

# Context:

Southeast Asians & other newcomers in California's classrooms  
December 1995–January 1996, Volume 16, No. 119



**Context** is published six times during the academic year as a way to provide staff with information and ideas concerning their newcomer students and parents (compliance item LEP.8). While the focus is on Southeast Asians, most articles and resources apply to other newcomer groups as well. This newsletter is developed with Economic Impact Aid funds, and district staff with English learners receive an automatic subscription (contact Nguyet Tham at the Transitional English office). Other district staff may request a subscription, at no cost. Outside subscribers pay \$10.00 per year to cover mailing and handling costs.

Editor:  
Judy Lewis

Transitional English Programs,  
Folsom Cordova Unified School District,  
2460 Cordova Lane,  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670  
Phone (916) 635-6815  
Fax (916) 635-0174

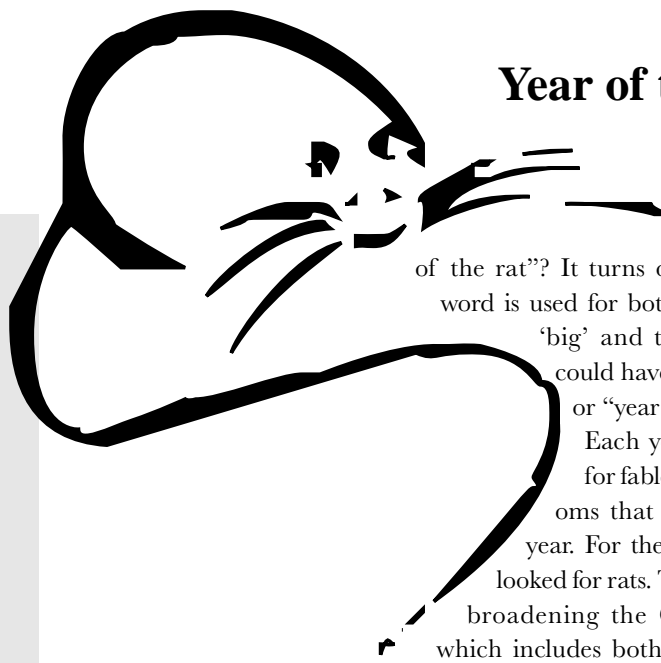
#### Refugee Educators' Network

This group of educators meets at the above address 5 times per year to share information and plan an annual conference, the Southeast Asian Education Faire—9:00-11:30, 3rd Thursdays.

Join us!

September 21, 1995  
November 16, 1995  
January 18, 1996  
February 15, 1996  
May 16, 1996

## Year of the Big Mouse



Who first translated “year of the rat”? It turns out that the same Chinese word is used for both ‘rat’ and ‘mouse;’ one is ‘big’ and the other is ‘small.’ So, it could have been “year of the mouse” or “year of the rodent.”

Each year for this issue we search for fables, stories, proverbs, and idioms that feature the animal of the year. For the past month or two, we’ve looked for rats. They aren’t that popular. By broadening the Chinese category to that which includes both rats and mice, it became much easier to find material for this issue.

I wonder why the rat is so poorly represented in folklore. Could it be that for Europeans the black rat, responsible for carrying the plague-bearing flea into millions of homes in the 1500s, is associated primarily with filth and disease? Are rats symbols of squalor and decay? What about their more admirable characteristics: adaptability, hardiness, aggressiveness, curiosity.

The Chinese describe people born in the year of the rat this way:

- Rats are noted for their charm and attraction to the opposite sex. They work hard to achieve their goals and are likely to be driving perfectionists. They are thrifty, but can maintain an outward show of control. Rats are very ambitious and can be very successful, rats make good businessmen.

- If you were born in the year of the rat (1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996), you are ambitious yet honest. You are prone to spend freely. You seldom make lasting friendships. You are charming, aggressive and a great joiner and party-goer. However opportunistic you can be generous to loved ones.

The ancient Egyptians also had a great respect for rats—both fear and admiration—first because rats were the symbol of utter destruction, and second because they were always wise in their judgements. A rat would always choose the best bread to gnaw, find the best grain, and sense coming disaster. They would also desert a

doomed ship, and leave a house or barn scheduled for burning or destruction.

Look at the way in which definitions carry the attitude of the writer. *Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia* tells us that the black rat, *R. rattus*, has profoundly affected human history. It is the primary host for bubonic plague, which is transmitted to humans by direct contact or through the bites of fleas that have fed on infected rats.

The *New York Times Everyday Dictionary* tells us that a rat is "a destructive rodent larger than a mouse," and as slang, is "a person considered low or mean, as an informer." As a verb, "**rat**" is to act in a low way, to "**rat on**" someone is to be an informer, a "**ratfink**." One can also "**smell a rat**" or suspect something tricky.

What about the mouse? According to the *NYTimes Dictionary*, a mouse is "a small gnawing animal with soft fur and a pointed snout, esp. the house mouse found worldwide and used in laboratories." "**Mousy**" is "like a mouse; timid, stealthy." Still, one wonders if the mouse that carries the hantavirus will be described having "soft fur," or rather, as "destructive."

Idioms reveal peoples' view of rats and mice. In Cantonese, if one's lineage is characterized by "**snake head mouse eye**," beware the thieves and other unsavory characters. In Vietnamese, to "**show a rat the way to run**" is to aid a wrongdoer; a project with the "**head of an elephant and the tail of a mouse**" is one with a grand beginning and a small ending; to act "**like a rat in daylight**" is to move in a stealthy, self-conscious, even guilty fashion; and to be soaking wet is to be "**wet as a skinned rat**." Finally, Cagney's "**you dirty rat**" has achieved an idiom's popular recognition.

**Proverbs**

The rat is not a frequent character in proverbs, but there are a few...

- *An old rat is a brave rat.* (France)
- *He who hunts two rats catches none.* (Buganda)
- *A rat cannot call the cat to account.* (Niger)
- *When a house is on fire, the rats show their faces.* (Vietnamese)
- *When a muskrat squeaks, the family will get rich; when the gutter rat squeaks, the family will have trouble.* (Vietnamese)
- *The rat has fallen into a crock of rice.* (Vietnamese, Malay)
- *When you throw something at a rat, beware the cupboard.* (Vietnamese)

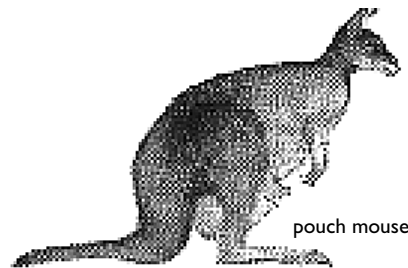
The mouse is a more frequent character in proverbs:

- *It is a bold mouse that nestles in the cat's ear.* (England)
- *When the mouse laughs at the cat, there is a hole nearby.* (Nigeria)
- *The mouse that has but one hole is soon caught.* (Arabic)
- *When the cat's away, the mice will play.*
- *When a house is on fire, the mice's burrows are uncovered.* (Vietnamese)
- *The mouse has run and reached the end of the pole.* (Vietnamese)

**Tales, fables, stories, poem**

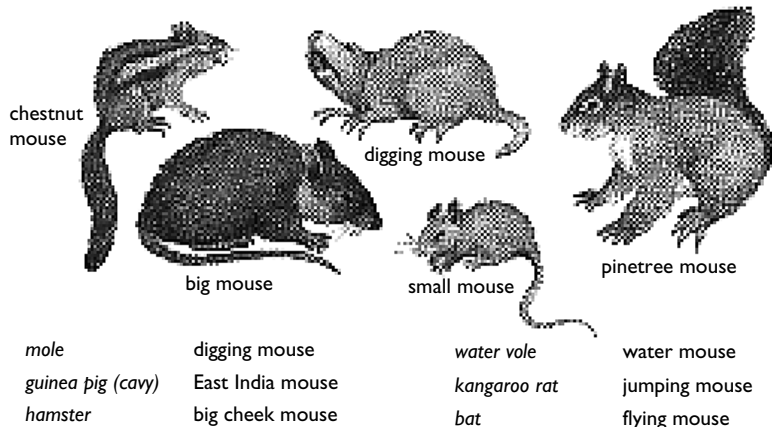
Other than Templeton, the sage rat in *Charlotte's Web*, and the rats who

**Oh, rats!**



pouch mouse

**A mouse in Chinese?**



chestnut mouse

digging mouse

pinetree mouse

big mouse

small mouse

mole

digging mouse

water vole

water mouse

guinea pig (cavy)

East India mouse

kangaroo rat

jumping mouse

hamster

big cheek mouse

bat

flying mouse

people the world of Mrs. Nimh, rats are most often cast as villains or comic relief.

On the next couple of pages are several stories, that feature rats or mice. Below is a poem (from the *Heritage of Vietnamese Poetry* by Huynh Sanh Thong, Yale University Press, 1979) that might have been penned by a man really sick of rats:

### A Hatred for Rats

Nguyễn Bình Khiêm

Heaven creates all men on earth—  
shelter and nurture they all need.  
The sages of long long ago  
taught them the way to grow five grains.  
Old parents' wants must be supplied.  
Children and wives must be sustained.  
O rats, why don't you take pity men?  
From them you filch and steal their food.  
In fields, you only spare dried stalks.  
In garners, you miss not one grain.  
The toiling farmers groan and moan.  
The suffering plowmen cry and weep.  
The people's livelihood is all—  
Such harm and havoc you have wrought!  
You've burrowed into walls and roofs,  
and there you hatch your evil schemes.  
Men's bosoms burst with hate for you;  
you have incurred the people's wrath,  
and someday they will slaughter you.  
Displayed at court and in all towns,  
your bodies will feed crows and hawks.  
The plundered folk will then, at last,  
enjoy the blessings of true peace.

### Why the rat is first

Long long ago the King of Heaven called a meeting of all the animals in the world. The purpose of the meeting was to choose animals, one to represent each year. You see, the King had decided to name the years, and since there were only twelve years in the zodiac, only twelve animals could be chosen.

The King decided that a race would determine his choices. The first twelve animals to reach the gates of heaven the very next day would each have

a year named in his honor, and the order would be the order in which they finished the race.

Amongst the many animals that hoped to win the race was the rat and the cat. The two animals were inseparable and the closest of friends. The cat slept at night and worked during the day while the rat slept during the day and worked during the night. Whoever was awake watched over the one who was asleep.

The night before the big race, the cat asked the rat to wake him from his slumber early in the morning so that he could get a head start. The rat agreed and the cat happily went to sleep. The rat, however, later reconsidered his decision to help the cat. He concluded that he would never win the race if he were to race against the much more agile cat. So on the morning of the race, the rat's sense of loyalty to his friend was overcome by his ambition to become the mightiest and quickest animal on the earth. He set out before dawn without waking the cat.

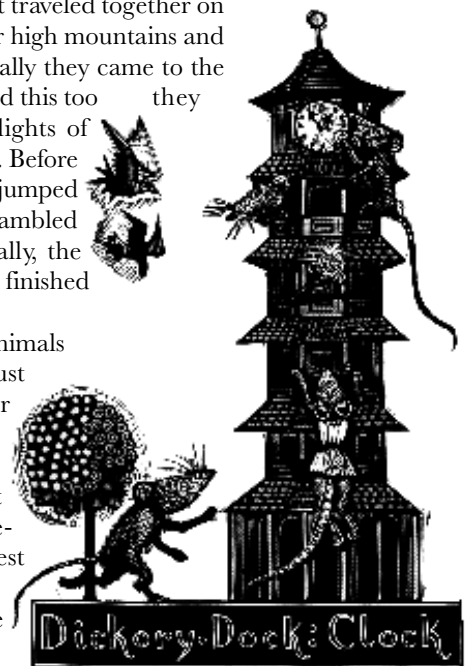
As the rat raced along the road to heaven, he came across the cow. Since the cow as such an industrious animal, it had started earlier than the rat. The rat walked alongside the cow and said, "Brother Cow, please, may I hitch a ride upon your forehead? I have walked so far and I am so tired."

The cow was an amiable animal, and seeing that the rat was so small, he agreed to give him a ride. Thus the cow and the rat traveled together on the long road to heaven. Over high mountains and deep rivers they traveled. Finally they came to the highest mountain on earth and this too they climbed until they saw the lights of heaven through the thick mist. Before the cow could react, the rat jumped off the cow's forehead and scrambled across the finish line. Naturally, the rat came in first and the cow finished second.

When all the remaining animals arrived and the King was just about to announce the order of the years, the cow spoke out and said that he was unfairly tricked by the rat and it should be the cow who deserved the title of the quickest animal on earth.

The King couldn't decide

London Cockney  
rhyming slang:  
a good way to confuse  
eavesdroppers.



(continues on next page)

which animal should be first so he came up with an idea to decide who should be the first. He said, "The two of you, go back to earth and walk across the plains so that people will see you. The one that people say is the biggest will become the first animal in the world."

The rat cried foul and begged the King to enlarge his size to that of a cat. The cow, smugly thinking he could win anyway, even against a rat the size of a cat, agreed. The two returned to earth the same way they came, with the rat resting on the cow's forehead.

The many people they met stared and exclaimed, "My, what a big rat!" That's the biggest one I have ever seen." They totally ignored the cow.

Realizing that the clever rat had tricked him, the cow admitted defeat. Thus, the first year in the Chinese Zodiac was named after the rat. From then on, the rat was known as the sneakiest animal on earth.

The cat, on the other hand, missed the race completely. By the time he woke up, the places had been decided. The cat became the enemy of the rat, and changed his habits so that he slept during the day and hunted during the night for the sneaky rat that caused him to miss out on the most important race in the history of time.

### Predictions from a Chinese astrologist on the internet

This is externally a Fire Rat Year, ruled by the stem/branch combination Ping Tzu. It is the thirteenth year in the seventy-eighth cycle of sixty. The stem Ping is fire. The branch Tzu is water. The combination's containing note is described as the "water of the brook," or the "water which nurtures." Thus, we may say that although this is nominally a fire year, the actual results will be seen with reference to the element water. In general we may say that the year augurs well for tradesmen and artisans. We may say the interesting seasons will be autumn and winter and the interesting direction will be north. The sixth lunar month may present problems, the summer may present obstacles, and there will be little activity in the spring. We may foretell rains, and urge the quiet progress of government on public works. We need pay special attention to the workings of the moon and the planet Mercury. The trigram in which we may have interest is K'an (Tibetan primary, Kham; Tibetan popular, Chhu; Vietnamese, Kham). The effects of which we speak will be subtle, and not at all profound.

1996 can be of great affinity to those born in the following years:

1912 | 1913 | 1920 | 1921 | 1928 | 1929 | 1942 | 1943 | 1950 | 1951 | 1958 | 1959 | 1972 | 1973 | 1980 | 1981 | 1988 | 1989

*1996 can present obstacles to those born in the following years:*

1904 | 1905 | 1918 | 1919 | 1926 | 1927 | 1934 | 1935 | 1948 | 1949 | 1956 | 1957 | 1964 | 1965 | 1978 | 1979 | 1986 | 1987 | 1994 | 1995

#### *Detailed Remarks*

The year 1996 may witness an increase in crimes perpetrated by young men 16 to 22 years of age. We will definitely see an increase in street crime, gangs, and robbery at night. The year may also endure a notable incident caused by a person suffering from mental illness. The AIDS problem will continue to occupy increasing attention. There will be much activity in printing, publishing and writing. There will be strides in chemistry and in fishing and aquaculture. The music industry will thrive. This is also a good year for brewers. There will be growing interest in the processes of aging and death. Funeral homes will reap rich profits, as will homes for the elderly. There will be interest and advances in therapeutic drugs and medicine. There will be increasing emphasis on hearing problems, and the year may witness breakthroughs in

hearing loss. Governments would be wise to concentrate on public works relating to flood control, watercourses and roadways. Flooding will create extreme problems in some areas of the world.

Asian Astrology Home Page  
(William Cassidy)



### The Lion and the Mouse

A lion was asleep in his den one day, when a mischievous mouse for no reason at all ran across the outstretched paw and up the royal nose of the king of beasts, waking him from his nap. The mighty beast clapped his paw upon the now thoroughly frightened little creature and would have made an end of him.

“Please,” squealed the mouse, “don’t kill me. Forgive me this time, O King, and I shall never forget it. A day may come, who knows, when I may do you a good turn to repay your kindness.” The lion, smiling at his little prisoner’s fright and amused by the thought that so small a creature could ever be of assistance to the king of beasts, let him go.

Not long afterward the lion, while ranging the forest for his prey, was caught in the net which the hunters had set to catch him. He let out a roar that echoed through the forest. Even the mouse heard it, and recognizing the voice of his former preserver and friend, ran to the spot where he lay tangled in the net of ropes.

“Well, your majesty,” said the mouse, “I know you did not believe me once when I said I would return a kindness, but here is my chance.” And without further ado he set to work to nibble with his sharp little teeth at the ropes that bound the lion. Soon the lion was able to crawl out of the hunter’s snare and be free.

*Application: No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.*

### The Mouse and the Frog

It was an evil day for the mouse when he met a frog on the eve of a journey into the country. Pretending great affection, the frog persuaded the mouse to allow him to go along. But we shall never know what possessed the mouse when he let the frog tie one of his own forefeet to one of the frog’s hindfeet, for surely it made traveling most uncomfortable indeed.

However, they limped and hopped along the path until they came to a stream of water. The frog immediately jumped in, saying: “Follow me, friend mouse and have not fear. You may find the harness a bit awkward, but remember that I’ll be right by your side as we swim across.”

So they began to swim. Scarcely had they reached midstream, however, when the frog took a sudden plunge to the bottom, dragging the unfortunate mouse after him. The struggling and thrashing of the mouse caused such a great commotion in the water that it attracted the attention of a hawk sailing in the sky overhead. Swift as lightning he pounced down upon the drowning mouse and carried him away. And with them, of course, went the frog as well.

*He who causes the destruction of his neighbor often is destroyed as well.*



### Rats on the 'Net

Gideon's Rat Page by Dave Hein

- The Rat FAQ

This is the official Rat Frequently Asked Questions.

- Dave & Gideon's Rat Care

- Helpful Hints

- Rat Binary

This is my little collection of rat pictures, sounds, and even programs.

- Rat Clubs and Societies

There are quite a few to pick from. They are all over the world, too.

- Rat Links on the Web

- The Netvet Rodent Page is the spot for technical information.
- The Swedish Rat Society.
- Michelle Tribe's RATS! RATS!
- Go Rat-surfing at this spot.
- Brian Lee's Rats!

- Mailing List

You should also be aware that there is a mailing list for rat fans.

- Send E-mail comments to [dhein@comp.uark.edu](mailto:dhein@comp.uark.edu)



## Vietnamese New Year, Tết

The year of the rat (giáp-tý), begins on February 19, and thanks to George Washington, many children have a holiday from school. What will they be doing?

New Year foods include square and round tamale-like cakes made from pounded sticky rice, filled with different things, wrapped in a banana leaf and tied with string. These square bánh chưng and

round bánh dày are shared with friends and enjoyed daily during the week of Tết festivities. A special pickle, dưa món, is prepared days ahead, and along with thịt đông (a meat sausage), roast duck, and bánh chưng, is offered to the ancestors in ritual ceremonies. Sweets, in the form of sugared coconut, lotus seeds, and ginger, are offered to guests.

Visitors come on Tết, and the first visitor to cross the threshold sets the fortune for the upcoming year.

Children honor their elders, and wait for red envelopes filled with money. Firecrackers are set off, to scare away the evil spirits.



Getting ready for the new year festivities in rural Vietnam. (From a silk painting by Tran Dac, 1970s.)

### Chinese New Year's Foods

The Chinese are a people who understand the art of eating, and there are many special foods that they eat at the Chinese New Year.

One of these special foods is called “nian gau,” or “New Year’s Cake.” New Year’s Cake is a kind of Chinese-style cake made of glutinous rice flour. It is tasty and sweet, and has a sticky texture, which is why it was originally called “Sticky Cake.” Eating New Year’s Cake symbolizes rising to a higher position than one was at the year before.

“Jiau-tzu” is another food that the Chinese always eat at the New Year. Jiau-tzu are a kind of dumpling which is shaped like gold ingots, so they symbolize obtaining wealth. Because they are filled with all kinds of ingredients, they also symbolize abundance.

On New Year’s Eve, the whole family gets together for New Year’s Eve dinner. This dinner is also called “tuan-yuan fan,” or “family reunion dinner,” and is an example of the warm and happy times when family members return home.

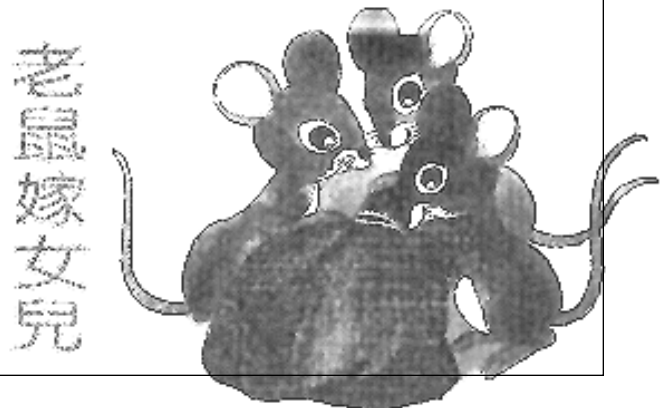
### Chinese calendar

During the middle years of the Shang dynasty (c.1300 BC) the Chinese began using a cyclical system to count days. The system consisted of 2 groups of ideographs, the 12 branches and the 10 stems, which were combined in couples, odd to odd and even to even, to form an endlessly repeating cycle of 60 units. About the time of Christ’s birth the system began to be used for reckoning years as well. The Chinese year, which consisted of 12 lunar months, was from time to time adjusted to the solar year by the addition of an intercalary month. The 7-day week was introduced about AD 1200. During the Han dynasty each branch was matched with an animal name, producing the series: rat, ox, tiger, hare, dragon, serpent, horse, sheep, monkey, cock, dog, and pig. In the cyclical round of years, 2000 will be the year of the dragon. The Chinese year begins with the second new moon after the winter solstice, which occurs between January 21 and February 19.

According to legend, Chinese astrology dates from the time Lord Buddha summoned all animals to him before he departed Earth. Only 12 appeared and as a reward, he named one year after each. The first year went to the rat who won the race to Lord Buddha.

third day of the lunar New Year), the mice brought her a little cloth package filled with gold and silver jewels! When the neighbors saw this, they were very jealous, and said that the mice had given Shiao Tsui her dowry.

End ever since that time, on the third night of the New Year, people turn out their lights and go to bed very early, in hopes that the mice will come and give their daughter a dowry.



## The Mice and the Rooster

A Ukrainian Folktale

There once lived two young mice, Hurry and Scurry by name, and a rooster named Silver Throat. The two mice spent all their time dancing singing, while the rooster always got up before dawn, woke everyone with his song and set to work.

One day he was sweeping the yard and found a wheat stalk. "Come, Hurry, come, Scurry, see what I have found!" he called. The mice, who had been playing games in the yard, came running.

"The stalk has to be threshed," said they.

"Who is going to do it?" asked the rooster.

"Not me!" said Hurry.

"Not me!" said Scurry.

"Well, then, I'll do it myself," said the rooster. He set to work, and Hurry and Scurry went back to their games again.

Silver Throat threshed the stalk and called to the mice: "Come, Hurry, come, Scurry, look at the grain!" The mice came running.

"The grain must be taken to the mill and ground into flour," said they.

"Who is going to do it?" asked the rooster.

"Not me!" said Hurry.

"Not me!" said Scurry.

"Well, then, I'll do it myself," Silver Throat said, and he threw the bag over his shoulder and set out for the mill. And the mice went hopping and skipping and playing leapfrog.

By and by, Silver Throat came home and he called to the mice: "Come, Hurry, come, Scurry! I've brought the flour!" The mice came running.

"Now the dough has to be mixed and the pies baked," said they.

"Who is going to do it?" asked the rooster.

"Not me!" said Hurry.

"Not me!" said Scurry.

Silver Throat thought it over. "Well, then, I'll have to do it," he said. He mixed the dough, brought in some wood, lit the oven, and when it was nice and hot, put the pies into it. And the mice went on dancing and singing.

When the pies were baked, Silver Throat took them out of the oven and set them on the table. The mice did not wait to be called but came running.

"Oh, how hungry I am!" said Hurry.

"Oh, how hungry I am!" said Scurry.

And they seated themselves at the table.

"Wait, wait, not so fast!" Silver Throat said. "First tell me who found the wheat stalk?"

"You did," said the mice.

"And who threshed it?"

"You did," they said in a smaller voice.

"And who mixed the dough and lit the oven and baked the pies?"

"You did," they said in a very, very small voice indeed.

"And what were you doing all this time?" Silver Throat asked.

The mice were silent, for they did not know what to say. They climbed down from the table, and Silver Throat did not stop them.

They were lazy mice who deserved nothing so nice as pie!

### Activities

▶What **American folktale** does this story resemble? Compare the two incident by incident, character by character.

▶What is the **character value** that this story teaches? Collect stories, songs, proverbs from all languages and cultures represented in your class that teach the same value, and display them as a **bulletin board** collage.

▶What **other animals** in folklore are portrayed as having this same value? What about its opposite?

▶**Brainstorm and list adjectives** that are related to this character value. What is the difference in **shades of meaning** between them? For each one, find an **opposite** that fits.

▶**Desktop publish a "character" book:** include proverbs, folktales, songs and other folklore that teach the same value. Type them in English and the other language as well (as parents or high schoolers to help with keyboarding and spelling). Illustrate the pages with computer graphics or scanned drawings. Print and bind. Share with students in lower grades. Give each class 4 or 5 copies for their reading library.



## ПІВНИК І ДВОЄ МИШЕНЯТ

### Українська народна казка

Жили собі двоє мишенят - Круть та Верть і півник Голосисте Горлечко. Мишенята було тільки й знають, що танцюють і співають. А півник удосвіта встане, всіх пісню збудить та й до роботи береться.

Ото якось підмітав у дворі та й знайшов пшеничний колосок.

- Круть, Верть, - став гукати півник, - а гляньте-но, що я знайшов!

Поприбігали мишенята та й кажуть:

- Коли б це його обмолотити...

- А хто молотитиме? - питається півник.

- Не я! - одказує одне мишеня.

- Не я! - каже й друге мишеня.

- Я обмолочу, - каже до них півник. І взявся до роботи.

А мишенята й далі граються. От вже й обмолотив півник колосок та й знову гукає:

- Гей, Круть, гей, Верть, а йдіть гляньте, скільки зерна я намолотив!

Поприбігали мишенята.

- Треба, - кажуть, - зерно до млина однести та борошна намолоти.

- А хто понесе? - питає півник.

- Не я! - гукає Круть.

- Не я! - гукає Верть.

- Ну, то я однесу, - каже півник. Узав на плечі мішок та й пішов.

А мишенята собі одно скачуть - у довгої лози граються.

Прийшов півник додому, знов кличе мишенят:

- Гей, Круть, гей, Верть! Я борошно приніс.

Поприбігали мишенята, порадили:

- Ой, півничку! Вже тепер тісто треба замісити та пиріжечків спекти.

- Хто ж міситиме? - питає півник.

А мишенята й знов свос:

- Не я! - пищить Круть.

- Не я! - пищить Верть.

Подумав, подумав півник та й каже:

- Доведеться мені, мабуть.

От замісив півник тісто, приніс дрова та й розпалив у печі. А як у печі нагоріло, посадив пиріжки.

Мишенята й собі діло мають: пісень співають, танцюють.

Аж ось і спеклися пиріжки, повиймає їх півник, виклав на столі. А мишенята вже й тут, і гукати їх не треба

- Ох, і голодний я! - каже Круть.

- А я який голодний! - каже Верть.

Та й посідали до столу. А півник каже:

- Стривайте-но, стривайте! Ви мені перше скажіть, хто знайшов колосок?

- Ти, - кажуть мишенята.

- А хто його обмолотив?

- Ти, - вже тихіше відказують Круть із Вертем.

- А тісто хто місив? Піч витопив? Пиріжків напек?

- Ти, - вже й зовсім нищечком кажуть мишенята.

- А що ж ви робили?...

Що мали казати мишенята? Нічого. Стали вони потихеньку вилазити з-за столу, а півник їх і не тримає.

Хто ж отаких лінюхів пиріжками пригощатиме?

## Dictionary of Cultural Literacy Online

DOCL@aol.com

*Dictionary of Cultural Literacy Second Edition*. Revised and updated.

Edited by E.D. Hirsch, Jr., Joseph F. Kett and James Trefil.

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Hirsch's Dictionary of Cultural Literacy contains 5,000 items that are essential to understanding references in Americans' speech and writing. From that list have come grade level books, "What Your First-Grader Needs to Know," and so on. The dictionary is now online. The entry for "proverbs" follows, and listed separately are hundreds of American proverbs.

**Many hands make light work**, but at the same time, **too many cooks spoil the broth**. Which of these contradictory proverbs shall we believe? Both, because in different contexts, both are true to experience. If they were not, they probably would not have survived. If the job to be done requires lots of unskilled labor, as picking up trash does, then many hands do make light work. But if the job requires intricate skill, as cooking or writing does, or if it requires a single guiding hand, then too many cooks do spoil the broth.

Proverbs reflect the accumulated wisdom, prejudices, and superstitions of the human race. Mainly it is the particular phrasing of the proverbs, not their ideas, that belongs to the cultural literacy of each nation and language. The ideas they express are often common to many nations. For instance, in German it is said, "Viele Hande bringt's gleich zu Ende" — literally, "many hands bring it quickly to a conclusion." But the literal sense doesn't capture the punch of the German version, which is a little rhyme:

Viele Hande (pronounced "hen-duh")

Bringt's gleich zu Ende (pronounced "en-duh").

In English, few would pay attention to the silly proverb "**An apple a day keeps the doctor away**" were it not for the rhyme. Indeed, it is hard to find the equivalent of this proverb in any other language, because it rhymes only in English. It sounds silly in French, and ridiculous in Italian. The rhyme alone makes us remember it — and encourages us to believe it.

The main reason we have included these little poems and nuggets of wisdom, false and true, is that they have become part of our cultural vocabulary. On many occasions when people invoke proverbs in speech and writing, they simply allude to them, rather than complete them. If someone offers you a fruit and says, "An apple a day," the communication will fail if you don't know the relevant proverb; you will be an outsider. We have included these proverbs because we want to enable everyone to be insiders. We don't wish to encourage ideas such as "Boys will be boys" or "Frailty, thy name is woman!"; in fact, we would prefer people to question proverbial wisdom rather than accept it blindly. But we also want to give everybody the chance to be insiders in American literate culture.

## NAFEA '96: "The Third Decade"

Ponchartrain Hotel, New Orleans

March 31–April 2, 1996

The National Association for the Education and Advancement of Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese Americans will hold its 16th annual conference in New Orleans next spring. The "third decade" in the United States will bring "New Opportunities, Challenges, and Responsibilities." Topics will include education, health/mental health issues, community development, political/economic empowerment, or social services. Ethnic studies sessions will be held in the native languages on Sunday, the first day of the conference. Information is available from Greg Levitt, Center for the Pacific Rim, University of New Orleans, College of Education, 5820 Hurst Street, New Orleans LA 70115.

## IECC: Intercultural Email Classroom Connections

<http://www.stolaf.edu/network/iecc>

St. Olaf College provides a free service to teachers and classes who wish to link to others in the world community. K-12 teachers should contact **IECC** (send the word "subscribe" to **iecc-request@stolaf.edu**) for partner classrooms and mail exchange. Academic goals for global email include: (1) understand "different" cultures; (2) understand own culture; (3) think critically; and (4) improve communication.

Other related sites include **Academy One** ([www.nptn.org/cyber.serv/AOneP/](http://www.nptn.org/cyber.serv/AOneP/)); **Global SchoolNet** Foundation ([www.gsn.org/gsn/gsn.home.html](http://www.gsn.org/gsn/gsn.home.html)); and **I\*EARN** ([www.igc.apc.org/iearn/](http://www.igc.apc.org/iearn/))



Journeys from one place to another, through time through the cycle of life, from one language to another, from one culture to another, from theory to practice, from outsider to insider, from curiosity to respect: experience your own journey....

Saturday, March 2, 1996  
Sacramento City College

8:00 to 4:00

# Journeys



Sponsored by Center USD, Center for Educational Equity, Elk Grove USD, Folsom Cordova USD, Grant Joint Union High SD, International Studies Project at Sacramento, Lincoln USD, MRC Northern California, North Sacramento SD, Rio Linda Elementary SD, Sacramento City USD, San Juan USD, Southeast Asian Culture & Education Foundation, Stockton USD, SWRL, UCB Teacher Education, Washington USD, and the California Department of Education, Emergency Immigrant Program. Proceeds benefit the Southeast Asia Community Resource Center.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Coming to Sacramento (Steve Magagnini)
- Out of Laos, 1960-73 (Roger Warner)
- Cambodian Weddings (Mory Ouk)
- Lao New Year (Khamchong Luangpraseut)
- Rites of Passage (Khmer female transitions) (Khatharya Um)
- Death & Dying in Vietnamese Culture (Huynh Dinh Te)
- Journey to Hanoi (Bien Hoa Hoang)
- Photo-Journey to Laos (Scott Takushi & Yee Chang)
- Disappearing Souls: Death in Mien Culture (Kal Phan)
- Religious Diversity in the Public Schools (Betty DeMarco)
- Ordination as a Buddhist Monk (Konthal Cheng)
- Peoples from the Former Soviet Union (Yuri Lavrenov)
- English Language Development for African Americans (Loraine Brown)
- Journey to Find My Mother (Charles Hwang)
- Journey of Mien Students (Youd Sinh Chao)
- Hmong in Vietnam (Eric Crystal)
- Post-secondary Education for Hmong Students (Lue Vang)
- Education in Northeastern Thailand and Laos (Fred Baker)
- Women's Conference in Beijing (Nouzong Ly)
- Iranian Students (Azar Sadrian)
- HELPing Hand (Sonny Le)

## TEACHING

- Multicultural Experiential Learning (Rosalie Giacchino-Baker)
- Tutoring Program (UCB Vietnamese Student Association)
- Garden Project Curriculum (Lorie Hammond)
- A Vietnamese Novel (Tiep Dao Thi Hoang)
- “Make-It-and-Take-It”–Circle of Life
- “Make-It-and-Take-It”–Flags: World and Ourselves
- “Make-It-and-Take-It”–Cooking & Children's Literature
- “Make-It-and-Take-It”–Immigration: Postcards from Home
- “Make-It-and-Take-It”–Making Kites Cooperatively
- “Make-It-and-Take-It”–Good Luck Symbols

## COMMUNITY DISCUSSION GROUPS

No charge for these primary language sessions (12:45-4:00)

- Mory Ouk (Khmer)
- Yee Chang (Hmong—Photojourney to Laos)
- Khamchong Luangpraseut (Lao)
- Nouzong Ly (Hmong—Young Women)
- Youd Sinh Chao (Mien Students)
- Vietnamese Students' Association

## PACKET, DISPLAYS, SALES, BREAKFAST, LUNCH

\$45. Make purchase orders and checks payable to **Refugee Educators' Network** and mail to 2460 Cordova Lane, Rancho Cordova CA 95670. Phone: (916) 635-6815. Fax: (916) 635-0174. **Deadline for registration will be February 23, 1996.** Programs will be mailed 4-5 days prior to the event. No refunds. Some workshops have limited seating, require a small materials fee, and are on a first-come, first-serve basis. Please indicate if you want to attend a “make it take it” workshop and if you want a vegetarian lunch.



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- #9410 *Amerasians from Vietnam: A California Study*, Chung & Le, 1994. \$7.00. No carton discount.
- #9409 *Proceedings on the Conference on Champha*, 1994. \$7.00. No carton discount.
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- #9207 *Minority Cultures of Laos: Kammu, Lua', Lahu, Hmong, and Mien*. Lewis; Kam Raw, Vang, Elliott, Matisoff, Yang, Crystal, Saepharn. 1992. 402 pages \$15.00 (carton discount \$12.00, 16 per carton)
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- #S8903 *Handbook for Teaching Lao-Speaking Students* Luangpraseut, Lewis 1989. \$5.50 (carton discount for lots of 42: \$4.50)
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- #S8805 *English-Hmong Bilingual Dictionary of School Terminology* *Cov Lus Mis Kij Txhais ua Lus Hmoob* Huynh D Te, translated by Lue Vang, 1988. \$2.00 (no carton price)
- #S9006 *Vietnamese Language Materials Sourcebook* Huynh Dinh Te, 1990. \$2.00 (no carton discount)

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