

1 Overview

Enjoy this endearing story of how a persistent mouse befriends a bear who thinks he is content to be alone.

2 Author & Illustrator

Bonny Becker dreamed of being a writer from an early age. She earned two degrees from college and has worked a variety of jobs, such as substitute teacher, photographer, hotel maid, waitress, and even fruit picker just to name a few, all before her dream was realized. Aside from writing her own books, she currently teaches young adults and children the art as well.

She is married, has two children and a beloved dog, Henry.

This Read-Aloud is the newest in a series of Bear books. Others include *A Birthday for Bear*, *A Bedtime for Bear*, and *The Sniffles for Bear*. *A Visitor for Bear* has been chosen for the new Oprah Children's Book Club. *The Magical Mrs. Plum* received awards and excellent reviews as well.

Kady MacDonald Denton was born in Canada where she was raised. She graduated from the University of Toronto before traveling to London to continue her studies. It was in London that she decided to focus upon writing and illustrating children's books.

Today she lives in Canada with her family.

Kady has won numerous awards for her illustrations. Two were for *A Child's Treasury of Nursery Rhymes*.

3 Before You Read

- Look at the cover. Who do you think the story is about?
Who is the main character? (Use the title to help you decide.)
- What does the sign on the door say? (No Visitors Allowed)
- Why do you suppose he is pointing to the sign and looking at mouse? (He is an unwelcome visitor.)

4 Vocabulary

- bright-eyed** — alertly eager
- firm** — fixed or settled, not likely to change
- vamoose** — leave quickly
- rigid** — unbending
- farewell** — goodbye
- whisked** — rushed
- for good measure** — a phrase that means "as an extra"
- venture** — a dangerous undertaking in which you are unsure as to the outcome
- intolerable** — unbearable
- insufferable** — same as intolerable, it means you are not able to suffer through it
- disbelief** — inability to believe
- murmur** — to complain aloud, but just loud enough for you to hear; no one else can understand the words; they just hear a low constant noise
- blubbered** — cried loudly
- unshuttered** — opened the wooden doors that cover the glass
- attentive** — really listening and paying close attention
- toodle-oo** — a fancy way of saying goodbye
- lump** — a cube of sugar

5 Picture Review & Comprehension

- What was Bear's reaction when Mouse knocked on the door? (He pointed to the sign that said "No Visitors.")
- Why do you think Bear didn't want visitors?
- What happened each time he went back to making tea? (There was mouse.)
- How is Mouse described each time? (small and gray and bright-eyed)
- List the places Mouse appeared. (cupboard, bread drawer, refrigerator, tea kettle)
- Can you tell from the illustrations if this story takes place in modern times or more olden days; why? (In the kitchen scene, when Bear is preparing tea for one, the stove pictured is an antique range; the water pump is one that would be commonly used in olden days.)
- How did Bear react after finding Mouse each time? (He got angrier and tried to keep him out.)
- What was the first thing Bear did to try to keep Mouse out of the house? (shut the door firmly)
- What did he do next to try to keep him out? (shut the door very firmly, locked it, and locked the windows)
- What did he do then to try to keep him out? (shut the door very, very firmly, locked it, boarded the windows, stopped up the chimney, plugged the bathtub drain)
- How do you think Mouse kept getting in?
- In the illustration of Bear screaming "Begone," you see the inside of his mouth and back to his throat. Do you know the name of the pink dangling part in his mouth? (uvula)
- How do you think he got into the refrigerator? the tea kettle?
- How did Mouse feel each time Bear asked him to leave? (upset)
- Did Mouse give up? (No) What character trait did Mouse display when he kept trying even though it was difficult and he faced unfriendliness? (persistence)
- What happened when Bear finally gave up and allowed Mouse to stay for tea? (He said he could have a snack but then had to go.)
- Was Bear showing hospitality? (No)
- Describe the tea time Bear and Mouse had together. (They did not talk for a long time. They just sat and drank their tea. Bear started the conversation and Mouse complimented him. Bear began to show tricks and tell jokes and they laughed together.)
- When tea was over, did Mouse leave right away? Why or why not? (No, because Bear wanted him to stay.)
- Do you think Mouse was invited over for tea again?
- Do you think they became friends?
- Go back through the story, looking only at the eyes of Bear and Mouse. Notice how the illustrator shows the emotion of the characters with the eyes.

6 After You Read

- Bear served Mouse tea. What do people sometimes put in tea? (milk or cream and sugar)
- This story highlights the reward (in this case, friendship) of persistence. Can you think of a Bible story in which someone had to face an unfriendly person who kept telling them no? (Moses)
- Recall some things that happened when Pharaoh told Moses no. (water turned to blood, frogs, gnats or lice, flies, livestock diseased, boils, thunder and hail, locusts, darkness, death of the firstborn)

WEEK 1: PART 2

HISTORY & CULTURE

- Discuss tea parties and table manners. Visit a local tea parlor if possible. Practice table manners at home and in the school lunch room if applicable. Some examples of Tea Time Etiquette from Sisters Tea Parlor in Buckner, KY:
 - Sit up straight in your chair.
 - Speak softly while dining.
 - Never speak with food in your mouth.
- Talk about how tea can be a part of a country's cultural identity (high tea in England, the importance of tea in China, etc.). Tea is the second most consumed drink in the world, after water.

SCIENCE

- Study tea plants. Where does tea grow best? What do the plants look like? How is tea cultivated?

Tea is the product of the leaves, leaf buds, and twigs of the *Camellia sinensis* plant. The plant has been cultivated in Southeast Asia for thousands of years. When European explorers reached Asia, tea was one of the first things they brought back with them. Tea then became extremely popular in Europe. There are six types of tea (white, yellow, green oolong, black, and pu-erh). The types of tea are a result of how long the tea leaves are dried and fermented. Once the tea has been dried and roasted, it can be packaged for sale or blended with other ingredients. The tea is brewed by pouring water over the dried ingredients.
- Sketch the tea plant in your *Composition & Sketchbook*.

ART

“Five O’Clock Tea,” 1880 by Mary Cassatt (Impressionism), Oil on canvas, Museum of Fine Arts – Boston, MA

Mary Cassatt (1845-1926) was born into a wealthy family in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. As a child, she visited Paris’s great art museums, and she wanted to become an artist. Her family at first disapproved of this idea, because women in that day were usually not permitted to study art and to sell paintings. However, Cassatt attended the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and then moved to Paris to further her art studies. Cassatt’s paintings were accepted into the Salon, an important exhibition in Paris. She traveled around Europe as a successful artist, and later became friends with Edgar Degas, another famous Impressionist artist.

In this Impressionist work, you can see bright colors and choppy brushstrokes. You see a scene from everyday life. Cassatt loved to capture mothers and their children in everyday life. When her family moved to Paris, she would often paint them drinking tea or relaxing in the garden. Look at the two women in this painting. Doesn’t it look as if they are looking at and listening to another person just to the right of the composition? What do you think they might be talking about? Which of the two women is a guest? (The woman sipping tea has her gloves and bonnet on. She is a guest.)

MUSIC

“Pie Jesu” from *Requiem in D Minor*, Op. 48 by Gabriel Fauré

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) was a French organist, pianist, teacher, and composer. He attended a music college in Paris, where he was taught to be a church organist and choirmaster. One of his teachers was Camille Saint-Saens, and the two became lifelong friends. His work as an organist and teacher left him little time to compose music, and he often retreated to the countryside during the summers to focus on composing music. By his last years, Fauré was recognized in France as the leading French composer of his day. His music has been described as linking the end of Romanticism to the beginning of Modernism.

Fauré’s *Requiem* is one of his most famous works. A requiem is a musical setting of a mass or liturgy often used at a funeral or to celebrate the eternal rest of a person’s soul. Fauré wrote this work from 1887-1890. *Requiem in D Minor* has seven parts or movements, and is thirty-five minutes long. Fauré wrote this work for an orchestra, piano, organ, a chorus, and two soloists, a soprano and a baritone. The “Pie Jesu” (Latin for “Good Jesus”) is a prayer to Jesus for eternal rest.

* Use the poetry guidelines found in the Teaching Guidelines to analyze the core elements of the poem each week. Additional content and vocabulary questions are provided weekly.

- This is a humorous three-line poem about what happens when someone named Algy meets a bear.
- What happened in line one? (Algy met the bear.)
- What was the bear like as described in line two? (bulgy, fat)
- Line three tells us why he was bulgy. What had the bear done after meeting Algy? (eaten him)