The Borrowers

By Mary Norton

Book Study

Predicting

Before reading this book have a look at the font cover, scan the images throughout the book and read the blurb on the back of the book.

Then ‘self question’ – using the self question generator, think of a few questions that you may have for each of these areas of the text.

Then work with your teacher and class to make a class list of questions and discuss what you think the answers may be. This will help you build a strong picture of what you think will happen in this book.

Additional Log Sheets

Synthesising Wheel- At the beginning of this novel record in the inner part of your wheel what you know about Arrietty and as you read through the novel keep adding information you learn about Arrietty. This will help you build a better picture of Arriety.

VCOP Scanning Sheet- This sheet will allow your teacher to pose questions, based on VCOP skills, eg What do you notice about how the author uses a connective on page 5? Or Locate a WOW word on page 27. You will be able to use this sheet throughout your novel study.

Determining Importance – Fact board

Throughout reading this book, choose 6 of the most important events(things that have happened) and write a sentence and draw a picture about it on your fact board.

Chapter 1

1. From what you have read so far, do you think Kate lives in a rich or poor house? What things infer (give you clues) about this?
2. Why did Kate think they must have borrowers in her house?
3. What were the name of the Borrowers that Mrs. May had seen in the past?
4. Why did Mrs. May’s brother think Borrowers had become so small?
5. Why do you think Old Aunt Sophy’s house was perfect for borrowers to live in?
6. What things infer (hint at, give you clues) that Aunt Sophy’s house is very old?
7. Where was the Borrowers entrance to their world below?

Follow Up Task

Research what Victorian houses looked like and visualise what you think Aunt Sophy’s House looked like. Now draw a picture of what you think Aunt Sophy’s house looked like.

Chapter 2

1. What things did the Borrowers use as gates to protect themselves from mice?
2. Why do you think Homily was angry at Arrietty bringing her a whole potato to prepare for dinner?
3. List a few of the things that the Borrowers have borrowed from from humans and how they use them, e.g . old scraps of paper – the borrowers used as wallpaper.
4. On page 17, what infers (hints at) that the Borrowers are very small?
5. What does the author’s use of an ellipsis (…) make you wonder at the end of this chapter?

Follow Up Task

From your knowledge of the Borrowers and their world so far, visualise what you think of them and how their home would look like and draw a very detailed picture of Pod, Homily, Arrietty and their home.

Chapter 3 & Chapter 4

1. On page 22 how does the author manage to create an image for the reader of Arrietty being so small?
2. In the past what kind of things have the Borrowers drank their tea from?
3. What had Pod been sent on a mission to *borrow* from upstairs?
4. What shocking thing had happened when Pod had been *borrowing*?

Follow Up Task

Collaboratively design and Create a model house for The Borrowers.

Chapter 5

1. What is Arrietty’s bedroom made from?
2. Why do you think the Borrowers are so frightened of being seen?
3. Describe what had changed in the house regarding the amount of Borrowers who lived there.
4. According to where the Borrowers lived in the house how did it affect how the other Borrowers thought of them?

Follow Up Task

Ask your teacher for 3 post it notes and on each of them make:

1. Self Connections- Does anything you have read so far remind you of something you have experienced personally?

2. Text Connections - Have you read another text that you can make links to the events, characters or plots in this book?

3. World Connections - Can you make any real life connections that you have read about or watched in the news to this book?

When you have finished your notes, your teacher will ask you to stick them in three separate areas and then you will discuss as a class the notes that you have made.

Chapter 6

1. Why did the Borrowers have gates ?
2. Why did Pod and Homily suddenly decide to talk to Arriety about ‘upstairs’?
3. Why was Arriety so upset about living in the old house?
4. What eventually made Arrietty pleased?

Follow Up Task

Create a mini book for the Borrowers to read.

Chapter 7

1. On page 61 how does the author describe how Arietty feels when she goes off to ‘borrow’?
2. What do you think the author means when he says ‘ the clock spoke- measuring out the seconds, spreading its layers of calm’?
3. What were Arietty and her Dad upstairs to borrow?

Follow up Task

Similes- when a person or object are compared to something else using like or as.

The Borrowers are described as ‘small’.

Make a list of 5 similes- beginning with:-

As small as…….. each time.

Chapter 8

1. What did the Borrowers use to slide down?
2. Scan read page 71 and note the adjectives(descriptive words) that the author uses and write them in your jotter.
3. How do you think Arietty would feel being allowed to explore outside for a while?
4. Homily did not like wood-lice because they ‘smell of old knives’. This is a clever and unusual way to use words. Do certain places have smells, eg, the dentist or a type of food?

Make a list of things you think smell different/strange and how/what you think they smell of.

Follow Up Task

Arriety thought the boy was a giant. Using your copy of the giant sheet, list as many adjectives (describing words) as you can to describe a giant.

Chapter 9

1. At the beginning of this chapter what makes you thin that the boy is quite rude?
2. Use a dictionary or ICT to look up the meaning of the word bilingual and write the meaning of it in your jotter.
3. On page 74 how does the writer describe the boy’s voice?
4. What does the boy think the borrowers are at first?
5. On page 80 Arrietty thinks there are more borrowers living in the world than humans. List a few reasons why she thinks that.

Follow Up Task

Questioning

Think of and write 5 questions you would like to ask a Borrower if you first met one face to face.

Chapter 10

1.Why did Aunt Sophy think she could only see one little Borrower rather than two of them?

2. On page 85 the boy says he thinks the Borrowers do not borrow that they ‘steal’ things. What is your opinion of the boy’s statement? Provide reasons.

3. Which things on page 90 infer(hint) that Arriety doesn’t want to tell the boy where they live and why do you think she doesn’t want him to know?

4. On page 90 why do you think that Arietty is feeling a chill?

Follow Up Task

In your opinion describe how you think it would feel like to be a Borrower having to live underneath the floor boards in the big house.

Chapter 11 & 12

1. How do you know that Homily is excited to see Arrietty and is keen to know what she has experienced?
2. Why do you think that the Borrowers have a ‘feeling’ when they sense that there are humans near them?
3. Why do you think Arrietty lied and told her parents that she never experienced a strange feeling when the boy was talking to her?
4. What effect as a reader does it have when the author repeats the word thinking several times on the bottom of page 97?

5. What object did Pod make Arrietty a hairbrush from?

6. Describe how Pod managed to climb up on pieces of furniture.

7. Who is the boy really looking for when Crampfurl thinks he is looking for a ferret?

Follow Up Task

Personal Writing- Write about a time when you may have told a lie or been nasty to someone. Describe how you felt, what happened and what lessons you learned from this experience.

Chapter 13 & 14

1. What did Homily use as coat hangers?
2. Who did Pod enjoy talking to upstairs?
3. What news did the boy have for Arrietty?
4. What infers(hints) on page 118 that Pod is not pleased with Arrietty talking to the boy?
5. Why did Arrietty send a letter to the other Borrowers?
6. Why do you think that Pod and Homily are so upset incase the boy knows where they live?

Follow Up Task

Write an acrostic poem using ‘The Borrowers’ as your title:- try to include some alliteration(words beginning with the same sound or letter), a simile(comparing an object to another using ‘like’ or ‘as’) and some adjectives.

Chapter 15

1. What was Homily fussing over? ( as she was frightened people may now see her)
2. What happened to the Borrowers when they woke up and who was responsible?
3. What did the boy bring to the Borrowers?
4. What infers(hints) on page 136 that the Borrowers are happy for the boy to possibly return?

Follow Up Task

Make a list of things that you think could go ‘missing/borrowed’ in your house and what a Borrower may use these things for.

Chapter 16

1. How do you know the boy is extremely kind to the Borrowers?
2. their What favour did the boy do in return for the boy’s kindness?
3. Why was the boy staying as a guest at the big house the Borrowers stayed in?
4. How do you think Pod felt about them having lots of new fancy things in their home? Give reasons.
5. Who noticed things were gradually going missing from the house and why were they so concerned?

Follow Up Task

Create a newspaper article based on people sighting Borrowers in their homes. You could consider reporting what people have said about the Borrowers, what they think about all their objects being ‘borrowed’ and their feelings about the Borrowers.

Chapter 17

Draw a visualisation of what Mrs. Driver saw when she first looked into the Borrower’s home! Draw plenty of detail and use adjectives to describe the objects you draw.

Chapter 18

1. How do you know the boy was sad about what Mrs. Driver had done to their home?
2. After the night in the dolls house where were the Borrowers hoping to stay after that?
3. What was Mrs. Driver hoping happened to the Borrowers?
4. What did Mrs. Driver do with the boy?

Follow Up Task

\*Look into the future - what are the main characters doing in ten years? Discuss this question with a partner and write a paragraph, based on your ideas about what the Borrower’s lives will look like in ten years.

Chapter 19

1. What happened to the boy?
2. How do you know that the policeman never believed Mrs. Driver’s story of seeing little people?
3. List some of the things you have read that tells you Mrs. Driver is a nasty person.
4. Suggest a way the Borrowers may have escaped?

Follow Up Task

Create a poster recommending this book to others. Use suitable illustrations and bullet point a few reasons why somebody should read this book.

Chapter 20

1. Describe some of the things the Borrowers living in the badger’s set would have had to eat.
2. Describe how and where the Borrowers would have lived.
3. What does the author tell us to suggest the Borrowers were still alive?

Follow Up Task

Create and write a different ending to this story.