

Town Mouse/Country Mouse

Special Area: Preschool

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I. **ABSTRACT**

This unit will teach children about the Aesop fable “Town Mouse and Country Mouse.” Various skills will be taught from the *Core Knowledge Preschool Sequence* with an emphasis on literature, work habits, orientation in space, oral language, and emerging literacy. Various versions of this story are used.

II. **OVERVIEW**

- A. Storybook Reading and Storytelling
 - 1. Demonstrate an Awareness of Book and Print (Written Language) Organization
 - a. Various versions of “Town Mouse and Country Mouse” (Level II, p. 50)
- B. Work Habits
 - 1. Develop Memorization Skills
 - a. Memorize address (street, city, and state). (Level II, p. 22)
- C. Orientation in Space
 - 1. Use Simple Maps of Familiar Environments
 - a. On a simple map of a familiar space (home, school), mark the locations of specific objects, places, etc. as requested. (Level II, p. 80)
 - b. On a simple map of a familiar space (home, school), mark with arrows or other symbols a path that has been taken from one place to another. (Level II, p. 80)
 - 2. Demonstrate an Understanding of Basic Geographic Concepts
 - a. Identify geographic features and environments by name in “real life”, photos, or drawings: city. (Level II, p. 80)
- D. Oral Language
 - 1. Understand and Use Language to Communicate: Expressing a Point of View and Imagining
 - a. Assume a different role or perspective and express different possibilities, either imaginary or realistic. (Level II, p. 33)
 - 2. Understand and Use Language to Think: Organize, Relate, and Analyze Information (Relating Concepts and Reasoning Logically)
 - a. Identify and name simple opposites: loud/quiet, happy/sad. (Level II, p. 34)
 - b. Sort, classify, and describe objects and pictures according to conceptual categories. (Level II, p. 34)
- E. Emerging Literacy Skills in Reading and Writing
 - 1. Develop an Awareness of Written Matter/Print in Everyday Surroundings and Its Many Uses: Narrating
 - a. Dictate a simple letter, invitation, or thank you note. (Level II, p. 54)

III. **BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE**

- A. For Teachers
 - 1. *Core Knowledge Preschool Sequence*. Charlottesville, VA: Core Knowledge Foundation, 2000. ISBN 1-8905/7-21-6.
 - 2. Brett, Jan. *Town Mouse, Country Mouse*. New York, NY: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1994. ISBN 0-399-22622-2.

3. Cauley, Lorinda Bryan. *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse*. New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1984. ISBN 0-399-21123-3.
4. Craig, Helen. *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 1992. ISBN 1-56402-102-5.
5. Schecter, Ellen. *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse*. New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1995. ISBN 0-553-09740-7.

IV. PREREQUISITE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE FOR STUDENTS

- A. Attend and listen to illustrated picture books.
- B. Describe an illustration.
- C. Use scissors appropriately.
- D. Copy numbers and words on to their own paper.

V. RESOURCES

- A. *Core Knowledge Preschool Sequence*. Charlottesville, VA: Core Knowledge Foundation, 2000. ISBN 1-8905/7-21-6. (Lessons One-Five)
- B. *The Mailbox – The Idea Magazine for Teachers*. Greensboro, NC: The Education Center, 1991. (Lesson One)
- C. Brett, Jan. *Town Mouse, Country Mouse*. New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1994. ISBN 0-399-22622-2. (Lesson Five)
- D. Cauley, Lorinda Bryan. *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse*. New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1984. ISBN 0-399-21123-3. (Lesson Three)
- E. Craig, Helen. *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 1992. ISBN 1-56402-102-5. (Lesson One)
- F. Jones, Carol. *Town Mouse, Country Mouse*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin, 1994. ISBN 0-395-71129-0.
- G. Lanza, Janet R. and Flahive, Lynn K. *Just for Kids- Basic Concepts*. East Moline, IL: Lingui Systems, 2002. ISBN 0-7606-0421-5. (Extra activity—see appendices)
- H. Schecter, Ellen. *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse*. New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1995. ISBN 0-553-09740-7. (Lesson Two)
- I. Stevens, Janet. *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse*. New York, NY: Holiday House Books, 1987. ISBN 0-8234-0633-4.

VI. LESSONS

Lesson One: Country or City (Town)?

- A. Daily Objectives
 1. Make symbols of the country and city mice and place them on a map.
 2. Make a mouse to use throughout the unit.
- B. Grouping
 1. Whole group and small group instructions
- C. Materials and Preparation
 1. *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse* by Helen Craig
 2. Copy of Appendix A for each student (keep for all lessons)
 3. Copy of Appendix B for each student
 4. Copy of Appendix C for each student
 5. Copy of Appendix D for each student copied on gray paper
 6. Copy of Appendix E for each student (in color if possible, use with a photocopied picture of a mouse)
 7. Scissors for each student
 8. Crayons
 9. Books about your closest big city and small town

10. Pictures of the country (farms, fields, streams, etc.)
 11. Pictures of the city (tall buildings, lots of people, crowded streets)
- D. Language of Instruction
1. Teacher: map, city, countryside, across, up, over, down, through, directions, maze, quiet, loud, fable
 2. Students: map, city, countryside, quiet, loud
- E. Procedures/Activities
1. Say, "Today we are going to read the story of two mice. One mouse is from the countryside, and his name is Charlie. The other mouse is from the city, and his name is Tyler."
 2. "Let's talk about the words countryside and city. Let's say them together: countryside, city."
 3. Show the pictures of the country and say, "This is a picture of the countryside." Let's look and see what we can find in this picture." Have children tell you what they see in the picture.
 4. Repeat the above for pictures of the city.
 5. Hold up both pictures. Say, "Which place looks like it is quiet? (country) Which place looks like it is loud?" (city) "Why?" Have children give reasons as to why the country looks quiet and the city looks loud to be sure that they understand the concept of each.
 6. Show the story *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse* by Helen Craig.
 7. "The title of our story is called *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse*, and it is written by Helen Craig. In this story, the city mouse is called a town mouse. Sometimes people use the word city, and sometimes they use the word town."
 8. Read the story with voice inflections. Charlie: slow and deliberate talking. Tyler: fast and snobbish. Narrator: your own voice.
 9. "So Tyler the Town Mouse was happier in the city and Charlie the Country Mouse was happier in the country. Was one mouse right, and the other mouse wrong?" (No) "Is the city better than the country, or is the country better than the city? There is no right or wrong. It just depended on what each mouse liked better."
 10. Give other examples of individuality: preference for different colors, foods, etc. "There isn't one best color or best food, it just depends on what you like."
 11. Divide children into two groups. Group one will cut out pictures from Appendix B and glue them onto Appendix C. Group two will make mouse ears.
 12. With group one, talk about the map (Appendix C) and help children place the symbols from Appendix B on the map. Give them time to color the map and draw items they would find in each area.
 13. With group two, make mouse ears with Appendix D. Keep the ears at school to use each day for various activities.
 14. If there is time, give each child a picture of a mouse and allow him/her to cut out a hat from Appendix E to make the mouse a city mouse or a country mouse.
- F. Go A Little Further
1. For students who have difficulty with the concept of country and city, focus on one area at a time and go into more detail about each area.
 2. For students who excel, allow them to look through magazines and cut out pictures to place on their maps, showing country and city. Allow them to help other students.
- G. Assessment/Evaluation
1. Use Appendix A, Unit Assessment to record question #1.

Lesson Two: Where Do I Live?

- A. Daily Objective
 - 1. Begin to memorize address (city, state).
- B. Grouping
 - 1. Whole group and small group instruction
- C. Materials and Preparation
 - 1. *Town Mouse and Country Mouse* by Ellen Schecter
 - 2. Copy of Appendix A for each student
 - 3. Copy of Appendix F for each child, with city filled in by teacher. (*Note: The state of Colorado is used in this example. Teachers should use an outline of their state and fill in the city/town where the child lives.*)
 - 4. Scissors
 - 5. One house from Appendix G for each child
 - 6. Crayons
 - 7. Mouse puppets
 - 8. Map of United States
- D. Language of Instruction
 - 1. Teacher: memorize, remember, address
 - 2. Student: address
- E. *Procedures/Activities*
 - 1. Show the story that was read in Lesson One. Review the title, character names, city (town), country, and a brief discussion of what happened.
 - 2. Say, "Today we are going to read another story called *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse*. This story has some parts that are the same and some parts that are different. Let's see if we can find out what is the same and different in this story."
 - 3. Read *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse* by Ellen Schecter.
 - 4. Use voices similar to those used in Lesson One but a bit higher since the characters are female in this version.
 - 5. When finished, talk about the differences in the stories (male/female characters, different experiences, etc.)
 - 6. "Even though some parts of the story were different, it was still the same story we read yesterday. There were two mice that went to visit each other's homes. Each one didn't like where the other mouse lived, so they went home to live where they were comfortable."
 - 7. Show pages 8-9. Re-read those pages. Ask, "When the country mouse invited the town mouse to her home, how did she know where to send the letter?"
 - 8. "When we want people to write us letters or if we're lost and want to go home, we need to know our address. Our address tells us where our house is."
 - 9. "Today we are going to learn part of our address by learning what city and state we live in."
 - 10. Give each child a copy of Appendix F, a pencil, one house from Appendix G, and crayons.
 - 11. Tell students that the first word on their paper is the city where they live. Have students trace the city name on their paper. As they are tracing, have them keep repeating the city that they are tracing.
 - 12. Repeat the process for the state.
 - 13. After they are finished tracing, have them cut out their state.
 - 14. Ask children to think of the color of their houses and to color their paper houses the same color.

15. Show them how to glue their house on the star that shows them where their city is on the map.
 16. Have children bring their states to the carpet. Ask them to look at their state. Say, "Which do you see is bigger, your city or your state?" (State) Show a United States map and talk about how the shapes on the map show us different states. Ask students if they can find their state on the map.
 17. Throughout the day, ask children to tell you their city and state.
- F. Go A Little Further
1. For students who have difficulty, focus only on city or state through different activities.
 2. For students who excel, have them find their city on a state map.
- G. Assessment/Evaluation
1. Use Appendix A to record question #2.

Lesson Three: Where Do I Live? – Part 2

- A. Daily Objective
1. Continue to memorize address (city, state); add street and zip code.
- B. Grouping
1. Small group instruction
- C. Materials and Preparation
1. *Town Mouse and Country Mouse* by Lorinda Bryan Cauley
 2. Copy of Appendix A for each child
 3. Copy of Appendix H for class
 4. Chart paper
 5. Marker
 6. Pre-printed addresses for each student
- D. Language of Instruction
1. Teacher: memorize, remember, address
 2. Student: address
- E. Procedures/Activities
1. Say, "Today we are going to read another story about two mice. Like the other stories we read, the story is the same but some parts of the story are different."
 2. Read *Town Mouse and Country Mouse*.
 3. Take a few moments to discuss some similarities and differences in the stories.
 4. Refer to page 1. Say, "Remember yesterday, we talked about the two mice in the story and we learned that one mouse wrote a letter to another mouse. In this story today, the same thing happened. Who remembers how people can send us letters?" (By using our address)
 5. "That's right, we use our address so others can write to us and also to help ourselves if we get lost."
 6. "Yesterday, we learned the city and state that we lived in. Who remembers our city and state?"
 7. "Which is bigger, our city or our state?" (State) Hold up sample from yesterday showing the state outline and city. "That's right, our state is bigger."
 8. "Today we are going to learn what street we live on and add it together with our city and state."
 9. Give example by using your address. Write the number and street name on the paper as you say it.
 10. After you write your city and street name, show the students how to write the city and state underneath it.

11. Divide students into small groups of two or three. One group will work with the teacher, one group with the aide, and the other groups will work at various centers.
 12. The students with the teacher and with the aide will begin memorizing their addresses. Start with reading each address to the student while you point at each number or word.
 13. Then, have the students trace their address that has been pre-printed on a piece of paper. Make sure that you have written their addresses in an appropriate format.
Example: John Smith
 1234 Flower Court
 Denver, Colorado
 80003
 14. As they are tracing it, have them say as much of their addresses as they can. Repetition is key to this activity. The more they say it, the better it will stick in their memories.
 15. When they are finished tracing, have them copy their addresses onto their house cutouts (Appendix H). Show them how to format it as in the example above.
 16. It is more important at this stage that they can memorize the address and be able to tell it to you. If a child becomes frustrated because of an inability to write the address, encourage him/her to keep trying as much as possible but realize that some children may not yet be at this stage depending on when in the year you decide to teach this unit.
 17. As each group finishes, repeat the process with the remaining groups.
 18. Keep a list of addresses with you during the day and periodically ask the students if they remember their address. Make it a “low pressure” situation! Encourage the students to come and tell you their addresses when they feel they are ready.
 19. Send the houses home with the students along with a copy of Appendix I (letter to parents).
- F. Go A Little Further
1. For students who have difficulty, give them the opportunity to say their address into a tape player repeatedly. Then give them time to hear their address during center time. Sometimes, children memorize better by hearing their own voices.
 2. For students who excel, give them the opportunity to write their addresses on real envelopes.
- G. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Use Appendix A to record question #3. If more time is needed, record question #3 with Lesson Four.

Lesson Four: Where Are My Manners?

- A. Daily Objectives
1. Dictate a simple invitation or thank you note.
 2. Assume a different role or perspective and express different possibilities, either imaginary or realistic.
- B. Grouping
1. Small group instruction
- C. Materials and Preparation
1. Two or three different versions of *Town Mouse and Country Mouse*
 2. A copy of Appendix J for each child
 3. Chart paper
 4. Markers (three different colors)
 5. Pencil

6. Envelopes
 7. Stamps
- D. Language of Instruction
1. Teacher: dictate, letter, write, thank you
 2. Student: thank you
- E. Procedures/Activities
1. Review addresses with students.
 2. Say, "Today we are going to pretend we are either the country mouse or the city mouse. If you made a country mouse puppet then you will write a thank you letter to the city mouse. If you made a city mouse, then you will write a thank you letter to the country mouse."
 3. "What are some things the country mouse could say thank you for in his letter?" (Inviting him to the city, feeding him different food, saving him from the dogs, etc.)
 4. "What are some things the city mouse could say thank you for in his letter?" (Inviting him to the country, showing him hard work, showing the sunset, etc.)
 5. "When we write a thank you letter, we write it this way." Show the following on chart paper (use a different color marker for each section):

Dear _____,
 Thank you for _____
 Sincerely,

6. Read the letter as you write it.
 7. Ask students for suggestions to fill in each area. If Hannah makes a suggestion, use her name under "Sincerely". Use a pencil so you can easily erase after a child gives a suggestion.
 8. Tell the children that you will be calling them over to dictate a letter to you. Tell them that "dictate" means they will tell you what to write, and you will write it down.
 9. Throughout the day, call children over to dictate their thank you letters. Ask children to sign their own names in the appropriate area.
 10. After they have dictated a letter, fold it and place it in an envelope. Have the children tell you their address as you write it on the envelope. Allow children to place the stamp on the envelope in the right spot (with your help!).
 11. After all letters are finished, walk to a mailbox to mail them. If that is not possible, make a mailbox out of construction paper ahead of time so the children can put their letters inside.
- F. Go A Little Further
1. For students who have difficulty, you may need to give them ideas as to what to write or remind them to whom they are writing. If necessary, review a version of the story. You can also have them choose pre-made pictures of the mice (for "Dear _____"), choose pictures that would show activities the different mice did (for "Thank you for _____"), and draw a picture of themselves to "sign" their names.
 2. For students who excel, allow them to write their own letters, following the same format. Allow them to write their addresses on the envelopes as well.
- G. Assessment/Evaluation
1. Use Appendix A to record questions #3 and #4.

Lesson Five: "There's No Place Like Home"

- A. Daily Objective
 - 1. Mark, with arrows or other symbols, a path that has been taken from one place to another.
- B. Grouping
 - 1. Whole group instruction
- C. Materials and Preparation
 - 1. *Town Mouse, Country Mouse* by Jan Brett
 - 2. Mouse tracks cut out on gray or brown paper
 - 3. Other “footprints” from other animals, copied on different colored paper and placed on the floor making a path. Make it as easy or difficult as you think your students can handle. (You can copy the pattern on brown paper if your students are capable of differentiating beyond color.)
 - 4. Large boxes painted to look like “skyscrapers”, small boxes painted to look like “barns”
 - 5. Various items found in the country and city, placed with the appropriate boxes
 - 6. Stapler
 - 7. A few blueberries for each child
- D. Language of Instruction
 - 1. Teacher: city, countryside, path
 - 2. Students: city, countryside
- E. Procedures/Activities
 - 1. Read *Town Mouse, Country Mouse* by Jan Brett.
 - 2. After the story is over, ask children how the country mouse felt when he got back to his home. (Happy, relieved, etc.)
 - 3. Relate this feeling to the children by giving examples of how they feel after coming home from a long trip, or when they are away from their parents for a while. Ask them how they feel when they get back home again and what their favorite part of home is. (Side note: This is a PRIME opportunity to get a feeling of a child’s home life. Be sure to take notes of any concerns.) Make sure to share the positive answers with parents—they love to hear them!
 - 4. Say, “We are going to pretend to be the Country Mouse from our story and we are trying to find our way home. The only way we can figure out how to get home is to follow the path with the mouse tracks that look like this.” (Show example.)
 - 5. “Let’s start in the city. Who can tell me where our city is?” (Where the tall buildings are)
 - 6. Walk over to the “city”.
 - 7. “Who remembers what the country mouse was like, was he loud or quiet?” (Quiet)
 - 8. “That’s right, so let’s be quiet as mice as we follow the path. We don’t want an owl to find us!”
 - 9. Quietly tiptoe along the path, following the mouse prints. When you get to a crossroads, have the children look to see which prints they should follow.
 - 10. Follow the mouse prints all the way to the barn. When you get there, have a celebration by eating some “fresh picked” blueberries!
 - 11. Keep animal prints available as a center to allow the children to make their own paths.
- F. Go A Little Further
 - 1. For students who have difficulty, make different colored prints instead of all one color, or use shapes instead of mouse prints.

2. For students who excel, allow them to work on various levels of paper mazes during center time.
- G. Assessment/Evaluation
1. Use Appendix A to record questions #7 and #8.

VII. CULMINATING ACTIVITY

- A. Mouse Tea Party
1. Use boxes from Lesson Five to create a country community and a city community.
 2. Use mouse ears from Lesson Five and face paint to transform children into little mice. They may choose city or country.
 3. Have children invite their country or city mouse friends to join them for “tea”.
 4. Serve juice and crackers with cheese. (Cut cheese into Mickey Mouse shapes if desired!)
 5. Have children act out the types of activities they would show their friend if they lived in the country or city.
 6. Keep the “buildings” up during the day to allow children to use it as an additional center.
 7. After the tea party, read the Lorinda Brown Cauley version of *Town Mouse and Country Mouse*.
 8. Use Appendix A to record question #9 and any other questions that have not been answered.

VIII. HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS

- A. Appendix A: Unit Assessment
- B. Appendix B: Country/City Symbols
- C. Appendix C: Map of Country/City
- D. Appendix D: Mouse Ears
- E. Appendix E: Hats
- F. Appendix F: State Pattern
- G. Appendix G: Small House Cut Outs
- H. Appendix H: Large House Cut Out
- I. Appendix I: Letter to Parents
- J. Appendix J: Thank You Template
- K. Appendix K: Tea Party Invitations
- L. Appendix L: Additional Activities

IX. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- B. *Core Knowledge Preschool Sequence*. Charlottesville, VA: Core Knowledge Foundation, 2000. ISBN 1-8905/7-21-6.
- C. *The Mailbox – The Idea Magazine for Teachers*. Greensboro, NC: The Education Center, 1991.
- D. Brett, Jan. *Town Mouse, Country Mouse*. New York, NY: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1994. ISBN 0-399-22622-2.
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Appendix A

Unit Assessment

1. Student is able to point to city pictures and country pictures when asked: Yes / No / Partially

Both – Yes	1 area – Partially	0 areas – No
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2. Student is able to locate his/her state on a United States Map: Yes / No / Partially

3. Student is able to recite address including house number, street, city, and state: Yes / No / Partially

All – Yes	3 out of 4 – Partially	2 or less – No
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4. Student is able to dictate a thank you letter or invitation: Yes / No / Partially
 - **Thank you letter includes "Dear _____," "thank you for _____," and ending.**
 - **Invitation includes "Dear _____," "Please come to _____," and ending.**

5. Student is able to recite the title of a version that has been read: Yes / No / Partially

6. Student shows understanding of a character by acting the part: Yes / No / Partially
 - **Town Mouse: Acts "high and mighty", doesn't like country food, etc.**
 - **Country Mouse: Acts humble, scared of city animals, etc.**

7. Student demonstrates the difference between loud/quiet, happy/sad: Yes / No / Partially

2 sets – Yes	1 set – Partially	0 sets – No
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8. Student demonstrates ability to follow a path with given criteria: Yes / No / Partially

9. Student shows ability to "summarize" the story by mentioning main points*: Yes / No / Partially

*Use Cauley version – check if student includes in summarization:

 - Country Mouse wrote letter to invite Town Mouse _____
 - They went for a walk and gathered food _____
 - Town Mouse complained, invited Country Mouse _____
 - They walked to town and went into the house _____
 - Ate lots of food from a big table _____
 - Dogs came in and scared Country Mouse _____
 - Country Mouse went home _____

6 or 7 – Yes	4-5 – Partially	4 or less – No
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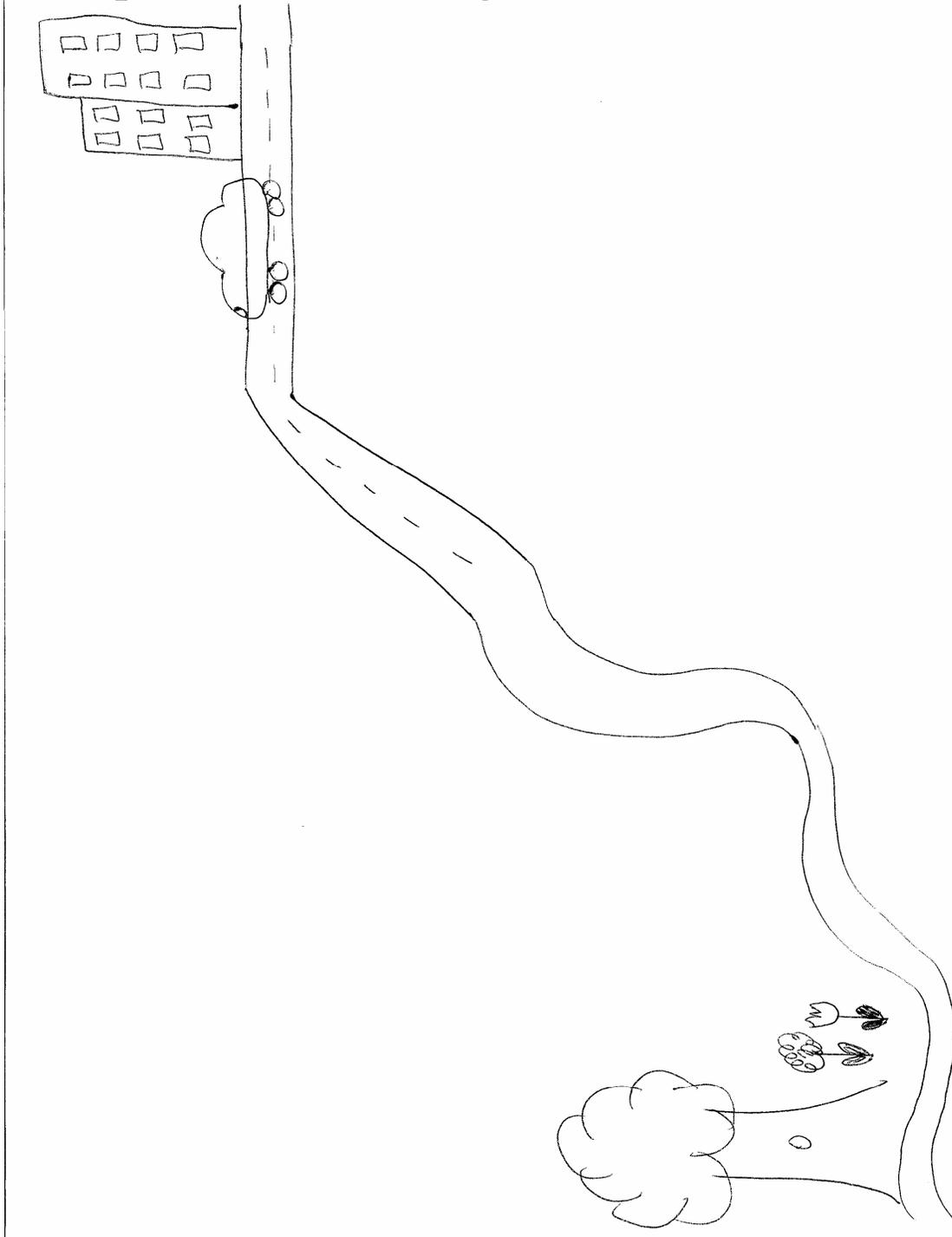
Appendix B
Country/City Symbols



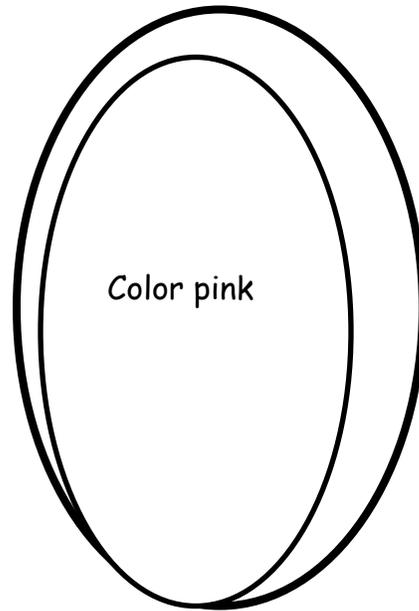
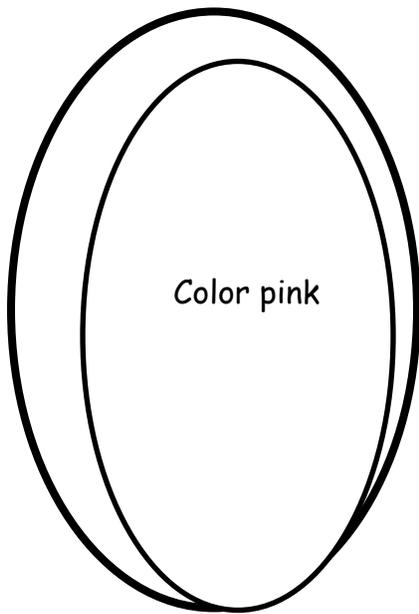
Appendix C

Teachers should use a map that they create that shows a local city and local countryside.

A simplified hand drawing is fine.



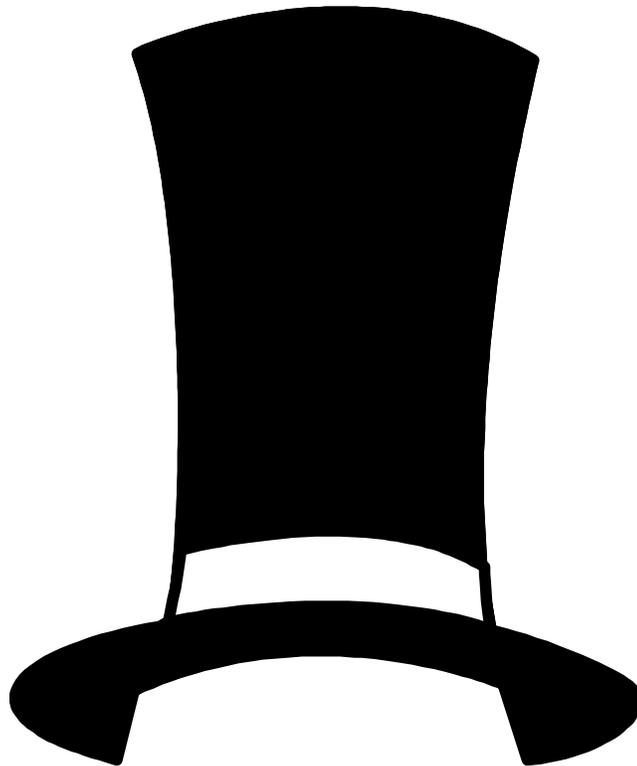
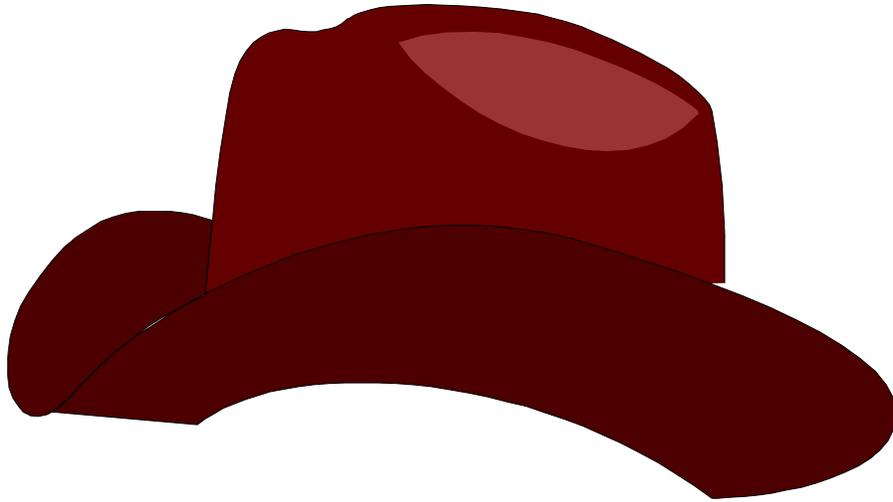
Appendix D
Mouse Ears



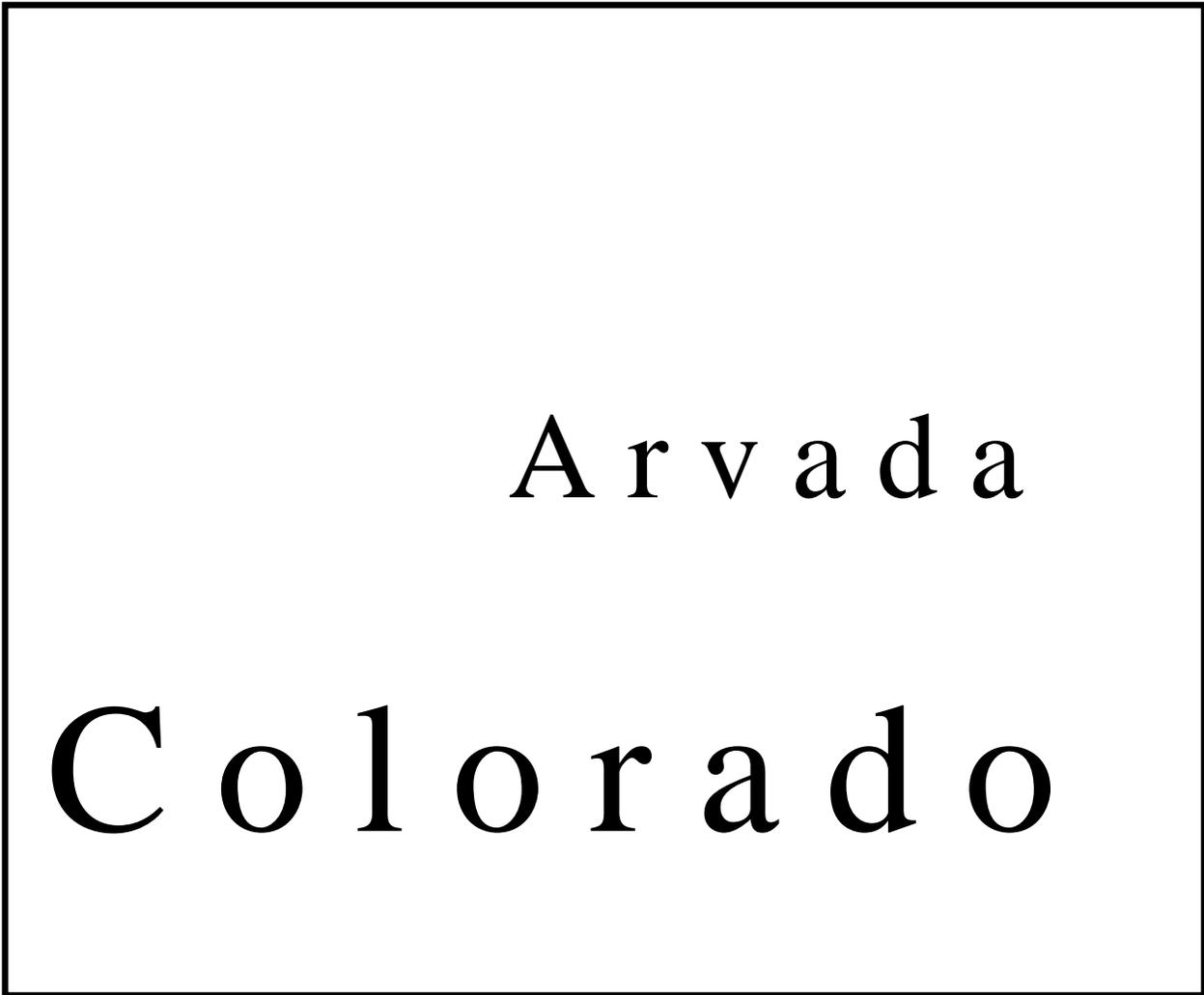
Use 9" x 12" or 9" x 17" paper to make headbands.

Appendix E

Mouse Hats



Appendix F

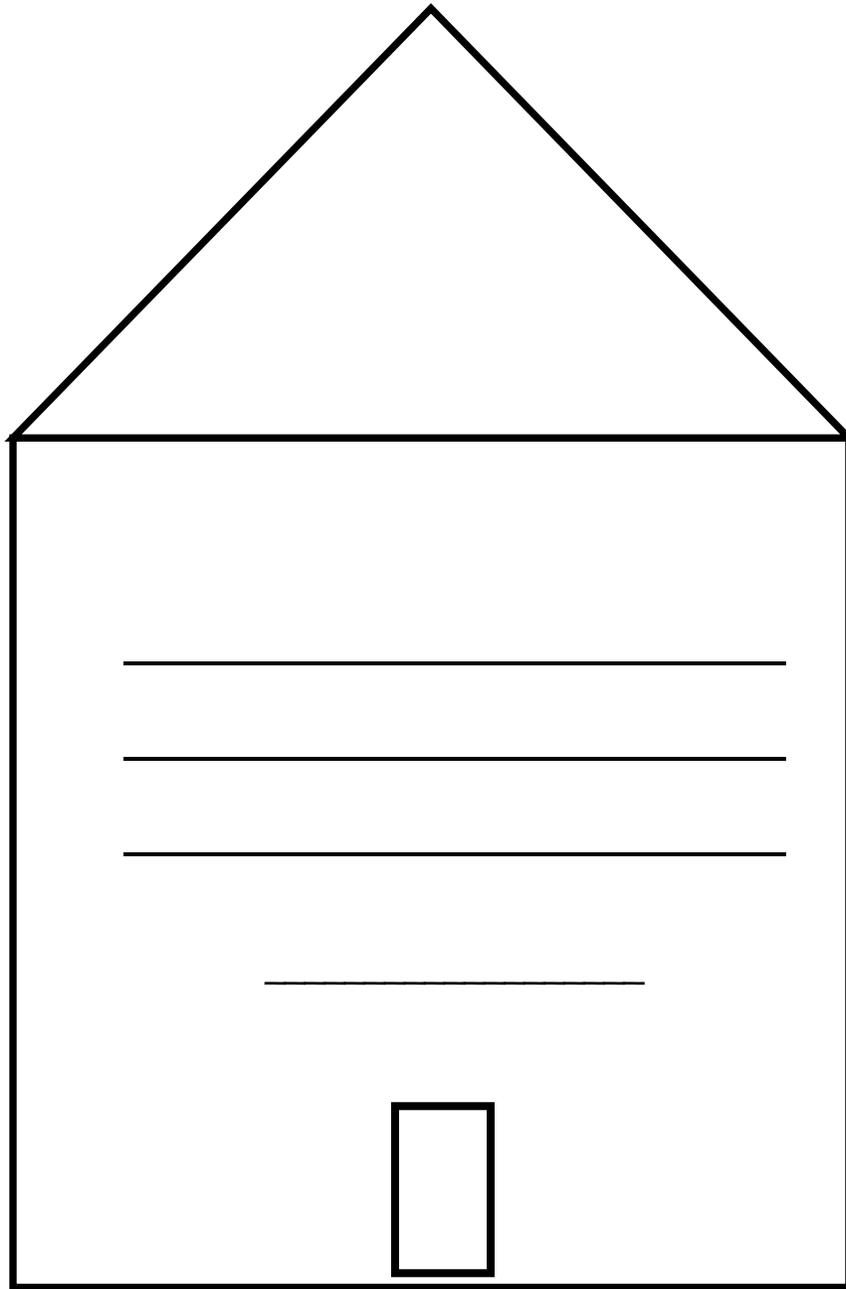


Teachers should use copies of their state shape and change the city and state appropriately.

Appendix G



Appendix H



Appendix I

Dear Parents,

This week, as one of our skills, we are learning to memorize our addresses! Please work with your child at home on memorizing.

It is important that they memorize the entire address, including house number, street, city, state, and zip code.

We will have the children write letters to themselves this week to give them the opportunity to write their addresses and receive letters!

Thank you for your help!

Sincerely,

Dear Parents,

This week, as one of our skills, we are learning to memorize our addresses! Please work with your child at home on memorizing.

It is important that they memorize the entire address, including house number, street, city, state, and zip code.

We will have the children write letters to themselves this week to give them the opportunity to write their addresses and receive letters!

Thank you for your help!

Sincerely,

Appendix J



Thank
You

Dear _____,

Thank you for _____

_____.

Sincerely,

**Appendix K
Tea Party Invitation**

Dear _____,

Please join me for a Mouse Tea Party today!

I hope to see you there.

Your Friend,



Appendix L

Additional Activity Ideas

- Have a "Country/City Day" and have children come to school dressed up as a country mouse or city mouse.
- Take a field trip to a country or city area near you.
- Do a lesson on magnets and talk about how "opposites attract".
- Read other versions of the story. (I.e., *Johnny Town Mouse* by Beatrix Potter)
- Talk about the phrase "The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence" with the version by Jan Brett.
- Make your doorway into a "mouse hole" for children to walk into the classroom!

