

Reading for Literary Experience

• PIRLS Example Passage and Questions •

The Upside-Down Mice

by Roald Dahl



Once upon a time there lived an old man of 87 whose name was Labon.



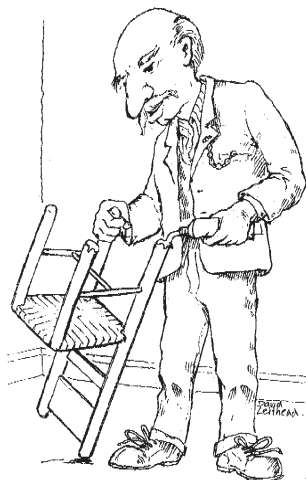
All his life he had been a quiet and peaceful person. He was very poor and very happy.

When Labon discovered that he had mice in his house, it did not bother him much at first. But the mice multiplied. They began to bother him. They kept on multiplying and finally there came a time when even he could stand it no longer.

“This is too much,” he said. “This really is going a bit too far.” He hobbled out of the house down the road to a shop where he bought some mousetraps, a piece of cheese and some glue.

When he got home, he put the glue on the underneath of the mousetraps and stuck them to the ceiling. Then he baited them carefully with pieces of cheese and set them to go off.

That night when the mice came out of their holes and saw the mousetraps on the ceiling, they thought it was a tremendous joke. They walked around on the



floor, nudging each other and pointing up with their front paws and roaring with laughter. After all, it was pretty silly, mousetraps on the ceiling.

When Labon came down the next morning and saw that there were no mice caught in the traps, he smiled but said nothing.

He took a chair and put glue on the bottom of its legs and stuck it upside-down to the ceiling, near the mousetraps. He did the same with the table, the television set and the lamp. He took everything that was on the floor and stuck it upside-down on the ceiling. He even put a little carpet up there.

The next night when the mice came out of their holes they were still joking and laughing about what they had seen the night before. But now, when they looked up at the ceiling, they stopped laughing very suddenly.

“Good gracious me!” cried one. “Look up there! There’s the floor!”

“Heavens above!” shouted another. “We must be standing on the ceiling!”

“I’m beginning to feel a little giddy,” said another.

“All the blood’s going to my head,” said another.

“This is terrible!” said a very senior mouse with long whiskers. “This is really terrible! We must do something about it at once!”

“I shall faint if I have to stand on my head any longer!” shouted a young mouse.

“Me too!”

“I can’t stand it!”

“Save us! Do something, somebody, quick!”

They were getting hysterical now. “I know what we’ll do,” said the very senior mouse. “We’ll all stand on our heads, then we’ll be the right way up.”

Obediently, they all stood on their heads, and after a long time, one by one they fainted from a rush of blood to their brains.

When Labon came down the next morning the floor was littered with mice. Quickly he gathered them up and popped them all in a basket.

So the thing to remember is this: whenever the world seems to be terribly upside-down, make sure you keep your feet firmly on the ground.



Questions **The Upside-Down Mice**

1. Why did Labon want to get rid of the mice?

(A) He had always hated mice.

* (B) There were too many of them.

(C) They laughed too loudly.

(D) They ate all his cheese.

2. Where did Labon put the mousetraps?

(A) in a basket

(B) near the mouse holes

(C) under the chairs

* (D) on the ceiling

3. Why were the mice nudging each other and pointing up with their paws when they came out of their holes on the first night?

(A) They could see a chair on the ceiling.

* (B) They thought Labon had done something silly.

(C) They wanted the cheese in the mousetraps.

(D) They were afraid of what they saw.

* correct answer

4. Why did Labon smile when he saw there were no mice in the traps?



5. What did Labon do after he stuck the chair to the ceiling?

- (A) smiled and said nothing
- (B) bought some mousetraps
- * (C) stuck everything to the ceiling
- (D) gave the mice some cheese

6. On the second night, where did the mice think they were standing and what did they decide to do about it?

Where the mice thought they were standing:



* correct answer

7. Find and copy **one** of the sentences that show the panic the mice felt on the second night.



8. How does the story show you what the mice thought was happening?

- (A) by telling you what Labon thought of the mice
- (B) by describing where the mice lived
- * (C) by telling you what the mice said to one another
- (D) by describing what the mice were like

9. Why was the floor covered with mice when Labon came down on the last morning?

- * (A) The mice had stood on their heads for too long.
- (B) Labon had given the mice too much cheese.
- (C) The mice had fallen from the ceiling.
- (D) Labon had put glue on the floor.

* correct answer

10. Where did Labon put the mice when he picked them up from the floor?



11. Do you think the mice were easy to fool? Give **one** reason why or why not.



12. You learn what Labon is like from the things he does. Describe what he is like and give **two** examples of what he does that show this.



13. Which words best describe this story?

- A serious and sad
- B scary and exciting
- * C funny and clever
- D thrilling and mysterious

14. Think about what Labon and the mice did in the story. Explain what makes the story unbelievable.



Stop

End of this part of the booklet.
Please stop working.

* correct answer