

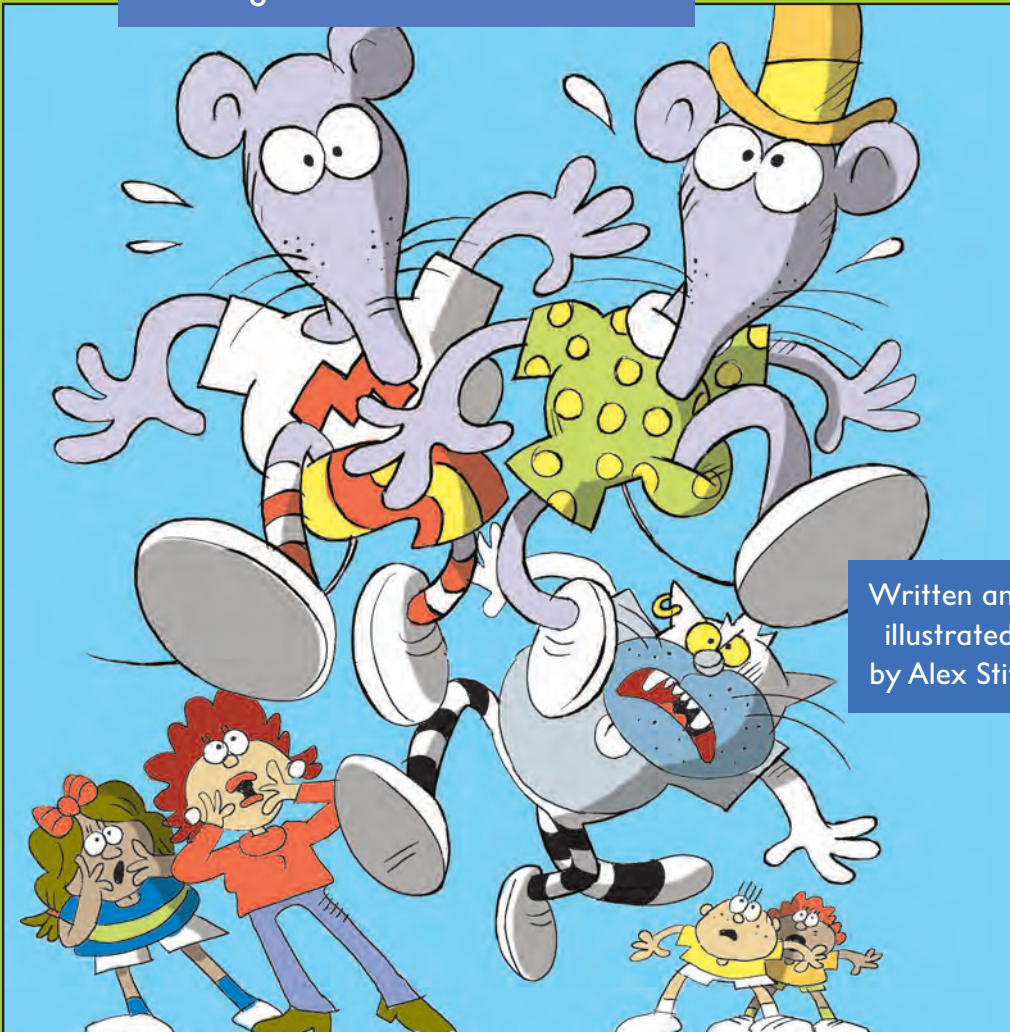
Teacher Edition

Mice In School



alphakids

Starring Max and Matilda Mouse



Written and
illustrated
by Alex Stitt

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How to use this book

The Alphakids Plus teacher editions support teachers as they guide children's reading and thinking during one or more guided reading sessions. Teachers can observe children as they read and choose from the given suggestions to suit individual needs.

Before reading

Setting the context, front cover and title page:

The suggestions help teachers to set the scene and prepare children for reading the book. Prompts help to determine children's prior knowledge. Where necessary, background information is provided. Teachers are encouraged to check that children understand the vocabulary listed and to discuss the meanings and/or the structures of these words. Previous experiences with similar text types may also be discussed.

During reading

Predict, Read, Reflect:

Questions encourage children to engage with the text by making predictions. They then read a section of the text and reflect on what they have read. The focus is on the content, language and text features of the book.

Observe and support:

Prompts help teachers to focus on the strategies children use as they read. Teachers can then select from and adapt the suggestions according to the needs of the individual child. The suggestions aim to develop a child's reading abilities. Interruptions to the child's reading should be minimal.

After reading

A selection of reading and writing activities:

The last pages of the teacher edition provide follow-up activities and include the assessment focus.

Selected text features

- Speech balloons are used throughout
- Illustrations support and extend the text
- Comic devices, such as the use of words on illustrations to indicate sound effects, are used

Vocabulary

basketball hoop, click, darker, footsteps, jumped, morning, scared, school, slam dunk, squeeze, teacher's, thud

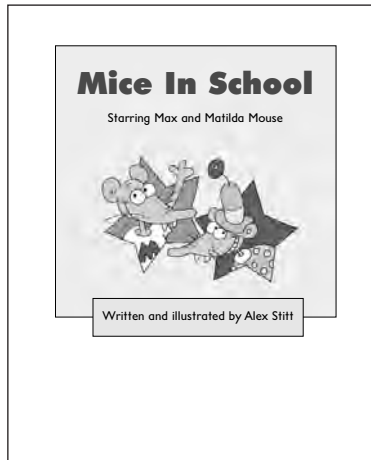
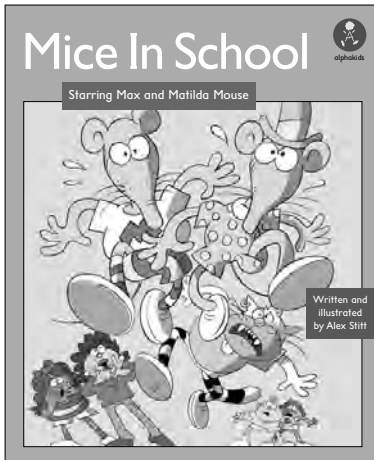
Setting the context

Have you ever read a comic book? What was it like? What kind of pictures did it have? How did you read it?

Have you read any stories about mice in a comic book? What enemies do mice have in stories? What usually happens to cats and mice in these stories?

You might like to supply children with a range of comics and give them time to browse through them.

You could read the level 12 Alphakids Plus book, 'Mice In Space' to the children.



Front cover

*This book is called Mice in School.
It is a comic. It is written and illustrated
by Alex Stitt.*

Title page

*Who do you think are the main
characters in this book? How do you
know this?*

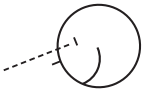
Predict

*Look at the four different pictures on pages 2 and 3.
What is happening on these pages?
What features tell us that this is a comic book?
How are Max and Matilda trying to get away?*

Read to the end of page 5.

Reflect

*How do we know who is talking in a cartoon?
Can you point to the speech balloons?
What other writing is on the page apart from the words
spoken by the characters?*



Observe and support

Can the child follow the story within the comic book format? Ask the child to direct you around pages 2 to 5.

Where do I start reading?

Where do I go to next?

How do you know?

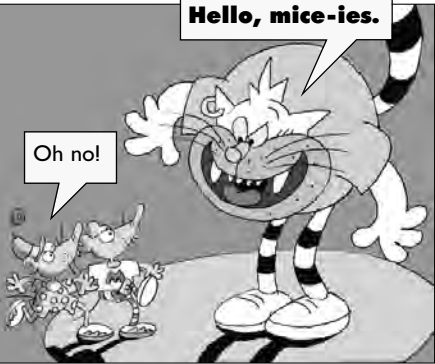
How would you know if you read the comic in the wrong order?

Max and Matilda Mouse ran down the street.



Hello, mice-ies.

Oh no!



2

Yum! Yum!



Quick, Matilda, up the light pole!

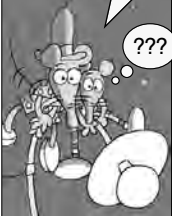


3

Max and Matilda ran up the pole.



What do we do now, Max?



You're not getting away from me.



4

We can walk out along this wire.



I'm scared.

Here I come, **mice-ies!**



Is it safe?

Safer than waiting for that **cat!**

5

● **Predict**

How are the mice escaping?

What will happen to the cat?

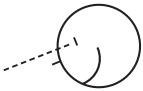
Do you think the mice are safe? What else might happen?

● **Read** pages 6 and 7.

● **Reflect**

How did the mice get away from the cat?

Would you be able to follow the story on these pages without reading the words? How?



Observe and support

Does the child stop to correct errors?

I liked the way you stopped to check that you were reading the text in the correct order. I also liked the way you re-read the sentence to make sure that it made sense.



6

Max jumped.



Matilda jumped too.
The cat was on the wire ...



7

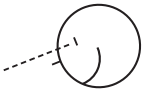
● **Predict**

*Where are the mice going? How do you know?
What does the picture of the two sets of eyeballs tell us?*

● **Read** to the end of page 11.

● **Reflect**

*Look at the word 'Thud!' What does it tell us?
Can you find other words that describe sounds?
How do we know that it is morning?*



Observe and support

Can the child interpret the text?
*What has happened to the cat?
How did the mice get away from the cat?
Where are the mice now? How did they get there?
Are they safe yet?
Do you think the cat will reappear in the story? Why?*

The mice
climbed down
the post.

Thud!

Ow!

Goodbye,
pussycat!

8



It's very dark.
Where do
you think we
are, Max?

I don't know.
But here are
some steps.
And a door.

We can squeeze
under the door.

Inside, it was
even darker.



9

Where are you,
Matilda? I can't
see anything.

I'm here. I've found
a box or something.
I can open the lid.



We can climb
inside and wait
until it's light.

Morning

Some light is
coming in.

Listen.



10



Sounds like
footsteps.

Good morning, children.

Good morning,
Miss Green.



11

● **Predict**

What is the girl holding?

Do you think Max and Matilda know that the cat is in the room?

What will they do when they find out?

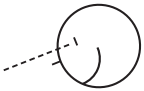
● **Read** to the end of page 13.

● **Reflect**

Did you expect the cat to reappear?

What is the cat's name?

What do you think will happen next?



Observe and support

Does the child integrate information sources to help solve problems?

After a miscue you could ask:

Does that make sense?

Does it sound right?

What sort of word needs to go there?

What sounds do the letters represent?

What are the pictures telling you?

Inside the teacher's desk.

I think we're in a school.



Cool!
Open the lid and let's see.



Now children, did you bring something for our show and tell time?

Max!
The lid is stuck!

12

Yes, Miss Green—I brought Pussykins, my **cat!**




Let's get **out** of here!

Cat?

13

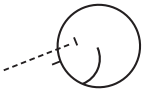
Predict

*What is happening in this picture?
Why do you think this picture fills two pages?
Do you think the mice have escaped safely?*

 **Read** to the end of page 16.

Reflect

*How do we know that the teacher is upset?
Why is there a question mark in the speech balloon
above Pussykins?
Do you think this is the last time that Max and Matilda
will run into Pussykins?*



Observe and support

Can the child read with expression using different voices for each character?
*When you read these pages, think about the way each character might be speaking.
How would the teacher say 'Mice!'
How would the cat say 'My mice-ies!'
How would the cat say 'Gotcha!'?*



After reading

Being a meaning maker

Encourage the children to support their answers with evidence from the book as they discuss these questions:

Why did the mice run up the light pole?

Why did the mice run into the school?

What happened to the mice in the classroom?

What would have happened if the girl did not grab the cat in time?

Being a code breaker

Children may like to explore the following language features:

- use of exclamation marks throughout the text
- words with the sound /m/: Max, Matilda, mice, yum

Being a text user

What kind of book is this?

How do you read it? How do you know which order to read it in?

How do you know which character is saying what?

How is a comic different to other stories? How is it similar?

Being a text critic

Did you like this story? Why?

Where do you think this author may have got his idea for the book?

Responding to text



Children could make stick puppets of the characters in the book and retell the text as a puppet play.



Children could make a poster that warns other mice about the dangers of Pussykins the cat.



Children could list all of the words used in the book to indicate sound effects, e.g. 'Clip!', 'Thud!'. This list could be expanded to include other words that might be used to indicate sound in a comic, e.g. 'bash', 'clang', 'boom'. Words could be illustrated in a way that indicates the impact of the word. For example, 'Bang!' could be written inside a jagged outline.

Writing links

Shared writing

Children could write a further adventure for Max and Matilda mouse. Provide large paper folded into eighths and felt-tip pens. Children could choose to work with a friend or individually.

Independent writing

Children could write their own version of the story.

Possible assessment focus

Can the child:

- explain the features of comics?
- follow a story that is largely contained within speech balloons?
- explain some of the differences between comics and other narratives?



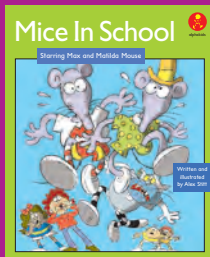
whole text activity



sentence activity



word activity



Teacher Edition

Topic: Survival

Curriculum link: English

Text type: Comic

Reading level: 19

Word count: 255

Vocabulary: basketball hoop, click, darker, footsteps, jumped, morning, scared, school, slam dunk, squeeze, teacher's, thud

Possible literacy focus

Understanding the conventions of comics.

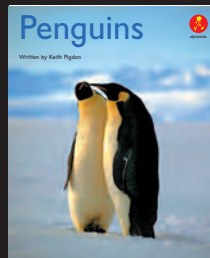
Reading speech balloons.

Exploring how stories in comics differ from other narratives.

Summary

This book is a comic that tells the story of two mice who escape a cat by hiding in a school.

Other books at this level



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