



BRAVE AS A MOUSE

Educators' Guide

NICOLÒ CAROZZI



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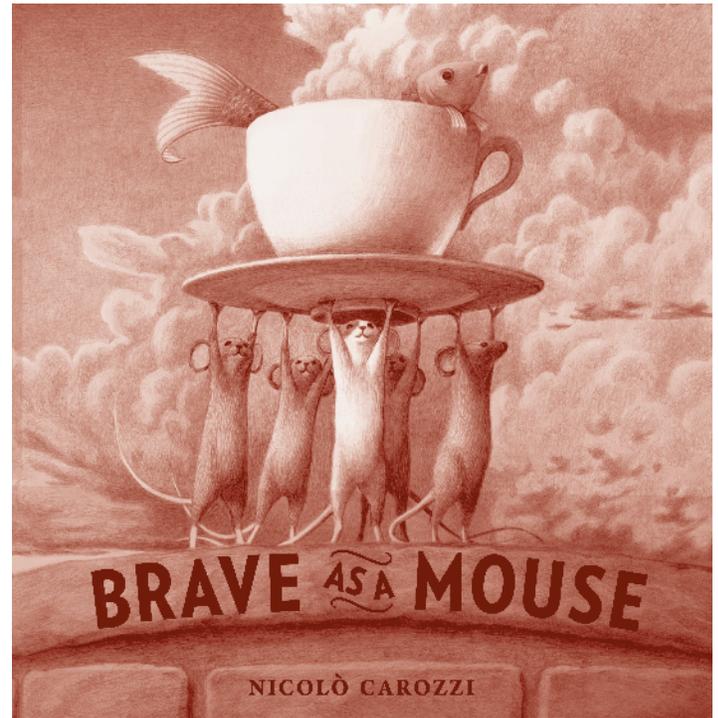
BY NICOLÒ CAROZZI

ABOUT THE BOOK

The friendship between a goldfish and a mouse is in jeopardy when three not-so-friendly felines want to play, too. This gorgeously illustrated picture book reminds us of the importance of bravery and friendship.

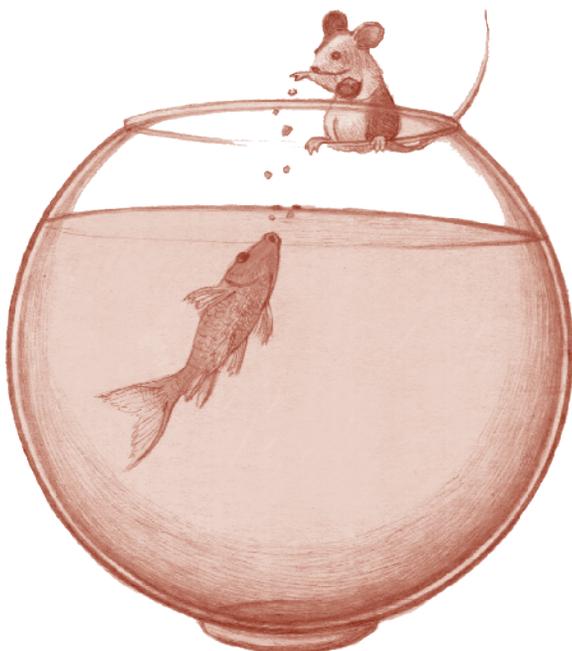
A goldfish and a mouse become fast friends as they play around the goldfish's bowl. But when three cats crash the party and terrify the poor goldfish, the brave little mouse gets an idea to keep the goldfish out of harm's way for good!

With simple text and stunning illustrations, this is a heartwarming story about the lengths one brave mouse will go to in order to save her friend.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR-ILLUSTRATOR

Nicolò Carozzi is a Veronese architect, teacher, and illustrator. He was awarded first prize in the EurHope Illustration competition in 2013, and was a shortlisted illustrator in three Folio Society competitions. He made his illustration debut with the Italian picture book *La lampada magica di Aladino* (*The Magic Lamp of Aladdin*) by Davide Cali. See more of his work at nicolocarozzi.com.





WHAT IS BRAVERY?

Before sharing the book, ask your students to complete the phrase “Brave as a _____” with the name of an animal. Note how many of them say “Brave as a mouse.” Hold a discussion about bravery, including what it means to be brave, and ask for examples from their own experience or that they’ve read or heard about. After reading the book together, ask the class why Mouse is brave. What did Mouse do? What risks did Mouse take? What was the result of the risk-taking? Do the students agree that Mouse is brave?

SO MUCH TO SEE

Brave as a Mouse has relatively few words, so the pictures provide much of the content. Ask students to work in pairs to choose a few pictures they like. After reading the words on those pages, they should list what they see in the pictures that isn’t described in the text, such as furniture and food. The pairs should discuss the story’s setting based on what they learn from the pictures. They should also discuss elements like facial expressions, body language, and movement, and what those contribute to the story.

ASK ME A QUESTION

Read the book aloud to your students, sharing the pictures. Ask students to pay special attention to the use of questions and answers, which are addressed to the reader. Have them listen, too, for the use of repetition and look for places where words are in all capital letters. Ask students why they think the author uses those techniques in the book and how readers might react to them, like answering the questions or anticipating the repetition. Then ask students to write their own short stories using questions and answers, repetition, and at least one word in all caps. They should add drawings based on the Catch Your Reader’s Eye activity to create a short illustrated book.

CATCH YOUR READER’S EYE

Invite students to look closely at the colors used on the cover and in the book’s illustrations. Most of the colors are neutral—grays, whites, blacks, and browns. Although the fish is not a bright color, it stands out against the neutral ones. As a class, discuss the use of color. What effect does it have on the viewer? What would it have been like if the fish had been gray? How different would the book have been if it were illustrated in vivid colors? Why does the cover have stronger colors than the internal illustrations? Have students illustrate the story they wrote for the Ask Me a Question activity, highlighting one or two elements with a brighter color than the rest of the pictures.





TO BE A GOOD FRIEND

Mouse and Fish become friends by playing together. When Fish needs help, Mouse thinks hard and takes risks to keep Fish safe. Although most friends don't have a chance to save each other's lives, there are many ways to be a good friend in daily life. Think about how you like to be treated, and then come up with five simple actions you can take or things you can say to be a good friend to someone else.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.





WHAT ABOUT THE HUMANS?

Brave as a Mouse shows rooms full of furniture but no people in the house. Imagine who lives there and owns the cats. Answer these questions about them.

How many people live there?

How old are they?

What are their names?

What are they like?

What do they like to do?

What have they named their cats?

What have they named their fish?

Do you think they know they have mice?

Where are they right now?

When will they get home?

What will they think when they come home and their fish is gone?

