



If You Take a Mouse to School

Script
by
David Morgan

Based on the book written by Laura Numeroff, illustrated by Felicia Bond

Classroom Guide Kindergarten - Grade 1

Guide content © copyright 2011 by The Magik Theatre. Available free of charge for educational use only. May not be republished or sold without express written permission.

How to Use This Guide

This classroom guide for *If You Take a Mouse to School* is designed for Texas students in kindergarten and Grade 1. It offers activities to help you integrate a performance of *Mouse* into English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, social studies, music, art, and theatre curricula.

All activities in this guide are linked to Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) content standards.

For students outside Texas, this guide’s ELA and math activities also are linked to Common Core standards. At the back of this guide, you will find a list of the guide activities and their related Texas and Common Core standards.

Table of Contents

Theatre	
1: Discussion Questions	3
English Language Arts	
2: Compound Words	4
3: Write and Illustrate Your Own Story	5
Mathematics	
4: Picture Problems	6
Science	
5: Motion	7
Social Studies	
6: Needs and Wants	8
Art	
7: Draw What You Saw!	9
Music	
8: Exploring Music	10
Appendix	
Activity Content Standards	11

1: Discussion Questions

Before the Performance

If You Take a Mouse to School is a stage play. What is a stage play?

- How is a play similar to a TV show or movie?
- How is it different?

Who performs the parts (roles) in a play?

- What kinds of skills do you think performers need to have to perform in plays?
- Who else works on plays? (Remember: you may not see them on stage!)

The play is based on a book: *If You Take a Mouse to School*, written by Laura Numeroff.

- Have you read *If You Take a Mouse to School* as a class or by yourself?
 - Based on what you read, what do you think may happen in the play?

During the Performance

When you watch a play, you are a member of the audience. What kinds of things should you do as an audience member? Examples:

- Pay attention
- Laugh when something funny happens
- Clap if you enjoy something

What kinds of things should you *not* do as an audience member? Examples:

- Talk to your neighbor
- Use a cell phone during the performance
- Yell at the actors (unless they ask you to!)

After the Performance

What did you think of the play?

- If you read *If You Take a Mouse to School* beforehand, how was the play similar to the book?
- How was it different?

Describe the performers in the play.

- What did they do to make their characters special (different from the other characters)?
- How did they use their bodies to play their characters (using voice, movement, etc)?
- Did you see anyone else who worked on the play besides the performers on stage?

Describe the characters' costumes.

- What did each character's costume tell you about that character?
- Did any of the performers change costumes?
 - If so, why do you think they needed to change costumes?

Describe the set of the play.

- Did it have a lot of locations?
- Did it look like a place you've been to before?
- How did different lighting change how the set looked for different scenes?

Did the play have music in it?

- If so, was it only in the background, or did it help tell the story?
- What instruments did you hear in the music?

If you were going to direct *If You Take a Mouse to School*, how would your production be different from the play you saw by Magik?

2: Compound Words

A compound word is made of two or more base words put together. For example, **playground** is a compound word:

playground = play + ground

You can often find the meaning of a compound word by using its base words. For example, the word **playground** describes a place (**ground**) and what happens at that place (**play**).

Each of the following compound words appears in *If You Take a Mouse to School*. Read each word. Then draw a line to separate the compound word into its base words, like this:

play|ground

Then, as a class, discuss what each word means using its base words.

lunchbox

notebook

backpack

bathroom

lunchroom

bookshelf

skateboard

Additional Activity

Teacher: Prompt students to make compound words using the following words as starters.

- any (-time, -day, -one, -body, -thing, -where, -how)
- some (-time, -day, -one, -body, -thing, -where, -how)
- every (-time, -day, -one, -body, -thing, -where)
- tea (-cup, -bag, -spoon, -time, -pot)
- no (-body, -thing, -where)
- night (-time, -mare, -gown, -light)
- day (-time, -dream, -light)
- class (-room, -mate, -time)

3: Write and Illustrate Your Own Story

In *If You Take a Mouse to School*, a boy agrees to take his mouse to school. What begins as a simple decision has big consequences. As a class, write a story about a character who does something that causes big changes in his life.

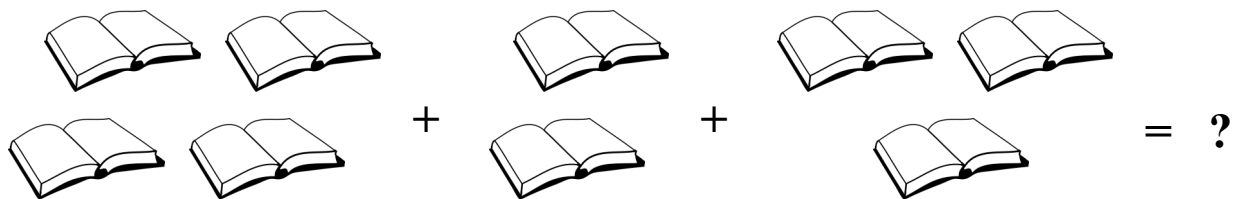
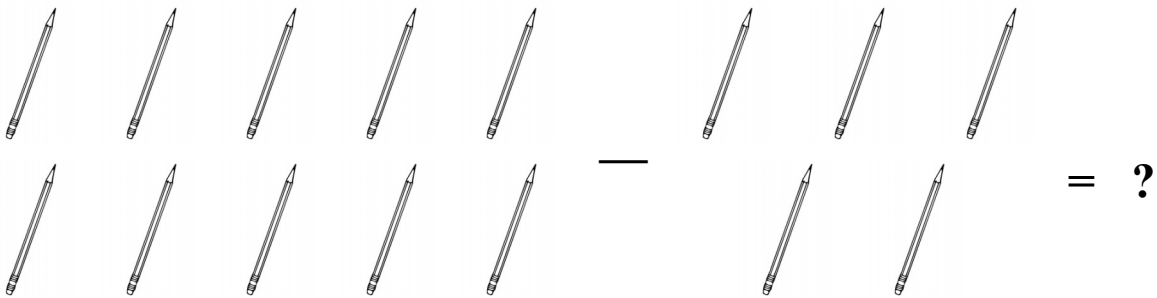
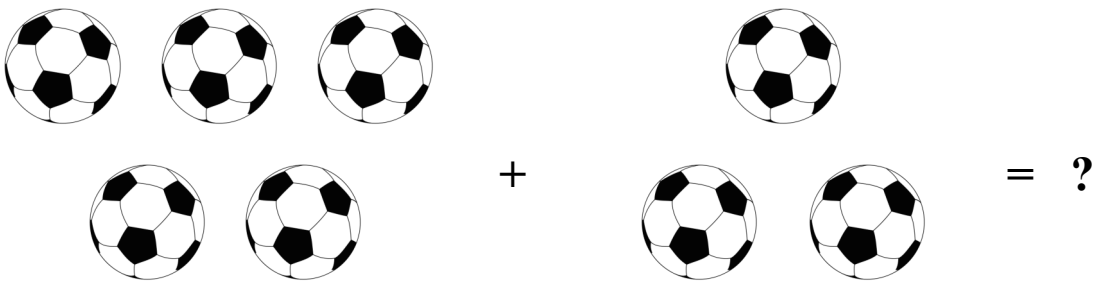
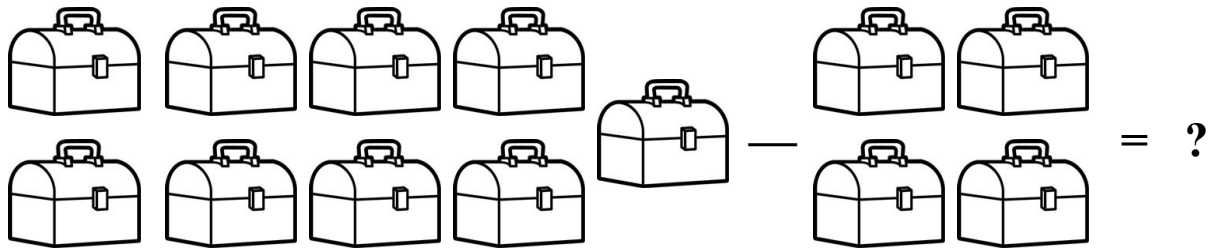
Answer these questions as you write your story:

- Who is your main character?
- Who are your other characters (if any)?
- What does your main character want?
- What is keeping your main character from what he or she wants?
- How does your main character tackle the problem?
- How does your story end?
- Did your main character learn anything?

In the space below, draw a picture to illustrate your story.



4: Picture Problems



5: Motion

Motion is how things move. We can describe the speed of motion using words like fast or slow. We can describe the direction something or someone moves in using forward, backward, sideways, up, and down. We have many words to describe the motion we observe.

If You Take a Mouse to School shows the interaction between a boy and an unusual mouse—one that talks, makes furniture, and plays soccer. Of course, mice usually don't do any of those things. But mice do move a lot.

As a class, watch videos of real mice.

What words describe the speed of the mice's motion?

- When do mice move quickly?
- When do they move slowly?
- Are mice ever perfectly still?

What words describe the direction of the mice's motion?

Compare a mouse's motion to a human's motion.

- How is it similar?
 - What about a mouse's physical characteristics makes its motion similar to a human's motion?
- How is it different?
 - What about a mouse's physical characteristics makes its motion different from a human's motion?

Take turns pretending to be a mouse. How would you move as a mouse if...?

- ...you were crossing a field?
- ...you were being chased by a cat?
- ...you spied a piece of bread across a room in a human's house?
- ...you moved toward that bread?
- ...you were making a nest?
- ...you were sleeping?

6: Needs and Wants

A **need** is something a person must have to survive (to keep living), such as air, water, nutritious food, and shelter.

A **want** is something a person wishes to have but doesn't need for survival.

In *If You Take a Mouse to School*, a boy gives a lunchbox to a mouse. When he does, the mouse asks for a sandwich and a snack for later.

- Do you think the lunchbox is a need or a want for the mouse? Why?
- Is the sandwich a need or a want? Why?
- What about the snack?

As a class, discuss needs and wants. Make lists of needs and wants in your lives, then study the lists.

- What kinds of things are on the Needs list?
- What kinds of things are on the Wants list?
- Which list is longer?
- Are people more likely to buy all of the things on the Needs list or the Wants list?
- In your family, which wants are most important?
- How do people in your family meet needs and wants?

Teacher:

Using imaginary currency, assign a very simple cost to each item on your class's Needs and Wants lists (simple enough for your students to add the amounts comfortably). Next, give each student the same amount of imaginary currency—no more than 75% of the amount needed to buy everything on the Needs and Wants lists.

Talk about how very few people have enough money to buy everything they want. Discuss how this means that people have to make economic decisions.

Next, have students use their imaginary currency to make economic decisions, starting with the Needs list.

- Which of the things on the Needs list would you buy?
- How much money do you have left over?
- Using your leftover money, what would you buy on the Wants list?
- Is there anything on the Wants list that you want but can't afford?

Finally, discuss how people approach not being able to afford everything they want, e.g., setting priorities, saving money over time, producing items themselves, trading, etc.

7: Draw What You Saw!

Choose your favorite moment from *If You Take a Mouse to School*. Use the space below to draw a picture of that moment. Use your own colors and style to show that scene however you want to. When you finish, share your picture with your class. Be ready to answer questions about your picture, such as:

- Who does your picture show?
- What is happening in your picture?
- Why did you choose the colors you used?
- How did you show emotions (feelings) in your picture?
- What happened just before the moment you drew? What will happen just afterward?
- Did anyone else draw the same moment you drew?
 - How is their picture similar?
 - How is it different?



8: Exploring Music

In the play and book of *If You Take a Mouse to School*, what begins as a simple act — a boy taking his mouse to school — becomes something much greater. The mouse's repeated requests for things keeps the boy busy and makes his school day increasingly complicated and chaotic. Finally, at the end, the story circles back to where it started: taking the mouse to school.

As an exploration exercise, play samples of several different musical pieces for your students. Encourage children to add dance/movement to their listening experience. Make sure students have room to move around. Point out different tempos and rhythms to encourage change in dance/movement. Help students find the beat of a piece by clapping, marching in place, snapping your fingers, etc.

Next, use a variety of musical instruments or everyday objects* to lead students through a discussion of musical qualities:

- Demonstrate musical qualities
 - loud vs. soft sounds
 - high-pitched notes vs. low-pitched notes
 - fast rhythms vs. slow rhythms
- Ask students to emulate your examples using instruments, their voices, or their bodies (e.g., clapping their hands, snapping their fingers, clicking their tongues)
- Ask students to sort instruments
 - sort single-pitch instruments from low-pitched to high-pitched
 - sort single-pitch instruments separately from multi-pitch instruments
- Create a simple rhythmic pattern
 - ask students to repeat it
 - ask students to create and repeat their own simple rhythmic patterns
- Create a simple melody
 - ask students to repeat it
 - ask students to create and play their own simple melodies

As a class, create a composition that represents *If You Take a Mouse to School*. Begin with a simple rhythm or melody: the boy. Next, to represent the mouse's requests, add a rhythm or a note pattern that repeats. As that repetition continues, add more sounds to represent the consequences of the boy giving the mouse what it wants. Your piece should become increasingly complex, with some unexpected sounds thrown in. Just as your composition seems ready to careen out of control, begin to strip away sounds until you have only the patterns representing the mouse and the boy. Let the mouse pattern repeat one more time (the mouse asking for the lunchbox). Let the boy's pattern play a few times in response (circling back to the beginning). As the boy realizes he'll have to take the mouse back to school, have every student play/make one loud sound together to end your composition with a bang.

**Including: cardboard oatmeal can (with lid), rubber band, chopsticks, metal spoons, plastic bucket, plastic storage bin, pots and pans, pot/pan lids, wooden spoon, plastic cup with lid, filled ¼ full with dry beans or rice, cardboard tubes, glasses with different levels of water*

TEXAS

Kindergarten

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Standard(s)</u>
1	Fine Arts 117.4.b.5
2	ELA 110.11.b.5
3	ELA 110.11.b.13-14
4	Math 111.12.b.1, 3-4
5	Science 112.11.b.6
6	Soc Studies 113.11.b.6-7
7	Fine Arts 117.2.b.1-2, 4
8	Fine Arts 117.3.b.1-2, 4

Grade 1

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Standard(s)</u>
1	Fine Arts 117.7.b.5
2	ELA 110.12.b.6
3	ELA 110.12.b.17-18
4	Math 111.13.b.1-3
5	Science 112.12.b.6
6	Soc Studies 113.12.b.7, 9
7	Fine Arts 117.5.b.1-2, 4
8	Fine Arts 117.6.b.1-2, 4

COMMON CORE

Kindergarten

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Standard(s)</u>
2	ELA L.K.4, 6
3	ELA W.K.3
4	Math K.OA.1-2

Grade 1

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Standard(s)</u>
2	ELA L.1.4, 6
3	ELA W.1.3
4	Math 1.OA.1-2, 5, 7-8