

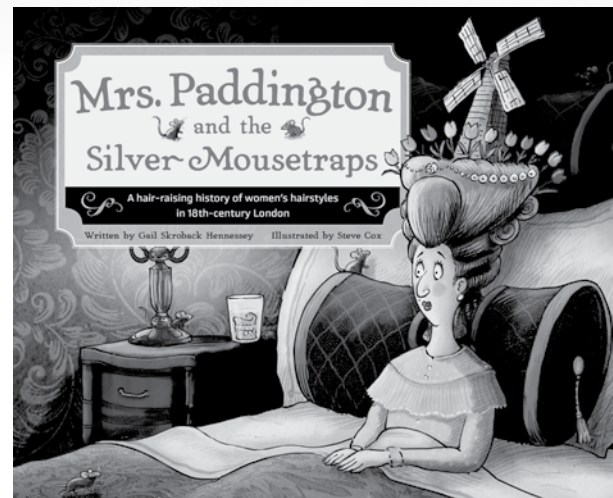
Teaching with *Mrs. Paddington and the Silver Mousetraps*

by Gail Skroback Hennessey

BEFORE READING: Explain that the story, *Mrs. Paddington and the Silver Mousetraps*, takes place in Great Britain. Locate Great Britain on a world map. Encourage students to share any prior knowledge about Great Britain. Review the cover for *Mrs. Paddington and the Silver Mousetraps* and encourage readers to share any thoughts they may have based on the illustrations. Look at the illustrations on pages 2-3 (Mrs. Paddington's hairdresser). What are five things you can spot? Look at the illustration (page 4) of Mrs. Paddington with the bird and its cage in her hair. What might be some problems with having a bird in your hair?

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Lexile: 950

2,429 words

DURING READING: Stop from time to time to make **text-to-self connections**.

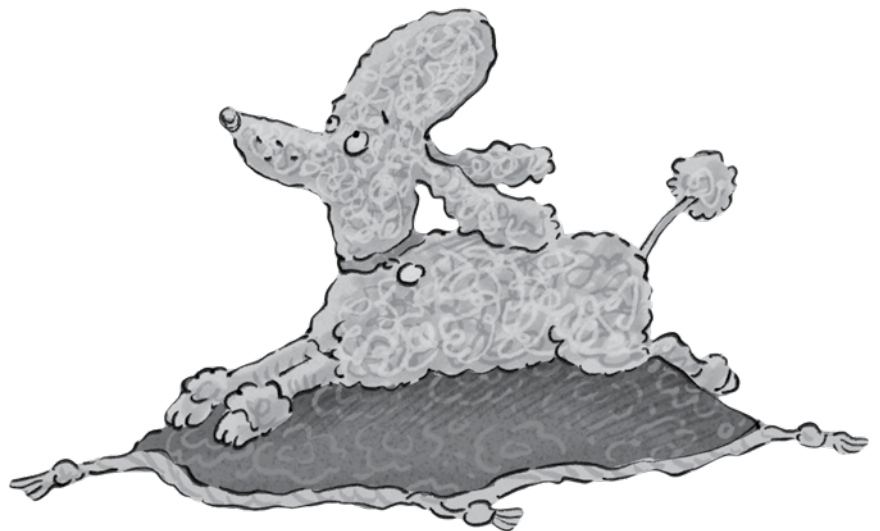
Would you go through what Mrs. Paddington did to try and win best hair at a party? How do you think the maid felt having to have her hair cut to supply extensions to Mrs. Paddington's hairdo? What might YOU place in a hairdo for a hair contest? Have you ever done something which caused others to laugh at you?

Discuss Problem solving. What was Mrs. Paddington's problem? How did she go about solving her problem? Can you think of anyone else in the story that has a problem? What might be a solution to their problem? What is a problem you may have? For example, maybe you aren't very good at basketball. How might you go about solving your problem?

AFTER READING: Have each student explain their favorite part in the story. Do you think Mrs. Paddington will win first prize at the Moonlight Ball? Wealthy women used flour dyed in different colors to decorate their hair. It caused the price of flour for other uses, such as bread, to increase. Many people couldn't afford higher flour costs. What do you think most people thought of wealthy women (and men) using flour to color their hair?

Discussion Questions (*key at end*):

1. Explain 3 facts about how the high hairdos were made.
2. What were two inventions that helped women with tall hairstyles?
3. What were two difficulties women wearing towering hairdos encountered?
4. What were two things about the hairdos which attracted mice and other bugs?
What two hair products might be similar which are used to style hair today?
5. Mrs. Paddington endured embarrassing moments in her desire to have a beautiful hairdo. List two of them.
6. What advice does Mrs. Kindlesides give to Mrs. Paddington?
7. Why was the maid, Carista, unhappy?
8. If you were Mr. Berryworth, what would you think of customers such as Mrs. Kindlesides, Mrs. Abernathy and Mrs. Paddington?
9. What were three things that women placed in their hair for balls? What were two reasons, Mrs. Paddington would NEVER place a bird in a birdcage in her hair ever again.



Vocabulary: Students may need to review the following words/terms:

Ball: fancy party or gathering

gold-leafed: thin sheet of gold added to an object

summer solstice: when the Sun reaches its highest point in the sky

array: display of something

extensions: something added

pomade: scented oil used on hair or scalp

masterpiece: a work of art, best effort

accustomed: to get used to something

manner: a behavior, a way something is done.

Establishment: business, household

Elegant: fancy, stylish in appearance

Pewter: a silver gray (or bluish) metal

Vigorously: forcefully, with effort

Frigate: a ship

Place the words into creative sentences. Discuss syllables and have the students determine how many syllables are in the different vocabulary words. A tip is to have students place their hand under their chin. Each time their chin drops, is one syllable. For example: **ELEPHANT** (chin drops 3 times, so the word has 3 syllables)

Activities

1. Discuss character traits. Conceited, helpful, vain, shy, caring, etc. What are three traits you could say about Mrs. P. Find examples in this story to support your traits. What are three character traits you would give yourself? Give an example to show why these traits apply to you.
2. Use your imagination, draw or color a picture of a woman's hairstyle for the Moonlight Ball! Write **three** facts learned about the period of time on your drawing.
3. Pretend you are Mrs. Paddington and write about the Moonlight Ball. Did you win the hair contest? Why, why not?
4. Pretend you are Mrs. Blinkhorn or Mr. Berryworth. Write a diary entry about your dealings with Mrs. Paddington.
5. Sequencing: Write 5 events from the story on five different pieces of paper. Exchange with someone else and place in proper sequence for the story.
6. Action and Reaction chart:

Have students write 4 actions taken by Mrs. Paddington and 4 reactions.

For example:

Action: Mrs. Paddington needed to take a carriage write to visit The Silver Mousetrap Shop but the carriage wasn't high enough for her large hairdo

Reaction: Mrs. Paddington stuck her head out the carriage window.

Action

Reaction

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

FUN FACTS about HAIR:

1. The word, shampoo, comes for an Indian word in Hindi.
2. Women used colorful flour in their hair and often wealthy people had a room to powder their hair. Today, we have the word “powder room” for bathroom!
3. It was once believed that helpful spirits lived in the hair and because washing the hair might harm these spirits, people didn’t wash their hair very often. Once a year to wash one’s hair was common at the time of this story.
4. A strand of hair can tell a lot of information about what you have placed into your body, like foods or medicines.

Website of interest: <http://www.marshallbrain.com/science/hair-strength.htm> How Strong is a strand of your hair?

Key to Discussion Questions:

1. Frame was used, small pillow stuffed with dog and horse hair for fillers, hair extensions were used, it took hours to do
2. Special pillows with opening for neck so hairdo wouldn’t get flattened and backscratcher
3. Getting through doorways, sitting inside a carriage, bending over, etc.
4. Sugar water to keep hair in place and using sticky mixture of beef marrow and wax to help style the hair/hair spray and mousse.
5. Sticking neck out of the carriage, crawling into the Silver Mousetrap Shop, a mouse jumping into a tea cup while meeting Mrs. Kindlesides, etc.
6. Suggested a visit to Silver Mousetrap Shop to buy some silver mousetraps.
7. She had “donated” her long hair to be used in Mrs. Paddington’s hairdo.
8. Answers will vary
9. ships, display of solar system, musical instruments, bird/bird cage, ships/squawked giving her a headache, sunflower seeds fell and scratched her eye, seed got stuck in her nose, smell of the birdcage