

Oh, Rats...The year is almost done. It's time for some standards-based movie watching fun!

Middle School ELA End of the Year Packet

Includes

- an informational article about rats and mice with Common Core based questions
- a poem about a rat with Common Core based questions
- two fables including a rat as a character with Common Core based questions
- a movie watching note-taking guide for the movie *The Tale of Despereaux (Tale of a mouse)*
- a 30 question multiple choice test on the movie

**A standards
based way to
watch a
movie!**



Thank you for purchasing this teaching unit! We hope you love it as much as we do!



DO NOT PHOTOCOPY
(Except for your own classroom)



DO NOT POST ONLINE.

Middle School ELA End of the Year Packet

Written by
Tammy Lewis and Shannon Temple
ELA Core Plans

www.elacoreplans.com



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Teacher-Written Standards-Based Lesson Plans

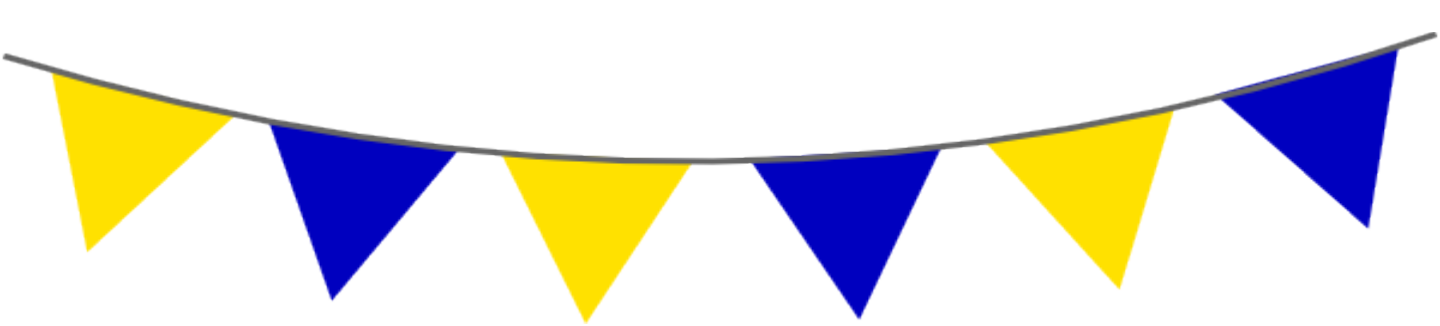
Included in this packet

- You can begin this unit by completing the KWL chart on rats. Then, if you have the technology available, allow students to research rats and complete a top 10 list of interesting facts about these rodents. You could also allow half of the class to research mice and the other half rats. A top ten list is a fast way to present research, and it is easy to grade!
- Allow students to read the informational article included in this packet titled “Destructive Habits of House Rats and Mice”. There are fifteen multiple choice questions to go along with this article.
- Have students read the poem titled “The Rude Rat and The Unostentatious Oyster”. There are ten multiple choice questions to accompany this poem.
- Have students read the two fables in the packet. There are five multiple choice questions that go with each of the fables.
- Now, after all of this study and reading about rats, it’s time to watch a movie with a mouse as the main character, and plenty of rats as characters too!
- *The Tale of Despereaux* is a novel. The movie based on this novel, however, is much different. Allow students to use the note-taking guide in this packet while they watch the movie. Then give the test.
- Check out our [complete novel unit on *The Tale of Despereaux!*](#) It is truly a wonderful novel that your students will not forget.

This unit will most likely take about five school days to complete. Enjoy!

KWL on Rats

K What I Know	W What I Want to Know	L What I learned



Top 10 Facts about _____

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

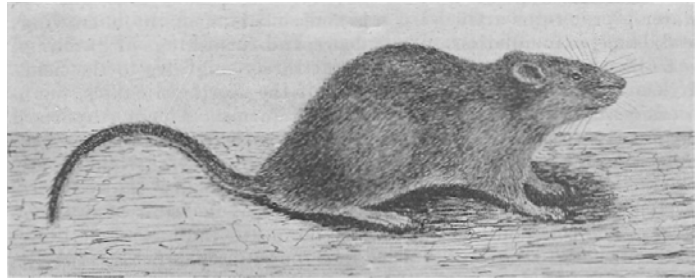
8.

9.

10.

DESTRUCTIVE HABITS OF HOUSE RATS AND MICE.

Losses from depredations of house rats amount to many millions of dollars yearly—to more, in fact, than those from all other injurious mammals combined. The common house mouse and the brown rat, too familiar to need description, are pests in nearly all parts of the country; while two other kinds of house rats, known as the black rat and the roof rat, are found within our borders.



Of these four introduced species—for none is native to America—the brown rat is the most destructive, and, except the mouse, the most numerous and most widely distributed. Brought to America just before the Revolution, it has **supplanted** and nearly exterminated its less **robust** relative the black rat; and in spite of the constant warfare of man has extended its range and steadily increased in numbers. Its dominance is due to its great **fecundity** and its ability to adapt itself to all sorts of surroundings. Rats and mice are practically omnivorous, feeding upon all kinds of animal and vegetable matter. The brown rat makes its home in the open field, the hedge row, and the river bank, as well as in stone walls, piers, and all kinds of buildings. It destroys grains when newly planted, while growing, and in the shock, stack, mow, crib, granary, mill, elevator, or ship's hold, and also in the bin and feed trough. It invades store and warehouse and destroys furs, laces, silks, carpets, leather goods, and groceries. It attacks fruits, vegetables, and meats in the markets, and destroys by pollution ten times as much as it actually eats. It destroys eggs and young poultry, and eats the eggs and young of song and game birds. It carries disease germs from house to house and once carried bubonic plague from city to city. It causes disastrous **conflagrations**; floods houses by gnawing lead water pipes; ruins artificial ponds and embankments by burrowing; and damages foundations, floors, doors, and furnishings of dwellings.

Unlike the brown rat the black rat rarely migrates to the fields.

At our seaports it frequently arrives on ships from abroad, but seldom becomes very numerous.

The roof rat is common in many parts of the South, where it is a persistent pest in cane and rice fields. It maintains itself against the brown rat partly because of its habit of living in trees. The common house mouse by no means **confines** its activities to the inside of buildings, but is often found in open fields, where its **depredations** in shock and stack are well known.

Not only are mice and rats, especially the brown rat, a cause of destruction and damage to property, but they are also a constant **menace** to the health of man. It has been proved that they are the chief means of **perpetuating** and transmitting bubonic plague and that they play important roles in conveying other diseases to human beings. They are parasites, without redeeming characteristics, and should everywhere be routed and destroyed.

From *HOUSE RATS AND MICE*

DAVID E. LANTZ

Public Domain Article

1. It can reasonably be inferred from the article that the writer would agree with which of the following statements about rats?
 - a. Rats make great pets.
 - b. Rats are harmful pests.
 - c. The bubonic plague was solely spread by rats.
 - d. The roof rat is much stronger than the brown rat.
2. Which rat is native to America?
 - a. the brown rat
 - b. the black rat
 - c. the roof rat
 - d. none of these
3. Which word can best replace the word underlined, bolded word *supplanted*?
 - a. replaced
 - b. understood
 - c. rearranged
 - d. helped

4. Which of the following words could best replace the word *robust*?
 - a. round
 - b. familiar
 - c. healthy
 - d. dangerous
5. What does the underlined and bolded word *fecundity* mean?
 - a. the ability to produce healthy offspring
 - b. the ability to run fast
 - c. soft fur
 - d. nest
6. Which of the following choice of words shows the author's opinion of rats?
 - a. numerous, dominance, adapt
 - b. omnivorous, disease, gnawing
 - c. rarely, seaports, common
 - d. invades, attacks, destroys
7. What does the word conflagrations mean? Use context clues to help you.
 - a. fires
 - b. wrecks
 - c. feasts
 - d. traps
8. Which of the following is one way in which the brown rat is different from the black rat?
 - a. The brown rat often migrates to the fields, but the black rat rarely does this.
 - b. The brown rat is omnivorous, but the black rat is a herbivore.
 - c. The brown rat was brought to America before the Revolution, but the black rat is native to America.
 - d. There are no differences.

9. Which of the following often arrives on ships from abroad?
- land rats
 - the brown rat
 - the black rat
 - the roof rat
10. Where do roof rats live?
- in chimneys
 - on top of roofs
 - in trees
 - in the sand
11. What does the bolded word *confines* mean as it is used in the passage?
- includes
 - blames
 - turns
 - limits
12. What does the bolded word *depredations* mean as it is used in the passage?
- achievements
 - destructions
 - habits
 - family
13. What does the bolded word *menace* mean as it is used in the passage?
- help
 - threat
 - reason
 - distraction
14. True or false: The author does not believe that rats are parasites; he is only comparing them to parasites.
- true
 - false
15. What is the purpose of this article?
- to inform readers about the life cycle of rats
 - to persuade readers not to buy rats as pets
 - to inform readers about the dangers and threats that mice and rats pose.
 - to compare and contrast rats and mice

The Rude Rat and The Unostentatious Oyster

Upon the shore, a mile or more
From traffic and confusion,
An oyster dwelt, because he felt
A longing for seclusion;
Said he: "I love the stillness of
This spot. It's like a cloister."
(These words I quote because, you
note,
They rhyme so well with oyster.)

A prying rat, believing that
She needed change of diet,
In search of such disturbed this much-
To-be-desired quiet.
To say the least, this tactless beast
Was apt to rudely roister:
She tapped his shell, and called him--
well,
A name that hurt the oyster.

"I see," she cried, "you're open wide,
And, searching for a reason,
September's here, and so it's clear
That oysters are in season."
She smiled a smile that showed this
style
Of badinage rejoiced her,
Advanced a pace with easy grace,
And *sniffed* the silent oyster.

The latter's pride was sorely tried,
He thought of what he *could* say,
Reflected what the common lot
Of vulgar molluscs *would* say;
Then caught his breath, grew pale
as death,
And, as his brow turned moister,
Began to close, and nipped her nose!
Superb, dramatic oyster!

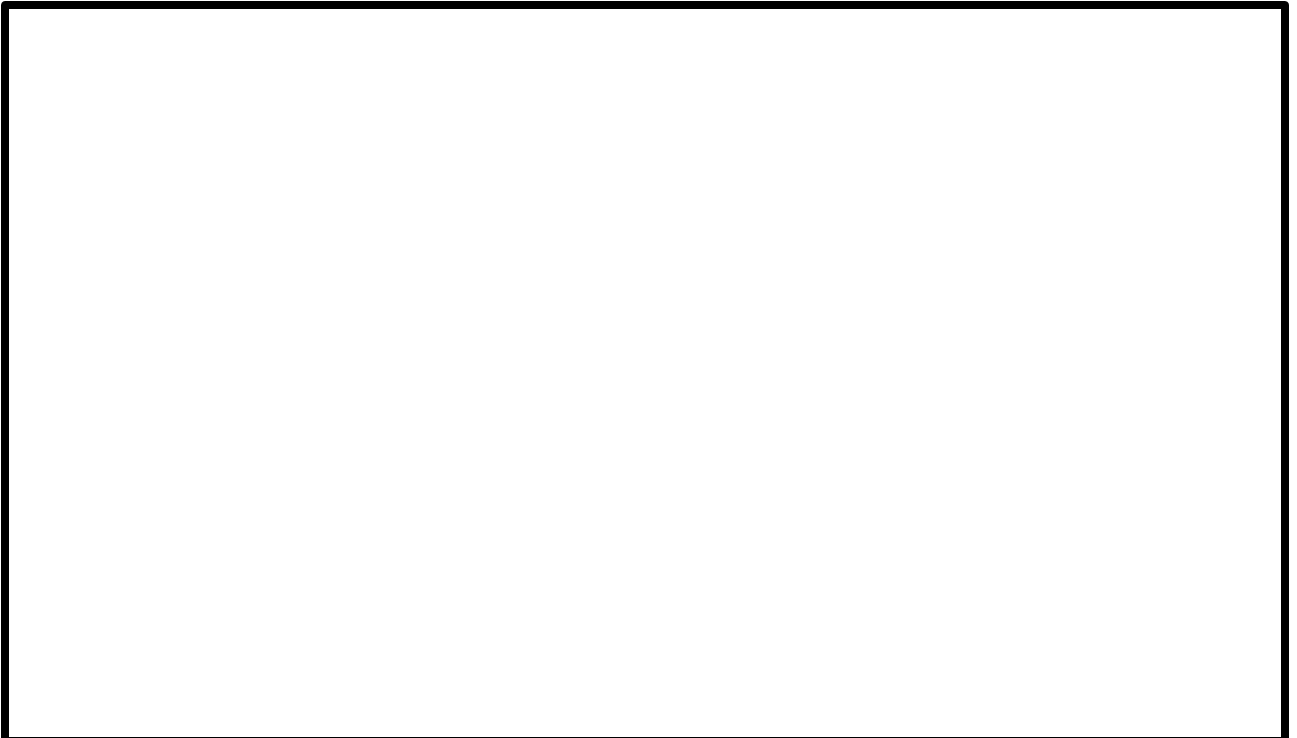
We note with joy that hoi polloi,
Whom maidens bite the thumb at,
Are apt to try some weak reply
To things they should be dumb at.
THE MORAL, then, for crafty men
Is: When a maid has voiced her
Contemptuous heart, don't think
you're smart,
But shut up--like the oyster.

-Guy W. Carryl

1. Why did the oyster live upon the shore?
 - a. He wanted to taste the water.
 - b. He wanted to live away from rats.
 - c. He wanted to live away from others.
 - d. He wanted to dig a hole in the sand.
2. What does the word *roister* mean as it is used in the second stanza?
 - a. enjoy oneself or celebrate in a noisy way
 - b. steal from others
 - c. hide from others
 - d. scream out in fear
3. The rat does which of the following to the oyster?
 - a. taps on his shell
 - b. calls him an ugly name
 - c. sniffs him
 - d. all of these
4. True or false: The rat is female.
 - a. true
 - b. false
5. What does the word *badinage* mean as it is used in stanza three?
 - a. speech that causes fear
 - b. talking in a slow manner
 - c. conversation that is funny or humorous
 - d. talking nicely to others
6. Why are the words *could* and *would* italicized in the fourth stanza?
 - a. so that the reader will replace the words
 - b. so that the reader will read the words with emphasis
 - c. so that the reader will skip the words
 - d. so that the reader will understand the lines
7. What does the oyster do to the rat?
 - a. He says something rude.
 - b. He spits at the rat.
 - c. He bites the rat on the nose.
 - d. He bites the rat's thumb.

8. In the last line, the words *shut up* do not just mean *be quiet*. What else does this line imply?
- a. Take action instead of speaking words. The oyster physically “shut up” the rat.
 - b. Do not react when angered. The oyster just shut up and did not respond.
 - c. Be smart like the oyster. Do not be dumb like a rat.
 - d. Argue back. Being quiet will not shut someone up.
9. What does the word *contemptuous* mean as it is used in the last stanza?
- a. kind and concerned
 - b. gentle and courageous
 - c. clever and humorous
 - d. disrespectful and insulting
10. The title of this poem is *The Unostentatious Oyster*. What does the word *unostentatious* mean?
- a. showy and rude
 - b. intelligent and outgoing
 - c. calm and discerning
 - d. suspicious and shy

In the box below, draw a picture of one scene from the poem.



The Mouse, the Frog, and the Hawk

A MOUSE who always lived on the land, by an unlucky chance formed a close acquaintance with a Frog, who lived for the most part in the water. The Frog, one day **intent** on mischief, bound the foot of the Mouse tightly to his own. Thus joined together, the Frog first of all led his friend the Mouse to the meadow where they were accustomed to find their food. After this, he gradually led him towards the pool in which he lived, until reaching the very brink, he suddenly jumped in, dragging the Mouse with him. The Frog enjoyed the water amazingly, and swam croaking about, as if he had done a good deed. The unhappy Mouse was soon suffocated by the water, and his dead body floated about on the surface, tied to the foot of the Frog. A Hawk observed it, and, pouncing upon it with his talons, carried it aloft. The Frog, being still fastened to the leg of the Mouse, was also carried off a prisoner, and was eaten by the Hawk.

Harm hatch, harm catch.

1. Which word best describes the frog?
 - a. strong
 - b. mischievous
 - c. unhappy
 - d. generous
2. Why did the frog most likely first lead the mouse to the meadow?
 - a. to find out where the mouse lived
 - b. to look for the hawk
 - c. to gain the trust of the mouse
 - d. to lie to the mouse
3. What does the word *intent* mean as it is used in the story?
 - a. curious
 - b. wise
 - c. happy
 - d. determined
4. Which of the following techniques is used to develop the frog's character?
 - a. quoting what the mouse says
 - b. telling what the frog does
 - c. telling what the mouse feels
 - d. ending the story with a moral
5. How does the setting impact the conflict?
 - a. The meadow provides conflict with nature.
 - b. The water is the primary danger to the mouse because the mouse is tied to the frog's foot.
 - c. The daylight aids in the frog's plan to trick the mouse because the frog could not trick the mouse in the dark.
 - d. The surface of the water causes the mouse to suffocate.

The Mouse and the Bull

A BULL was bitten by a Mouse and, angered by the wound, tried to capture him. But the Mouse reached his hole in safety. Though the Bull dug into the walls with his horns, he tired before he could rout out the Mouse, and crouching down, went to sleep outside the hole. The Mouse peeped out, crept furtively up his flank, and again biting him, retreated to his hole. The Bull rising up, and not knowing what to do, was sadly perplexed. At which the Mouse said, "The great do not always prevail. There are times when the small and lowly are the strongest to do mischief."

1. Why did the bull go after the mouse?
 - a. because the mouse aggravated him
 - b. because the mouse bit him
 - c. because the bull was hungry
 - d. because the bull thought it was fun to catch mice
2. What is the meaning of the word *rout* as it is used in the story?
 - a. to defeat
 - b. to shout loudly
 - c. to force out
 - d. to explain
3. Which of the following lines from the story best supports that the mouse was sneaky and sly?
 - a. *But the Mouse reached his hole in safety.*
 - b. *The Mouse said, "The great do not always prevail..."*
 - c. *The Mouse peeped out, crept furtively up his flank, and again biting him, retreated to his hole.*
 - d. *The bull rising up, and not knowing what to do, was sadly perplexed.*
4. What does the word *retreated* mean as it is used in the passage?
 - a. moved back
 - b. hid
 - c. talked
 - d. found
5. What does the word *prevail* mean as it is used in the story?
 - a. succeed
 - b. lose
 - c. encourage
 - d. argue

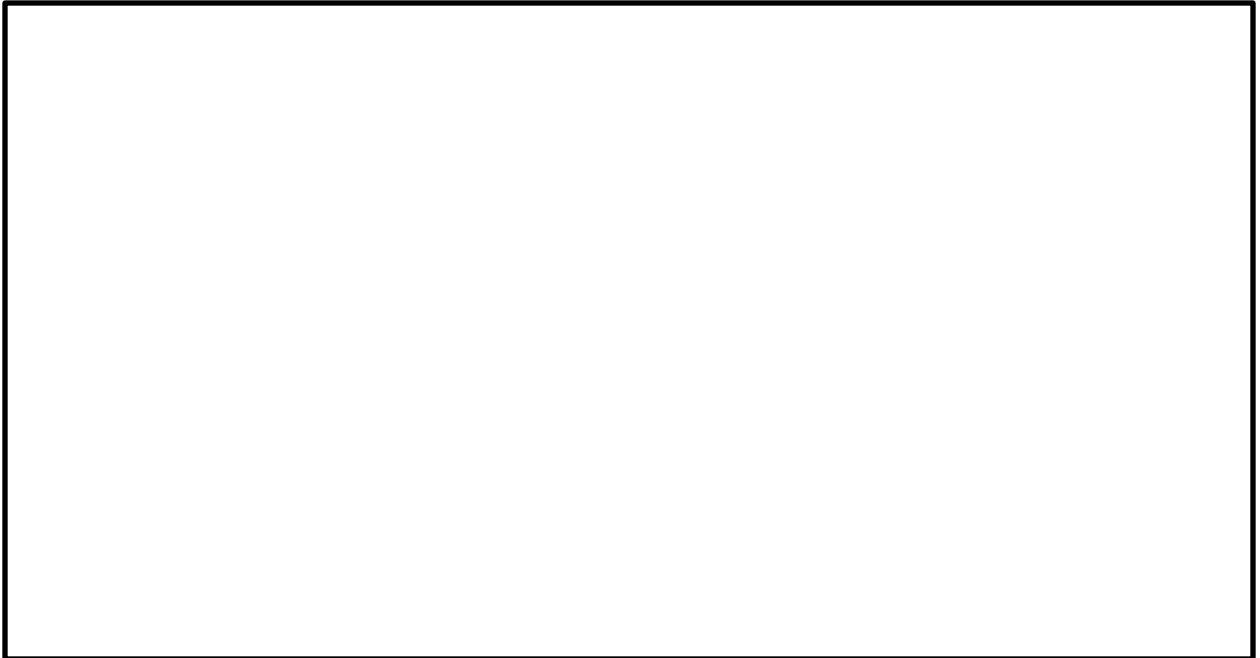
Movie Viewing and Test

Allow your students to watch the movie *The Tale of Despereaux*. This movie is based on the wonderful novel. The main character is a mouse named Despereaux. He must fight against the force of evil to rescue a princess. This fairy tale has plenty of rats in the plot as well.

Have students use the note taking page as they watch the movie. After finishing the movie, give students the test.

Movie Notes
The Tale of Despereaux

Who's Who? In the box below, list the main characters and the main things that they are known for doing in the movie.



Take notes on Despereaux's actions in the box below.



Movie Notes

One of my favorite quotes from the movie:

What happens in the end of the movie:

The theme of this movie:

Other notes:

The Tale of Despereaux

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 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?
 - a. He fights Boticelli with his sword.
 - b. He shines the light toward Boticelli
 - c. He throws rocks at Boticelli and the other rats.
 - d. He uses the cat to trick Boticelli.

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

Answer Keys

DESTRUCTIVE HABITS OF HOUSE RATS AND MICE.

1. b
2. d
3. a
4. c
5. a
6. d
7. a
8. a
9. c
10. c
11. d
12. b
13. b
14. a
15. c

The Rude Rat and The Unostentatious Oyster

1. c
2. a
3. d
4. a
5. c
6. b
7. c
8. a
9. d
10. c

The Mouse, the Frog, and the Hawk

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. b | 2. c | 3. d | 4. b | 5. b |
|------|------|------|------|------|

The Mouse and the Bull

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. b | 2. c | 3. c | 4. a | 5. a |
|------|------|------|------|------|

Movie Test Answer Key

1. a
2. c
3. d
4. b
5. b
6. c
7. c
8. b
9. a
10. d
11. a
12. c
13. a
14. d
15. c
16. a
17. b
18. a
19. b
20. c
21. b
22. b
23. a
24. b
25. a
26. d
27. c
28. a
29. a
30. d

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We have tons of resources for ELA teachers including [novel units](#), [short story lessons](#), [writing activities](#), and [Common-Core bell ringer activities](#). You can print free samples from all of these online teaching materials!

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