Chapters 1-3

Chapter 1 Vocabulary

bellboy: n. A hotel worker who carries travelers’ luggage

croquet: n. A game in which players use mallets to hit balls through metal

wickets

vacancy: n. An opening

dreadful: adj. Frightening; very unpleasant

threadbare: adj. Worn down; shabby

Chapter 1 Comprehension Questions

1. How are you and Keith alike? How are you and Keith different? Support your

answers with specific examples.

2. How does Mrs. Gridley feel about the Mountain View Inn?

3. Why does Mr. Gridley refuse to leave the Mountain View Inn?

4. How is Keith’s opinion of mice different than his mother’s? How do you know?

Chapter 2 Vocabulary

despair: n. Hopelessness

chromium: n. A hard, shiny, metallic element used to harden steel and protect it

from corrosion

jauntily: adv. With self-confidence and ease

Chapter 2 Comprehension Questions

1. Is this story an example of fiction or nonfiction? Why?

2. What are some things Ralph’s mother worries about?

3. How does Ralph feel about the motorcycle?

4. Why does Ralph’s mother think Ralph is reckless?

Chapter 3 Vocabulary

incinerator: n. A furnace used for burning garbage to ashes

remorseful: adj. Feeling regret for past sins

venturing: v. Going on an adventure; taking a risk

tourist: n. A person who travels for pleasure

predicament: n. A difficult or troublesome situation

Chapter 3 Comprehension Questions

1. Why does Ralph feel remorseful?

2. What have you learned about Ralph? Make a list of his qualities, or write them

in

a character web.

3. List some events from this chapter that could not happen in real life.

4. Predict will happen next in the book.

Write a Review\* -- Have your student write a review of the Mountain View Inn to

be published in the travel section of a newspaper. Begin with a description of

the hotel. Help your student review chapter 1 for descriptive words and phrase to use. The review should explain why readers should or should not stay at the

hotel. Have student include at least two reasons to support their point of view.

Provide reviews from travel sections of newspapers to be used as models.

Create an Advertisement\* -- Have your student create an advertisement for the

Mountain View Inn. Look at advertisements in a newspaper and make a list of

the qualities they share, such as illustrations, photographs, descriptions and

testimonials from satisfied customers. Then, help your student gather

information about the hotel from Chapter 1. The ad should include a brief

description of the hotel’s best qualities and imaginary quotations from happy

customers. Have student illustrate the ad with an appealing illustration or

photograph of the hotel.

Businesses (Hotel) – Mrs. Gridley is not at all impressed with the Mountain View

Inn. Discuss with your child some of the qualities you would look for in a nice

hotel, maybe making a list as you go. You would want it to be clean and roomy,

a comfortable temperature, quiet, and easily accessible from major highways.

You would look for someplace with quick, friendly service, and probably good

food if you don’t plan on leaving the hotel often. Would you want a hotel with

“dust mice” under the beds, or real mice hiding in knotholes? Most likely not. Is

having cable television, telephone, or computer access important to you?

Maybe your children would enjoy playing hotel, with parents or grandparents

for the guests. The child could write an advertisement for his hotel, including all

the selling points, put room numbers on the bedroom doors, and play bellboy

or maid. Let him have fun using his imagination.

Stereotypes – Keith’s opinion of mice is very different than Mrs. Gridley’s. While

Keith actually looks forward to finding a mouse, not a bit afraid, his mother is

terrified of the little creatures. Does your child understand what a stereotype is?

Oftentimes, we look at a person, believing that he possesses certain

characteristics that typify a particular group. This is sometimes based on

personal experience, and sometimes based on things we’ve been told by others.

Maybe Mrs. Gridley had a bad experience with mice, possibly having one in her

house, eating food from the pantry or chewing holes in clothing, causing her to

dislike all mice. Or maybe she just heard horror stories from others about the

damage done by mice. Ask your child if it is fair of Mrs. Gridley to dislike Ralph

solely because of what other mice may have done. How would your child feel if

he was disliked just for being a child, based on some bad acts other children

have done. I’m sure he would find it unfair. Children, like Keith, have often times

not experienced enough in life to develop their own stereotypes. While they will

learn that often times stereotypes do fit, the right and fair thing to do is to give

everyone the benefit of the doubt, and to like or dislike the person on their own

merits.

Emotions – In chapter 2 there were many emotions felt by Ralph i.e. terror, hope,

joy, despair, eagerness, excitement, curiosity, and impatience. Discuss these

emotions with your child, and have him act out the various emotions.

Personification – Personification is a literary device in which the author elevates

an animal, object, or idea to the level of a human, in that it takes on the

characteristics of a human. In The Mouse and the Motorcycle Ralph the mouse is

personified. He is given a name, a personality, human type emotions and

speech, and even clothing. Can your child think of any other famous mice, which

have been personified in any other stories? Some possibilities are Mickey Mouse,

Stuart Little, Anatole (from the Eve Titus series), or Angelina the ballerina.

Emergencies – Ralph got himself in to quite a predicament, falling into the

trashcan. Ask your child if he has ever been in a predicament such as this, maybe

getting stuck somewhere, or lost in a crowd. Explain how important it is to keep

your cool and think clearly. How did Ralph handle this emergency? Well, he

went from being annoyed, to scared and panicked, to trying to figure out an

escape plan. Ask your child if there was anyway to prevent this from happening?

If Ralph had listened to his mother from the beginning…