

## Lesson 13: A New Home

### Getting Started

#### ? Big Ideas

- What threatens the survival of living things?
- What means do living things have for survival?
- How does Mrs. Frisby fight for the survival of her son?



#### Facts and Definitions

- The plot involves the problem, events, climax, and solution to the problem.

#### ⦿ Skills

- Identify and interpret elements of fiction and nonfiction. (LA)
- Recognize the differences among genres of literature. (LA)
- Use a variety of strategies to organize ideas. (LA)
- Determine the plot, conflict, sequence of events, and resolution of a story. (LA)

#### ✂ Materials

- ✓ *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH* by Robert C. O'Brien
- ✓ *The Secret of NIMH* or *Ratatouille*
- ✓ journal

### Introduction

Tell your child that today he will learn the fate of the rats and NIMH, and he will find out if moving the house saved Timothy and the rest of Mrs. Frisby's family.

### Activities

#### Reading and Questions

Today, your child will read Chapters 26, 27, and the Epilogue. Use the following as discussion and journal questions.

1. Why did Nicodemus want Mrs. Frisby at the meeting?
  - He wanted her to explain exactly what she had heard at the Fitzgibbon's house.
2. Do you think it is important to make it look as if they never lived in their home? Why or why not?
  - Answers will vary.
3. How did the rats get out of the hole?
  - They created an escape exit that the men did not see.
4. How did the rats make it look like there were many rats escaping from the hole?
  - They continued running out from under cover and then returning. They ran in what seemed like a random pattern.
5. How did Brutus get out?
  - Another rat carried him.

6. Which rat do Mrs. Frisby's kids believe risked his life to save Brutus? Do you think it was Justin or a different rat? Why?

- Justin. Answers will vary.

7. What did Timothy know before his mother told him?

- That his father and Mr. Ages were friends of the rats.

### Activity 1: Plot Flowchart

Now your child can fill in an event from the chapters on the "Plot Flowchart."

### Activity 2: Elements of Fantasy

Review the elements of fantasy that your child learned about in Lesson 1. Then ask him to list examples from the book that support each element on the page, "Elements of Fantasy."

### Activity 3: Plot Diagram

Ask your child to look back over the "Plot Flowchart" that he created during his reading of the novel. Review the fact that the action in a story builds until it reaches a climax. In this story, many of the events threatened the survival of the characters. Choose an option for your child to complete.

#### Option 1

On the "Plot Diagram" (Option 1) page, ask your child to list the problem of the story on the bottom left line. Next, let him list three major events in the story that lead up to most challenging event for the main character, also called the climax. He can get these events from his "Plot Flowchart." Then he will list one event that happens after the climax, and finally the solution.

*Answers:*

Problem: Timothy is sick and cannot leave his home in the garden. If the family does not leave, their home will be destroyed by the plow.

The events will vary.

The climax is when Mrs. Frisby is caught by Billy.

Any major event that occurs after Mrs. Frisby is caught.

Solution to problem: The rats moved Mrs. Frisby's house, and Timothy and the family were saved.

#### Option 2 (Advanced)

For this option, your child will record the events as described in Option 1, but he will also be asked to label the boxes on the "Plot Diagram" (Option 2) page. Encourage him to label the parts of the story in the boxes before filling in the events.

### Wrapping Up

Ask your child if he enjoyed the story of *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH*. Ask him to tell you about his favorite part of the story and to name and describe his favorite character.

### Life Application

Let your child compare the book with the movie based on the book called *The Secret of NIMH*. Let him discuss how the book and the movie are similar and different. Another idea is to compare the rats of NIMH to the rats in Disney's *Ratatouille*. Your child can think about how the rats and their experiences in this story are similar to and different from the rats of NIMH.

\*Note: *The Secret of NIMH* is an intense movie and may not be appropriate if you have a sensitive child. Please preview the movie before letting your child watch it. If you do not believe it is appropriate, then show Disney's *Ratatouille* and let your child compare it with the book.

# Elements of Fantasy

**Directions:** Read about each element of fantasy and record an example in each box from the book.

## Characterization

- Animals have human characteristics
- Characters can have special powers

## Setting

- Place is imaginary or in another world or universe
- The time period is not usually relevant to the story

## Plot

- Usually has surprising twists or developments

## Theme

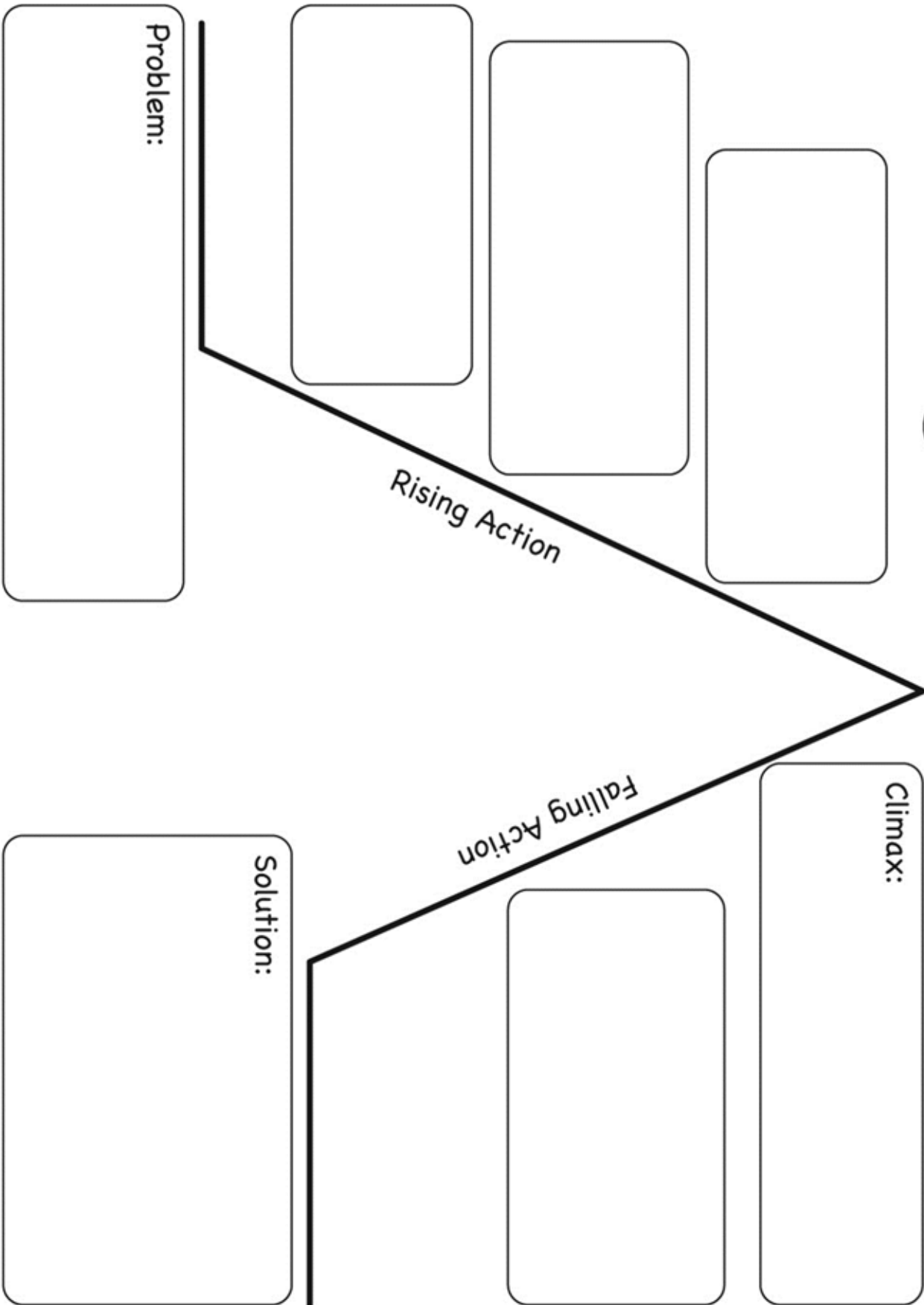
- May have a good versus bad/evil theme
- Science or other ideas may be applied to the extreme

## Style and Tone

- Use of magic or scientific principles not yet discovered
- Use of technology or mental powers that are not possible or not yet discovered

# Plot Diagram

**Directions:** Complete the diagram below using your Plot Flow Chart and what you remember from the story.



# Plot Diagram

**Directions:** Complete the diagram below using your Plot Flow Chart and the labels provided in the word box.

