

INDEPENDENT STUDY COMPANION

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS



A LIVING BOOK STUDY - LEARNING BOOKLET

Name: _____

TASKS: DAY 1

Week 1 - Chapter 1: The River Bank

READ:

Chapter 1: Mole meets Rat and discovers the river and boating.

NARRATION:

What makes the riverbank so appealing to Mole? Find the line about 'simply messing about in boats' and explain it in your own words.

EXTENSION:

Nature: research riverbank wildlife - water voles, otters and kingfishers. Which animal is Ratty most likely based on?

Your response:

TASKS: DAY 2

Week 1 - Chapter 2: The Open Road

READ:

Chapter 2: meeting Toad, and the motor-car that smashes his caravan.

NARRATION:

What does Grahame show us about Toad's personality through his changing enthusiasms - first the caravan, then the motor car?

EXTENSION:

History: research the arrival of motor cars in Edwardian England. Why might they have seemed so exciting and dangerous?

Your response:

TASKS: DAY 3

Week 1 - Chapter 3: The Wild Wood

READ:

Chapter 3: Mole's dangerous solo trip, and finding Badger's home.

WRITING OPPORTUNITY:

Describe a frightening place using your five senses, as Grahame does with the Wild Wood.

EXTENSION:

Discuss: how does Grahame build fear and atmosphere in this chapter?

Your response:

TASKS: DAY 4

Week 2 - Chapter 4: Mr Badger

READ:

Chapter 4: meeting Badger properly, and seeing his underground home.

DISCUSS:

Compare Badger's home to Mole's and Rat's homes. What does each home say about its owner?

EXTENSION:

Art: draw a cross-section of Badger's underground home.

Your response:

TASKS: DAY 5

Week 2 - Chapter 5: Dulce Domum

READ:

Chapter 5: Mole revisits his old home at Christmas time.

NARRATION:

Why does Mole feel so emotional returning home? ('Dulce Domum' means 'sweet home' in Latin.)

EXTENSION:

Discuss: what makes somewhere feel like home to you?

Your response:

TASKS: DAY 6

Week 2 - Chapter 6: Mr Toad

READ:

Chapter 6: Toad's car obsession worsens, and his friends stage an intervention.

DISCUSS:

How does Grahame use humour in Toad's boastful speeches?

EXTENSION:

Drama: perform one of Toad's speeches aloud, as boastfully as you can.

Your response:

TASKS: DAY 7

Week 3 - Chapter 7: The Piper at the Gates of Dawn

READ:

Chapter 7: Rat and Mole's mystical encounter by the river at dawn.

DISCUSS:

This chapter feels different from the rest of the book. What changes in tone and style?

EXTENSION:

Art: respond to the imagery of dawn on the river with a drawing or painting.

Your response:

TASKS: DAY 3

Week 3 - Chapter 8: Toad's Adventures

READ:

Chapter 8: Toad escapes from prison disguised as a washerwoman.

NARRATION:

Retell Toad's escape in your own words.

EXTENSION:

Drama: act out the disguise scene with a friend or family member.

Your response:

TASKS: DAY 3

Week 3 - Chapter 9: Wayfarers All

READ:

Chapter 9: Rat meets the Sea Rat and feels the pull of travel.

DISCUSS:

This chapter is about the tension between adventure and home. Which does Rat choose in the end, and why?

EXTENSION:

Geography: map the Sea Rat's imagined Mediterranean travels.

Your response:

TASKS: DAY 10

Week 4 - Chapter 10: The Further Adventures of Toad

READ:

Chapter 10: Toad's escapades on the road and canal.

DISCUSS:

What keeps going wrong for Toad, and why?

EXTENSION:

Narration: retell Toad's journey as a newspaper report.

Your response:

TASKS: DAY 11

Week 4 - Chapter 11: 'Like Summer Tempests Came His Tears'

READ:

Chapter 11: Toad Hall has been taken over by weasels and stoats.

NARRATION:

What has happened to Toad Hall while Toad has been away?

EXTENSION:

Discuss: is this fair? What might Grahame want us to feel about Toad at this point in the story?

Your response:

TASKS: DAY 12

Week 4 - Chapter 12: The Return of Ulysses

READ:

Chapter 12: the battle to reclaim Toad Hall, and the celebratory banquet.

DISCUSS:

How has Toad changed by the end of the book? Has he really changed for good?

EXTENSION:

Compare Toad's change of heart to another character who reforms, such as Scrooge in A Christmas Carol.

Your response:

TASKS: DAY 11

Week 4 - Response Day

READ:

No new reading - review the whole book.

CHARACTER PROFILES:

Draw or write about Mole, Rat, Badger and Toad - what does each one represent?

EXTENSION:

Discuss: which character are you most like, and why?

Your response:

TASKS: DAY 14

Week 4 - Wrap-up

READ:

No new reading - watch a film or TV adaptation instead, if you can.

DISCUSS:

Compare the adaptation to the book. What is similar? What is different, and why might a filmmaker make those changes?

EXTENSION:

Art: explore E.H. Shepard's original illustrations for the whole book.

Your response:

TASKS: DAY 15

Week 4 - Wrap-up

READ:

No new reading - it's your turn to write.

WRITING OPPORTUNITY:

Plan and write a new, short adventure for Mole, Rat, Badger and Toad.

EXTENSION:

Share your new chapter aloud with your family.

Your response:

SEASONS THROUGH THE BOOK

The story moves through the seasons. As you read, note where each season appears and how Grahame describes it.

Season	Chapter	How Grahame describes it
Spring		
Summer		
Autumn		
Winter		

RIVERBANK FACT FILE

Water vole

Otter

Kingfisher

Badger

Fun facts