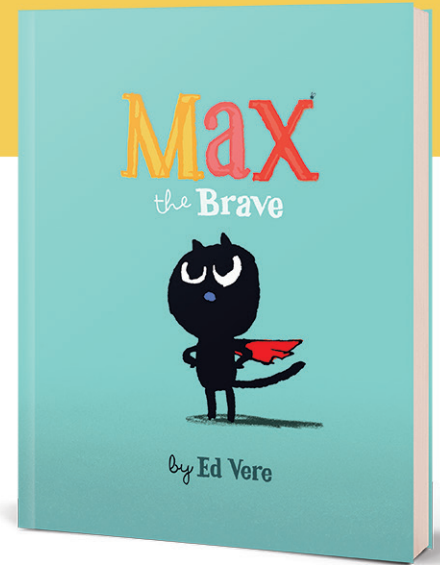


An Educator's Guide to *Max the Brave*

Written and Illustrated by Ed Vere

Note: The activities in this guide align with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts Grades K, 1, and 2, but standards for other grades may also apply.

Prepared by We Love Children's Books



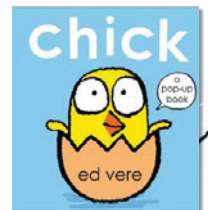
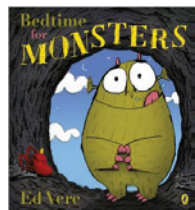
About the Book

Max is a fearless kitten. Max is a brave kitten. Max is a kitten who chases mice. But what does a mouse look like? Join Max as he goes on a hunt for mice with unexpected results! He meets many animals, but when he finally finds Mouse, he gets more than he bargained for! Ed Vere's humorous illustrations and text make this story a winning read-aloud choice for children of all ages.



About the Author

Ed Vere lives and works in London, England. He studied fine art at Camberwell College of Art. Ed has been writing and illustrating children's books since 1999. He is also a painter represented by galleries in London and Los Angeles.



Praise

“Full of playful humor...Highly recommended.”

—School Library Journal

“A cat-and-mouse game to be laughed at and reread.”

—Kirkus Reviews



Pre-Reading Discussion Questions and Activities

As a class, look at the cover of *Max the Brave*. What do students think is going to happen in this book? What kind of story do they think it will be? Based on the cover, what kind of creature do students think Max is? How do they think the fly fits in the story? Have them predict what the book will be about and give reasons for their predictions.

Before starting to read this book to the class, do a “picture walk” of the first pages of the story. Have students closely examine the illustrations. Discuss what is happening. Have them identify illustration details and explain what the details tell them about the story’s characters, setting, and events.

Ask students what they think it means to be brave. How have students been brave in their own lives? How do they think Max might be brave?

Max the Brave has a funny surprise twist at the end. As you read the story, stop after each animal encounter and ask students to predict what will happen next. Be sure to do this as you approach the ending of the book and Max’s encounter with Monster...and Mouse!

Vocabulary Words

There are some words in this book that students may not know. Using context and the accompanying illustrations in the story, define the words as a class. Discuss other words that could be used which mean the same thing. Have each student draw a picture illustrating one of these words.

- **Fearless**
- **Brave**
- **Scurry**
- **Dash**
- **Excuse**
- **Scot**
- **Elephant**
- **Skitter**
- **Certainly**
- **Monster**
- **Decides**
- **Cracked up**

RL K.4, 1.4

SL K.5, 1.5, 2.5

L K.4, 1.4, 2.4

Post-Reading Discussion Questions and Activities

Scurry/Scoot/Dash

When Max the Brave asks the different animals about whether they have seen Mouse, they each use a different verb to tell Max that Mouse has run away. Below are a list of the words used. As a class, discuss the meaning of each word. How are they similar? How are they different? Next have student volunteers act out each of the words. Can students think of other words to describe Mouse's movements? Discuss with the students how the words the author chose make the story more interesting to the reader.

- Scurry
- Dash
- Scoot
- Skitter

SL K.1, 1.1, 2.1

L K.5, 1.5, 2.5

What Is Max Like?

Come together as a class and discuss what "characters" are and how we learn about them from what they do and say in a story. Who is the main character of *Max the Brave*? Ask students to describe Max. What does he look like? What sorts of things can he do? What does he like? What does he not like? What challenges does Max encounter and how does he respond? Are there any other characters in this book?

RL K.1, K.3, K.7, 1.1, 1.3, 1.7, 2.1, 2.3, 2.7

SL K.1, K.2, 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2

First, Next, Last

Review the plot of the story with students. Ask them what comes first, what happens next, to identify the plot twist, and how the story ends. What is the main problem in this story? What is the main lesson? What was Mouse's plan to thwart Max? Did it work? Next, break students into pairs. Have them retell the story using the pictures for guidance. Then, have them summarize the story for each other. Does it matter in which order Max meets the other animals?

RL K.1, K.2, K.3, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5

SL K.1, K.2, 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2

More Adventures with Max

During the book, Max the Brave goes from animal to animal asking each if they are Mouse. Invite students to continue the story by choosing new animals for Max to meet. Have students illustrate this new encounter. Then, working with an adult if necessary, write the text for the scene, using a variation of the dialogue below. Reread the story aloud as a class, inserting the new passages after Max's encounter with the birds.

"Excuse me, please, but are you Mouse?"

"I'm not Mouse, I'm _____."

"But I just saw Mouse _____."

W K.3, 1.3, 2.3

SL K.5, 1.5, 2.5

A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words

The illustrations in *Max the Brave* are simple, but eloquent. For example, the first few pages show three pictures of Max the Brave. In the first, he looks cute; in the second, he is wearing a bow; and in the third, he is expressing his feelings about the bow. As a class, study these three pictures. What differences are there between the first and second picture showing the reader that Max might look sweet, but that he does not like to be dressed in bows. What about the pictures is the same? What is different? What feelings is Max expressing and how do the pictures show that? Are the illustrations funny? Why or why not?

RL K.1, K.3, K.7, 1.1, 1.3, 1.7, 2.1, 2.3, 2.7
SL K.1, K.2, 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2

Questions, Questions, Questions!

Break the class into teams and have them practice creating questions about the story using the “Five W’s and one H”: who, what, where, when, why, and how. Have each group pick their best question for each word and, with adult help if necessary, write them on flash cards. Gather together all the cards and take turns asking each team a question, awarding points for correct answers. When finished, review all the questions with the class. What makes a good question? You may want to incorporate questions of your own to ensure that the main points of the story are covered.

RL K.1, K.7, 1.1, 1.7, 2.1, 2.7
SL K.1, K.2, 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2
L K.1

Readers' Theater

Max the Brave's simple story line and text make it the perfect book for your class to perform. To help students “get into character,” have them make masks to wear depicting the different animals Max meets—these can be as simple or as elaborate as you wish. Have students read the lines of the different animals using different voices, and act out the scenes. When everyone is ready, record the performance using a video camera and make the final product available online.

RL 1.6, 2.6
RF K.4, 1.4, 2.4

My Favorite Part Is...

Give each student a sheet of paper and have them write the words “My favorite part of *Max the Brave* is...” Have students illustrate their favorite moment with an original drawing. Then, working with an adult if necessary, have students finish the sentence and write or dictate two or three additional sentences explaining why they like this scene.

W K.1, 1.1, 2.1
SL K.5, 1.5, 2.5

Elephant and Mouse

When Max the Brave tells the elephant that he is looking for Mouse, Elephant replies, “Eeek, Mouse?!” How is Elephant’s response different from the other animals? Why do students think Elephant responds this way? Is it true that elephants are afraid of mice? As a class, use the Internet or library resources to prove or disprove this idea.

RL K.1, K.10, 1.1, 2.1
W K.7, 1.7, 2.7
SL K.1, K.2, 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2

Gulp. Gulp? Gulp!

Sometimes the same word can be used to mean two different things. Come together as a class and look at the pages where Monster swallows Max. What noise does Monster make when he swallows Max? What noise does Max make when he is swallowed? Do they mean the same thing?

RL K.1, 1.1, 2.1
SL K.1, 1.1, 2.1
L K.4, K.5, 1.4, 1.5, 2.4, 2.5

Just Like Max

Now that students have read *Max the Brave*, ask them to think of a time when they felt brave. Working with an adult if necessary, have them write down their story and accompany it with an illustration.

W K.3, 1.3, 2.3
SL K.5, 1.5, 2.5

Visit the Common Core State Standards website to read about the individual standards listed in this guide: <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards>