

Stalking the Bat Killer

A devastating disease has killed millions of bats. Can it be stopped?

About the Story

Lexile: 930L

For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

Learning Objective:

to learn about the plight of bats by reading an article and conducting research

Key Skills:

author's craft, point of view, sensory details, text features, interpreting text, key ideas and details, inference, text structure, applying knowledge

Essential Questions:

- What is the relationship between humans and the natural world?
- How do misconceptions about animals form?
- What is conservation?

Standards:

This article and lesson support these Common Core anchor standards:

R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.5, R.6, W.2, SL.1, L.4, L.5, L.6

For more standards information—including TEKS—go to Scope Online.



Your Teaching Support Package

Find your full suite of materials at
scope.scholastic.com.

Audio:

- The article (English and Spanish)
- Vocabulary

Differentiated articles:

- Lower-Lexile version (printable)
- Spanish version (printable)

Literature Connections: ideas for connecting to curricular texts

Activities to print or project:

- Vocabulary
- Close Reading and Critical Thinking
- Applying Knowledge: Researching Bats
- **Core Skills Workout:** Central Ideas & Details*, Summarizing*, Text Features, Text Structure, Tone
- Quiz*
- Nonfiction Elements*
- Contest Entry Form

**Available on two levels*

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

1 Preparing to Read

Do-Now: Make a list

(5 minutes)

Write on the board: *Study the photograph of the bat on pages 4-5. Make a list of words and phrases to describe the bat.* Give students two minutes to complete the do-now, then invite volunteers to share their lists. After reading the article, have students review their lists and ask whether anyone would add or take away any words or phrases.

Preview vocabulary.

(8 minutes, activity sheet online)

Project or distribute the **Vocabulary Words and Definitions**. Review as a class. Optionally, complete the activity that follows. Highlighted words: *carcasses, culprit, dehydrated, detested, emaciated, nocturnal, petrified, rehabilitator, spores, torpor*

2 Reading and Discussing

Read and discuss the article.

(45 minutes, activity sheets online)

- Have a volunteer read aloud the As You Read box on page 5.
- Play the audio at Scope Online while students follow along in their printed magazines.
- Have students work in groups to discuss the following questions.

Close-Reading Questions

▶ **Why might the author have decided to address the reader as though he or she is a bat?** (author's craft, point of view) *Addressing the reader as if he or she is a bat helps the reader understand what bats with white-nose syndrome endure. By writing from this point of view, the author helps readers empathize with bats and inspires compassion for them.*

▶ **In the introduction, what does author Kristin Lewis's use of sensory details help readers understand about bats?** (sensory details) *Lewis's use of sensory details helps readers understand the amazing power and skill of bats. By including sensory details such as "a silent shadow swooping down from the sky" and "you'll swallow the body in mid-air," she enables readers to vividly imagine bats in action.*

▶ **How does the map on page 6 contribute to the article?** (text features) *The map contributes to the article by helping readers understand how widespread the problem of white-nose syndrome is.*

▶ **On page 7, Lewis writes, "Others leave to look for food only to find the world locked in a winter freeze they cannot endure." What does she mean?** (interpreting text) *Lewis means that during the winter, there are no insects, so there is nothing for bats to eat.*

▶ **How does the author support her idea that, historically, bats have been misunderstood?** (key ideas and details) *Lewis supports the idea that bats have been misunderstood by including details about how they were perceived in the past and then explaining why those perceptions are false. For example, she explains that the famous character Dracula took the form of a bat and feasted on human blood (9). Then she explains that few bats actually feed on blood.*

▶ **According to information in the sections "The Bat Woman" and "By Your Side," what can you infer about Jackie Kashmer and the kind of person she is?** (inference) *You can infer that Kashmer is a compassionate, gentle, and dedicated person. You can also tell that she has a deep love of animals. For example, on page 8, the author explains that Kashmer cleans and*

feeds her bats by hand despite the fact that they sometimes bite her, and that she does this time-consuming work in addition to her day job. This shows that Kashmer is extremely dedicated to bats and is willing to make personal sacrifices for them.

► **What is the main purpose of the sections “So Misunderstood” and “Fear of Night”?**

(text structure) *The main purpose of these sections is to explain how humans have perceived bats throughout history and where our negative associations with bats come from.*

- Reconvene as a class to discuss the following critical-thinking questions.

Critical-Thinking Questions

► **Why should people care about bats?**

Answers will vary. Some students may point out that bats are important because they keep insect populations under control. Other students may argue that bats are not pests but are extraordinary and special creatures with remarkable skills, such as their ability to echolocate. Still others may argue for the intrinsic value of all creatures—in other words, all beings are important, regardless of whether they benefit humans directly.

► **On page 7, Kashmer says, “People think, oh, bats are just little flying rats; they don’t have personalities. But they do. Some are timid. Some are bullies.” How might this quote help more people care about the plight of bats?** *This quote could help more people care about the plight of bats because it shows that bats are misunderstood and it humanizes them. Kashmer is also likening bats to other animals that humans have closer relationships with, such as cats and dogs. This could evoke empathy in people who may otherwise have looked at bats as pests.*

► **After reading this article, has your view of bats changed at all? Why or why not?**

Answers will vary.

3 Skill Building

Featured Skill: Applying Knowledge

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

Have students work in groups to complete the activity sheet **Applying Knowledge: Researching Bats**. This activity will prepare students to respond to the writing prompt on page 10. *For alternate culminating tasks, see the box below.*

Differentiate and Customize

For Struggling Readers

In a well-organized paragraph, provide a summary of the article.

For Advanced Readers

Research a species of bat that lives in your region or state. In an essay, slideshow, video, or podcast, explain the key biological features of the bat, the role the bat plays in its ecosystem, any threats the bat currently faces, and ongoing conservation efforts. Be sure to interview at least one bat expert.

For Writers

In the article, the author writes that bats have a bad reputation that they don’t deserve. Choose another animal that is often misunderstood, such as the shark, the snake, or the cockroach. Write an essay explaining why this animal is important and dispelling any common misconceptions about it.

For Graphic Novelists

Retell the story of the bat rescue from “Stalking the Bat Killer” in the form of a graphic novel.