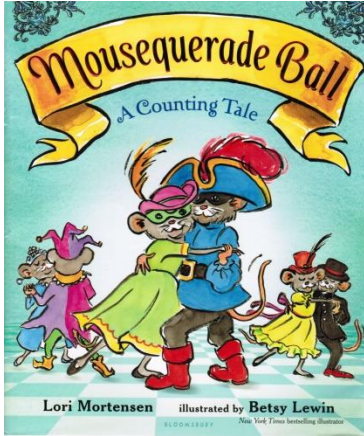


# Mousequerade Ball



Written by Lori Mortensen,  
Illustrated by Betsy Lewin

Bloomsbury, 2016  
Rhyming Picture Book  
Hardcover, 32 pages, Children's, Ages 4-8

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## SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS AND LIBRARIANS

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### ABOUT THE BOOK

In a castle on a hill, in a great grand hall, mice are getting ready for the Mousequerade Ball. They dress in their finest. What a grand affair! But when an unexpected guest arrives, the mice get quite a scare. Is the evening ruined? Should they run in fright? Or, will a gallant mouse stand up and save the splendid night?

Counting up to ten and back again, this delightful story invites readers to the event of the season: The Mousequerade Ball.

### THEMES

- Poetry
- Rhyming words
- Counting
- Mice
- Character Education: fear, bravery, acceptance, inclusion.

### BEFORE YOU READ

- Practice counting.

- Discuss how you might prepare for a big event.

### AS YOU READ

- Count the mice.
- Discuss the different types of things the mice are doing, first to prepare, then the types of costumes the mice are wearing for the big event.

### AFTER YOU READ

#### Art

- What other costumes might the mice wear to the ball? Have students draw a picture.
- The mice are all dancing until someone or something unexpected shows up. Have students draw a picture (or use other media) of what that might be.
- When the cat scares the mice, the mice dash into all sorts of different hiding places. Have students draw

other places where the mice might hide.

## Character Education

- When the mice see the cat, they immediately assume the worst. In this case, they are wrong. Cat just wants to dance too. Ask students to discuss other times they made incorrect assumptions.
- Everyone wants to feel included. Discuss how cat must have felt when all the guests scurried away.
- It takes a lot of courage to stand up to others as one mouse did when she realized the real reason Cat was there. Ask students to share a time they stood up for something or someone when everyone else felt differently.

## Language Arts

- Mousequerade Ball is written in rhyme. Ask students to add their own rhyming verse to the story.
- In this case, the mice were planning a dance. Have the students write another counting, mouse story. What else could they be doing?

## Research

- The title of this story comes from the word “Masquerade.” Where does this word come? What does it mean?
- Masquerade balls are very popular. Research the most famous ones. Who was there? What did they do? Why was it so important?
- Guests dance at a ball. What kind of dances did they do 100 years ago? Two hundred years ago? What sort of clothes do they wear to balls today, and what did they wear long ago?

## Social Studies

- When the mice saw the cat, they were immediately afraid. What could Cat have done so they wouldn't be scared? Were there clues the mice could have seen that would tell them that Cat came for another purpose?
- What could the mice do to help the cat feel welcome? How can we make others feel welcome?

## FUN MICE FACTS

- There are many types of mice, including zebra mice.
- If a mouse is really frightened, it may play dead until the danger has passed.
- A mouse's tail is usually about as long as its body.
- A baby mouse is called a pinky.
- The word “mouse” is a Sanskrit word that means “thief.”
- Mice usually live 1-2 years.

## READ MORE AT:

- <http://www.livescience.com/28028-mice.html>
- <http://www.pets4homes.co.uk/pet-advice/fun-interesting-facts-about-mice.html>
- <http://dc.about.com/od/specialevents/a/inauguralballs.htm>

## HOLIDAYS AND OBSERVANCES

### February

11 - Make a New Friend Day

### March

9 - Panic Day

## April

- 2 - Children's Book Day
- 3 - World Party Day
- 27 - Tell a Story Day
- 28 - Great Poetry Reading Day

## June

- 4 - Hug your Cat Day
- 18 - World Juggler Day

## July

- 14 - Pandemonium Day

## August

- 9 - Book Lover's Day
- 28 - Race your Mouse Day

## September

- 6 - Read a Book Day

## BIOS



**Lori Mortensen** can always count on a good time when she's kicking up her heels at a rollicking, frolicking ball. She earned her degree in dance! Since then, she's become the author of more than seventy fiction and nonfiction books for children. Recent picture book titles include *Cowpoke Clyde Rides the Range* (Clarion 2016) and *Chicken Lily* (Henry Holt, 2016). She lives with her husband in Northern California and shares her keyboard with her mega-fluffy cat, Max, who shows no interest in dancing whatsoever.

To learn more about Lori's books, book trailers, and other activity guides, visit her website at [www.lorimortensen.com](http://www.lorimortensen.com).

**Betsy Lewin** is the bestselling Caldecott Honor-winning illustrator of *Click, Clack, Moo: Cows that Type* and its many sequels, all by Doreen Cronin, in addition to a number of other picture books--including her own *Where is Tippy Toes?* She had great fun researching pirate hats and pantaloons, chefs' hats and glitzy gowns for *Mousequerade Ball*. She lives in Brooklyn, New York. Visit her website at <http://betsylewin.com/>.