



## Level 4

<b>Suitable for:</b>	young learners who have completed up to 200 hours of study in English
<b>Type of English:</b>	British
<b>Headwords:</b>	800
<b>Key words:</b>	15 (see pages 2 and 6 of these Teacher's Notes)
<b>Key grammar:</b>	past simple of regular listed verbs, <i>going to</i> future, defining relative clauses

## Summary of the story

*The Wind in the Willows* is a story about Mole and his adventures. He is spring-cleaning his little house one day but because it is such a beautiful day, he decides to go for a walk in the Wild Wood. There he meets Rat who teaches him how to row. Together they row along the river but Mole falls into the water and Rat saves him. He takes Mole to his home and they stay there for many weeks. Then they meet Toad who always has fantastic ideas. His latest one is to travel the roads in a gypsy caravan. Rat and Mole join him but the trip ends in disaster and Toad returns home. Mole goes back to Rat's home and stays there for a little while longer.

One autumn day, Mole decides to visit his friend Badger but gets lost in the snow. Rat saves him and together they find Badger's home. When it is time to leave, Badger takes them to the village and Mole smells his old home. He wants to go back even though he loves his life with Rat. With the help of Rat he finds his old home but it is untidy and dusty. They clean the house and make a fire and the two friends sit happily in Mole's old home. Rat falls asleep and Mole thinks of how happy he is to have new friends and how wonderful it is to be home.

## Background information

*The Wind in the Willows* was written by Kenneth Grahame and first published in 1908. It immediately became a success and has been popular ever since. Many films, TV series, animations and stage productions have been made from the book.

## Did you know ... ?

*The Wind in the Willows* is the only book Kenneth Grahame wrote. He was inspired by all the animals he studied after he retired in his home town of Cookham, Berkshire. The book started as a series of bedtime stories Kenneth Grahame would tell his son.

## The characters

**Mole** is the main character. He decides to leave his spring cleaning to go out in the nice spring air.

**Rat** is the first animal Mole meets. They become best friends.

**Toad** is an animal who takes Mole and Rat on a new adventure.

**Badger** takes Mole and Rat in one cold winter's night and offers them a fine supper.

**Otter** is an animal Mole meets in the river.

## Topics and themes

**Friendship** Mole makes friends with Rat, Otter and Toad, and has different adventures with them. Rat saves Mole from drowning and from getting lost in the snow, Toad takes them on a journey and Badger takes Rat and Mole in from the bad weather and offers them a warm supper. Mole feels happy to have found new friends. Ask students about the importance of friendships. Why is it important to have friends and in what ways do friends help each other?

**Difference** Mole, a small, almost blind animal, becomes friends with Rat, a kind, clever animal. They go on a journey with Toad, an eccentric animal. Then they meet Badger, a big, strong animal, who takes them and some small hedgehogs in from the cold. All these animals are different and yet they become friends. Ask students to explain how they are different from their friends and in what ways they are similar. Can people from different backgrounds and appearances become friends? (See also Activity 1 on page 4 of these Teacher's Notes.)

**Seasons** The story starts during spring when Mole meets Rat. They row down the river and have a nice lunch. Throughout summer, Mole stays with Rat and one beautiful afternoon they take a caravan ride with Toad. In the autumn, Badger has them stay in his warm home after they get lost in the heavy snow. Ask students what they usually do during the different seasons of the year. How

## Key words

(see page 6 of these Teacher's Notes for the Key words in context)

basket (n)	knock (v)
dig (v)	lost (adj)
dust (n) / (v)	oar (n)
dusty (adj)	river bank (n)
footprint (n)	row (v)
gypsy caravan (n)	supper (n)
hedgehog (n)	tunnel (n)
hole (n)	water rat (n)

is daily life a little more difficult in the winter than in the summer? What season do they particularly enjoy and why? (See also Activity 2 on page 4 of these Teacher's Notes.)

**Food** Mole and Rat enjoy a lunch in a basket, Badger offers them supper and breakfast. Talk to students about the three main meals of the day and what they have during each meal. Discuss the importance of a balanced meal and breakfast. Ask students to tell you what their favourite food is and how often they eat it. Ask students to describe a traditional food from their home country. (See also Activity 4 on pages 4 and 5 of these Teacher's Notes.)

**Homes** Toad lives in a grand house called Toad Hall and shows them a gypsy caravan. Badger takes Mole and Rat back home through a village. There they see pretty houses in the snow. Inside, the people are warm and happy. Mole feels wonderful to be home at the end of the story. Discuss with students different types of homes that people live in. Ask students to describe their homes and how they feel in them.

**Senses** Towards the end, Mole recognises his home from its smell. Explain that moles have very small eyes and so have poor vision and that some cannot see at all. Ask students what smells they associate with their homes and school. Ask students what other senses people use if they are

blind or deaf. What senses do we use and how do they help us in general?

**Feelings** The hedgehogs feel grateful towards Badger who takes them in from the cold weather and feeds them. Mole is also grateful to Rat who saves him when he falls into the river. Toad is excited because he goes on a journey in a caravan. Ask students what kind of things make them feel happy, excited or afraid and how they would feel if they fell in a river, had an accident, or got lost in the snow. (See also Activity 3 on page 4 of these Teacher's Notes.)

**Transport** Toad takes Rat and Mole on a trip with a caravan pulled by a horse. They get hit by what Toad calls 'a new thing'. How is transport different today from that in *The Wind in the Willows*? Ask students how they get to school every day, what form of transport they use to go on holidays, to the centre of their town / city, and so forth.

**Helping others** Rat helps Mole when he falls into the water and stops him from getting lost in the snow. Rat and Mole take Toad home after his caravan is in an accident, and Badger helps Rat, Mole and the hedgehogs. Why is it important to help people and each other? Ask students to tell you how they feel when someone helps them through a difficult situation. Have they ever helped others during difficult times?

## Class Activities (After Reading)

Here are some activities to do with your class after reading *The Wind in the Willows*.

### 1. Different friends

**Materials:** large sheets of paper; coloured pencils / markers

- Talk to students about friendships and the different things they do with their friends.
- Ask students if they have many friends and how long they have known them for.
- Encourage students to talk about their friends' height, size, if they are clever, good at a particular sport or musical instrument, and why they like their friends.
- Tell students that they are going to make a poster showing themselves and their friends. Their poster has to show how they are different in appearance, or show the different things their friends are good at.
- Give out a large sheet of paper to each student and hand out the coloured pens.
- When students have completed their posters, ask volunteers to come to the front of the class with their poster.
- Encourage the students to ask the volunteers questions, such as who their friends are, how long they have known them, where they first met, and so forth.
- Place posters on classroom display.

### 2. The four seasons

**Materials:** large sheets of paper; coloured pencils / markers

- Talk to students about the four different seasons and what they do during each one.
- Encourage students to tell you how each season is beautiful in its own way but also difficult. For example, it is difficult to get around in the snow but very hot weather can make people feel tired and ill too.

- Explain to students that certain jobs rely on the weather a great deal. For example, farmers rely on the weather for their crops, sea captains to avoid shipwrecks, and airports to decide whether they will allow aeroplanes to fly or not.
- Place students in four groups and assign each group to a season. Give each group a large sheet of paper and the coloured pens.
- Ask them to choose two characters from the story and to place them in a situation or an adventure during the given season. Have them draw it and write a few sentences about it.
- When the groups have completed their posters, have each one come to the front of the class to describe or act out their scene to the class.
- Place all work on classroom display.

### 3. Feelings

**Materials:** coloured paper; coloured pens / markers; scissors; tape. Five big sheets of coloured paper, each cut into the shape of a cloud. On each one write *happy, sad, excited, angry, afraid* (*happy* on one, *sad* on another, and so on).

- Ask students what situations make them feel happy, sad, excited, angry and afraid. Write all their answers on the board.
- Give each student a coloured sheet of paper and have them cut it in four strips. On each strip ask them to write one thing that makes them feel happy, sad, excited, and one for angry or afraid.
- Stick the coloured paper clouds on a classroom wall.
- Ask each student to come to the front of the class and stick their pieces of paper under the correct cloud. As they do so, have them tell the class what they have written.

### 4. A menu

**Materials:** large sheets of paper; coloured pens or pencils

- Have students tell you what they would like to

have for supper and what their favourite food is.

- Ask students to pretend they are at a five star restaurant where they can order anything they like to eat and drink.
- Then have students describe a traditional meal from their own country and ask them to explain why they like it so much.
- Place students in pairs and give them a sheet of paper and coloured pens or pencils.
- Explain that they have to make a menu that will contain breakfast, lunch and dinner. Encourage students to illustrate their menus.
- Collect and shuffle all the menus and then hand them to different pairs. If a pair ends up with their own menu, have them swap with another pair.
- Bring a volunteer pair to the front of the class and have them order a meal from the menu they have. The pair who made the menu being ordered from, has to stand up and pretend to serve the meals.
- At the end of the activity, collect all menus and place them on classroom display.

## 5. Scenes

- Ask students what their favourite scene from the whole story was and why.
- Go through all the main characters and ask students what they liked about each character.
- Have students talk about what parts of the story made them feel sad, angry, and happy and made them laugh.
- Place students in small groups. Explain that they have to choose their favourite scene and write a short script about it.
- Have students act out their scenes in front of the class.

## Key words

- basket** ..... 'Let's take some lunch in a basket ...' (p. 5)
- dig** ..... He started to dig in the snow. (p. 14)
- dust** ..... He dusted and washed and painted. (p. 3)
- footprint** ..... Rat looked outside and saw Mole's footprints in the snow. (p. 13)
- gypsy caravan** ..... 'It's a gypsy caravan, my friend. It's a new thing!' (p. 9)
- hedgehog** ..... There were two hedgehogs at the table! (p. 16)
- hole** ..... He could see a hole in the river bank. (p. 4)
- knock** ..... They knocked loudly on the door. (p. 15)
- lost** ..... Mole was lost! (p. 12)
- oar** ..... He took the oars and ... oh no! (p. 7)
- river bank** ..... He could see a hole in the river bank. (p. 4)
- row** ..... Rat rowed across the river in his little boat. (p. 5)
- supper** ..... Late in the evening they stopped and ate their supper. (p. 10)
- tunnel** ..... Badger took them through a tunnel ... (p. 17)
- water rat** ..... It was a water rat! (p. 4)



## While-Reading activities

### Activity 1 (pages 3–6)

Circle the right words.

- 1 One **winter** / **spring** morning, Mole was busy.
- 2 He **knocked** / **dusted** and painted.
- 3 He could see a hole in the river bank. It was **Otter** / **a water rat**.
- 4 Rat rowed across the river in his little **boat** / **caravan**.
- 5 Mole listened to the sounds of **Toad** / **the river**.

### Activity 2 (pages 7–10)

Order the sentences.

- 1 After lunch, they all climbed on to the caravan. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Mole and Rat ate their lunch on the grass by the river bank. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Late in the evening they stopped and ate their supper. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Mole took the oars and fell into the river. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 One summer day Mole said, 'Let's go and visit Toad.' \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Mole stayed in Rat's house for many weeks. \_\_\_\_\_



### Activity 3 (pages 11–14)

Write the words in the sentences.

dark dig footprints lost sound tired

- 1 Suddenly the old grey horse heard the \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 The Wild Wood was \_\_\_\_\_ and then it started to snow.
- 3 Mole was \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 Rat followed the \_\_\_\_\_ into the Wild Wood.
- 5 'Rat, is it really you?' said a small, \_\_\_\_\_ Mole.
- 6 He started to \_\_\_\_\_ in the snow.

### Activity 4 (pages 15–18)

Tick ☒ the right answers.

- 1 Rat and Mole sat by the fire. They ate an excellent lunch. ☐
- 2 There were two water rats at the table! ☐
- 3 Badger made them an excellent lunch. ☐
- 4 The tunnel went under the Wild Wood. ☐
- 5 The houses were warm in the snow. ☐

### Activity 5 (pages 19–22)

Circle all the adjectives.

- 1 The house felt sad without him.
- 2 It was small. Yes, it was untidy but it was home.
- 3 Mole liked his new friends. But he loved his old life too.
- 4 It was wonderful to be home.



## After-Reading activities

### Activity 1

Write the seasons next to the actions.

Spring Summer Autumn Winter



- 1 Rat and Mole walked through a little village.
- 2 Mole stayed in Rat's house for many weeks.
- 3 Mole could see beautiful flowers all round him.
- 4 Mole went to the Wild Wood without Rat!

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### Activity 2

Circle the words.

knock footprint hedgehog dig supper tunnel hole

k	n	o	c	k	l	f	a	t	c
h	r	k	f	b	n	o	n	i	b
h	e	d	g	e	h	o	g	x	v
m	e	c	z	d	w	t	v	e	f
a	z	t	u	n	r	p	k	e	y
u	s	u	p	p	e	r	n	u	k
h	e	n	o	d	d	i	g	g	h
w	s	n	w	r	q	n	a	s	u
y	g	e	n	n	l	t	o	p	m
h	o	l	e	o	p	a	j	o	w

### Activity 3

Write the words in the sentences.

excited sad scared warm wonderful

- 1 Mole felt \_\_\_\_\_ to be home.
- 2 Toad was \_\_\_\_\_ with the gypsy caravan.
- 3 Mole was \_\_\_\_\_ in the dark Wild Wood.
- 4 Mole's home felt \_\_\_\_\_ without him.
- 5 The people in the houses were \_\_\_\_\_ and happy.

### Activity 4

Draw a picture of your favourite character in the story and write about him or her.



My favourite character in the story is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Answer Key

### In the back of the Reader

#### Before You Read

- 1 1 d 2 e 3 a 4 b 5 c  
2 a Rat b Mole c Badger d Otter e Toad

#### After You Read

- 1 1 F 2 T 3 T 4 T 5 T 6 F 7 F 8 T  
2 1 lunch 2 supper 3 supper 4 breakfast  
5 lunch 6 supper  
3 Students' own answers.

### In these Teacher's Notes

#### While-Reading activities

##### Activity 1

- 1 spring 2 dusted 3 water rat 4 boat  
5 the river

##### Activity 2

- 2, 4, 6, 5, 1, 3

##### Activity 3

- 1 sound 2 dark 3 lost 4 footprints 5 tired  
6 dig

##### Activity 4

- 1 ✗ They ate an excellent supper.  
2 ✗ There were two hedgehogs at the table!  
3 ✓  
4 ✓  
5 ✗ The houses were pretty in the snow.

##### Activity 5

- 1 sad 2 small, untidy 3 new, old 4 wonderful

## After-Reading activities

### Activity 1

- 1 Winter 2 Summer 3 Spring 4 Autumn

### Activity 2

k	n	o	c	k	l	f	a	t	c
h	r	k	f	b	n	o	n	i	b
h	e	d	g	e	h	o	g	x	v
m	e	c	z	d	w	t	v	e	f
a	z	t	u	n	r	p	k	e	y
u	s	u	p	p	e	r	n	u	k
h	e	n	o	d	d	i	g	g	h
w	s	n	w	r	q	n	a	s	u
y	g	e	n	n	l	t	o	p	m
h	o	l	e	o	p	a	j	o	w

### Activity 3

- 1 wonderful 2 excited 3 scared 4 sad 5 warm

### Activity 4

Students' own answers.