



Teacher Resource

Mouse Plague

Focus Questions

Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following:

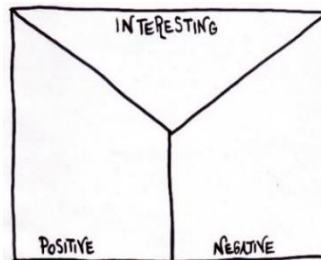
1. Discuss the BTN story with another student. Record the main points of your discussion.
2. Where in Australia is there currently a mouse plague? Name the 3 states.
3. How are the mice affecting farmer's crops?
4. Complete the following sentence. Mice originally came from _____ on the boats during colonisation.
5. What caused the recent mouse plague?
6. Mice breed very slowly. True or false?
7. How many pups can a female mouse have in one year?
8. When was the worst mouse plague in Australia?
9. What are the pros and cons of using poison to eradicate mice?
10. What is another possible solution to the problem?

Activity: Note Taking

Students will practise their notetaking while watching the BTN Mouse Plague story. After watching the story, ask students to reflect on and organise the information into three categories.

What information in the story was...?

- Positive
- Negative or
- Interesting



Activity: Class Discussion

Discuss the information in the BTN Mouse Plague story. What questions do they have about the story? Use the following questions to guide discussion:

- When were mice introduced to Australia and where did they come from?
- How did they come here?
- What impact do mice have on agriculture, the environment and people?
- What conditions cause mice to breed in large numbers?
- What other introduced animal species are there in Australia? Make a list.
- What impact do introduced species have on ecosystems?



EPISODE 3

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KEY LEARNING

Students will learn more about mice and the impact they have on agriculture and the environment. They will investigate other introduced species and methods used to manage or eradicate them.

CURRICULUM

Science – Years 5 & 6

Scientific knowledge is used to solve problems and inform personal and community decisions.

Science – Year 5

Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them to survive in their environment.

Science – Year 6

The growth and survival of living things are affected by physical conditions of their environment.

Science – Year 7

Interactions between organisms, including the effects of human activities can be represented by food chains and food webs.

Activity: Glossary

Students will brainstorm a list of key words that relate to the BTN Mouse Plague story. Here are some words to get them started.

INTRODUCED SPECIES	PEST	INVASIVE
PLAGUE	ERADICATE	RODENT

Activity: Introduced Species Research

After watching and discussing the BTN Mouse Plague story, what questions do students have and what are the gaps in their knowledge? The following KWLH organiser provides students with a framework to explore their knowledge on this topic and consider what they would like to know and learn.

<i>What do I <u>k</u>now?</i>	<i>What do I <u>w</u>ant to know?</i>	<i>What have I <u>l</u>earnt?</i>	<i><u>H</u>ow will I find out?</i>

Students will develop their own question/s to research, collecting and recording information from a wide variety of sources.

- Students will investigate different pest threats to farming and agriculture. Apart from mice, what other animals are a threat to farming and agriculture? For example:
 - Rabbits
 - Foxes
 - Locusts
 - Feral pigs
 - Feral goats
 - Feral camels
- How do we try to stop the spread of diseases and pest species (animals and plants) in Australia? (For example: not being allowed to take some food items across state borders, having bags checked at the airport, vaccinations for animals).
- Investigate ways of controlling pests. What are some health and safety considerations? Include information about using pesticides versus biological control.
- Investigate the research on how [barn owls could be used to help control mouse plagues](#). Summarise your findings.
- Are introduced species always a bad thing? What makes an animal a 'pest'?

Activity: Introduced Species Research

Students will investigate the impact introduced species have on the environment and choose one to research. Include the following information:

Introduced species	Research
Describe the animal	
Which country did the animal come from?	
When was the animal introduced to Australia?	
Why was the animal introduced to Australia?	
Where does the animal live in Australia? (show on a map).	
What impact does the animal have on native animals, the environment and agriculture?	
What methods have been used to control or eradicate the animal? How successful has it been?	

Below are stories about introduced species on the BTN website to help students with their research.



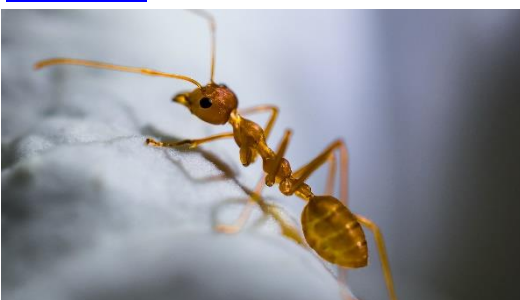
[Rabbit Scan](#)



[Controlling Carp](#)



[Toad Training](#)



[Fire Ants](#)

Activity: Investigate Introduced Species

Students choose one of the following projects to work on and then present the information to their class.



Activity: Create a Kahoot Quiz

Use [Kahoot!](#) to test students' knowledge about introduced species. Quizzes can be created to recap learning or test personal knowledge. There is also the option to connect with classrooms around the world and play kahoot in real time.



Useful Websites

- [Tracking Australia's Mice](#) - CSIRO
- [Could Barn Owls help predict or control costly mouse plagues in Australia and overseas](#) – ABC News
- [Mouse plague wreaks havoc across two states, destroying crops in Qld, blanketing parts of NSW](#) – ABC News
- [Mouse Plague](#) – BTN