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The Mole and the Mound (and the House Underground) by Will Hamilton-Davies and Kasia Fryza



Learning Resource Guide for Teachers and Librarians Suitable for ages 5+

Themes:

- Empathy and kindness
- Not underestimating someone
- Patience and determination
- Animal homes and habitats

This Resource Guide is for *The Mole and the Mound (and the House Underground)*, a thoughtful picture book exploring empathy, kindness, and the importance of recognizing value in others.

Through Mole's encounters with a bird, a beaver, and a bee, children learn that being patient, careful, and determined can lead to amazing results – even if others don't notice at first.

A laugh-out-loud tale about never judging a mole by his mound.



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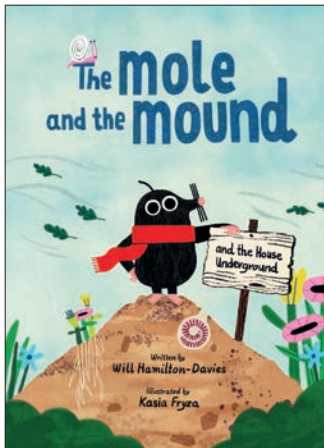
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The Mole and the Mound

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1. Making predictions:

Show just the cover of the book. Ask students:

- Who do you think Mole is?
- What is a mound? Who might live there?
- Do you think Mole likes his home? Why or why not?
- Do you think this story will be funny, emotional, or something else?

2. Discussion: Homes and habitats

In the story, we see animals building their homes.

Ask students:

- What kind of homes do animals live in?
- Do all animal homes look the same?
- Why do animals build homes at all?
- How is an animal home different from a human home?

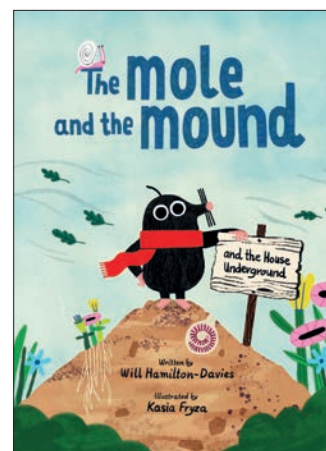


Optional activity: Draw a picture of what you predict Mole's home might be like underground.

3. Activity: Thinking about perseverance and determination

In the story, we learn that Mole trusts himself, stays focused, and keeps working even when others doubt him.

- On a piece of paper or sticky note, draw or write one thing you didn't give up on, even when it was tricky or others didn't notice or appreciate it.
- Complete the sentence: "I kept going because ____."
- You could ask the children to share with a partner or stick it on a class "Determination Wall."



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Discussion Questions

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1. What is Mole doing throughout the story?

- What does Mole spend most of his time doing?
- What is a mound? Who might live there?
- Does Mole stop what he's doing when the other animals talk to him? Why or why not?
- What does this tell us about Mole's determination?

What to highlight: Mole stays focused on his goal from beginning to end.

2. How do the other animals treat Mole?

- What do Bird, Beaver, and Bee say about Mole's work?
- Do they think their homes are better? Why?
- How do their attitudes toward Mole change by the end of the story?

What to notice: Words can discourage others, even if they are said casually.

3. How does Mole respond to being doubted or underestimated?

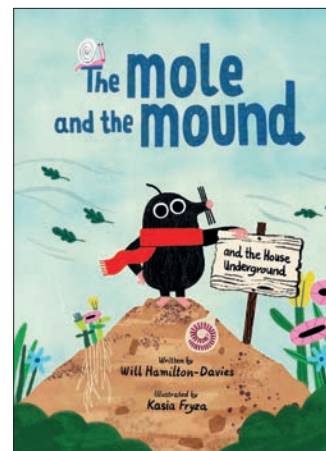
- Does Mole argue back?
- Does he change his plan?
- What does Mole do instead?

What to highlight: Mole responds with quiet confidence and persistence, rather than anger or giving up.

4. What do we learn about different kinds of homes?

- Where are each of the animals' homes built?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of each type of home?

What to highlight: Links to early science ideas about habitats, shelter, and protection from weather.



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5. What happens during the storm?

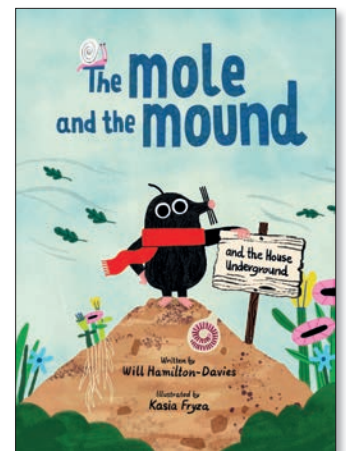
- What effect does the storm have on each animal's home?
- Why does Mole's home stay safe?
- How does Mole's preparation help him?

What to highlight: How careful building + suitable location = safety.

6. What is the message at the end of the story?

- Were the other animals right at the beginning?
- What do they learn from Mole?
- What does the story teach us about judging others' ideas?

What to highlight: The story shows why we shouldn't underestimate someone – especially when we don't yet understand their work.



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Objective: Explore how animals build homes suited to their needs (science link).

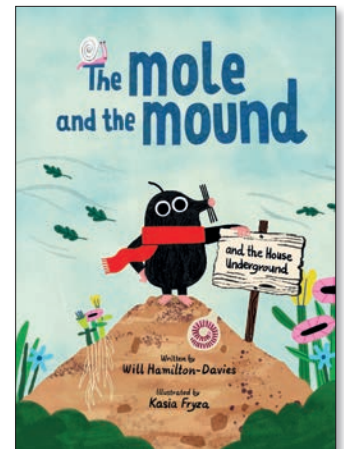
1. Create a class chart comparing animal homes.

The first example has been done for you:

Animal	Home	Materials	Purpose – Why is it a Good Home?
Bird	Nest	Twigs	Safety above ground away from predators, warmth
Beaver			
Bee			
Mole			

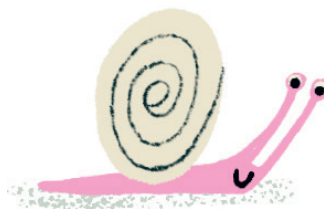
2. Discuss:

- Why does each animal build differently?
- What would happen if they swapped homes?
- Which home is underground? Why might that be useful?



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Extension:
Build model animal homes
using recycling and modeling
materials.



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Objective: Explore kindness and its impact.

1. Revisit moments where the other animals underestimated Mole.

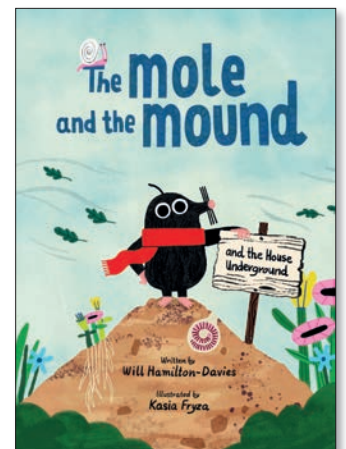
2. Ask:

- What could the other animals have said to encourage Mole?
- How could they use their words to be kinder when talking to him?

3. Create a “Kind Words for Mole” speech bubble wall:

- “Your mound is important because . . .”
- “I like your home because . . .”
- “You are good at . . .”

Link to real life: How can kind words help friends in class?



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Objective: Build empathy by examining how the other characters learn from Mole.

1. Focus on Bird, Beaver, and Bee after the storm.

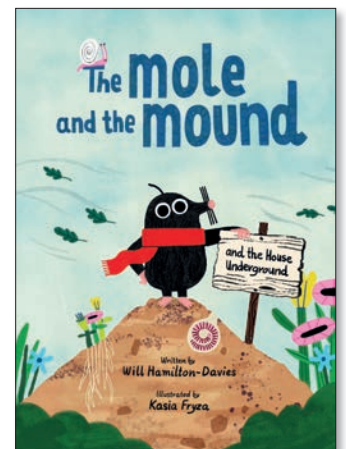
Ask:

- What do they notice about Mole's home?
- What do they realize they were wrong about?
- How might they feel now?

2. Write or draw:

- "At first, I thought Mole's work was _____. Now I know _____."

Extension:
Role-play or write an apology
or thank you scene.



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