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# NOSEY MRS. RAT

Author: Jeffrey Allen

Illustrator: James Marshall

Publisher: Viking

## THEME:

Being a skilled observer is a valuable tool, but snoopiness is annoying.

## PROGRAM SUMMARY:

Mrs. Rat makes a career out of spying on her neighbors, but the tables are unexpectedly turned on her.

Being a skilled observer is a valuable tool. Primatologist Dr. Jane Goodall explains how her own curiosity helped her become a leading scientist in the study of primates. A nature/wildlife photographer shows viewers how observation and scrutiny are important tricks of the trade in the world of photography.

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

Discuss the feelings of Mrs. Rat's neighbors about her spying. What does it mean to "respect someone's privacy"?

Discuss with the students how they felt about Brewster Blackstone's solution to the problem of Mrs. Rat's nosy behavior. Mrs. Rat was "humiliated." What does it mean to be humiliated? Invite students to describe an occasion when they have felt that way. Brainstorm other possible solutions for handling the problem of Mrs. Rat's snooping.

Mrs. Rat described her snooping as her "hobby." Have students discuss hobbies that they have or might have that are more acceptable to other people.

Discuss what it means to be a "neighbor." What makes a good one?

## CURRICULUM EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

Have the class make a list of all the ways that Mrs. Rat spied on others.

Have students brainstorm a list of occupations in which skilled observation is important.

Bring some sets of binoculars into the classroom, so students can look through them. As they view the same scene with and without the binoculars, discuss the differences in what they see.

Invite a student's parent or friend who enjoys nature photography into the classroom to show some of his/her photos and share with the children important considerations in photographing nature.

Assign each student a 3-foot square of the schoolyard or other nearby grassy area. Have students observe their spaces for as many details as they can find and draw their space. They should note such features as rocks, plants, insects, twigs, seeds, etc. Discuss the importance of only *observing* their space, rather than disturbing it.

Brainstorm what students know about "primates." If this term is unfamiliar, work with a more familiar concept, such as "monkey" or "ape." (The primate family includes lemurs, monkeys, apes, galagos, and humans.) Make a list of types of primates with which students are familiar. Display the list in the classroom so that they can add new names as they learn more about these animals. Working with partners, have students use print and multimedia resources to research members of the primate family.

Have the students make a class "peep-hole" book. To make a page for the book, they cut a picture from a magazine and attach it to the back of a piece of construction paper. They need to identify what part of the picture they want to reveal through a "window" in the construction paper; then cut out the window. When the book is finished, share it with the whole class and have students guess what each picture is by looking through the window. Tana Hoban's *Look! Look! Look!* (Greenwillow) might give them some ideas for their book.

Using a variety of scrap materials, have children create disguises for themselves.

Have students locate other books illustrated by James Marshall and note how often he uses animals in his illustrations, but gives them human qualities. Discuss possible reasons for his use of animals as "people."

## RELATED THEMES:

scientific process  
wildlife observation  
photography

## RELATED READING RAINBOW PROGRAMS:

Program #115 — Archibald Frisby  
Program #28 — Feelings  
Program #109 — My Shadow  
Program #77 — Raccoons And Ripe Corn

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Jeffrey Allen had an established career in journalism until he met James Marshall and the two of them created a humorous story about a telephone operator who was a duck. That story was published as *Mary Alice, Operator Number Nine*, the first of several collaborations between Allen and Marshall.

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**ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR:**

Best known for his series of books featuring the popular characters George and Martha, Viola Swamp, and the Stupids, James Marshall's cartoon style of art and his subtle use of humorous detail have made his books immediately recognizable to children. James Marshall's work has been featured on previous **Reading Rainbow** programs: *Fox on the Job*, *Miss Nelson Is Back*, *The Piggy in the Puddle*, *Space Case*, and *Three by the Sea*.

**BOOKS REVIEWED BY CHILDREN:**

MOUSE VIEWS: WHAT THE CLASS PET SAW  
by Bruce McMillan (Holiday House)

THE 13TH CLUE  
by Ann Jonas (William Morrow)

TIGER  
by Judy Allen, illus. by Tudor Humphries (Candlewick Press)

**SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKLIST:**

MY CAMERA  
by George Ancona (Crown)

ANNO'S ALPHABET  
by Mitsumasa Anno (Thomas Y. Crowell)

IF AT FIRST YOU DO NOT SEE  
by Ruth Brown (Henry Holt)

JANE GOODALL'S ANIMAL WORLD: CHIMPS  
by Jane Goodall (Atheneum)

MY LIFE WITH THE CHIMPANZEES  
by Jane Goodall (Simon & Schuster)

LOOK! LOOK! LOOK!  
by Tana Hoban (Greenwillow)

MY FIRST PHOTOGRAPHY BOOK  
by Dave King (DK)

THINK LIKE AN EAGLE: AT WORK WITH A WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER  
by Kathryn Lasky, photographs by Christopher Knight and Jack Swedberg  
(Joy Street/Little, Brown)

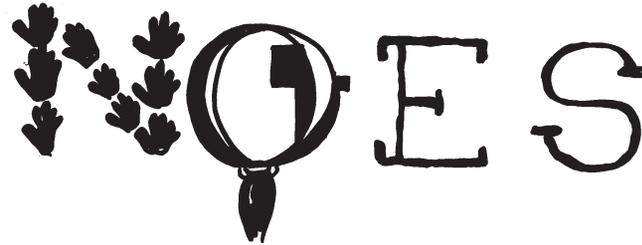
WHERE IS EVERYBODY?  
by Eve Merriam, illus. by Diane de Groat (Simon & Schuster)

NATURE SPY

by Shelley Rotner and Ken Kreisler (Macmillan)

EVERYDAY MYSTERIES  
by Jerome Wexler (Dutton)

LOOK CLOSER!



Reizl Bozyk (Mrs. Katz and Tush). Wayne Brady (Mr. George Baker). Jeff Bridges (The Tin Forest). Fran Brill (Dive to the Coral Reefs). Matthew Broderick (Owen). Ruth Buzzi (Miss Nelson is Back). David Canary (Work Song). Faith Prince (Nosey Mrs. Rat). Freddie Prinze Jr. (Beegu). Keshia Knight Pulliam (The Magic School Bus: Inside the Earth). Gilda Radner (The Tortoise and the Hare). Phylicia Rashad (Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters). Lou Rawls (Ty's One Man Band). Metacritic TV Episode Reviews, Nosey Mrs. Rat, Observing people is the theme of the day, as LeVar finds himself with time to kill before a business meeting and chooses to watch children... Log in to finish your rating Nosey Mrs. Rat. tbd. Your Score. Nosey Mrs. Rat. posted by hornean. Mrs. Davis felt peculiar as she took her morning bath. "I feel like I'm being watched," she said to herself. And she was being watched by Shirley Rat, the nosiest person in town. "I see you're using lilac bubble bath," said Shirley. "I personally prefer rose." Mrs. Davis pulled down the shade. "I love to know what's going on," said Shirley. "I don't get paid for it—it's my hobby." Banco de S ries   uma rede social que mant m um registro de todas as s ries que voc  assiste, deixa voc  dar notas, cria seu calend rio, mostra estat sticas de quantas horas voc  passa vendo s ries, cria rankings das s ries que voc  assiste e promove um espa o perfeito para que voc  possa comentar e interagir sobre os epis dios com outros f s.