tale**
  - short story
- Roscuro tricked Mig into believing that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - she was already a princess
  - she and the princess pea would trade places**
  - the dungeon was a wonderful place to live
  - Despereaux was really a rat
- Which of the following is **not** one of the main issues in this novel?
  - light versus darkness
  - good versus evil
  - the power of love and hope
  - power versus money**
- Throughout the novel, characters are forced into the dungeon because of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - other's evil intentions**
  - the need to be alone
  - Despereaux's love of the princess
  - the limited space in the castle
- While in the dungeon, darkness corrupts Roscuro until all he thinks about is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - love
  - revenge**
  - cheese
  - fear
- Many of the characters in this story experience forgiveness. For example, Pea forgives Roscuro. Who does Despereaux forgive?
  - The princess
  - Gregory
  - His father**
  - Miggery



9. Which of the following characters is the hero of this story?
- The King
  - Princess Pea
  - Roscuro
  - Despereaux**
10. The power of a story is emphasized in *The Tale of Despereaux*. Which of the following is **not** an example of how storytelling affects the characters?
- The first time Despereaux enters the dungeon, he tells himself a story to battle his fear.
  - Gregory decides to rescue and help Despereaux because of his ability to tell a story.**
  - When Despereaux goes on his quest to save Princess Pea, he tells himself a story for courage.
  - Miggery learns to tell stories from Despereaux and tells them to the cook.
11. All of the following words describe Despereaux except \_\_\_\_\_.
- brave
  - athletic**
  - determined
  - motivated
12. Which of the following best describes Despereaux's attitude toward Princess Pea?
- loving**
  - turbulent
  - unsupportive
  - one-sided
13. Which of the following passages from the book could be considered the **best** overall theme?
- Reader, you must know that an interesting fate (sometimes involving rats, sometimes not) awaits almost everyone, man or mouse, who does not conform.***
  - The dungeon was quiet, but it was not quiet in a good way.*
  - There are those hearts, reader, that never mend again once they are broken.*
  - Stories are light.*
14. In the novel, the use of the third person omniscient point of view allows the author to \_\_\_\_
- share only Despereaux's inner thoughts and feelings.
  - concentrate on creating unusual characters.
  - share what many of the characters are thinking and feeling.**
  - describe the story's setting in vivid details.
15. The narrator in this book often pauses to speak directly to the reader. When doing this, the narrator sometimes \_\_\_\_\_.
- allows us to learn about a character's past
  - reassures the reader during suspenseful moments
  - foreshadows future events
  - all of these**

16. When the cook first sees Despereaux, she orders him to be killed. However, at the second meeting, the cook offers Despereaux soup. Why does the cook's attitude toward Despereaux most likely change?
- The disappearance of the princess has had an effect on the cook.
  - The cook has learned that mice are the best taste testers of soup.
  - The cook has gotten married and is a happier person.
  - The cook is afraid of Despereaux because he is missing his tail.
17. Which of the following words best describes the relationship between Princess Pea and Miggery Sow at the end of the novel?
- rocky
  - acquaintances
  - sisterly
  - one-sided
18. Which of the following elements of a fairy tale are in *The Tale of Despereaux*?
- a princess
  - a knight
  - a happy ending
  - all of these
19. Roscuro tells Miggery Sow that aspirations are "those things that make a serving girl want to be a princess." The dictionary defines aspiration as *a strong desire to do something great or important*. Choose two characters from the story and describe their aspirations. Then, tell which character's aspirations you admire most. **Accept reasonable answers.**
20. What are two life lessons that you believe the author of this book wanted her readers to take away from it? Explain how the author uses the characters and plot to teach these lessons. **ARA**

# *Tale of Despereaux*

## ABCs

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Directions: Think of words that are important in the novel *The Tale of Despereaux*. Then, place the word in the appropriate box. Make sure you are able to explain why each word relates to the novel. **Sample Answers Below**

|                                    |  |   |  |
|------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| <b>A</b><br>Antoinette             | <b>B</b><br>Botticelli<br>bravery<br>betrayal    | <b>C</b><br>castle crown<br>clout cloth conform       | <b>D</b><br>dungeon<br>despair<br>darkness           |
| <b>E</b><br>Empathy                | <b>F</b><br>fate forgiveness<br>fear Furlough    | <b>G</b><br>gore<br>Gregory                           | <b>H</b><br>hope<br>hero<br>hearts                   |
| <b>I</b><br>illegal                | <b>J</b><br>Jailer                               | <b>K</b><br>knife<br>king<br>knight                   | <b>L</b><br>love<br>light<br>locket                  |
| <b>M</b><br>music<br>mouse Miggery | <b>N</b><br>Needle                               | <b>O</b><br>outlawed                                  | <b>P</b><br>perfidy<br>Princess Pea                  |
| <b>Q</b><br>queen<br>quest         | <b>R</b><br>rat<br>rope<br>revenge<br>red thread | <b>S</b><br>soup<br>survival<br>storytelling<br>spoon | <b>T</b><br>tears<br>traitor<br>threadmaster<br>tail |
| <b>U</b><br>uncle<br>unusual       | <b>V</b><br>Vengeance                            | <b>WX</b><br>whiskers                                 | <b>YZ</b><br>yearn                                   |

**The Tale of Despereaux**  
**Comparing the Movie and the Novel**  
**Test**

1. The beginning of the novel focuses on the birth of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Roscuro
  - b. Despereaux**
  - c. Miggery
  - d. Princess Pea
2. At the beginning of the movie, we see \_\_\_\_\_ on a ship.
  - a. Roscuro**
  - b. Botticelli
  - c. Miggery
  - d. Despereaux
3. In the movie, there is one very special day in the Kingdom of Dor. This day is known as \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Pea Day
  - b. Royal Day
  - c. Soup Day**
  - d. Story Day
4. True or false? The narrator in the book also tells us about this special day.
  - a. true
  - b. false**
5. In the movie, we see that Roscuro is a sea rat and is not born in the dungeon but falls into the dungeon. However, in the book \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Roscuro is born in the dungeon at the same time that Despereaux is born in the castle.
  - b. Roscuro was a rat born into the darkness of the dungeon several years before Despereaux. was born.**
  - c. Roscuro is a sea rat who willingly goes to the dungeon because he wants to be there.
  - d. Roscuro is born on the sea but is transported to the dungeon.
6. Which of the following is true of how the cook can be contrasted in the book and the movie?
  - a. In the movie, the cook is a man, but in the book, the cook is a woman.
  - b. In the movie, the cook relies on magic to help him, but in the book, this magic is not included.
  - c. In the book, the cook secretly has rats help make soup, but in the movie, the cook does not.
  - d. both a and b**
7. In the movie, Roscuro goes from the castle to the dungeon, but in the book, Roscuro \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. goes from the ship to the castle.
  - b. goes from the dungeon to the castle**
  - c. goes from the chandelier to the library
  - d. goes from the kitchen to the dungeon
8. In the book, Botticelli is described as an old, one-eared rat. In the movie, Botticelli is portrayed as a tall, old rat who is a leader in "Ratworld". What is something significant that is left out in the movie?
  - a. Botticelli does not yell very loudly in the movie like he does in the book.
  - b. Botticelli does not use magic spells in the movie like he does in the book.
  - c. Botticelli does not wear a red cloth around his neck in the movie like he does in the book.
  - d. Botticelli does not swing a locket when he speaks to Rosucro in the movie like he does in the book.**

9. Which of the following happens in both the book and the movie?
- Soup is outlawed.**
  - There is no rain in Dor for a long time.
  - The Princess Pea sings every night.
  - Miggery receives clouts to the ear.
10. In the movie, when Despereaux first meets the Princess Pea, she is crying. Which of the following is Princess Pea doing in the book when she first meets Despereaux?
- She is writing a song about her mother.
  - She is listening to her father play his guitar and sing.**
  - She is talking about bugs to her father.
  - None of these
11. How is Hovis, the threadmaster, portrayed in the movie?
- He is blind and creepy looking.**
  - He is tall and handsome.
  - He has a hood over his face.
  - He is small and has a patch over his left eye.
12. Which of the following is a major difference in Despereaux in the movie and the book?
- In the movie, Despereaux has large eyes and is very small, but in the book, Despereaux has large ears but is average height.
  - In the movie, Despereaux is born with his eyes open, but in the book he is not.
  - In the movie, Despereaux reads the story of a knight, but in the book, he does not.
  - In the movie, Despereaux has no fear of going to the dungeon, but in the book, Despereaux is often afraid and even faints when he finds out he must go to the dungeon.**
13. In the book, Despereaux's mother is portrayed as being dramatic and somewhat selfish. How is she portrayed in the movie?
- as mean and hateful
  - as brave
  - as overly intelligent
  - as meek and concerned**
14. In the movie, what is the dungeon called?
- Dungeonworld
  - Ratworld**
  - The Deep Downs
  - The Underworld
15. True or false. Despereaux is put into an arena to fight a cat in both the movie and the book.
- true
  - false**
16. Which of the following is a significant difference in the story of Miggery Sow?
- In the movie, Mig is raised by a mean uncle, but in the book, she is raised by a mean stepmother.
  - In the movie, Mig cannot hear well, but in the book, she has a keen sense of hearing.
  - In the book, Mig's father sells her, but in the movie, Mig's father did not want to give her up.**
  - In the book, Mig's heart-shaped birthmark is on her hand, but in the movie, it's on her neck.

17. The story of Roscuro is different in a lot of ways when comparing and contrasting the book to the movie. Which of the following is true in both the book and the movie?
- a. **Roscuro begins to help with evil plans after being ridiculed by the princess.**
  - b. Roscuro is a sea rat.
  - c. Roscuro saves Despereaux from the vicious cat.
  - d. Roscuro wants to be like Boticelli.
18. In the book, Miggery and Roscuro take the princess to the dungeon and hold her captive there together, but in the movie \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. only Miggery takes the princess captive
  - b. Roscuro takes the princess, but Mig tries to stop him.
  - c. Miggery and Roscuro take the princess to the dungeon, but lock her up with alligators.
  - d. **Miggery and Roscuro take the princess to the dungeon, and then Roscuro locks Mig up by herself.**
19. In the movie, which of the following happens to the Princess Pea?
- a. She is locked up in a cell all alone.
  - b. She is attacked by tons of rats.
  - c. **She is tied up and brought into the arena in Ratworld.**
  - d. She escapes the dungeon by herself and makes her way back to the castle.
20. Which version of the story portrays Roscuro in a more positive way?
- a. **the movie**
  - b. the book

#### Discussion

21. Which did you like better, the movie or the book? Explain why by using specific examples in your answer.

#### **Accept reasonable answers.**

22. Think of one part of the plot that was either not included in the movie or that was changed in the movie. What do you think of this? Do you think the movie was better because of the change, or do you think that this part of the plot should have been kept the same way as it was written in the book? Explain your answer.

#### **Accept reasonable answers.**

## Movie Test

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Use the information in this box to help you keep the characters straight in your mind.**

Roscuro – The rat with the earring in his ear that falls in the bowl of soup

Boticelli – The tall rat who seems to be the head of the other rats

- At the beginning of the movie, we see \_\_\_\_\_ on a ship.
  - Roscuro**
  - Boticelli
  - Miggery
  - Despereaux
- In the movie, there is one very special day in the Kingdom of Dor. This day is known as \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Pea Day
  - Royal Day
  - Soup Day**
  - Story Day
- How is Despereaux's mother portrayed in the movie?
  - as mean and hateful
  - as brave
  - as overly intelligent
  - as meek and concerned**
- What happens when Roscuro falls in the queen's soup?
  - Roscuro is burned.
  - The queen dies.**
  - The table falls apart.
  - The queen is unaware of the rat in her soup.
- In the movie, what is the dungeon, or place where the rats live, called?
  - Dungeonworld
  - Ratworld**
  - The Deep Downs
  - The Underworld
- Which of the following **best** describes Despereaux as a young mouse?
  - lazy and slow
  - athletic and kind
  - adventurous and unique**
  - nice and giving
- Despereaux's parents are worried because Despereaux \_\_\_\_\_.
  - does not know how to write
  - does not like cheese
  - is not afraid**
  - does not like his brothers

8. What does the cook use to help him cook?
- a gigantic spoon
  - magic**
  - lots of spices
  - the help from rats
9. When Despereaux reads the book in the library, we see his “thoughts” of \_\_\_\_\_.
- a knight in shining armor fighting**
  - a frog kissing a princess
  - a battle between a mouse and a rat
  - his fear of the king
10. Despereaux introduces himself to the princess as \_\_\_\_\_.
- a mouse
  - a friend
  - a knight
  - a gentleman**
11. True or false. The Princess wishes it would rain again.
- true**
  - false
12. Miggery Sow always wanted to be a \_\_\_\_\_.
- servant girl in the castle
  - friend to the princess
  - princess**
  - queen
13. How did Miggery get to the castle?
- She was sold as a servant with a bunch of pigs.**
  - She applied for a job as a servant.
  - She was picked up by a knight on his horse.
  - She walked.
14. Despereaux strongly believes in \_\_\_\_\_.
- courage
  - honor
  - decency
  - all of these**
15. Who rescues Despereaux from the big cat in the arena?
- the princess
  - Gregory
  - Roscuro**
  - Boticelli



16. After Miggery is caught with the princess' crown, how is she punished?
- a. She must take food to the jailer in the dungeon.**
  - b. She must scrub all of the floors three times a day.
  - c. She must feed the pigs.
  - d. She must iron all of the princess' clothes.
17. How does Roscuro manipulate Miggery?
- a. He tells her that a crown awaits her in the dungeon.
  - b. He lies to Miggery and tells her that she should be the princess and the actual princess should be put in the dungeon.**
  - c. He forces her to steal a knife from the kitchen.
  - d. He tricks her into believing she is already a princess.
18. Once Despereaux finds the princess in the dungeon, what does she give him to take to her father?
- a. her necklace**
  - b. a lock of her hair
  - c. her crown
  - d. her shoe
19. Why do Despereaux's father and brother most likely think Despereaux is dead when he asks them for help rescuing the princess?
- a. because they had seen his ghost before
  - b. because he is covered in flour**
  - c. because he has a sheet on his head
  - d. because he tells them he is a ghost
20. What happens towards the end of the movie when the cook makes soup again?
- a. Everyone in the kingdom comes to eat.
  - b. The bowls and spoons start to be collected again.
  - c. It starts raining.**
  - d. The princess smells the soup from the dungeon.
21. Who accompanies Despereaux to the dungeon to find and rescue the princess?
- a. the king
  - b. the cook's magic helper**
  - c. Boticelli
  - d. Despereaux's father
22. How does Miggery's father recognize that Miggery is his daughter?
- a. He remembers her curly hair.
  - b. He sees her birthmark.**
  - c. He remembers her voice.
  - d. He sees the scar on her arm.
23. At the end when the princess is tied up and all the rats are cheering, Roscuro is given the chance to end her. Why does Roscuro decide not to do it?
- a. because he chooses to forgive her**
  - b. because he is afraid
  - c. because he wants to allow Despereaux to save her
  - d. because he wants the cat to finish the princess

24. How does Roscuro help save the princess?
- He fights Boticelli with his sword.
  - He shines the light toward Boticelli**
  - He throws rocks at Boticelli and the other rats.
  - He uses the cat to trick Boticelli.
25. What happens to Boticelli in the end?
- He is eaten by the cat.**
  - He is banished from the kingdom by the other rats.
  - He disappears into the castle.
  - He is killed by Despereaux's sword.
26. Who apologizes at the end of the movie?
- Roscuro
  - Miggery's father
  - The king
  - All of the above**
27. What happened to Miggery in the end?
- She became a princess.
  - She continued to be a servant for the princess.
  - She returned to her farm with her father.**
  - She founded her own kingdom.
28. What happened to Roscuro?
- He went back to sea.**
  - He lived in the kitchen with the cook.
  - He became a knight.
  - He took Boticelli's place as the head rat.
29. True or false. This movie ends happily ever after.
- true**
  - false
30. Which of the following elements of a fairy tale does the movie include?
- magic
  - good versus evil
  - love
  - all of these**

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