



Martha Mouse's Code

Level: BB1.5 Onset/Rime

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Lesson One – Prior Knowledge

Before Reading

- Extend prior knowledge and vocabulary around the book cover and title page.
- Read the title to the students. Discuss the title and the cover photo. Tell the students that this is Martha Mouse. Discuss with them what a code is.
- Tell the students that they will learn about Martha Mouse's code as you read the book to them.

- Turn to the title page. Tell the students that before you read them the book they are going to find out some things about the real animals. Click on the Martha Mouse picture. Ask the students what they already know about mice. Add to, or correct their knowledge as necessary.
- Tell the students – *Mouse, or mice, if there is more than one mouse, are small rodents. Everyone knows that mice eat cheese, but they eat almost everything. Mice like to eat often. They eat between 15 and 20 times a day. A male mouse is called a buck, and a female mouse is called a doe. Baby mice are called pinkies or kittens. A female mouse can have up to 150 babies a year.*
- Click on the cat picture. Follow the same procedure. Then tell the students – *Cats have very good eyesight and hearing which makes them very good hunters. This is probably why people started keeping them in their houses to get rid of rats and mice, and other small animals. Cats have different types of fur. Some cats have long fur and others have no fur at all.*

During Reading

- Use the audio or turn down the volume and read the complete book to the students with the appropriate intonation and pacing.

After Reading

- Discuss what the student's liked and didn't like about the story, then ask them to think about the part they liked the best.
- Have the students give a personal response to the story and draw the part they liked the best part.
- Write the student's dictated caption using the following sentence frame. "*I like the part when...,*" said...
- Have the students write or copy their own name.
- Invite volunteers to share their pictures with the class, talk about the part they liked the best, and read the caption.

Lesson Two

Comprehension Strategies – Recognizing fiction text structures

Before Reading

- Invite the student's to read the title with you.
- Have them recall the facts they learned about the animals in the previous lesson.
- Discuss the story structure with the students. Tell the students that all stories take place somewhere. This place is called the setting. The setting for Martha Mouse's Clever Class was a school. The setting for Crab's Rhyming Game was a beach. Stories also have characters and one or more of the characters has a problem. The story tells you what the problem is and how the characters go about solving their problem. This is called the plot.
- Tell the students that as you read the story this time you are going to ask them to think about the problem that the mice have and how they go about solving it.

During Reading

- Turn the audio down and read the story.
- Invite the students to participate in the reading by asking them questions as you read. Introduce the appropriate language for your ELL students who may not have the English words they need. Have them repeat the words you supply to consolidate meaning and pronunciation.
- Page 6/7 - *What is the problem that Martha has? How do you think she might solve it?*
- Page 10/11 - *What has Martha done to solve the problem? Do you think this will work?*
- Page 24 - *Did Martha solve her problem, or will Cat soon learn the code?*

After Reading

- Ask the students some literal comprehension questions about the story, for example –
What did Cat do for a job?
Why did Cat have to catch Martha's Million Mice?
How did Martha get in touch with the mice?
Where did the Million Mice come from?
What is the code for cat?
What else did Martha mouse show the Million Mice?
- Ask some inferential questions, for example –
What else could Cat do to help her catch the mice?
Why do you think the Million Mice liked Martha's meetings?
Why do you think the mice danced and pranced around?
What are some other things could Martha have done to solve her problem with Cat?
- Discuss with the students how good they think they think they would be at making up a code.

Lesson Three - Exploring the Setting

Before Reading

- Tell the students that today they are going to learn some more about where the story took place. They are going to learn about the setting. They are going to learn the names of some of the things in the photos.
- Turn to page 2/3. Click on the background and a popup box with the background photo only will appear (to remove the photo click on the X on the top right hand corner of the photo). The aim of this part of the lesson is that ELL students and students who speak English, but have very limited experiences, will have English language words that they can use in the following discussion.
- Invite the students to look closely at the photo and tell you all the things that they can see. Invite volunteers to come and point to the item they are naming.
- Elaborate on the students' answers, for example – *Yes, this is a desk. It's made of wood. In fact it looks as though just about everything in Cat's office is made of wood. What is the desk made of?*
- Ask questions about items that the students do not mention, for example - *Who knows what these are called? They're earphones. You sometimes use earphones when you listen to music. You also use ear plugs to listen to music.*
- Repeat this sequence with the other pages where the background differs, that is pages 4/5, 6/7, 12/13 & 20/21. You will note that story is set in a cheese-making factory.

During Reading

- Turn the audio down and read the story reinforcing the setting. As you read, stop and discuss the setting further, for example –
Page 2/3 - Say – *How is Cat's office the same as /different from the school office?*
Page 4/5 - Say – *How do you think Cat gets from her office to the factory. Where do you think Cat's office is? Where could the mice hide so Cat can't catch them?*
Page 20/21 - Say – *What can you see in this part of the cheese factory that you couldn't see before?*
Page 22/23 - Say – *What other things can you see in this photo of Cat's office that you couldn't see before?*

After Reading

- Have the students discuss the two settings – Cat's office and the cheese factory. Have them say all the things that are different.
- Make a big mural of the cheese factory. Have the students draw the mice and glue them onto the mural.

Lesson Four – Exploring Characters

Before Reading

- Tell the students that today they are going to learn more about the characters in the book.
- Turn to page 23. Click on Cat and a popup box will appear with Cat only in it.
- Invite the students to recall the facts they know about cats.
- Invite volunteers to describe what Cat looks like.
- Have them say what is the same as/different from a real cat and Cat.
- Guide their responses if necessary by asking questions such as – *Do you see cats that look like this. Do you know the name for cats that are stripey like Cat?*
- Turn to page 24. Click on Martha Mouse and a popup box will appear with Martha only in it.
- Invite the students to recall the facts they know about mice.
- Invite volunteers to describe what Martha looks like. What sort of mouse is Martha.

During Reading

- Turn the audio off and read the story to the students.
- Invite them to join in as much of the reading as they can
- Use the oral cloze procedure of hesitating before certain words to encourage the students to participate, for example – *to stop them from stealing the...*

After Reading

- Discuss the characters with the students.
Which character do they like the most? Why?
What things would Cat have to be good at to be a detective?
What sort of things would Martha have to be good at to work out a code?
What is it about Martha that makes the mice want to come to her meetings?
Which is smarter, Cat or Martha? Why?
Which character would they most like to be? Why?
- Have the students chose their best character to draw.
- Caption their drawings with “I like.....,” said Have the students copy or write independently as much as they can.
- Invite volunteers to share their drawings, say why they like the character they do and read their caption.

Lesson Five – Onset Rime

Before Reading

- Tell the students that today they are going to learn how to break words up like Martha did in her code.
- Ask them to listen carefully as you say some words and then break them into two parts.
- Say *cat*, and *c-at*.
- Say *hat*, and *h-at*.
- Say *c-at* and *h-at* emphasizing *at*. Ask the students if they can hear the part of *cat* and *hat* that sound the same?
- Say *rat*
- Invite a volunteer to break *rat* into two parts.
- Repeat this procedure with *bat*, *mat*, *pat*, and *sat*.
- Ask the students to say the part of each word that sounds the same.

During Reading

- Turn the audio down and read the story to the students. Have them join in as much as possible especially the code words.

After Reading

- Ask the students questions such as –
What is the code word for cat?
What is d-og code word for?
What is the code word for snake?
What is gr-ass the code word for?
What is ch-eeze the code word for?
What is the same about dog and frog?
- Invite volunteers to say more words that end like *dog* and *frog*. Have them say the word and the code.

Lesson Six – Innovations

- Tell the students that today they are going to make a new story. The new story is going to have farm animals in it.
- Write on the board –

Martha Mouse showed them a picture of a cat.

- Have the students think of other farm animals they could have instead of *cat*.
- Write their suggestions above and below *cat*, for example –

pig
goat
horse

Martha Mouse showed them a picture of a cat

cow
sheep

- Have the students read all the new stories with you, for example –
Martha Mouse showed them a picture of a pig.
Martha Mouse showed them a picture of a goat.
- Show the students how they would read each of the new animals using Martha's code –
p-ig, g-oat, h-orse, c-ow, sh-eeep.
- Read the new stories using the code instead of the words.
- Invite the students to draw the new characters.
- Make a wall story for the students to reread.

Lesson Seven – Revise, Consolidate, Extend

During Reading

- Turn the audio up and encourage the students to join in as much of the reading as they can. Have them emphasize the code words.

After Reading

- Ask the students what happened at the beginning of the story, and what happened next. Ask them how the story ended.
- Invite them to recall what Martha’s problem was and how she solved it.
- Have them say what Cat’s problem was. Did Cat manage to solve her problem?
- Invite volunteers to talk about the settings and what was different between Cat’s office and the cheese factory.
- Discuss Martha’s code. What did Martha do to the words to make her code?
- Have the students work out the code for the following words and say what part is the same
pig, dig, fig, wig, jig
sheep, sleep, peep, keep, weep
goat, boat, coat, float
cow, how, now, wow
- Have the students work in pairs or small groups to reread the story at the computer with the audio on.