

Name _____



Rule Breaker

In *The Mitten* by Jan Brett, Nicki's adventure starts with one simple choice—ignoring his grandmother's warning. She tells him that making his mittens white is not a good idea because they will blend into the snow and be easy to lose. But Nicki insists, wanting white mittens anyway. This small decision leads to a series of events that teach an important lesson about the consequences of not following rules or instructions.

Not long after receiving the mittens, Nicki goes outside to play. Just as his grandmother predicted, he drops one mitten in the snow without realizing it. Because it is white, it is nearly invisible, and he does not find it right away. Meanwhile, a small mole stumbles upon the lost mitten and crawls inside to keep warm. Soon, more and more animals squeeze into the mitten, stretching it far beyond its normal size.

As each animal enters, the mitten becomes more crowded, and the situation grows more ridiculous. A hedgehog, an owl, a rabbit, a fox, a badger, and even a giant bear all manage to fit inside. Finally, a tiny mouse lands on the bear's nose, causing the bear to sneeze. With one enormous "Achoo!" the mitten bursts open, sending all the animals flying into the snow. The mitten, now stretched and misshapen, drifts back to Nicki, who unknowingly picks it up and returns home.

Even though Nicki does not realize what happened, the story suggests that listening to wise advice is important. His grandmother's warning was meant to help him avoid losing his mitten, but by ignoring it, Nicki set off a chain reaction of events. The mitten might have stayed in perfect condition if he had chosen a color that stood out against the snow.

The story also shows how rules and instructions exist for a reason. The animals keep piling into the mitten, even when it is clearly full. If they had followed the unspoken rule that mittens are meant for just one person, they wouldn't have ended up getting flung into the air! Through humor and adventure, *The Mitten* teaches that following instructions can help avoid unexpected problems—like a mitten full of animals flying in every direction.