

# Teaching Notes

**Who Sank the Boat?**  
**By Pamela Allen, Published by Penguin Books**

**A**s there are so many different aspects to this book it is important to read it several times. Each reading should have a different focus, such as sinking and floating, rhyme or punctuation.

## Sinking and Floating (weight)

### Before reading

- Have students collect a variety of objects that can be placed in water. As a class, discuss which objects students think might float and which might sink. Using a clear plastic container, test each object and then discuss why it floated or why it sunk.
- Ask students to collect pictures of different objects. Divide a piece of cardboard in half. Label one side ‘Things that float’ and label the other side ‘Things that sink’. As a class, decide where each of the pictures/objects belongs.

### During reading

- Look at each of the characters in the story and discuss which ones would be heavier and which ones would be lighter. Ask students to predict which animals might sink the boat.
- Discuss with the class why the mouse sank the boat. Was it because it was heavier than the other animals? Why didn’t the cow sink the boat? If a cat had hopped in the boat next would it still have sunk?

### After reading

- Gather different containers that float. As a class, discuss things that would make each container sink. Use different objects to try to sink the containers. Then combine the objects to see what combinations will sink the containers.
- Ask students to draw pictures of different objects/combinations that would sink the containers. Have them draw pictures of other things they think would sink the containers.
- Make one of the containers into a boat and use a different object for each of the characters. Act out the story using the objects.

## Punctuation

### Before reading

- As a class, define what a question is. Ask students for examples of questions. Make a class list of the first words of the example questions given by students. Talk about question words (who, what, where, when and why).
- Discuss with students what a statement/sentence is and how it differs from a question. Ask students to give examples of statements.
- Play the Question Game. Someone stands out the front of the class and either asks a question or makes a statement for an action students could do. For example: If a student asks a question ('Do you have your hands on your heads?'), the other students must do as they are asked. But if a student makes a statement ('Your hands are on your heads'), the other students should remain still. If a student moves after a statement, they are out and must sit down.

### During reading

- Read the book title and discuss whether it is a question or a statement.
- Have students raise their hands every time they hear a question. Choose one student to tell you what the question was and which question word it used.
- Take a look at the questions in the book and discuss the role of a question mark. Where does it appear? What does it mean? If questions have a question mark at the end then what do statements have?

### After reading

- Play the Question Quiz Game. Select a student to sit out the front. Choose a question word and have students ask questions about the book using that question word. The person out the front needs to answer each of the questions. If they get an answer wrong then they have to join the rest of the class and a new person is selected. If

they get three answers right then they win and can select the next person to have a turn.

- Write some questions and statements from the book on the board, leaving out the question marks and full stops. Read them together as a class and discuss whether they are a question or a statement. Select students to add in the full stops or question marks.

## Rhyme

### Before reading

- Ask students for examples of words that rhyme.
- Give students two words at a time. Ask them to clap if the two words rhyme or to put their thumbs down if the two words don't rhyme. Once they are confident with words then repeat this but with sentences instead of words.

### During the story

- Ask students to put their hands on their heads if a page contains a rhyme. Select a student to tell you which words rhymed and see if they can think of other words that might rhyme with those words.
- Talk about where the rhyming words appear in the story. Are they at the beginning or the end of a sentence?
- In the sections that rhyme leave out one of the rhyming words and ask the class to think of rhyming words that would fit there.

### After the story

- As a class make up rhymes about other animals that might board the boat.
- Ask students to draw pictures of words that rhyme on paper squares. Have students work in pairs to play a rhyming memory game with their paper squares.