

MRS. FRISBY  
AND  
THE RATS OF NIMH

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## MRS. FRISBY AND THE RATS OF NIMH

### Synopsis

Mrs. Frisby knows it is moving time - time to leave the fields before their house is plowed under, and move to their summer home. Usually this is no problem, but this year her son Timothy is sick and cannot be moved. A friend suggests that she go to the wise owl for advice. When the owl finds out she is the widow of Jonathan Frisby, he tells her how to get help from the rats in the rose bush. Again, the name of her departed husband turns the rats into friends, and she is able to get the help she needs. It is also from the rats that she learns how her husband died, and more about his ability to read. It seemed he had been part of a scientific experiment, and so had the rats. They had become highly intelligent, and had escaped from the scientists, who hadn't realized how well all their experiments had worked. These superior rats moved Mrs. Frisby's house to a safe location, so that she could be safe until Timothy was well enough to move to their summer home. The rats moved on to a valley where humans couldn't find or disturb them.

**MRS. FRISBY AND THE RATS OF NIMH**  
**LESSON 1**  
Chapters 1-7

1. The story opens with a problem, what is it?

2. Underline the characteristics of Timothy.

Mean          Kind          Happy          Slow

3. Who is Jeremy and how does Mrs. Frisby meet him?

4. How does Mrs. Frisby know that it's almost moving day?

5. Why is Mrs. Frisby afraid to visit the owl in the forest at night?

6. How does Timothy being sick make a difference to the families moving plans?

## MRS. FRISBY AND THE RATS OF NIMH

### LESSON 2

#### Chapters 8 - 11

1. The owl wasn't very helpful until he found out Mrs. Frisby's name. Why did the name make a difference?
  - A. Her husband was well known and admired.
  - B. The owl had a cousin with the same last name.
  - C. Frisby is a name used for royalty and so the owl was impressed.
2. What does "deference" mean?
  - A. With fear
  - B. With respect
  - C. With care
3. What situation in his own life did the owl compare to Mrs. Frisby's?
  - A. His tree dying and that he needed to move, but like her he didn't want to.
  - B. He had been ill all winter like Timothy.
  - C. He is growing old like Mrs. Frisby.
4. How do you think Mrs. Frisby was feeling as she walked into the tunnel inside the bush?
5. Who did Mrs. Frisby meet first in the tunnel?
  - A. Justin
  - B. Brutus
  - C. Mr. Ages
6. When Mrs. Frisby is with the rats she finally discovers how her husband died. How did Jonathan die and why didn't she know before this?

**MRS. FRISBY AND THE RATS OF NIMH**  
**LESSON 3**  
**Chapters 14-18**

1. Where had the rats been going when the men caught them?
  
2. How many rats including Nicodemus were in Group A?
  - A. 40
  - B. 20
  - C. 25
  
3. The rats were receiving two types of injections. What were the injections?
  - A. Vitamin and intelligence shots
  - B. For long life and to become more athletic
  - C. To become smarter and live longer
  
4. What does "inextricably" mean?
  
5. When Nicodemus starts to tell his story that is called:
  - A. Flashback
  - B. Foreshadowing
  - C. Fantasy
  
6. Why did the rats in the control group die while the rats in group A did not?
  
7. Why didn't the rats escape from the building the first night they knew how?
  
8. The rats think Dr. Schultz might try to find them if they escape. Why are they so important to him?

## MRS. FRISBY AND THE RATS OF NIMH

### LESSON 4

Chapters 19 - 23

1. Inside the Boniface estate the rats found a treasure. What was it?
  - A. A kitchen full of food
  - B. A library full of books
  - C. A room full of small tools
  
2. What is the main idea of the rats PLAN?
  - A. To be able to live without stealing.
  - B. To have all the comforts that people have.
  - C. To keep away from Dr. Schultz
  
3. Why was finding the truck of the Toy tinker so important to them?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What does "tapped it" mean?
  - A. To draw power from
  - B. To make tapping noises on it
  - C. To tape it up
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Put a check by the event, which happened first.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Finding the cave on the Fitzgibbon farm
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Deciding on the PLAN
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Coming across the truck of the Toy Tinker
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Which do you think was the most important find - the books or the small tools? Support your answer with at least two reasons.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Explain why Jenner may have been against the plan for the rats to start over.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Tell what you think will happen to Mrs. Frisby and her family now that she is caught.

## MRS. FRISBY AND THE RATS OF NIMH

### LESSON 5

#### Chapters 24 - 28

1. What news does Mrs. Frisby hear that she needs to tell the rats?
  - A. That the people will be plowing the field that next day.
  - B. Dr. Schultz found Brutus
  - C. There are some doctors coming to exterminate the rats under the rose bush.
2. Why doesn't Justin just lift the cage door up and let Mrs. Frisby out?
  - A. He doesn't want anyone to hear the squeaky door.
  - B. He isn't able to lift the door by himself.
  - C. It needs to look liked she did it so the people won't be suspicious.
3. This type of book could best be described as:
  - A. Fantasy
  - B. Mystery
  - C. Non-fictional animal
4. What does "civilization" mean?
5. Why do the people think that Dragon, the cat is lazy?
6. Why do you think the shrew wouldn't let the rats move Mrs. Frisby's house?
7. Do you think the men in the truck were from NIMH? Explain your answer.
8. Compare Mrs. Frisby to an animal character in another story you have read. Tell in a complete sentence one way they are alike.

**MRS. FRISBY AND THE RATS OF NIMH**  
Answer Key

LESSON 1

1. The problem is Timothy's sickness.
2. Happy and kind should be underlined.
3. Jeremy is a crow that Mrs. Frisby freed from a fence where he was tangled up.
4. Mrs. Frisby knew it was almost moving day because the farmer had started up the tractor.
5. Mrs. Frisby is afraid to visit the owl in the forest because owls eat mice.
6. If Timothy is moved to their summer home the cool evenings could make his illness worse. This affects their plans because if they don't move him, they all will be killed.

LESSON 2

1. A
2. B
3. A
4. Mrs. Frisby was feeling scared, uncertain, and frightened and/or nervous as she walked into the tunnel inside the bush.
5. B
6. Mr. Frisby had died while helping the rats give Dragon a sleeping potion. Mrs. Frisby hadn't known because he had never returned and the rats didn't know her to come and tell her.

LESSON 3

1. When the men caught the rats they had been going to the marketplace to get food scraps.
2. B
3. C
4. Inextricably means unable to become disentangled or untied.
5. A



6. The rats in the control group died of old age - the rats in group A did not because the injections they were getting made them live longer.
7. The rats were unable to escape from the building the first night because the vents were like a maze and they had to search out the correct path so they wouldn't be lost and they were not able to do it in one night.
8. The rats are important to Dr. Schultz because of their high intellect and slow aging, which would show that his experiments had been successful.

#### LESSON 4

1. B
2. A
3. The truck of the Toy Tinker provided the rats with tools the right size for them and so it was very important.
4. A
5. Finding the cave on the Fitzgibbon farm was the first event.
6. Answers will vary.
7. Answers will vary.
8. Answers will vary.

#### LESSON 5

1. C
2. C
3. A
4. Civilization means a relatively high level of cultural and technological development.
5. The people think Dragon, the cat, is lazy because he spends so much time sleeping and doesn't chase the mice or rats.
6. Answers will vary. The shrew didn't want the rats to move Mrs. Frisby's house because she didn't know them and didn't realize that Mrs. Frisby knew them. The shrew distrusted the rats and was trying to protect her friends.
7. Answers will vary.
8. Answers will vary.

