

TEACHER'S GUIDE

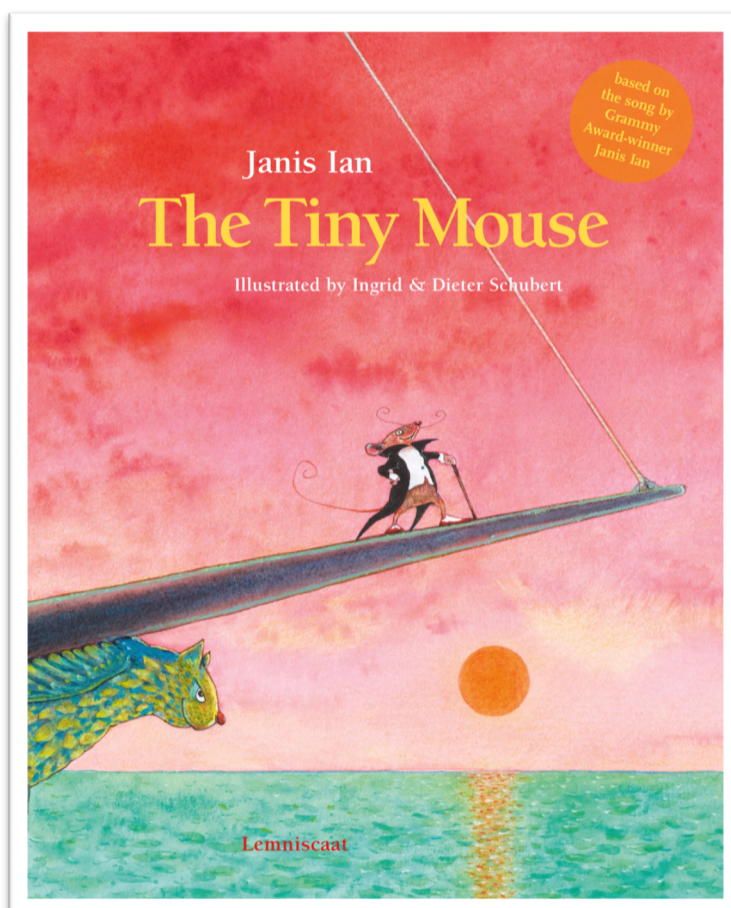
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The Tiny Mouse (Lemniscat)

The tiny mouse lives in a beautiful house and has everything he could desire. But he's still bored. He wants to have an adventure – he wants to go to sea! But the life of a sea mouse is not easy, especially when he realises who the ship's captain is...

My house

Here in this weird house lives a teeny-weeny mouse. And that mouse is one strange creature.



Look at the house in the first picture of the story. What does the mouse's house look like? What is the house made of? Does your house look like that too? In what kind of house do you live?

Ask the children what kinds of houses they know.

Optionally, go for a stroll around the neighbourhood to look at different kinds of houses. Instruct the children to make their own house.

Suggestions:

- The children draw the house in which they live.
- The children make their own dream house out of no-cost materials.
- Give each child the outline of a house. Let them turn it into a weird house by filling it out with strange shapes, drawings or decorations. They can draw these, cut them out of coloured paper or look for them in magazines.

Where is the mouse?

Build a number of houses using blocks. Place them next to each other as if along a street. Give each house a number.

Prepare a small picture of a mouse, a toy mouse or a stuffed mouse. Say the numbers of the houses out loud with the children. Then hide the mouse behind one of the houses. Let the children guess where the mouse lives by giving them hints, such as:

- The mouse's neighbour lives at number six.
- The mouse lives in the house between number four and number eight.
- The mouse lives in the house that comes after number two.

Hide the mouse in a different house and repeat the activity.

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Variation: Ask one of the children to leave the group or to close their eyes. Hide the mouse behind one of the houses. The child goes looking for the mouse. They stand in front of a house and say the house's number out loud. If correct, they may look behind the house. The group counts the number of attempts it takes to find the mouse.

Then choose another child to find the mouse. How many tries do they need to find the mouse?

Photo scavenger hunt

Take photographs of houses or details of houses in the streets around the school or your home. Also take a photo of the mouse's house in the first picture of the story. Print the photos.

The children go looking for the houses that match the photos. One option is to scale down the photos and print them on a single sheet to create a scavenger hunt chart. Can they find the mouse's house as well?

Mice in holes

Look at the mice in the first picture of the story. They are all looking out from their holes. Some holes are empty.

Create a grid by drawing twenty-five equal boxes in a square measuring five boxes a side. On the left of the boxes, draw five lines in different colours, e.g. red, yellow, green, blue and orange. Above the boxes, draw one to five dots. Now, all the boxes have a name, e.g. Yellow Five. Cut twenty-five squares out of sturdy white paper. Make sure they are the same size as the boxes in the grid. Draw a mouse on some of the squares. Fill the grid with the squares, placing them face down.

The children look for the mice. They give the name of a spot on the grid, e.g. Red Two, and may then turn over the card in that spot. Is a mouse hiding there? Add to the excitement by challenging the children to find as many mice as possible in ten turns. Then repeat the activity. Can the children find more mice in ten turns than last time?

Rooms in the house

Turn to the second page of the story. What room do you think the mouse is in? What other rooms might the house have? Let the children imagine what the house looks like on the inside. Then describe the rooms in your own house.

Collect items from the various rooms, e.g. a ladle from the kitchen, a pretty vase from the living room, a towel from the bathroom, an alarm clock from the bedroom, an old book from the attic, etc. Ask the children which room each object belongs in.

A silver spoon in a golden room

One day, the mouse is at home eating off a silver spoon in a golden room. Although his house is very comfortable, he is bored to tears.

In the book *The Tiny Mouse*, look at the picture in which the bored mouse can be seen sitting on a chair in his house. Read out the text and remark that "spoon" and "room" (almost) rhyme. Together with the children, come up with words that rhyme with objects in the mouse's house, such as the plate, the soup, the chair, the cheese, the candle, the bowl, the candlestick, the cat, the bicycle, the ladder, etc.

Take turns to name a word that rhymes.

Into the wide world

The mouse exclaims that he has to get away. It's too boring for him here! He wants to live the life of a sea mouse, and sets out to board a ship.

In *The Tiny Mouse*, look at the page in which the mice are sitting on branches in the tree. The tiny mouse is leaving. He wants to discover the world. His friends remain behind. Count the mice on the branches. Which branch has the highest number of mice on it? Which one has the lowest?

Print out images of mice and draw two branches on brown paper. Cut out the branches. Place a number of the mice on one branch and the remainder on the other. Let the children count the mice and compare the numbers on each branch. Which branch has the most mice on it, and which one has the least? Change the number of mice and repeat the activity.

Stowing away using a rope

So the mouse stowed away that very day...

Open the book *The Tiny Mouse* and look how the mouse boards the ship. Can the children do that too? Go to a playground with a climbing frame, or position a ladder horizontally between wall bars and a climbing tower. The children grab the first rung of the ladder and hang from it. Using the strength of their arms, they try to reach the other side. You can also use chin-up bars instead of a climbing frame.

Yum, a mouse!

The mouse must always remain alert. Cats may be on the prowl, and they're always in for a tasty bite!

In *The Tiny Mouse*, look for the picture in which a cat is prowling after the mouse. Can you find the cat? Who is he looking at? Ask the children what sound they can hear at the beginning of the word "mouse". Look at each other to see what your mouth looks like when you say "m", and feel what the "m" sounds like. Can you also make the "m" sound when you pinch your nose shut? Let the children pretend to be cats. Prepare a toy or stuffed mouse. Hide it behind your back. The cats watch closely. Occasionally, let the mouse be seen. When the cats see the mouse, they say "(yu)mmmmmmmm."

What might the mice in this picture be called? Come up with a name that begins with "m" for each mouse.

Double vision

The mouse doesn't feel all that good at sea. He goes looking for the loo, but that's easier said than done...

The mouse feels ill and has double vision. He can't tell which way to go. Place a strip of blue paper. That's the sea. Using mosaic pieces, create figures on one side of the strip and instruct the children to mirror those on the other side of the strip. Double vision!

Do the same with images of mice. Place them on one side and let the children mirror them on the other side. The children can then do this in pairs. One child places an object and the other mirrors it, and vice versa.

Through the window

No, this really isn't where the mouse is supposed to be...

In the book *The Tiny Mouse*, look at the round windows (portholes) of the ship. What might the mouse see when looking through them? For each child, glue a white circle on brown paper. This is a window in the ship. The children draw what the mouse sees through the window. It is up to them to decide what, e.g. the sea, another ship, a desert island, a dolphin, the coast...

The captain

The mouse began to cry, "oh, what a fool am I, to come so far and then be served up on a plate."

Read the above text and then ask the children why the mouse thinks this will happen (the captain is a cat). Place a breakfast plate and prepare images of mice. Roll a die and count the pips. Place the same number of mice on the plate. Continue until the plate is full or you run out of mice.

Seven oysters

The mouse flees! He catches a flounder and sails off as fast as he can. Washing up on the beach, he coughs and coughs and coughs, and spits out seven oysters and a clam.

Prepare seven seashells and some shiny beads. Hide a number of beads under the seashells. Tell them that there are oysters on the beach. Oysters have pearls in them. The children go looking for pearls. They do so by using ordinal numbers, e.g.: "Is there a pearl under the sixth oyster?" If the children then point at the sixth oyster, they may look under it. Can they find the pearls?

Variation: Ask one of the children to close their eyes.

Hide six pearls under the oysters. The child opens his/her eyes and goes searching for the pearls. The moment he/she turns over the empty oyster, their turn is over. How many pearls has he/she found? The turn then passes to another child. How many pearls do they each find before they look under the empty one?

Stories

The mouse and his wife have thirty children. Before they go to bed, they listen to stories. Let the children re-tell the story of the tiny mouse.

Suggestion 1: Let the children retell the story using the pictures in the book.

Suggestion 2: Prepare pictures of important moments in the book, such as the mouse family, the ship, the cat, the beach and the little mice. The children lay out the pictures in the order of the story and then retell the story using the images.

Suggestion 3: Create a storytelling table. Paint a background on wallpaper. Prepare toy figures or stuffed animal versions of mice and a cat. Place a boat or paint it on the background. Provide things to furnish the boat with, e.g. doll's house furniture. Place the book near the storytelling table. The children re-enact the story.

Lesson suggestions written by Anke van Boxmeer and Els van Dijck