



# *The Most Well-Traveled Squirrel in the Whole Wide World*

*Written by: Blaze Kelly Coyle & Andrew Romano*

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## TEACHER GUIDE (3 pages)

We hope you will find the teacher guide and corresponding skill sheets helpful. Each activity is designed with K-3 academic standards in mind. The lessons are easily adaptable to challenge students of various abilities. Most are self-explanatory, while others require further explanation. Please adjust the lessons to suit both you and your students' needs.

Overview:

- **A Perfect Pair** - identifying rhyming words
- **Bursting Boxes** - producing rhyming words
- **Poetry Patterns** - producing an AA BB CC DD poem in rhyme (use with Bursting Boxes). A completed example is included
- **Be a Word Detective** - vocabulary development
- **Vocabulary Crossword Puzzles** - three different puzzles- each highlighting five vocabulary words and their keys \*\*\*
- **Word Search** - A search puzzle highlighting vocabulary words
- **Comparing Worlds** - Students make a text to self connection
- **Change of Character** - Students will identify the change in the main character as the story progresses, as well as provide story details as proof. They will also make a text to self connection.
- **Traditions** - Local and worldwide traditions are examined.
- **Environment** - Students will complete a Venn diagram to detail things in the environment. They will also identify other possible regions/environments
- **Tommy's Next Adventure** - (use with the environment page) After identifying where Tommy travels next, (example: desert, savannah or mountains) the students list what they will see, the climate, and then help Tommy pack his suitcase.
- **Map Skills** - Using a compass and grid map (with a key), students will navigate the city.
- **Tommy's Tree** - Students will follow directions to color the lights on Tommy's tree, complete the graph and answer the questions.

\*\*\*Supercrosswordcreator.com was used to create the puzzles in this packet.



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Rhyme identification and production are two separate skills that are critical to phonemic awareness. **A Perfect Pair** and **Bursting Boxes** address each of those skills. When working the rhyme production sheet, students can choose their own end sound to make it as simple (-at) or complex (-tion) as they like.

How to use the **Poetry Patterns** page:

The students need a bit of background information before attempting to complete **Poetry Patterns**. *The Most Well-Traveled Squirrel in the Whole Wide World* is written as a poem as is [A Visit From Saint Nick](#).

Interesting information about [A Visit From Saint Nick](#):

1. Well known for its first line 'Twas the night before Christmas . . .
2. First published in the New York Sentinel in the early 1800's
3. Author wanted to remain anonymous
4. This poem changed the way society viewed Santa Claus
5. Many years later Clement Moore claimed ownership of the poem
6. Some say Henry Livingston, Jr. authored the poem

I would prepare a chart that contains the first 8 lines of [A Visit From Saint Nick](#) and *The Most Well-Traveled Squirrel in the Whole Wide World*. In a group setting allow the students the chance to identify the rhyming word pairs using different color markers. Label each rhyme pair AA BB CC DD. Repeat with the first eight lines of *The Most Well-Traveled Squirrel in the Whole Wide World*.

Explain that the students are going to tell a story in AA BB CC DD poem form. After they complete the **Bursting Boxes** page, they should circle their two favorite words from each box. Those circled words will be the *last* word on each line on the **Poetry Patterns** page. The story does not have to be holiday-related. Students needing assistance can work in pairs. For the very young, you can use this on an overhead projector/smart board and create one class story.

How to use the **Be a Word Detective** page:

Working in small groups of 4-5, each student should individually complete the page detailing one vocabulary word. In the group, students teach the new vocabulary word to their peers. Now the students have been introduced to 5 new vocabulary words. **Vocabulary Crossword Puzzles** are a great follow up activity. They were designed with five new words per puzzle. A different group of words can be introduced over the period of a few days or a week. Use the **Word Search** puzzle as a review. Student shouldn't circle the word unless he/she can describe the meaning.



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It is important for students to be able to prepare a written response to a piece of literature. Learning is more meaningful when he/she can connect on a personal level. **Comparing Worlds** and **Change of Character** pages ask the student to relate something they read in the story to something that has happened to him/her in real life. To assist the struggling learner, it would be helpful to brainstorm a chart containing emotions that a person might feel. If necessary draw facial expressions next to the words so that the students can work independently when it is time to write.

How to use the **Traditions** page:

Teachers know their students best. You have to decide the extent of prior knowledge relating to the NYC holiday festivities. Some students may have visited every site mentioned in the story, while others may not even know they exist. This page may be used before or after the first reading. The benefits of using it prior; you are building prior knowledge, but at the same time may reveal some of the surprises in the text. The benefit of using it after the first reading; it is a meaningful extension of the traditions presented in the story.

How to use the **Environment** pages:

Tommy had to learn to adapt in a new environment. The student will identify sights, sounds, smells, etc . . . in a particular environment. Many different environments will be identified such as desert, mountain, savannah, arctic, etc. Using his/her imagination, the student will decide Tommy's next destination. He/she will be given a chance to help Tommy pack a suitcase that will contain items that are helpful to that environment. Students needing a challenge may further develop this line of thinking and actually write the next chapter in Tommy's travels.

**Map Skills** and navigation are important in a city. Students needing a challenge can create a grid map of the new environment they created for Tommy. They may imagine they are the voice on a GPS and lead someone from one point to another.

**Tommy's Tree** is a basic graphing activity. It does require the students to follow directions in choosing colors to complete the lights. Some students may need assistance in labeling the graph.

*Stay tuned for Tommy's next adventure... coming soon!*

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