



## The Tale of Peter Rabbit - 1st Grade Book Guide

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### Book Summary

Peter Rabbit doesn't listen to his mother's warning and gets himself into deep trouble! How will he escape Mr. MacGregor's garden?



### Skills Focus

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.1.4:** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 1 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.6:** Distinguish between information provided by pictures or other illustrations and information provided by the words in a text

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7:** Use Illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.8:** Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text

**Social-Emotional Connection:** respect, actions & consequences, problem solving



### Teacher Overview

In this classic tale, Peter Rabbit goes into Mr. McGregor's garden against his mother's advice and gets himself into lots of trouble! As a result, he has to deal with the consequences of his actions. Readers will enjoy following along on Peter's mischievous adventures.

This charming story provides opportunities to discuss respect, actions and consequences and the importance of following directions. Invite children to consider the choices Peter made compared to the choices of his siblings and the different consequences they encountered. Highlight the multiple-meaning words featured in the text during small group instruction.



## Vocabulary

Write the vocabulary words on index cards or sentence strips and display them in a pocket chart where children can see them during the read-aloud. Display the chart as the book is being read for reference. Discuss the vocabulary prior to the read-aloud to aid comprehension.

- **mischief:** behavior that is often playful, but can be irresponsible and dangerous
- **fir tree:** Firs are evergreen trees of the pine family with leaves are like needles
- **accident:** an event that happens by chance, especially a harmful one
- **loaf:** a mass of bread or cake baked in one piece
- **currant buns:** a sweet bun containing currants
- **currant:** a small seedless raisin
- **blackberries:** a berry that is black or very dark purple when ripe
- **french beans:** the pod of a green bean or wax bean
- **parsley:** an herb with curled leaf clusters to garnish or season food
- **thief:** someone who steals
- **frighten:** to cause fear in; scare
- **naughty:** not behaving or obeying; mischievous
- **implore:** to beg or plead urgently
- **exert:** to push into effort or action
- **tremble:** to shake from fear, weakness, or cold
- **damp:** slightly wet
- **puzzle:** to confuse
- **twitch:** to move or pull with a quick, sudden motion
- **supper:** an evening meal; dinner
- **fortnight:** fourteen nights and days; two weeks
- **camomile tea:** a tea made from a plant with scented leaves
- **cucumber frame:** a structure made to help cucumbers grow upwards to save space
- **gooseberry net:** a net set around a gooseberry plant to protect it from birds and other small animals
- **toolshed:** a place to store tools
- **flowerpot:** a pot that holds seeds, flowers or plants
- **hoe:** a tool with a thin, flat blade to break up soil or remove weeds
- **wheelbarrow:** a tool used for moving things. It has a frame or box for putting things in and wheels and handles to hold and roll it from one place to another.
- **sieve:** a tool that has a mesh or tiny holes on the bottom to separate coarse from fine parts of loose matter



## Before You Read

Say: Today we are going to read the story, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*.

- I wonder if this is Peter (*point to the picture on the front cover*). What does it look like he is doing?
- I'm noticing that he is wearing a blue coat with fancy gold buttons. Do rabbits usually wear clothes? What does that tell you about the type of book this is?
- Have you ever seen a real rabbit? Does Peter look the same or different from a rabbit you have seen before?
- I'm noticing the word "Tale" in the title. Have you heard that word before? I know it's spelled differently than the tail on an animal, so it must mean something different. A tale is an imaginary story.
- What else are you noticing in this picture? What are you wondering?



## As You Read

Read *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* aloud to your students, or play the accompanying audio while projecting, pausing to model good reading strategies, defining words in the text, and asking discussion questions.

Ask:

- **SEL:** (page 1, after reading about the four little rabbits in Peter's family) Peter has 3 siblings. What are siblings? How many siblings do you have?
- **Skills focus:** (page 2, after reading that Mrs. Rabbit warned the little rabbits not to go into Mr. McGregor's garden) Let's look at this picture closely. Does it look like Peter is listening to his mother carefully? How do you know?
  - Mrs. Rabbit telling Peter and his siblings about Mr. McGregor's garden seems very important. Let's keep that in our minds as we keep reading.
- **Skills focus:** (page 3, after reading that Mrs. Rabbit said, "Now run along, and don't get into mischief.") What did Mrs. Rabbit mean when she told the little rabbits not to get into mischief? What is mischief? Mischief is behavior that is often playful, but can be irresponsible and dangerous.
- (after reading page 4, after reading, "Then old Mrs. Rabbit took a basket and her umbrella, and went through the wood to the baker's.") I'm noticing Mrs. Rabbit took an umbrella with her. What clue does that give you?
- **Skills focus:** (page 5, after reading that Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cotton-tail went down the lane to gather blackberries) I'm noticing Peter is not in this picture. Where do you think he might be? Do you think he's going to listen to his mother and follow her directions to only go into the fields or down the lane?
- **Skills focus:** (page 6, after reading that Peter ran straight away to Mr. McGregor's garden) Oh no! Was your prediction correct? Did Peter listen to his mother? What do you think is going to happen when Peter sneaks into Mr. McGregor's garden?
- **SEL:** (page 7, after reading that Peter ate lettuce, beans and radishes) How do you think Mr. McGregor is going to feel when he sees Peter eating the vegetables in his garden?
- **Skills focus:** (page 8, after reading that Peter felt rather sick) Why do you think he was feeling sick? I'm noticing he is holding his stomach. That makes me think he ate too much!
- **Skills focus:** (page 9, after reading that Mr. McGregor found Peter in his garden) Uh oh! How do you think Mr. McGregor is going to react when he sees Peter Rabbit in his garden?

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- **Skills focus:** (page 10, after reading that Mr. McGregor called out, “Stop thief!”) What is a thief? Why is Mr. McGregor calling Peter a thief?
- **Skills focus:** (page 11, after reading that Peter lost one shoe among the cabbages and the other among the potatoes) What do you think Mrs. Rabbit will say when she finds out Peter lost both his shoes in Mr. McGregor’s garden?
  - Have you ever lost anything? How did it make you feel when you lost it/them?
- **Skills focus:** (page 12, after reading that his new blue jacket got stuck in the gooseberry net) Oh no! His blue jacket! Do you think he’ll be able to get out of the gooseberry net before Mr. McGregor catches him?
- **Skills focus:** (page 13, after reading about the friendly sparrows) What do you think it means that the friendly sparrows “implored him to exert himself?” Do you think they were trying to be helpful? How do you know?
  - “Implored him to exert himself” means that they were urgently telling him to push himself free of the gooseberry net.
- **Skills focus:** (page 14, after reading about the sieve Mr. McGregor used to try to catch Peter) A sieve is a tool that has a mesh or tiny holes on the bottom to separate coarse from fine parts of loose matter. Do you think that was a good tool to use to catch Peter? Do you think Mr. McGregor could have used something better to catch Peter? What ideas do you have?
- **Skills focus:** (page 15, after reading that Peter jumped into a watering can) Oh no – he’s going to be all wet! Have you ever played hide and seek? Where is the best place you’ve ever hid?
- **Skills focus:** (page 16, after reading that Peter sneezed and Mr. McGregor was after him in no time) Do you think Mr. McGregor would have found Peter had he not sneezed?
- (page 17, after reading that Mr. McGregor tried to put his foot upon Peter) Rabbits are known to be very quick! Do you think Mr. McGregor will catch him?
- **Skills focus:** (page 18, after reading that Peter sat down to rest) I’m wondering if Mrs. Rabbit and the other little rabbits have realized that Peter is missing. Do you think they are out looking for him? Why or why not?
- **Skills focus:** (page 21, after reading Mr. McGregor was hoeing onions and his back was turned towards Peter) It seems like Mr. McGregor gave up looking for Peter and went back to doing work in the garden. Do you think Peter will be able to sneak past him without getting caught?
- **Skills focus:** (page 22, after reading that Peter slipped underneath the gate, and was safe at last) Phew! Safe at last! He did it! What do you think will happen next?
- **Skills focus:** (page 23, after reading that Mr. McGregor hung up the little jacket and the shoes for a scare-crow to frighten the blackbirds) Mr. McGregor hung up Peter’s little jacket and shoes as a scarecrow to frighten the blackbirds out of his garden. What do you think about what Mr. McGregor did with Peter’s coat?
- **SEL:** (page 24, after reading that it was the second little jacket and pair of shoes that Peter had lost in a fortnight) That was the second little jacket he lost in a fortnight. A fortnight is 2 weeks or 14 days. Did Mrs. Rabbit seem upset with Peter for losing it?
- **Skills focus:** (page 25, after reading that Peter was not very well during the evening) Why do you think Peter was not feeling well that evening?
- **Skills focus:** (page 26, after reading about Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cotton-tail’s supper) It seems like bread, milk and blackberries were a special treat for the little rabbits to have for dinner. Do you think it was fair that Peter did not get to enjoy the delicious supper with the other little rabbits? Why or why not?



## After You Read

Provide some or all of the following prompts to generate a classroom discussion. Give students time to ask questions and clarify things that might have been unclear.

Ask:

- **Skills focus:** Do you think Peter will ever try to sneak into Mr. McGregor’s garden again? Why or Why not?
- **SEL:** Was Peter being respectful toward his mother by not listening and following her directions? Why or why not?
- **Skills focus:** What lesson did Peter learn about not following directions?
- **SEL:** What were some of the consequences Peter faced after sneaking in the garden?
- **SEL:** Did Flopsy, Mopsy and Cottontail make good or bad choices throughout the story? What were their (good) consequences?



## Adaptations

**For use with ELL students:**

- Pre-teach vocabulary words by putting the words and corresponding pictures on index cards. Have them visible for children to view throughout the story on a white board, bulletin board or in a pocket chart.
- Provide students with a graphic organizer (T-chart or Venn Diagram) and ask them to compare and contrast Peter Rabbit and a real rabbit by drawing the similarities and differences between the food, clothing, actions, home, etc. of a real rabbit and what they read about Peter in the story.

**For use with small groups:**

- Discuss making good choices and the consequences of bad choices. Invite students to draw a picture of what happened to Peter Rabbit after he came home from Mr. McGregor’s garden.
- This can be an opportunity to introduce/re-teach multiple-meaning words to students. Define homophones and tell students that some words, although pronounced the same, have different spelling and different meanings. Then, have students draw pictures to portray the multiple meanings of words. Invite them to add other examples of homophones they have seen in their reading such as, dear and deer, be and bee, bare and bear. Provide the following examples from the text:
  - An example from the book is, “tale and tail.” In the title, The Tale of Peter Rabbit, the word “tale” means an imaginary story. The homophone, tail, sounds the same but is spelled differently and has a different definition.
  - Another example from the book is, “meet.” “But round the end of a cucumber frame, whom should he meet but Mr. McGregor!” The homophone, meat, has a different meaning.
  - Also featured in the book is the homophone, four. “Once upon a time there were four little Rabbits, and their names were— Flopsy, Mopsy, Cotton-tail, and Peter.” The homophone, for, has a different meaning.



## Book Extension Ideas

- **Skills focus:** Create a class graph recording students' favorite fruit or vegetable. After creating the graph, ask students to analyze the data by identifying which fruit or vegetable received the most votes and which fruit or vegetable received the least. Then, invite them to find the difference between the most and least. Encourage students to share why the fruit or vegetable they chose is their favorite.
- **Skills focus:** Discuss the fruits and vegetables that were featured in the text and that are often planted in a garden. Ask students to compare and contrast the fruits and vegetables by shape, texture, color, etc. Invite learners to also consider the health benefits of each (i.e. carrots promote healthy eyes and radishes are good for your heart).