



The Great Texas Hamster Drive

an original tall tale

by Eric A. Kimmel

illustrated by Bruce Whatley

Summary

This is an adaptation of the famous Washington Irving story about the man who fell asleep for 20 years. He awakes to a much changed family and world.

Ideas for Classroom Use

Discussion Questions

Discussion questions - encourage children to find examples from the story to document their answers.

Why do you think Slue Foot Sal "runs the house" at Pecos Bill and Slue Foot Sues place?

Why did the Ike send two hamsters? What began to happen?

How do you think the hamsters got loose?

Describe the "Great Texas Hamster Drive". How many hamsters were driven to Abilene?

What caused the hamsters to stampede? What happened next?

How did they get the hamsters out of the tunnel and herded onto the train to Chicago?

Were gerbils going to be a problem? Why or why not?

Responding to the Text

Writing Tall Tales

Oh, those silly hamsters have a mind of their own! One gets distracted on the way to Abilene and decides to go off on his/her own and explore! Encourage your children to create a tall tale of their own, sharing the adventures of their very own hamster of the Wild West! In their tall tale, encourage children to include exaggeration, humor, hardships to overcome, and a hero or heroine that saves the day.

In sharing the tall tales, encourage children to draw a picture of their hamster involved in his/her outrageous adventures. Children might sit around an indoor "campfire" and share their wild and wonderful stories with one another before posting the pictures and stories on a "Wanted!" or a "Great Texas Hamster Drive" Bulletin Board.

For more great ideas on writing and sharing Tall Tales, go to:

<http://www.greenville.k12.sc.us/stone/staff/lessons/bennett/tales.asp>



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Hamster Jokes

This is so much fun, the laughter just have to continue! Encourage your children to create hamster jokes and riddles. Some examples can be found a the following website:

<http://www.jokesbykids.com/animal/hamster/index.php?page=1>

Science

Adopt a Class Hamster!

Have your children take up a collection or earn the money to buy all that is necessary to care for a pet hamster. Learn about hamster facts, caring for your hamster, and some great classroom activities at the following website:

<http://www.teacherwebshelf.com/classroompets/mammals-hamsters.htm#12>

PS – just get one! Make sure she isn't pregnant!

Just for Fun - The Great Hamster Dance

This is a funny website that will make you and your children laugh! It could be that this was the song Slue Foot Sal and her family sang while along the "Great Texas Hamster Drive."

<http://www.webhamster.com/>