

PLOT, CHARACTER & SETTING

1. Tell the story

Objective

To discuss the sequence of events in books.

What you need

Copies of *The Highway Rat*, photocopiable page 20 'Tell the story'.

What to do

- Read *The Highway Rat* together. Discuss how the first half of the story follows a regular pattern as the Highway Rat stops different animals to steal their food. Identify the point at which this pattern changes (when the duck appears).
- Talk about events after this point, leading to the Highway Rat working in the cake shop.
- Display photocopiable page 20 'Tell the story'. Read the sentences together, asking why the story makes no sense. Discuss the order of the remaining sentences.
- Invite children to complete the photocopiable sheet in pairs.
- When they have finished, and are satisfied that their sentence order tells the story, bring the class together to share results. Choose a few pairs to read their stories and note any differences between them. Agree as a class on the final order.

Differentiation

Support: Ask children to find the two sentences representing the beginning and end of the story.

Extension: Ask children to compose two sentences about what happened when the Highway Rat met the cat and spider, and slot them into the sequence.

2. The rat's journey

Objective

To participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates.

What you need

Copies of *The Highway Rat*, a selection of simple maps, story map resources such as small plastic animals or card images representing story characters, art materials.

Cross-curricular link

Drama

What to do

- Invite children to share their map experiences, for example, exploring an atlas or following a local street plan.
- Discuss how maps are useful when travelling. Recall previous activities involving story maps, or introduce the children to this useful method of sequencing events if they are not already familiar with them.
- Suggest creating story maps of *The Highway Rat* story to help children remember the sequence of events as the rat travels along the road, through the cave and into the cake shop.
- Divide the class into small groups and provide access to story map resources. Encourage the children to draw a road on the back of wallpaper, create a cave from a box and use doll's house furniture for the cake shop. Decorate the map with art materials.
- Once the map is finished, ask children to retell the story as a group, moving small animals along the surface.

Differentiation

Extension: Ask children to perform the story to the class using their story map and the additional resources.