



RedRover Readers Program

**Discussion and Activity
Guide for**

The Forgotten Rabbit

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Concepts

- What do rabbits need to be safe?
- Why would someone get a rabbit for a pet?
- What do rabbits learn about us (people) from our behavior (how we treat them)?
- What responsibilities do people have when they get a pet? How long do those responsibilities last?

Write this question on the board before class: “What do rabbits need to be safe?”

Before Reading

Ask students if they have ever *seen* a rabbit.

Share the cover with the students. Read the title of the book. Ask three questions, such as:

- Describe the rabbit’s face.
- What is in the background? Is this rabbit inside or outside?
- Predict (make an educated guess): What do you think will happen in this story?

Clarify Vocabulary

- What does the word “forgotten” mean?
- What does the word “remember” mean?

Ask students to think about the question you wrote on the board ahead of class as they listen to the story. Ask what does it mean to be “safe?”

During Reading

Read the story aloud and make sure all the children can see the illustrations by walking around the room.

On the page where the children are giggling with the rabbit in the basket and the next page where the rabbit is jumping, ask after reading, “At first, they petted and played with me. I jumped straight up and wiggled my ears, binkying with joy,” ask, “How do you think the children are feeling here? How can you tell?” “How is the rabbit feeling in this picture? Why?” “What do you think ‘binkying’ mean?” (When a rabbit sprints around, jumps in the air, kicking their legs out to the side quickly they are binkying. This behavior most likely means a rabbit is happy and feeling joyful.)

On the page where the children are playing outside and the rabbit is watching them, ask, “What has changed?” (*the children’s behavior, the weather/ seasons*)

On the page where the rabbit is taken out of the cage, ask, “How do you think the rabbit feels in this picture??” “What might the girl be thinking in this picture?” Why do you think the family decided to give her their rabbit?

On the page that starts, “The girl laughed...” read the first two sentences. Ask, “What do you think it means to “periscope”?” (This is another classic rabbit behavior.) Ask, “Why do you think the rabbit is watching the girl?”

On the page where the text reads, “Rosalita said I was a natural. I jumped far and high. I jumped for joy.” Ask students to look at Rosalita and Bella and ask, “Describe these characters. What is similar about the way they look?”

Pause on the page with Rosalita smiling holding Bella that says, “I chinned Rosalita. I wanted everyone to know she was mine,” and ask, “How do you think Rosalita is feeling right now? Why?” “How is Bella communicating with Rosalita? And what is she saying?”

After Reading

Review the story’s illustrations without reading the words. Ask the students to tell you the story using the illustrations. Ask the questions (below) if the students need prompting or to guide the discussion.

- Why is the title of this book *The Forgotten Rabbit*?
- Where is the rabbit when the story begins? Then what happens?
- What happened when it got cold?
- Who comes and takes the rabbit out of the cage?
- What does Bella have with Rosalita that she does not have when she is in her cage with the first two children? (*warmth, fresh water, exercise, attention, etc.*)
- What does Bella learn about people?
- How does Rosalita communicate to Bella how she feels about her?

After retelling the story, ask: “What do rabbits need to be healthy, safe and happy?” Write the students’ responses on the board under your question. Read it out loud together with the students if appropriate (with students in second grade and higher.)

You may also want to ask:

- Do you think Bella remembers where she lived and how she was treated before she came to live with Rosalita?
- Do you think rabbits remember people they have known and places they have been?
- Why do you think some people help rabbits and other animals?

Activity: Safe and Warm

Tell the students that you are going to first “compare and contrast” two different images. Share with students the page that the rabbit is huddled in the corner of the cage during the snowy winter. Then show the students the next two pages where the rabbit is indoors, warm and safe with Rosalita.

Ask students to imagine that they are the rabbit. Ask, “How would you feel if you were in the cage outside in the snow?” “What is different about the animal’s environment in these two pictures?” “Which environment does the rabbit look like she prefers (likes better)?” “How can you tell?”

Here is an example conversation for the first comparison.

Adult: “How does the rabbit look like she might be feeling in this picture?”

Possible student response: “She feels happy.”

Adult extending the child’s thinking: “How do you know she feels happy?”

Possible student response: “The eyes.”

Adult: “Let’s describe her eyes.”

Possible student response: “Her eyes look open, bright, and alert.”

| How does Rabbit look? | In the cage out in the snow | Inside with Rosalita |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Example: eyes | closed sad | eyes look open bright alert |
| Eyes | | |
| Ears | | |
| Body | | |

Extension Activities: Choose one or more depending on time and interest.

A. Imagine a conversation between Bella and Rosalita

Show the story's final illustration of Rosalita holding Bella. Ask students to imagine a conversation between Bella and Rosalita. What would Bella say to Rosalita (if rabbits could talk in words)? What would Rosalita say? This conversation can take several forms:

- Ask two students to volunteer to role play each character in front of the class. After the role play (two minutes) ask the class what they would add to the conversation.
- Ask students to form pairs and role play.
- Ask students to write down a conversation working individually or in pairs.
- Write the conversation as a class with you or another adult writing on the white board or chart paper.
- Have students pretend to be Rosalita's voice and you pretend to be Bella as you respond to their statements and questions.

B. Class book: What do rabbits enjoy?

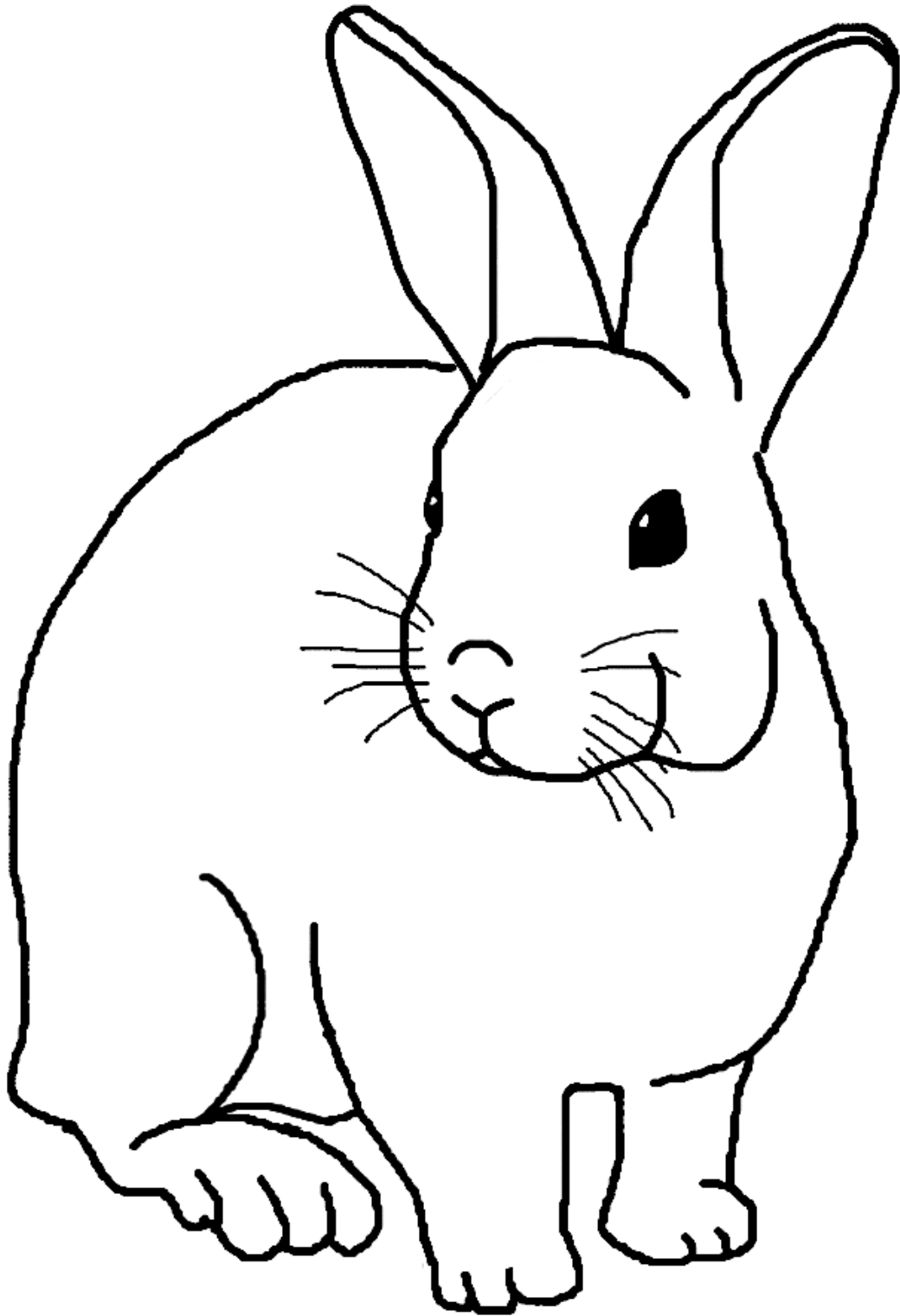
Review in the story the activities that Bella and Rosalita seem to enjoy doing together. Ask students for additional ideas on ways to play and show friendship with a rabbit. List ideas on the whiteboard or chart paper.

Give each student an 8-1/2 x 11 piece of paper. Ask students to draw one thing that they think rabbits enjoy doing based on the story and their own imaginations. Ask students to explain their illustrations to you either as a class or individually. Bind all of the pages together and create a title page for this class book.

C. Companion and Friend

What qualities make a person a good companion or friend for another person? Share ideas as a class. Write the ideas on a white board or chart paper. How can a person be a good companion or friend to a rabbit? Share ideas as a class. Circle ideas in common (a person's companion or friend and a rabbit's companion or friend.) How do the qualities of a good companion or friend apply to both a person and a rabbit (and another animal?) Why are these qualities similar?

Provide each student with large paper cutouts of a rabbit (see next page). Have students fill the paper figures with 5 to 10 words describing a good companion or friend.



www.squidoo.com/bunny-coloring-pages

<http://gonnafly.squidoo.com/bunny-coloring-pages>

Rabbit picture by GonnaFly. Used with Permission.

D. Activity: Compare and Contrast: Animal Behavior & Emotions: HAPPY

This activity works well to review animal behavior topics and compare and contrast how different animals express the emotion of “happy.” (You will need: *Max Talks to Me*, *The Forgotten Rabbit* and *Hens for Friends*.)

Draw a chart with 3-4 animals across the top and possible ways to categorize student observations along the side. Review animal behavior illustrations from the books and activity guides, and then ask students to make observations based on the illustrations to help answer the question: “How can you tell when cats, dogs, birds or people are happy?” If you include people, you can use the illustrations from the book, or you can ask the students to imagine they feel happy and to think about what they think their face would look like if they were happy. Variation: Have students work in pairs. Each partner takes turns acting “happy” while the other partner takes notes on what they observe.

| | People | Dogs | Rabbits | Birds |
|-----------------|--------|------|---------|-------|
| Eyes | | | | |
| Ears | | | | |
| Mouth | | | | |
| Body | | | | |
| Other behaviors | | | | |

Extension: After this activity, discuss how students might feel and what students might do (what behaviors would they respond with) if they come across an animal or person displaying the behaviors in the chart.

At the End of the Lesson

Ask students to reflect on one of these questions: “What surprised you most about the book and discussion today?” or “After today’s book and discussion, what would you like to learn more about?” or “What did you like about the book and discussion today?” You can do this with the whole group, in a sharing circle or related class meeting format, by having students fill out index cards, or another format you choose. We recommend that you ask different questions and have a variety of formats for the different books. Consider adding additional activities or lessons based on what they say they’d like to learn more about. Please share student responses and stories about changes in attitude or behavior you observe with us by adding to your report about this reading or by emailing Readers@RedRover.org.