

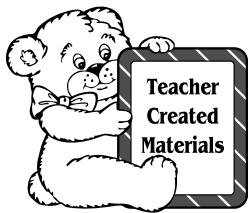
A Guide for Using

The Borrowers

in the Classroom

Based on the novel written by Mary Norton

This guide written by Shelle Allen-Russell



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Introduction

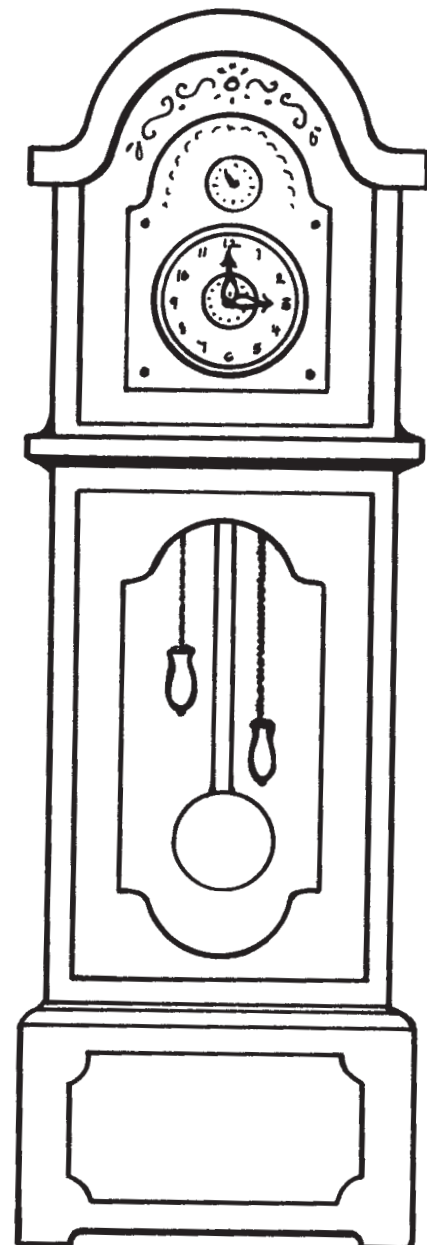
An interesting book can create new ways of viewing life around us. Inside its pages are words and characters which can teach us valuable lessons, challenge creativity, and inspire us to become better people. We can read for enjoyment, knowledge, and guidance. The lives found on the pages of books will impact our lives forever.

In Literature Units great care has been taken to select books that are sure to be great friends. *The Borrowers* is one such book.

Teachers who use this literature unit will find the following features to supplement their own valuable ideas.

- A Sample Lesson Plan
- Pre-reading Activities
- A biographical sketch and picture of the author
- A Book Summary
- Vocabulary Lists and Vocabulary Activity Ideas
- Journal activities
- Chapters grouped for study, with each section including:
 - *quizzes*
 - *hands-on projects*
 - *cooperative learning activities*
 - *cross-curriculum connections*
 - *extension activities to relate to the reader's own life*
- Post-reading Activities
- Book Report Ideas
- Research Ideas
- Culminating Activities
- Three different options for unit tests
- Bibliography
- Answer Key

We are confident that this unit will be a useful addition to your lesson planning. Through the use of our ideas, your students will, we hope, increase the circle of “friends” they can have in books!



Debate: To Borrow or Not to Borrow?

In this exercise you are going to get some feedback from other people in your class on your writing. You will also share and debate your ideas with others.

On a plain sheet of paper, take 15 minutes to make a first draft on one of the following topics related to *The Borrowers*. Give your writing piece a catchy title.

- Define borrowing. Is it a good thing or a bad thing? State at least three reasons to support your answer.
- Are family and relatives important to you? Why or why not? If so, what traditions have you started to build together as a family? If not, what kinds of things do you think should take place in groups that feel family is very important?
- What are some things parents try to shield or protect their children from? Can parents go too far in making rules and guidelines? Can children go too far in defying parents' rules? State examples.

When you have finished writing, break into groups of three. Pass your paper to the person on your left. Take a paper from the person on your right. Read each draft and discuss your feelings versus the writer's feelings.

Next, form debate teams. Debate one of the above issues in front of the class. Make sure both sides have some persuasive arguments. (**Note:** You may wish to videotape the debates in place of live debates.)

After the debates have been completed, take a class survey to find out how most people sided on the subjects. Chart the survey results on a chart on the chalkboard.

The debates may be made to look professional by seating students dressed in businesslike attire behind a rectangular table and/or setting up a stage (like on a talk show).

	Borrowing	Families and Traditions	Rules and Guidelines
Side A			
Side B			

Borrowing in the Mansion

In the story of *The Borrowers*, the borrowing that the Clock family does starts to get out of control. They start to borrow out of greed rather than for survival. In our lives we sometimes borrow things from other people, but (hopefully) we do not do it often, and we always return the items.

In mathematics it is perfectly acceptable to borrow when we are subtracting. There is nothing questionable about it, and it must be done in order to let us know how much we will have left over in the end.

In this activity pretend that dear Aunt Sophy wishes to give her old mansion to the person who is the best at borrowing. Some of the windows have math problems. Start with number one and complete the problems in order. See how successfully you can borrow your way through the mansion. When your work is complete, ask your teacher for the answers, and check your work. See the bottom of the page to find out where you stand in Aunt Sophy's will.



Aunt Sophy's Will

10 correct: You inherit the mansion.

7 correct: You inherit her jewelry.

8–9 correct: You inherit the servants and her model car.

6 or fewer correct: You get to work for the new owner.