



Challenge Novels

Grade 3



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Background Information

The following facts might help you better understand this book:

- This story takes place in the mid-1800s, roughly between 1835–1865. At this time in history, women were expected to care for the home and children as their full-time jobs. Women were not allowed to vote. However, groups of women worked to improve women’s rights during this time, including the right to vote.
- In the mid-1800s, people traveled mostly by boat, stagecoach, horseback, or foot. Stagecoach and wagons transported people and their things across the land. Travel was slow and bumpy because roads were made of dirt.

WEEK 1 Think about It

Before reading *Riding Freedom*, think about the following questions:

- How do you show respect to others?
- How do you show respect to animals?
- Is respect something that is earned or given? Why?
- Who are people you respect? Why?

Discuss your thoughts with others during Workshop. As you discuss *Riding Freedom*, think about these ideas as you read. Post any new ideas or questions about Respect on the **Concept/Question Board**.

Read about It

VOCABULARY Review the following vocabulary words and definitions from Chapters 1–2 of *Riding Freedom*.

orphanage (or’ fə nij) *n.* a place where children without parents live together until they are adopted or grow up (Chapter 1)

nature (nā’ chûr) *n.* the way a person usually acts or thinks; a person’s character (Chapter 1)

pestered (pes’ tûrd) *v.* form of the verb **pester**: to bother someone by asking many questions, repeating something, or interrupting (Chapter 1)

pasture (pas chûr’) *n.* a place with grass where animals eat and rest (Chapter 1)

stall (staul) *n.* a gated place inside a barn for an animal (Chapter 1)

filly (fil’ ē) *n.* a young female horse (Chapter 2)

Write an ending to each sentence.

1. The couple went to the orphanage to...

2. My nature is...

3. I pestered my teacher about...

4. In the pasture, I saw...

5. Inside each stall was...

6. I would name a filly _____ because...

COMPREHENSION Read Chapters 1–2 of *Riding Freedom*. As you read, answer the following questions to check your understanding. Write your answers on the lines.

7. In the first chapter, Vern tells Charlotte, “That boy is full of no respect for horses.” What story details support this statement? (Chapter 1)

8. Give examples from the story of how Charlotte shows compassion. Explain how Charlotte's actions lead to her decision to leave. (Chapters 1, 2)

9. How does the illustration of Charlotte and Hayward help you understand where they are or how they are feeling? (Chapter 1)

Wrap It Up

At the end of the week, review the vocabulary and questions that have been posted on the **Concept/Question Board**. Write a prediction about what will happen to Charlotte.

WEEK 2 Read about It

VOCABULARY Review the following vocabulary words and definitions from Chapters 3–4 of *Riding Freedom*.

intentions (in' ten shənz) *n.* plural form of **intention**: a plan; what you want to do (Chapter 3)

strained (strānd) *v.* form of the verb **strain**: to look hard at something that is difficult to see (Chapter 3)

makeshift (māk' shift) *adj.* made from available materials and not expected to last (Chapter 3)

livery (liv' ə rē') *n.* the place where horses for coaches eat, sleep, and rest between drives (Chapter 4)

droning (drō' ning) *v.* form of the verb **drone**: to speak in a boring way (Chapter 4)

destinations (des' ti nā' shənz) *n.* plural form of **destination**: the final stop of travel (Chapter 4)

Read each item, and then answer the question.

1. Chuck has plans for being outdoors this weekend. What activities would fit his intentions?

2. Ellen strained to see her family in the crowd. What reasons might make her strain to see?

3. Bo forgot his umbrella and it started to rain. What could he use as a makeshift umbrella?

4. The coach driver took the horses to the livery. What might the horses expect in the livery?

5. The speaker's voice was low and constant. It was hard to pay attention. What might you do if a speaker is droning on and on?

6. The Smith family considered many destinations for spring break. What destinations would you suggest?

COMPREHENSION Read Chapters 3–4 of *Riding Freedom*. As you read, answer the following questions to check your understanding. Write your answers on the lines.

7. What does Charlotte do to change her appearance? What story details support your answer? (Chapter 3)

8. What does Charlotte do to let Vern know she makes it to Concord? Do her actions show appreciation and respect? Why or why not?

9. How does Charlotte feel once she makes it to Worcester? Does her plan work? Find details in the story to support your ideas. (Chapter 4)

Wrap It Up

At the end of the week, review the vocabulary and any additional questions you have about the story. Write a prediction about what will happen next to Charlotte. Give details from the story to support your prediction.

WEEK 3 Read about It

VOCABULARY Review the following vocabulary words and definitions from Chapters 5–6 of *Riding Freedom*.

scrawny (skraun' ē) *adj.* very thin or skinny (Chapter 5)

veered (vērd) *v.* form of the verb **veer**: to turn suddenly while driving or steering (Chapter 5)

exhilaration (eks' il ə rā' shən) *n.* a feeling of great excitement and joy (Chapter 5)

reputation (rep' ū tā' shən) *n.* a set of actions a person is known for (Chapter 5)

pitiful (pit' i fəl) *adj.* in a sad way; in need of love and care (Chapters 5, 6)

maneuvered (mə nōō' vûrd) *v.* form of the verb **maneuver**: to steer or drive with skill, often around some things (Chapter 6)

Read each item. Then circle the example that illustrates the vocabulary word.

1. Which one is scrawny: an underfed stray dog or a well-fed hamster?
2. Which one veered: a car going straight or a truck going to the right?
3. Which one would give a sense of exhilaration: a train ride or a roller coaster ride?
4. Which one would create a reputation: getting first place several times or winning one race?
5. Which one is pitiful: a shirt with a stain on it or a worn teddy bear missing an eye?
6. Which one maneuvered: a driver stopping or a driver going around traffic?

COMPREHENSION Read Chapters 5–6 of *Riding Freedom*. As you read, answer the following questions to check your understanding. Write your answers on the lines.

7. Do you think Ebenezer knows Charley is really a girl? Why or why not? Find details from the story to support your opinion. (Chapter 5)

8. How is Ebenezer generous to Charlotte? (Chapter 5)

9. What does Charlotte do when Mr. Millshark is a passenger? How does she feel? Why? (Chapter 6)

Wrap It Up

At the end of the week, review the vocabulary and any additional questions you have about the story. Write a question you have about the story or your wonderings about a character.

WEEK 4 Read about It

VOCABULARY Review the following vocabulary words and definitions from Chapters 7–8 of *Riding Freedom*.

enthusiasm (en thōō' zē a' zəm) *n.* a feeling of great energy and excitement (Chapter 7)

defeated (di' fē təd) *adj.* to look beaten or on the losing side (Chapter 7)

prospect (pros' pekt) *n.* the possibility of something good happening (Chapter 7)

temporary (tem' pə râr' ē) *adj.* lasting only a short time; not permanent (Chapter 7)

confusion (kon fū' zhən) *n.* a scene in which things are going every direction (Chapter 7)

reluctantly (rē' luk' tənt lē) *adv.* in a way that is unsure or not willing, but then gives in (Chapter 8)

Write an ending to each sentence.

1. I have enthusiasm for...

2. She looked defeated when...

3. I am happy about the prospect that...

4. This job is temporary because...

5. In the confusion, I lost...

6. My mom reluctantly let me...

COMPREHENSION Read Chapters 7–8 of *Riding Freedom*. As you read, answer the following questions to check your understanding. Write your answers on the lines.

7. Why does Charlotte decide to go to California? Which reason is most important to her? (Chapter 7)

8. Why does Ebenezer show such devotion to Charlotte? (Chapter 7)

9. What big event happens to Charlotte soon after she arrives in California? What does she do next? (Chapter 8)

Wrap It Up

At the end of the week, review the vocabulary and any additional questions you have about the story. Write a prediction about what will happen next to Charlotte. Give details from the story to support your prediction.

WEEK 5 Read about It

VOCABULARY Review the following vocabulary words and definitions from Chapter 9 to the end of *Riding Freedom*.

surveyed (sûr' vād) *v.* form of the verb **survey**: to look all over carefully (Chapter 9)

substantial (sub' stan shəl) *adj.* having a large amount of something (Chapter 9)

contented (kən ten' təd) *adj.* happy and not wanting of anything (Chapter 9)

registered (rej' i stûrd') *v.* form of the verb **register**: to sign up in an official way (Chapter 10)

polls (pōlz) *n.* the place where people vote (Chapter 10)

qualified (kwol' i fid') *adj.* having the necessary skills or knowledge (Chapter 10)

Read each item, and then answer the question.

1. Samuel is going someplace new. What might he survey?

2. Julia collects seashells. When would she have a substantial collection?

3. Luis is happiest when he is surrounded by family. What might he do to feel contented?

4. Hazel wants to sign up for swim lessons. Where should she register?

5. William is registered to vote. What should he know before going to the polls?

6. Mr. Jones will be our soccer coach. What would make him qualified to coach?

COMPREHENSION Read Chapter 9 to the end of *Riding Freedom*. As you read, answer the following questions to check your understanding. Write your answers on the lines.

7. Why does Charlotte buy the small parcel of land west of her property? What does that action tell us about Charlotte? (Chapter 9)

8. Why does Charlotte want to vote? Use story details to support your answer. (Chapter 10)

9. Do you think men in the voting line will respect Charlotte's opinion if they know she is a woman? Why or why not? Find details in the story to support your ideas. (Chapter 10)

Wrap It Up

At the end of the week, review the vocabulary and any final questions you have about the story. Think about how Charlotte showed courage in *Riding Freedom*. Describe a time when Charlotte showed courage that earned the respect of others.

WEEK 6 Talk about It

COMPREHENSION Answer the following questions to check your understanding. Write your answers on the lines.

1. How does Charlotte earn the respect of others?

2. Do you think Charlotte has integrity? Why or why not?

3. When Charlotte talks to the woman about the right to vote in chapter 7, Charlotte tells her “You are much braver than me.” Do you think this is true? Why or why not?

Write about It

Choose a written response to *Riding Freedom* from the following list.

- Create a poster or flier selling seats on a stage coach driven by Charley. It could be for the east coast line or west coast line. Be sure to tell why Charley is the most qualified driver!
- Write a letter from Charlotte to Hayward or Ebenezer telling about the ranch she buys.

Use the following steps to write:

PREWRITING Write your ideas for writing in note form. Think about the audience of the writing—whether it is a person from the 1800s wanting a stage driver or the person to whom Charlotte is writing. Think about the purpose of the writing—to sell stage coach rides or to tell news to a friend. Put ideas that are alike together and cross out ideas that do not belong or are repeats.

DRAFTING Write a draft poster or letter. Be sure to include all the details from your notes. Get all your ideas written into sentences. If you are unsure of spelling or grammar, just circle or underline each instance and keep writing.

REVISING Reread your draft. Does it make sense? Should some details be rearranged? Would additional details add something to your writing? If you are making a poster or flier, consider adding a large heading to get people’s attention. If you are writing a letter, make sure you have all the parts of a friendly letter, such as date, greeting, and signature.

EDITING Read through your revised draft. Look for spelling errors, missing punctuation, or grammatical mistakes.

PUBLISHING Make a clean copy of your edited draft. Add a picture or color to make it more interesting, if you wish.

Wrap It Up

At the end of the week, share and discuss your writing with others. Discuss any final questions you have about the story or the theme of respect. List any new ideas or questions about Respect you learned from reading, discussing, or writing about *Riding Freedom*.



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The Mouse and the Motorcycle

Background Information

The following information might help you better understand this book:

- Beverly Cleary has written many books for children, including several featuring Ralph Mouse. When she started school, she was a struggling reader. By third grade, she was a much better reader and went to the library often to find more books to read. The librarian at her school suggested that she write her own stories one day.
- Mice live in nests close to a food source. They do not travel far from their home, and usually move fast and stay away from open areas. Many animals like to eat mice, including cats, foxes, snakes, owls, and hawks.

WEEK 1 Think about It

Before reading *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*, think about the following questions:

- What are the wild animals and habitats like where you live?
- What problems might occur if too many animals live in a habitat?
- How do wild animals and people live together in a habitat?
- Do you think wild animals cause more harm or good when they live with humans? Why?

Discuss your thoughts with others during Workshop. As you read *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*, think about the ideas you discussed. Post any new ideas or questions about Animals and Their Habitats on the **Concept/Question Board**.

Read about It

VOCABULARY Review the following vocabulary words and definitions from Chapters 1–3 of *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*.

perplexed (pûr' plekst) *adj.* confused and not sure of the truth (Chapter 1)

eagerly (ē' gûr lē) *adv.* in a way that is excited or interested (Chapter 2)

reckless (rek' les) *adj.* without thinking about dangers; causing safety problems (Chapter 2)

craved (krāv'd) *v.* form of the verb **crave**: to have a strong desire for (Chapter 2)

remorseful (rē mors' fəl) *adj.* sorry; feeling bad for something done (Chapter 3)

hearty (hart' ē) *adj.* big and filling (Chapter 3)

Read each item, and then answer the question.

1. Josh played a trick on his dog. He pretended to throw a ball, but kept the ball in his hand. How might the dog look or act perplexed?

2. Michael was looking forward to the game. How could someone tell he eagerly waited?

3. The two kittens jumped from high places. What might make them seem reckless?

4. Ava loved to play outside. It was raining, so she had to stay inside. What did Ava crave?

5. The cousins were playing a game. Bea cheated and they all quit. What could Bea do to show she was remorseful?

6. When Leo thought a joke was funny, he had a big laugh. How might a hearty laugh sound?

COMPREHENSION Read Chapters 1–3 of *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*. As you read, answer the following questions to check your understanding. Write your answers on the lines.

7. Why does Mrs. Gridley think there are mice in the hotel? (Chapter 1)

8. Why does Ralph prefer more children to stay in the room? (Chapter 2)

9. How does Ralph feel stuck inside the wastebasket? How does he try to get out? (Chapter 3)

Wrap It Up

At the end of the week, review the vocabulary and questions that have been posted on the **Concept/Question Board**. Write a prediction about how Ralph will get out of the wastebasket.

WEEK 2 Read about It

VOCABULARY Review the following vocabulary words and definitions from Chapters 4–5 of *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*.

apologetically (ə pol' ə jet' ik lē) *adv.* in a way that says sorry or makes up for a wrong (Chapter 4)

indignant (in dig' nənt) *adj.* showing anger because of something that is unfair (Chapter 4)

fumbled (fum' bəld) *v.* form of the verb **fumble**: to look for something in a messy way, turning over things (Chapter 4)

jauntily (jaunt' i lē) *adv.* showing self-confidence in a playful way (Chapter 5)

hesitated (hes' i tā' ted) *v.* form of the verb **hesitate**: to pause before doing something (Chapter 5)

ridiculous (ri dik' yə lus) *adj.* very silly; beyond believable (Chapter 5)

Write an ending to each sentence.

1. He answered apologetically after...

2. She was indignant when her aunt asked...

3. I fumbled in my backpack for...

4. The boy walked jauntily around...

5. The cat hesitated before...

6. The most ridiculous thing I have seen is...

COMPREHENSION Read Chapters 4–5 of *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*. As you read, answer the following questions to check your understanding. Write your answers on the lines.

7. How does Ralph get out of the wastebasket? (Chapter 4)

8. How does Ralph feel about riding the motorcycle? How does Keith feel about it? Find details in the story to support your answer. (Chapter 4)

9. What deal do Ralph and Keith make about using the motorcycle? (Chapter 5)

Wrap It Up

At the end of the week, review the vocabulary and any additional questions you have about the story. Think about how Ralph’s hotel habitat is dependent on people visiting the hotel. Write a prediction about what will happen if someone other than Keith finds Ralph or his mouse family.

WEEK 3 Read about It

VOCABULARY Review the following vocabulary words and definitions from Chapters 6–8 of *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*.

nuisance (nōō' səns) *n.* someone or something that is a bother or a pest (Chapter 6)

incredulous (in kred' yə lus) *adj.* not believing because something is too much to be true (Chapter 6)

oblivious (ə bliv' ē us) *adj.* completely unaware (Chapter 7)

abruptly (ə brupt lē) *adv.* all of a sudden, without warning (Chapter 7)

tactless (takt' les) *adj.* without thinking about someone's feelings (Chapter 8)

conscience (kon' shəns) *n.* a sense of knowing right from wrong (Chapter 8)

Read each item. Then circle the example that illustrates the vocabulary word.

1. Which one is a nuisance: a dog barking constantly or a cat sleeping inside?
2. For which school visitor would you look incredulous: a parent or a famous author?
3. Which person is oblivious to a visitor: a man reading a book or a woman waving hello?
4. Which one happens abruptly: a sunflower growing tall or a sunflower stem breaking in a storm?
5. Which one is tactless: a thoughtful person or a person who does not care how others feel?
6. When a person has a conscience is he or she: someone who tells lies or an honest person?

COMPREHENSION Read Chapters 6–8 of *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*. As you read, answer the following questions to check your understanding. Write your answers on the lines.

7. Why does Ralph’s mother choose the hotel for a habitat instead of the woods? (Chapter 6)

8. What happens to Ralph when the maid comes in the room to clean? (Chapter 7)

9. What is a possible danger when the mice in the hotel have a family reunion? What would happen if they are discovered by humans? Why? (Chapter 8)

Wrap It Up

At the end of the week, review the vocabulary and any additional questions you have about the story. Think about what Keith says to Ralph at the end of Chapter 8. Write a prediction about what Ralph will do next to make up for losing Keith’s motorcycle.

WEEK 4 Read about It

VOCABULARY Review the following vocabulary words and definitions from Chapters 9–10 of *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*.

fascinated (fas' i nā' ted) *adj.* very interested and amazed (Chapter 9)

pandemonium (pan' də mō nē' əm) *n.* a confusing scene where people, animals, and things are going in all directions (Chapter 9)

exterminator (eks tûr' mə nā' tûr) *n.* someone whose job is to kill household pests, such as insects or small animals (Chapter 9)

emerged (ē mûrjd') *v.* form of the verb **emerge**: to come out from behind something (Chapter 10)

pilfering (pil fûr' ing) *v.* form of the verb **pilfer**: to steal something small (Chapter 10)

exasperated (eks as' pûr ā' ted) *adj.* annoyed to the point of feeling helpless (Chapter 10)

Write an ending to each sentence.

1. The baby was fascinated with...

2. There was pandemonium at the park when...

3. The store owner called the exterminator to...

4. She emerged from...

5. I found our cat pilfering...

6. I was exasperated when I...

COMPREHENSION Read Chapters 9–10 of *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*. As you read, answer the following questions to check your understanding. Write your answers on the lines.

7. Why is Keith “mad but not *real* mad” with Ralph? How does he seem to understand? (Chapter 9)

8. Why is Ralph’s mother and family so upset? What did they overhear? (Chapter 9)

9. What happens to Keith? How does Ralph plan to help him? (Chapter 10)

Wrap It Up

At the end of the week, review the vocabulary and any additional questions you have about the story. Write a question or wondering you have about the story or about the characters.

WEEK 5 Read about It

VOCABULARY Review the following vocabulary words and definitions from Chapters 11–13 of *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*.

determination (dē tîr' mə nā' shən) *n.* a mindset to get something done (Chapter 11)

endangering (in dān' jûr ing) *v.* form of the verb **endanger**: to put someone in harm's way (Chapter 11)

din (din) *n.* a lot of loud noise (Chapter 12)

crucial (krōō' shəl) *adj.* very important to the success of something (Chapter 12)

triumph (trî' umf) *n.* a great success (Chapter 12)

tantalizing (tan' tə lî' zing) *adj.* very desirable, but unattainable (Chapter 13)

Read each item, and then answer the question.

1. You set a big goal. You know what you have to do. How do you show determination?

2. We must make sure the water temperature is just right for our pet fish. How might we endanger our fish?

3. Think about a place where you hear a lot of loud noises. What sounds make up the din?

4. Sis wants to make a sandwich. Which ingredients are crucial?

5. Think about a successful time. How did the triumph make you feel?

6. Imagine walking along some shops in town. What do you find tantalizing in a store window? Why?

COMPREHENSION Read Chapters 11–13 of *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*. As you read, answer the following questions to check your understanding. Write your answers on the lines.

7. How does Ralph feel when the girls find him? Why do you think they are not scared? (Chapter 11)

8. How does Ralph get the aspirin from the first floor to Keith on the second floor? (Chapter 12)

9. How does Ralph’s retelling of the night’s events differ from what really happened? Why are they different? (Chapter 13)

Wrap It Up

At the end of the week, review the vocabulary and any final questions you have about the story. Write about the indigenous animals of the woods in *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*. Think about how the mice fit into the woods habitat. Find details in the story to support your answer.

WEEK 6 Talk about It

COMPREHENSION Answer the following questions to check your understanding. Write your answers on the lines.

1. In Chapter 2, we learn that “Ralph’s mother was a great worrier.” Do you think she would be more worried or less worried living in the woods habitat? Why?

2. How did the human characters interact with the mice? How would you react to finding a mouse in your hotel room? Why?

3. In Chapter 8, we learn how different rooms in the hotel have different offerings. How does the food differ? If you were in Ralph’s family, where would you want to live in the hotel? Why?

Write about It

Choose a written response to *The Mouse and the Motorcycle* from the following list.

- Rewrite your favorite scene from the book as a play. Think about the setting and the characters. Picture how to tell the story through dialogue, props, and movements.
- Create a travel brochure for the Mountain View Inn where Keith and his family stay. Be sure to describe all the beauty of the woods that surround the hotel, as well as the hotel building.

Use the following steps to write:

PREWRITING Review examples of plays and travel brochures to plan formatting and layout. If you are writing a play, reread your favorite scene. Write notes about important actions and words. If you are making a travel brochure, visualize the hotel in the mountains and write what you see, hear, taste, smell, and feel. Put ideas that are alike together and organize notes in a sequence that makes sense.

DRAFTING Write the scene as a play or write descriptions for the travel brochure. Be sure to include the details from your notes. Get all your ideas written into sentences or into the correct form or layout. If you are unsure of spelling or grammar, just circle or underline each instance and keep writing.

REVISING Reread your draft. Does it make sense? Would additional details add something to your writing? Should some details be rearranged? If you are writing a scene in a play, consider adding stage directions and descriptions of the setting. If you are writing a travel brochure, make sure it follows the correct layout and add headings to highlight the important features.

EDITING Read through your revised draft. Look for spelling errors, missing punctuation, or grammatical mistakes.

PUBLISHING Make a clean copy of your edited draft. Read or act out your play with others. Add pictures or use a computer to type sections of the travel brochure.

Wrap It Up

At the end of the week, share and discuss your writing with others. Discuss any final questions you have about the story or the theme *Animals and Their Habitats*. List any new ideas or questions about *Animals and Their Habitats* you have after reading, discussing, or writing about *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*.
