Relibit Litil

by Robert Lawson

Classroom Favorites

Teacher's Guide by Pam Spinner

A Perma-Bound Production

Synopsis

All the chatter on The Hill is about the New Folks who are moving into the Big House. Will they be Planting People? Will they have dogs or cats? Father, Mother, Little Georgie, Uncle Analdas and all of the other little creatures have entertaining adventures, as well as lessons about life, in the meadows, farms and woods of Rabbit Hill, Connecticut. Their adventures lead them to discover that the New Folks are better than they ever imagined! Their "live and let live" attitude towards the animals let them enjoy the many pleasures of life, along with confusing the townspeople. Their consideration for the needs of all living things make the animals hope The New Folks never move away.

Biographical Sketch

Robert Lawson is the author and illustrator of Rabbit Hill. He was born October 4, 1892 in New York City. He attended New York School of Fine and Applied Arts from 1911-1913. He tells that his love for good books came from his mother. She didn't care what he was reading, as long as he was reading. In 1936 Robert Lawson and his wife, Marie Abrams, who was also an author/illustrator, built Rabbit Hill on Weston Road in Westport, Connecticut. When Lawson started to write Rabbit Hill, he was going to tell about how rabbits and woodchucks ate up everthing you planted and how deer trampled gardens and skunks upset garbage pails, but when he started to write he became fond of Little Georgie and his mother and father, so changed the story.

Robert Lawson and his wife lived together on Rabbit Hill until his death in 1957.

Critic's Corner

Robert Lawson was nominated for and won several Caldecott and Newbery Medals. In 1945 he won the Newbery Medal for *Rabbit Hill*. This made him the first person to ever win a Newbery and a Caldecott Medal.

Note to Teacher: Throughout Rabbit Hill many new words are used that may be unfamiliar to students. Because there are so many of them, presenting them all at once or prior to the chapter they appear in may take away from the fun of reading the story. For this reason, a list of words and their meanings are presented for the students to use while reading the story. Students can refer to this while reading the story to ensure understanding. Vocabulary activities are then presented for use after completing the story.

Objectives

- 1. To recall details
- 2. To expand vocabulary

- 3. To use inferential/context clues to gather information
- 4. To use problem-solving skills
- 5. To verbalize an understanding of the relationship between humans and animals (or nature)
- 6. To verbalize how a variety of personalities affect people who live closely together

Meaning Study

Chapter 1

p. 12 optimistic - cheerful; hopeful

felicitous - happy

bountiful - generous; plentiful

- p. 13 auspicious promising success; favorable; fortunate
- p. 14 solemn quiet

successors - people (or things) who come next or after someone else

shiftless - lazy

inconsiderate - not respecting the feelings of others

- p. 16 hearsay gossip; rumor
- p. 18 obliged grateful; thankful
- p. 21 renaissance to come again; rebirth
- p. 24 leeward the side protected from the wind

Chapter 2

- p. 27 frenzy excitement
- p. 28 diabolical wicked; cruel

untimely - not happening at a good time; not at the usual time

negligence - carelessness

husbanding - managing carefully

commendable - very well done

folly - silly; foolish

accumulation - a collection; a heap

provender - food put away to be eaten a little at a time

- p. 29 gout an illness characterized by arthritic attacks
- p. 30 negligible not worth much

capacity - power to hold something

sustained - to prolong; to keep up

unduly - wrongly

indulgence - to give in to desires

p. 31 louts - stupid, awkward fellows

relish - to enjoy

p. 32 advent - the coming or arrival of something

menage - a collection

p. 33 beneficial - producing good results

acute - severe; critical

edibles - things that can be eaten

extant - still living

anticipate - expect; wait for

eventuality - possible ending or result

propitious - favorable

Chapter 3

p. 43 prodigious - great in size, force or length

pessimistic - believing the worst will happen

Chapter 4

- p. 52 bountiful a great deal; many
- p. 56 solemnly seriously; quietly
- p. 57 knick knacks small trinkets
- p. 59 harrow a plow used on a farm

Chapter 5

p. 62 plowshare - the cutting blade of a plow

furrows - long, narrow shallow trenches

proceedings - sequence of events

ecstatically - delightedly

- p. 63 adjacent close to; next to
- p. 64 ultimatum a final statement of terms
- p. 67 flippant disrespectful

ascertain - to find out

disposition - mood; personality

p. 68 speculation - thinking or talking about what might happen

Chapter 6

p. 72 occupants - those inside of something

Chapter 7

p. 76 indolently - lazily

p. 77 gentility - well bred; taught to be gentle

aspersions - untruths

- p. 79 cronies close friends
- p. 80 aristocrats people from an upper class
- p. 81 contradict argue, say the opposite

belligerently - angrily

- p. 82 queer different from the rest
- p. 84 impertinent rude

prying - looking at closely

p. 86 allot - distribute

Chapter 8

- p. 89 consternation sudden confusion, amazement or frustration
- p. 90 hypocritical pretending to believe
- p. 98 wrangling arguing

encroaching - intruding

- p. 99 banishment forced to leave
- p. 100 prohibition the act of forbidding

Chapter 10

p. 103 congenial - agreeable

inconsolable - not able to feel better

- p. 104 summoned called
- p. 106 succulent juicy

ecstasy - extremely happy

- p. 107 incessant seemingly never-ending; constant
- p. 110 tidings information; news

gnarled - twisted

Chapter 11

p. 115 forebodings - warnings of danger

copiously - fully

wrathfully - violently; full of anger

- p. 116 eloquence persuasiveness; ability to change a mind
- p. 118 tarpaulins a waterproof canvas

Chapter 12

- p. 121 cavorted pranced happily
- p. 128 marauders a person or animal in search of something not belonging to them

Discussion Questions

Chapter 1

1. Name and describe the characters we have been introduced to so far.

Little Georgie: young, innocent, full of energy; curious, little rabbit

Mother: level-headed; responsible; loving

Father: intelligent, very responsible, a leader; somewhat bossy

Porkey the Woodchuck: complaining; irritable

Bill Hickey: carpenter

Louie Kernstawk: mason

Tim McGrath: farmer

Gray Fox: polite; friendly

Gray Squirrel: absent-minded; forgetful; old fashioned

Willie Fieldmouse: energetic; helpful; friendly

Mole: nearly blind; friendly; not very bright

Phewie the Skunk: polite, friendly, smelly

Red Buck: polite; intelligent

- 2. What is the main topic of discussion among the animals? New Folks are moving into The Big House.
- 3. What do you call the homes that rabbits live in? *Burrows*
- 4. Do the animals want New Folks to come? Why or why not?

Yes, because there hasn't been much food for them to eat for quite a while. There haven't been any gardens planted recently with food for them.

- 5. What kind of New Folks do they want to come? Why? Planting Folks so they can have food to eat.
- 6. Compare/contrast the way Father talks to the way the other animals talk. Why does Father speak this way?

 Father talks about the same things and has the same basic interests as the other animals, but Father is a Southern Gentleman and speaks using big words. He also thinks carefully about what he says before speaking.

Chapter 2

1. What were some dangers that might occur to the animals because of the New Folks?

Dogs, cats, ferrets, shotguns, rifles, explosives, traps, snares,

poison and poison gases, boys (children).

- 2. Does Mother have good reason to worry? *Yes, there are many dangers.*
- 3. Where is Little Georgie going? *To get Uncle Analdas*.
- 4. Why does the family want Uncle Analdas to come and live with them?

He is lonely, the food situation in Danbury is not good, and Uncle Analdas is the oldest member of the family and has had many years of experience with Man and his ways.

- 5. How does Little Georgie feel about going? *Excited.*
- 6. Name some things Georgie has done to show he was a "big boy" now.

He could run almost as fast as Father, he knew most of Father's tricks, for the past few months he had done all the marketing for the family, had easily avoided dogs, crossed the Black Road safely twice a day.

Chapter 3

- 1. What did Georgie take with him on his trip?

 Lunch and a letter for Uncle Analdas packed in a knapsack.
- 2. What directions did Father give Little Georgie before he left him?

No dawdling, no foolishness, keep close to the road but well off it, watch your bridges and crossings.

3. What did Father mean when he asked Georgie to "recite his dogs"?

Name ever; dog that Georgie might encounter on his way to get Uncle Analdas.

- What are "checks and doublings"?
 Moves to use when running from dogs.
- 5. How long should this trip take Georgie to complete? One day.

6. How did Georgie relieve his boredom? Tell what problems this caused him.

Hummed and sang a song. He was not paying attention like he should have and got careless. He almost got caught by a dog.

- Did Georgie ever find Uncle Analdas? Yes.
- 8. How do you think Georgie felt about no one wanting to hear his song?
 Sad.

Chapter 4

- 1. Why were Little Georgie and Uncle Analdas traveling slowly? Because Uncle Analdas was very old and couldn't move quickly.
- 2. Describe what Uncle Analdas thought were good times. The Soldiers went away; new Folks were coming; mills and factories were running; fields were growing wheat and potatoes and onions; big wagons were rolling along and spilling grain and hay.
- 3. Describe the bad times.

Soldiers fighting; British red coat soldiers burning houses and barns; shooting; burning fields; then good times for a while; then more soldiers, this time wearing blue uniforms. Factories and mills fell in; weeds grew in the fields.

- 4. Why did Uncle Analdas decide to take a bath after all this time? To make Georgie's mother happy.
- 5. What surprise happened concerning Georgie's song? How do you think this made Georgie feel?

 All of the animals Georgie and Uncle Analdas passed along the way home were singing Georgie's song. Now Georgie was feeling good.

Chapter 5

- 1. Why was Porkey upset?

 Porkey didn't want to move his home. He and Father were arguing about it.
- 2. Why was everyone asking Porkey to move? His present home was in a dangerous location.
- Describe what the animals had seen happening at the house. Newly repaired chicken house; vegetable garden was plowed, harrowed and raked; flower beds had been cultivated; lawns were dug up, raked and ready for seeding; the North Field was being plowed.
- 4. How did Georgie know that The Folks were coming tomorrow?

 Georgie heard Louie Kernstank telling Tim McGrath said that the holes in the driveway had to get filled up because the moving vans are coming tomorrow.
- 5. Why was mother so upset about moving vans? Throckmorton, one of Mother's favorite grandchildren, was "taken off" by a moving van.

Chapter 6

- Name some of the items the animals saw coming off of the moving van.
 Furniture; a large garbage can without a lid; tools and garden implements; lots of cans and jugs; books.
- 2. What made Phewie happy? Why?

 Large, old-fashioned garbage cans without lids; so Phewie could get garbage for dinner without a struggle.
- 3. Why did Uncle Analdas like a man who smoked a pipe? Because the smell of the pipe let you know the Man was coming.
- 4. Did the Folks have any pets? Explain and describe. Yes, a cat; an enormous tiger-striped gray cat.
- 5. Describe Sulphronia. Why did the sight of her make Phewie happy?

 Stout and flushed; because he had "never seen one that shape and size that didn't set out the elegantest garbidge"!
- 6. All things considered, were the animals happy with the New Folks?

 Yes

Chapter 7

- 1. Who was Mr. Muldoon? the cat
- 2. How did the animals "try him out"?

 Father hopped across the front lawn; Uncle Analdas ran close enough to throw some dirt on Mr. Muldoon; Willie Fieldmouse and some cousins jeered and made faces and sang a song.
- 3. How did Father discover that The New Folks had good manners?

 Father jumped on front of the moving car that belonged to the New Folks. The Man slammed on his brakes and said "Good evening" and "Good luck" to Father, and carefully drove on.
- 4. Describe how the animals determined that the Folks were nice.

 The man put up a sign at the driveway entrance that said "Please Drive Carefully on Account of Small Animals."
- 5. Why did Tim think The Folks were "queer" or "nuts"? Because they read books; The Man didn't want to use traps to catch small animals.
- 6. When is Dividing Night?

 May 26
- 6. What happens on Dividing Night?

 Each animal and his family is given an allotment of vegetables once harvest time comes.

Chapter 8

- 1 What happened to Willie? He fell into a barrel of water
- 2. Who saved him? The New Folks

- 3. Describe how the other animals reacted.

 They organized a search party; the animals became suspicious of the New Folks.
- 4. Why was Tim so upset?

 The lawn he had rolled was all torn up
- 5. What did The Man tell him? "Roll it down again."
- 6. How do you think Tim liked The Man's answer? He didn't like it at all.

Chapter 9

- 1. Compare/contrast how the farm looks now to how it looked before The Folks moved in.

 It is still the same farm with the same animals living on the Hill; the house has been repaired, fields have been planted, the animals are much happier.
- 2. What season do you think it is now? Why do you think so? Spring/summer; because Dividing Night is May 26; because crops are growing well and above the ground
- Why were Phewie and the gray Fox chosen as judges for Dividing Night?
 Because they were not interested in eating from the garden - they got their food from the garbage
- 4. What did the Fieldmouse family propose? Was it agreed on by all the rest of the animals?

 The Fieldmouse family proposed that a part of the garden be set aside for The Folks and no animals touch it. The other animals disagreed.
- 5. What did Father say to all animals in his closing speech? Nothing was to be touched until Midsummer's Eve.
- 6. What would happen if any animal "encroached on property not his own"?
 They would risk banishment from the community.
- 7. When could the animals begin to "harvest"? Why did they have to wait?

 Midsummer's Eve because allowing the plants to mature made for a more plentiful supply.
- 8. What hideous sound made everyone silent? The shriek of car brakes
- 9. Who do you think The Man wrapped in his coat? Accept reasonable answers.

Chapter 10

- 1. How was the attitude on The Hill different from what is was before? Why?

 Everyone was grief-stricken, because they thought Little Georgie was dead.
- 2. Tell what good news Willie Fieldmouse had. How did it make everyone feel?

He had seen Little Georgie in The Big House. Now everyone was joyful again.

Chapter 11

- 1. Why had Willie not seen Little Georgie again? The Folks spent most of their time in an upstairs sitting room, so Willie could not see them in the window.
- 2. How did they know Georgie was still in the house? The Lady gathered clover, carrot tops, lettuce leaves or peavines each morning
- 3. What new feelings did some of the animals have about The New Folks? Tell what caused these feelings.

 They did not trust them.
- 4. Did all the animals feel the same way?
- 5. What kind of problems did these new feelings start on The Hill? *The animals were arguing.*
- 6. Why did Uncle Analdas move out? Where did he go? How was he causing bad feelings? He and Father had an argument; he moved in with Porkey; he was starting rumors about what The Folks were doing to Georgie.
- 7. What did Uncle Analdas say that Louie Kernstawk was building?

 Traps and springguns and poisons and gases
- 8. What came on Tim McGrath's truck? What does Uncle Analdas say it is?

 A heavy wooden packing case, a gallows

Chapter 12

- 1. Where did the animals go on Midsummer's Eve? To the garden
- 2. Who did they find there?

 The Folks and Little Georgie
- 3. What was under the tarpaulin?

 A statue of St. Frances of Assisi with little animals around his feet
- 4. How was this good for the animals?

 There was water dropping from his hands into a pool in front of him, and things for The Animals to eat set out all around him.
- 5. Describe how the animals were feeling. Awe struck, amazed, etc.
- 6. What did Red Buck say that all the animals agreed to? The garden should be forbidden ground to all animals now.
- 7. Describe the situation on Rabbit Hill at the end of the story. How is this different from the situation at the beginning of the story?

All animals were content, The Folks were happy, In the beginning all animals were not happy with their lives. They were in "bad times," now they are in "good times."

8. What couldn't Tim McGrath understand?

Why his fences and traps didn't keep animals out.

Discussion Questions - After the Story

- Compare/contrast Tim McGrath's and Louie's approaches to keeping the animals out of their garden to The New Folks' approach.
 - A. Would both approaches work? Which would work better? Why do you think so?
 - B. How could each of these approaches be used on people also? What results would each have? Explain your thoughts. Tim and Louie used fences and traps. The Folks shared. Yes, both approaches would work; The Folks' approach worked better. Answers will vary for "why." Saying "Absolutely not" and not being willing to compromise will usually not get positive results. Compromising, being open minded, sharing, will usually get more positive results.
- 2. Do you think the coming of The New Folks changed the relationships among the animals? Explain.

 Before The Folks, the animals went from day to day with no real "leader" or "rules" to follow. They had no reason for such things. After The Folks, they had reason to converse, make decisions, deal with happiness and sadness, make rules, etc.

 They, unknowingly, had leaders and followers, had to make rules and decisions, deal directly with different, conflicting personalities, etc.

Activities

- Pretend you are one of the animals in the story. Write a short story/paragraph telling about what a day would be like in your school if you were this animal. Be sure to include things you might find dangerous and why, as well as what things might look like from the animal's view.
- 2. Choose or make up a problem or conflict that deals with another person. Write how you think Tim McGrath or Louie might solve the problem. Write also how The New Folks might solve it. Tell what the possible results might be from each. Choose which results you think are better and tell why.

Another approach to this activity might be for the teacher to give a problem to the class. Divide the class in half. Instruct one half of the class to pretend they are Tim McGrath or Louie and solve the problem the way they might. Instruct the other half of the class to pretend they are the New Folks and solve the same problem the way they think The New Folks might. Each group should also include possible results their solutions might bring. Share results with the class and discuss pros and cons of each approach. Decide which way would be better and why.

Vocabulary Activities

Note: The following activities are not intended to be used with all of the vocabulary words. It is strongly suggested that the words are divided among the class so the students do not feel overwhelmed with vocabulary. Some suggestions for dividing the words:

- a. Teacher should choose ones found to be troublesome or particularly interesting during the reading of the story.
- b. Students should choose several words from each chapter or words they found to be particularly interesting from the overall story.
- c. All words should be written on individual strips of paper and placed in a container. Students can pick a given amount of words from the container to work with.
- Use a thesaurus. Students can locate words in the thesaurus.
 Write one sentence using the vocabulary words. Rewrite the sentence using a word from the thesaurus.
- 2. Locate the sentence using the vocabulary word in the story. Use the thesaurus to replace the word in the sentence from the story.
- Using a vocabulary word, think of a situation in a student's own life where he/she might be able to use the vocabulary word.
 Tell about the situation and use the vocabulary word in the tale.
- 4. Locate the sentence using the vocabulary word in the story. Illustrate the sentence where possible and explain how the illustration fits the sentence.

TEST

Comprehension

A. .	True and raise			
1.	No one liked Father because he thought he was better than everyone else.			
2.	It didn't matter whether or not the New Folks were planting people.			
3.	The past couple years had not been very good ones for the animals.			
4.	There were many dangers for the animals on and around The Hill.			
5.	The New Folks did not care about the animals.			
B. Fill in the Blanks				
1.	This story takes place on			
2.	A word to describe Little Georgie might be			
3.	A word to describe Uncle Analdas might be			
4.	Father might be considered to be the			
5.	The New Folks were			
6.	Georgie got hurt when			
7.	St. Francis of Assisi is the patron saint of			
C . §	Sequencing			
Nu	mber these sentences in the order they happened.			
A.	Willie fell into the water			
В.	The New Folks move in			
C.	The animals find out that New Folks are moving in			
D.	Georgie was hurt			
E.	Little Georgie goes to get Uncle Analdas			
F.	The animals saw the statue and the food			

Short Answer

1.	Explain how the Animals needed The New Folks and how The New Folks needed the Animals.
2.	Father seemed to be a type of leader of the Animals. What made him able to handle this role?
3.	Tell how things would have been different on The Hill if the New Folks had been just like people who lived on The Hill in the past.
4.	Describe the kind of personality Uncle Analdas had.
5.	Describe The Folks.
\mathbf{W}	ho Might Have Said
1.	"Soon I'll be old enough to do things just like Father!"
2.	"I'm the oldest and I've seen more happen than those blasted folks have seen any day!"
3.	"I'm very happy taking care of my children."
4.	"Set up more traps in the carrot patch! We'll stop those darn animals!"
5.	"Why don't these animals stop teasing me and let me sleep?"
6.	"I'm quite sure that the requests I am making are in no way unreasonable, however you seem to strongly
	feel that they are."
7.	"We must share our harvest with the animals and be sure they are well taken care of."

Complete the Sentences Because Willie Fieldmouse fell into the water 1. Because no one recently living on The Hill had been Planters 2. Because Uncle Analdas was starting bad rumors _______. 3. Because Georgie got hit by a car 4. Because the New Folks moved in _____ 5.

Vocabulary

1.	"Well, it's high time there were New Folk's in the Big House and I do hope they're planting Folks, not shiftless
	like the last ones."
	Shiftless probably means
2.	"Unfortunately, our somewhat straitened circumstances of recent years have not permitted the accumulation of any great store of winter <u>provender</u> Provender probably means
3.	"As a matter of fact," said Father, "I can think of no more <u>propitious</u> time for your Uncle Analdas to visit" Propitious probably means
4.	There was <u>consternation</u> among the animals when Willie failed to report to the group waiting at the burrow. Consternation probably means
5.	"This news of Georgie's may promise the approach of a more <u>felicitous</u> and bountiful era." said Father. Felicitous probably means
6.	Then evil days had fallen upon the Hill. The good Folks had moved away and their <u>successors</u> had been mean, shiftless, inconsiderate. Successors probably means
7.	the lawns had gone to crab grass and weeds, and there was no garden. Last autumn even they had gone, leaving the empty house with it <u>desolate</u> black windows and its shutters flapping through the winter storms. Desolate probably means
8.	"Is there any clear proof of this most desirable addition to our neighborhood, or is it more hearsay?" Hearsay probably moons

9.	" As you are aware, children should be heard but not seen. If they are kept indoors until large enough to properly take care of themselves, if they are taught to be always observant and alert, the danger from cats is practically negligible." Negligible probably means
10.	Little Georgie's heart leaped with excitement at the prospect, but he managed to lie quietly while Mother did a fresh bit of worrying and Father allayed her fears - as much as possible. Allayed probably means
11.	Although Mother had worried about the state of Uncle Analdas' home with no feminine hands around to keep things neat, she could never, in her most pessimistic moments, have pictured anything quite so disorderly as the burrow to which Little Georgie was welcomed. Pessimistic probably means
12.	Mr. Muldoon was lying on the front step in the bright sunlight, surveying his new surroundings, when Father hopped across the front lawn, only a few feet away. Mr. Muldoon merely eyed him indolently and continued to survey the landscape. Indolently probably means
13.	He was coming down the drive carrying a neat wooden sign fastened to a stake, a crowbar, a hammer, and various other implements. Implements probably means
14.	"Now I ain't never lived in no bluegrass region, so I don't know nothin' about <u>aristocrats</u> and <u>gentilities</u> and them things, but what I hold is this " Aristocrats and gentilities probably mean
15.	Seated in a dark shadow on the sill, he could safely observe the Folks and listen to their garden plans. Tonight, surrounded by a sea of catalogs, they had been making out their lists of seeds and plants. A sea of catalogs probably means

ANSWER KEY

A. Comprehension

- 1. F
- 2. F
- 3. T
- 4. T
- 5. F

B. Fill in the Blank

- 1. Rabbit Hill
- 2. Answers may vary.
- 3. Answers may vary.
- 4. leader
- 5. nice, planting people
- 6. he got hit by a car
- 7. animals

C. Sequential Order

- A. 4
- B. 3
- C. 1
- D. 5
- E. 2
- F. 6

Short Answer

Accept any reasonable answers.

Who Might Have Said . . .

- 1. Little Georgie
- 5. Mr. Muldoon
- 2. Uncle Analdas
- 6. Father
- 3. Mother
- 7. The Folks
- 4. Tim McGrath

Complete the Sentences

Accept any reasonable answers.

Vocabulary

- 1. lazy
- 2. food; food to be stored
- 3. favorable; better
- 4. concern; worry; confusion
- 5. happy
- 6. persons who came next
- 7. empty; deserted
- 8. rumors; untruths
- 9. none; very little
- 10. calmed
- 11. worst; believing the worst
- 12. lazily; uncaringly
- 13. tools
- 14. rich people; well-bred people
- 15. a great many catalogs



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