

# THE CLEVER MONKEY

By Rob Cleveland

Kindergarten

## **Outcome:**

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the story through the use of phonics, comprehension, illustration, and dramatization.

## **Overview:**

Students will read and explore a folktale from West Africa while utilizing interdisciplinary connections in language arts and social studies, as they sequence information, use pantomime, explore idiomatic expressions, and write.

## **Materials:**

Book The Clever Monkey

Map or globe

Pencil, paper, scissors, crayons or markers

Selection of mild cheeses, crackers, plastic knives, napkins, and plates

## **Assessment Tools:**

Discussion Questions

Cat Phonics worksheet

Copying Sentences worksheet

Sequencing Pictures worksheet

## **INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN**

### **Introduction:**

Each student receives a copy of The Clever Monkey. Preview the book together looking at each picture and making predictions. Discuss the meaning of the word clever.

Explain: This is a folktale that started in Africa. Use a map or a globe as a visual aid.

- Africa has a very warm tropical climate.
- Africa has rain forests with lots of trees that create a great home for many animals, including monkeys.
- African people place great importance on storytelling.
- Many of the stories or folktales from Africa involve animals that assume human personalities.
- Some of the stories teach a lesson. Listen carefully so you know what lesson The Clever Monkey teaches.

Read the story aloud as the students follow along in their own books. Pause on each page to ask the children, based on the story and the illustrations, how the animals have assumed human personalities.

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## **Discussion:**

Questions to assess comprehension and interpretation of the story.

- Who are the three characters in the book?
- What did the cats find?
- What were the cats arguing about?
- What did the monkey offer to do?
- Why did the monkey keep eating little bits of the cheese?
- How did the cats feel when they were left with tiny pieces of cheese?
- How did the monkey feel?
- How did the book end?
- Why was the monkey clever?
- What lesson does the story teach?

## **Dramatic Arts:**

Pantomime is an important part of African storytelling. Good storytellers can use body language and facial expressions to help tell a story. Look at the illustrations in the book. The animals say so much with the expression on their faces and with the position of their bodies.

- Students are divided into groups of three. They practice acting out the story using pantomime only. Each group performs for the class.

## **Phonics:**

An activity for differentiated learning

**Materials:** Cat Phonics worksheet, scissors, pencil, lined paper

- Group A—Cat Phonics worksheet  
Directions: Cut out the cat, the letter strip, and the slits in the cat's nose. Feed the letter strip into the slits in the cat's nose. Practice with a partner reading the /at/ family words created by pulling the strip through the opening.
- Group B—Complete the worksheet as group A. Copy all the words on lined paper.
- Group C—Complete worksheet as group A and copy words as group B. Complete Copying Sentences Worksheet.

## **Writing:**

Copying Sentences worksheet

Directions: Children copy these sentences and read as a group in unison. Students then read these sentences to the teacher or other students.

The cat sat.

The cat is fat.

A cat is on the mat.

The rat saw the cat.

I can pat the cat.

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## **Sequencing Pictures:**

**Materials:** Sequencing worksheet, scissors, pencil

Directions: Cut out the pictures on this worksheet and place them in chronological order. Write the number 1 under the first picture, 2 under the second picture, 3 under the third picture, 4 under the fourth picture and 5 under the fifth picture. Students practice retelling the story to a partner, while using these pictures as a guide.

## **Illustration:**

Cats have always stimulated peoples' imaginations. There are many stories and superstitions about cats. It seems as if people either like or dislike cats. There is not much middle ground. Take a survey to determine how many students like cats and how many dislike cats. Teacher asks students to form opinions about both cats' behavior in the story. Discuss each of these expressions below and have students illustrate one of these folk sayings about cats.

- When the cat's away, the mice will play.
- A cat's a cat and that's that.
- Curiosity killed the cat. Satisfaction brought him back.
- The cat loves fish but hates wet feet.
- A cat is a lion to a mouse.

## **Extension Activity:**

### • **Cheese tasting**

**Materials:** a selection of mild cheeses, crackers, plastic knives, napkins, and plates

Serve a variety of cheeses to the class and have the children vote on their favorite cheese.

Class creates a bar graph to show how well the students liked each cheese. Students can cut cheese in half with the plastic knife and pretend to be the monkey as they trim the cheese bit by bit.

Students compare like objects that differ in size. They sort and classify items as "bigger" and "smaller".

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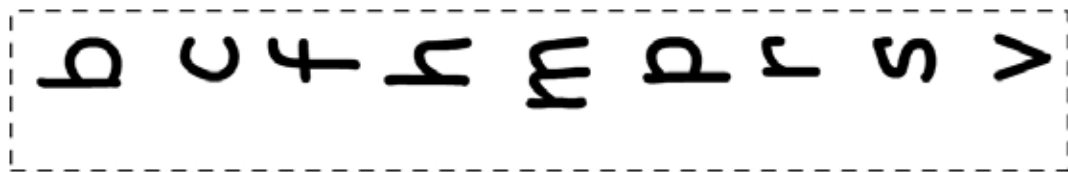
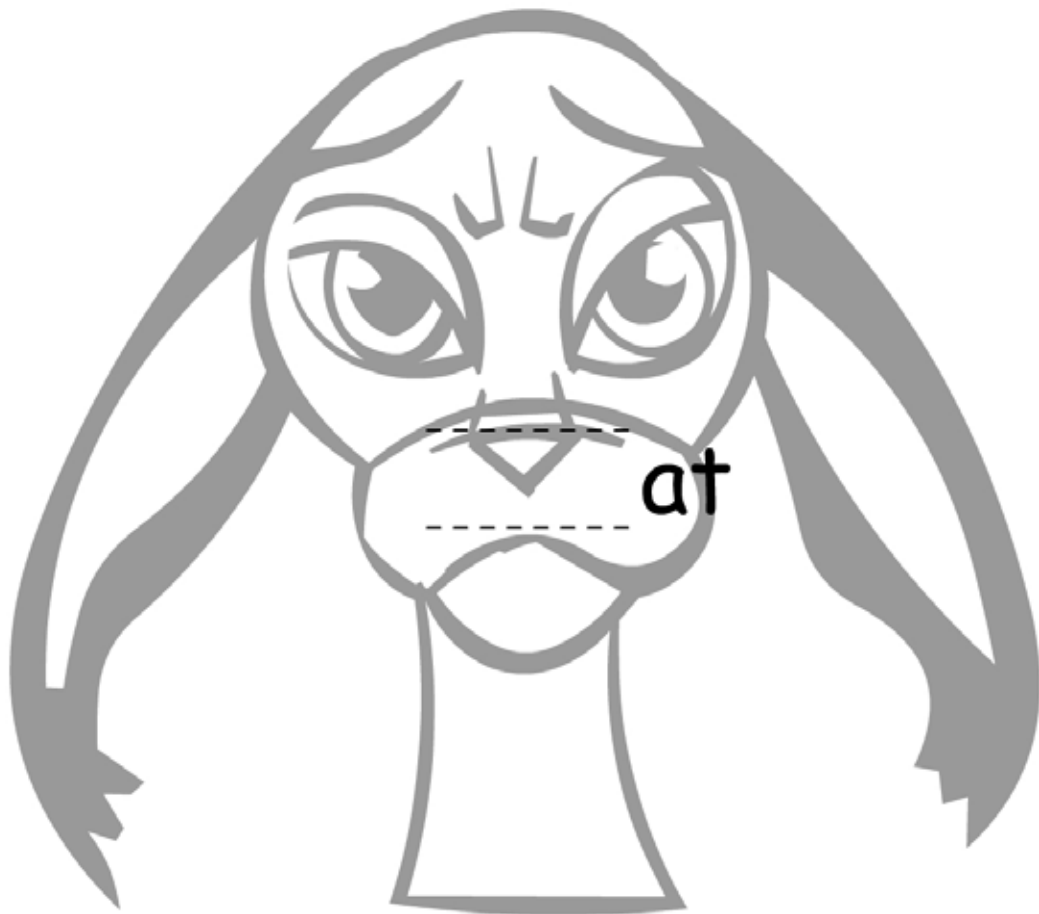
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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Cat Phonics

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Copying Sentences

Directions: Copy these sentences about the cat.

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A cat is on the mat.

The rat saw the cat.

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