

Lesson Plans

Advanced Fluent
reading stage

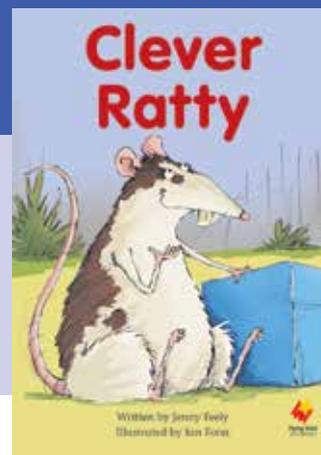
Level Q



HeroRATs explains how rats are trained to detect landmines and tuberculosis. It describes how this began and how it is helping people.

Running words: 1758

Text type: Report



Joey is petrified of rats. So when Joey's sister adopts a pet rat, no one could have predicted that this would make Joey very happy one day.

Running words: 3040

Text type: Narrative

Content vocabulary

African giant-pouched rats clicker
deminer diagnose excavated explosion
explosives handler infectious disease
landmines metal detector
mine detection rats organisation
rodents scents sputum trigger
tuberculosis war-torn

Literary language

Figurative language: a faraway look as gently as a curling feather face drops had zapped him with lightning her heart of hearts tremor of fear

Verbs: adds agrees argues asks cries croons declares insists laughs promises shouts tells whispers yells

Adjectives: cold clever determined different dim gentle huge joyous proud soft sunny terrified wide-eyed

Reading strategies

HeroRATs

- Asking questions about the information

Clever Ratty

- Identifying how a character changes from the beginning of the story to the end

Curriculum links

HeroRATs

- Science: Science and human endeavour
- Science: Living things

Clever Ratty

- English: Literature

Lesson Plan HeroRATs



Key concepts

- Rats can be trained to help people.
- Rats can use their sense of smell to detect things such as landmines and tuberculosis.

Before reading

Exploring vocabulary

Give each student a copy of *HeroRATs*. Say: *Rats have been trained to use their sense of smell to find landmines, which are underground bombs. They can also use their sense of smell to detect if a person has a disease called tuberculosis. This book explains how they do these things. What words might be in this book?*

★ Make a list of key words from the book (refer to the “Content vocabulary” section) and talk through their meanings.

Establishing the strategy focus

Say: *Before, during and after reading this book, we are going to be asking questions about the topic. Asking questions provides a deeper understanding of what we are reading. It also helps to spark our interest in a topic, so that we want to know more and more.*

During reading

Reading with teacher support

Ask students to browse through the book. Have them work with a partner to write two questions about the topic. Have students read the introduction independently. Ask the pairs to add a question about Bart Weetjens to their list. Have students read Chapters 1 to 3 independently. Say: *As you read, put a sticky note on a page if you find answers to your questions.* Monitor and support students as they read. After reading, have pairs discuss their questions and if they were able to answer them.

Check for understanding

Have pairs share questions they have asked and answered so far.

★ Ask students to provide examples of questions they wrote with their partners. Use these examples to talk about open and closed questions.

★ These activities are also suitable for English Language Learners (ELL).

Working with a partner

Say: *The next chapter is about rats using their sense of smell to detect a disease. Have students talk with their partner and write two questions they have about this topic.* Students read Chapter 4 independently and then the pairs check if their questions were answered. Students read the remainder of the book independently. Monitor and support them where appropriate.

Quick write

Say: *Now that you have asked questions about the topic and found answers, you will have a good understanding of the facts.* Introduce Graphic Organiser 1: HeroRATs quiz. Say: *Use what you know about HeroRATs to write quiz questions. Include a range of questions by using different question starters, such as what, why and how.*

After reading

Talking about the book

Have students talk about the whole text. Use a range of questions to promote discussion and higher-level thinking. *Why are rats the perfect animals for finding buried landmines?* (Inferential) *How else might rats be useful to people?* (Synthesising) *Did the author cover all of the information you wanted to know about how rats help people? What else could have been included in this book?* (Critical) Invite students to ask their own questions.

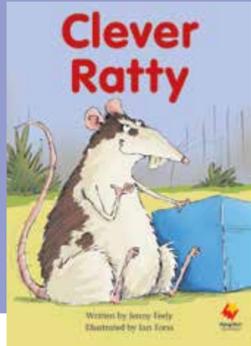
Vocabulary reflection

★ Return to the list of key content words recorded before reading. In pairs, students take turns using the words in a sentence.

Strategy reflection

Ask: *What did you learn about asking questions?* Scribe students’ responses onto a chart. Ask: *Did asking questions help you to understand the topic more fully?* Have students explain their thinking.

Lesson Plan Clever Ratty



Key concepts

- A character’s attitudes and feelings can change throughout a story.
- Things that happen to a character can change how they think and act.

Before reading

Exploring vocabulary

Say: *In a narrative, authors describe things, such as what something looks like and sounds like.* Give each student a copy of *Clever Ratty*. Say: *This is a story about a clever rat. What words might be used to describe him?*

★ Show students a picture of Ratty and invite them to describe him. Use these words to create a list of adjectives.

Establishing the strategy focus

Say: *As we read this book, we are going to explore how characters can change. We will also work out why they have changed. Think about this as you read the book.*

During reading

Reading with teacher support

Have students read Chapter 1 independently. Ask: *How do Joey and Kara feel about the rat?* Say: *The next chapter is called “A new member of the family”. What might happen next? How might Joey and Kara feel?* Have students read Chapters 2 and 3 independently. Say: *If you notice a change in a character, mark that page with a sticky note.*

Check for understanding

Ask: *Have you noticed any changes in a character’s attitudes or actions?* Draw out that Joey’s attitude toward Ratty is slowly changing. Discuss the reasons for this.

★ Guide students in retelling the story so far. Then ask: *What might happen next?* Discuss students’ predictions.

Working with a partner

Have students read Chapter 4 independently. In pairs, students discuss how Joey has changed since he first saw Ratty. Ask: *Why does Kara want Joey to help with Ratty’s training?* Have pairs discuss what else Kara could do to have Joey accept Ratty.

Reading with teacher support

Have students read Chapter 5 independently. Ask: *Was it fair of Joey to not want Ratty at the parade?* Ask students to predict what might happen next. Have students read Chapter 6 independently. Monitor and support students where appropriate.

Check for understanding

Reflect on the book by guiding conversations about the characters’ attitudes and actions. Ask: *How did Joey change? Why did he change? What was Kara’s role in this change?*

Working with a partner

In pairs, students discuss if and how the characters changed. Encourage students to refer back to the sticky notes they placed in the book to indicate this change. Have students reflect on the text and complete Graphic Organiser 2: Joey and Ratty – A changing relationship.

After reading

Talking about the book

Have the students talk about the whole text. Use a range of questions to promote discussion and higher-level thinking. *Was Ratty clever? Why?* (Inferential) *Could another animal have been in this story? If so, what sort of animal? How would the story have been different?* (Synthesising) *What does the author believe about rats?* (Critical) Invite students to ask their own questions.

Vocabulary reflection

★ Refer to the list of adjectives created before reading. Ask: *What adjectives could describe Joey? What about Kara?* Add words to the list.

Strategy reflection

Ask: *What things does an author do to show that a character has changed from the beginning of a story to the end?* Draw out that the character’s words, actions and thoughts show us how they have changed.

Synthesising: Talk about the pair

Say: *You have read a report and a narrative about rats using their senses to help people. What have you learnt? How do you feel about this topic?* Introduce De Bono’s thinking hats strategy. Say: *Sometimes it is good to think about a topic in different ways.*

You can do this by using a strategy called De Bono’s thinking hats. By putting on a different-colored hat, you can think about the topic from different perspectives. Talk through each of the hats and questions below. Then have students complete the chart.

Name: _____

<p>Red hat <i>(feelings and emotions)</i></p> <p>How does the story of HeroRATs make you feel? Why?</p>	<p>White hat <i>(the facts)</i></p> <p>What facts do you know about how rats help people?</p>
<p>Yellow hat <i>(the positives)</i></p> <p>What good things are being done using rats?</p>	<p>Black hat <i>(the negatives)</i></p> <p>What problems did you learn about landmines and tuberculosis?</p>
<p>Green hat <i>(creativity)</i></p> <p>What other things could rats help people with?</p>	<p>Blue hat <i>(thinking)</i></p> <p>What does the story of HeroRATs make you think about?</p>

Assessment

Do students understand the main themes from the texts? Can they write about the topic from different perspectives?

Graphic Organiser 1: HeroRATs quiz

Name: _____

Partner's name: _____

Write four questions based on what you learnt from reading *HeroRATs*.

Have your partner use the book to find and record the answers.

How did they go? Discuss the answers with your partner.

Question 1:
Answer:
Question 2:
Answer:
Question 3:
Answer:
Question 4:
Answer:

Graphic Organiser 2: Joey and Ratty — A changing relationship

Name: _____

Think about how and why Joey's attitude toward Ratty changes throughout the book.

	How does Joey feel about Ratty?	Why does Joey feel this way? What made him change?
By the end of Chapter 1		
By the end of Chapter 3		
By the end of Chapter 4		
By the end of Chapter 6		

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