**Class Schedule**

1. Vocab Bingo (15 mins)
2. Opening Activity (10 mins)
3. Read extract (10 mins)
4. Comprehension questions (15 mins)
5. Read through new vocab (10 mins)

**Vocabulary Bingo!**

* Spot check on definitions, antonyms and synonyms of last week’s words (use the words in sentences)

**Opening Activity**

*Match the word to the definition!*

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| 1. Arduous
2. Consent
3. Estimate
4. Debate
5. Foundation
6. Ignorant
7. Surprise
8. Ambition
9. Bargain
10. Complex
 | 1. To negotiate the terms and conditions of a transaction
2. Roughly calculate or judge the value, number, quantity or extent of.
3. Involving or requiring strenuous effort; difficult and tiring
4. Not easy to understand; complicated
5. Lacking knowledge or awareness; uneducated
6. A strong desire to do or achieve something
7. Permission for something to happen or agreement to do something
8. Argue about something in a formal way
9. An unexpected or astonishing event
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Tales from Watership Down by Richard Adams

“Tell us a story, Dandelion!”

It was a fine May evening of the spring following the defeat of General Woundwort and the Efrafans on Watership Down. Hazel and several of his **veterans**—those who had been with him ever since leaving Sandalford—were lying on the warm **turf**, full of grass and comfortably relaxed. Nearby, Kehaar was **pecking** among the low **tussocks**, not so much feeding as using up the day’s remains of his **continual**, **relentless** energy.

The rabbits had been chatting together, **recalling** some of their grand adventures of the previous year: how they had left the Sandleford **warren** under fiver’s warning of **imminent** disaster; how they had first come to Watership Down and dug their new warren, only to realize that there was not a single **doe** among them. Hazel had recalled the ill-judged **raid** on Nuthanger Farm, in which he had nearly lost his life. This had reminded several of them of their journey to the great river, and Bigwig had told yet again of the time he had spent in Efrafa as a supposed officer of General Woundwort; and how he had persuaded Hyzenthlay to form the group of does who had broken out in the thunderstorm. Blackberry had tried but could not explain his trick with the boat, which had **enabled** them to escape down the river. Bigwig, however, had refused to tell of his underground fight with General Woundwort, insisting that he wanted only to forget it; so instead, Dandelion had **recounted** how the Nuthanger dog, let loose by Hazel, had pursued him and Blackberry into the midst of the Efrafans gathered on the Down. He had hardly finished, when there arose the well-worn cry: “Tell us a story, Dandelion! Tell us a story!”

Dandelion did not respond immediately, seemingly reflecting as he **nibbled** the grass and took a few hops to a sunnier patch before settling himself again. At length he replied, “I think I’ll tell you a new story this evening; one that you’ve never heard before. It’s about one of the greatest of all adventurers of El-ahrairah.”

He paused, sitting up and rubbing his front paws over his nose. No one hurried the master storyteller, who appeared, by taking him time, to be rather **relishing** his **standing** among the group. A light breeze stirred the grass, and a lark, ending its song, dropped down near them, paused for a time and then began another **ascent**.

There was a time (said Dandelion), long ago, when rabbits had no sense of smell. They lived as they do now, but to have no sense of smell was a terrible **disadvantage**. Half the pleasure of a summer morning was lost to them, and they couldn’t pick out their food in the grass until they actually bit into it. Worst of all, they couldn’t smell their enemies coming, and this meant that many rabbits fell **victim** to stoats and foxes.

Now, El-ahrairah **perceived** that although his rabbits had no sense of smell, their enemies and other creatures—even the birds—possessed it, and he determined that he would seek out that extra sense and win it for his people, whatever the cost. He began to seek advice everywhere he could, asking where the sense of smell was to be found. But no one knew, until at last he asked a very old, wise rabbit in his warren, named Heartsease.

“I can only **recall** that when I was young, “ said Heartsease, “our warren gave shelter to a wounded swallow—one who had travelled far and wide. He **pitied** us because we had no sense of smell, and he told us that the way to the sense of smell lies through a land of **perpetual** darkness, where it is guarded, he said, by a band of fierce and dangerous creatures known as the Ilips, who live in a cave. More than this he did not know.”

El-ahrairah thanked Heartsea and, after **deliberating** for a long time, when to see Prince Rainbow. He told him that he meant to go to that land and asked him for his advice.

“You had much better not attempt it, El-ahrairah,” said Prince Rainbow. “How do you think you are going to find your way through a land of perpetual darkness to a place you don’t know? Even I have never been there, and what’s more, I don’t intend ever to do so. You’ll only be throwing your life away.”

“It’s for my people,” replied El-ahrairah. “I’m not prepared to see them hunted down day after day for want of a sense of smell. Is there no advice you can give me?”

“Only this,” said Prince Rainbow. “Don’t tell anyone that you meet on your journey why you are going. There are some very strange creatures in that country, and if it were to become known that you had no sense of smell. It might well be the worse for you. **Invent** some purpose. Wait—I’ll give you this **astral** **collar** to wear around your neck. It was a gift to me from Lord Frith. It may just possibly help you.”

El-ahrairah thanked Prince Rainbow, and the next day he set out. When at length he came to the border of the land of perpetual darkness, he found that it began with twilight, which deepened until all around was dark. He could not tell which way to go, and what was worse, he could form no sense of direction, so that for all he knew, he might be going in circles. He could hear other creatures moving in the dark around him, and as far as he could tell, they seemed to know what they were doing. But were they friendly. And would it be safe to talk to any of them? At last, in sheer desperation, he sat down in the dark and waited in silence until he heard come creature moving nearby. Then he said, “I’m lost and confused. Can you help me?”

He heard the creature stop, and after a few moments it replied in a strange but just understandable tongue. “Why are you lost? Where have you come from and where do you want to go?”

“I’ve come from a land where they have daylight,” answered El-ahrairah, “and I’m lost because I can’t see and I’m not used to this darkness.”

“But can’t you smell your way? We all can.”

El-ahrairah was about to answer that he had no sense of smell, but then he remembered Prince Rainbow’s warning. So he said, “I’m afraid the smells are all different here. They only confuse me.”

“So you’ve no idea what sort of creature I am, for instance?”

“Not the least. But you don’t seem fierce, that’s one blessing.”

El-ahrairah heard the creature sit down. After a little, it said, “I’m a glanbrin. Are there any where you come from?”

“No. I’m afraid I’ve never heard of a glanbrin. I’m a rabbit.”

“*I’ve* never heard of a rabbit. Let me sniff you over.”

El-ahrairah kept as still as he could while the creature, which was furry and seemed to be about the same size as himself, sniffed him over carefully from head to foot. At last it said, “Well, you seem to be very much the same sort of animal as I am.  You’re not a beast of pretty and you obviously have a very strong sense of hearing. What do you eat?”

“Grass.”

“There isn’t any here. Grass won’t grow in the dark. We eat roots. But I think you and I are very much alike. Don’t you want to have a sniff too?”

El-ahrairah pretended to sniff all over the glanbrin. In doing so, he found that it had no eyes; that is, what might have been its eyes were hard, small and **sunken**, almost lost in its head. But for all that, he thought, “Well, if this isn’t some sort of rabbit, then I’m a badger.” He said, “I don’t believe there’s anything much to choose between us, except that I…” He was about to say “can’t smell” but checked himself and finished, “that I’m **utterly** confused and lost in this darkness.”

**Comprehension Questions**

1. Summarise the extract in a few sentences.
2. What do you think will happen next in the story and why?
3. What do you think the moral or the lesson of Dandelion’s story will be?
4. What are some of the adventures that the rabbits had before the moment of this story?
5. Why shouldn’t El-ahrairah let any of the other animals know that he can’t smell?
6. Do we think the glanbrin is a good or bad character?

**Vocabulary**

* *Define each word, put it into one of four categories (noun, adjective, verb or adverb) and, where applicable, note down a synonym or antonym.*
1. Veteran – a person who has had long experience in a particular field; an ex-member of the armed forces
2. Turf – grass and the top layer of earth
3. Pecking – (of a bird) strike or bite something with its beak
4. Tussock – a small area of grass that is thicker or longer than the grass growing around it
5. Continual – having no interruptions
6. Relentless
7. Recall – remember
8. Warren
9. Imminent – about to happen
10. Doe – a female deer, hare, rabbit, rat, ferret or kangaroo
11. Raid
12. Enable – make (something) possible
13. Recount – tell someone about something; give an account of an event or experience
14. Nibble
15. Relish
16. Standing – position, status or reputation
17. Ascent
18. Disadvantage
19. Victim
20. Receive – be given, presented with, or paid something
21. Pity
22. Perpetual – never ending or changing
23. Deliberate
24. Invent
25. Astral – relating to or resembling the stars
26. Collar
27. Sunken – at a lower level than the surrounding area

**Homework**

* Revise the vocabulary we have learned today.
* Continue the story in your own words. What do you think will happen next? Include ten of the words from the vocab list.