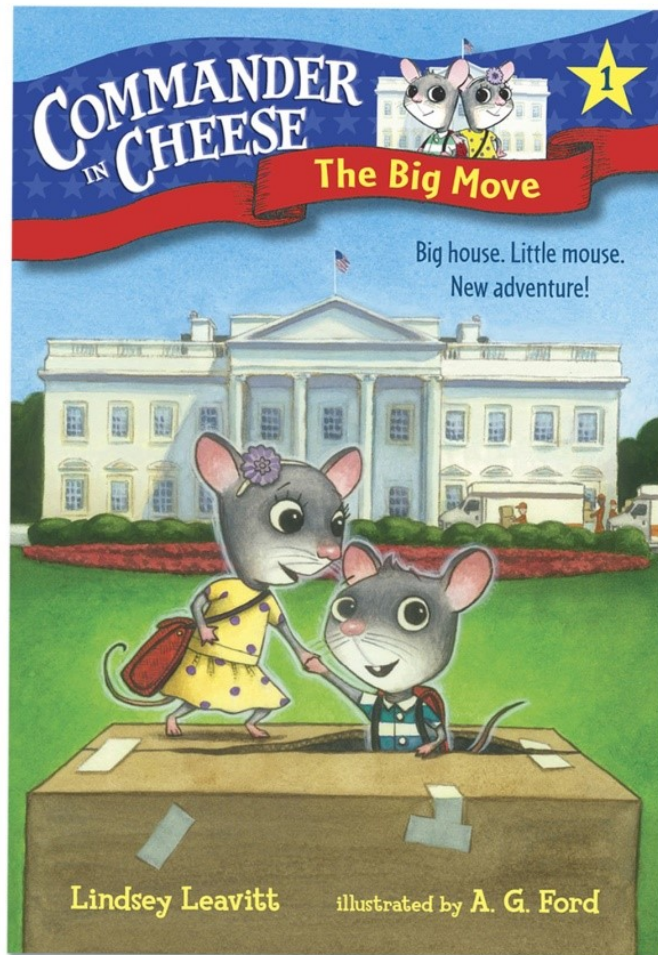


COMMANDER IN CHEESE



Teacher Guide



This packet includes:

Chapter by Chapter Questions
Whole Book Questions
and Whole Book Projects



Chapter by Chapter Questions

Chapter One

How might living in The White House be different for a mouse than it would be for a person?

Why do you think it's top secret information that mice live in The White House?

What might some problems be if people knew mice lived in The White House?

Chapter Two

The narrator says that “being a Squekerton was a big deal in the mouse world. But sometimes a mouse just needed to feel like any other mouse. Being told to put the juice away felt like something any house mouse in America would hear.” Why do you think this is? Why do you think that “sometimes a mouse just needed to feel like any other mouse?”

How would you describe Ava and Dean's relationship?

Predict what you think might happen when Dean goes looking for a Lego.

Chapter Three

Describe how Ava and Dean respond to Inauguration Day and to having a new family move into the house.

How would you describe Dean? How would you describe Ava? Select three words for each and then explain why you chose those words.

Do you think Ava and Dean's plan is a good one? List some pros and cons to their plan.

Why does Ava decide to go with Dean to look for a Lego?

Chapter Four

Explain how cousin Gregory is a potential conflict in the book.

What are some of the other potential conflicts that we've seen so far?

Predict how these conflicts might be solved.

Chapter Five

What are some of the positives about Inauguration Day for the mice?

Explain what happens on Inauguration Day in the White House your own words.

Chapter Six

Examine the mouse rules and explain what three you think are the most important and why.

Dean says, "A mouse against the wall is the best mouse of all." What does he mean by this? Why is that the best mouse of all?

What are some of the obstacles Ava and Dean had to overcome to make it to the little boy's room?

Chapter Seven

What does the problem of Ava and Dean getting stuck in the room add to the story?

Ava and Dean get stuck in the boy's room. Predict what you think will happen to them.

What are the most important details in this chapter that you need to know in order to help tell the story?



Chapter Eight

Describe how Ava and Dean each respond to being trapped in the room.

Ava is unable to find a battery for the plane, so she gets upset because she believes she will never have the chance to fly again, “Ava hung her head. She had been so close to flying. So close. She would never have this chance ever again. She would have to sit on that roof of the great, big White House and watch the planes overhead and dream her days away. She was, after all, only a mouse. Mice are small and they probably shouldn’t dream so big.” Do you believe her way of thinking is true? Should mice not dream big because they are small. Why or why not?

Ava’s dream is to fly. Based off of what we know about the character of Dean, what do you think some of his dreams might be?

Chapter Nine

Describe the type of relationship that Banks and Macie have. Is it similar or different than the one that Ava and Dean have? Explain.

What do you think the crazy idea is that Dean and Ava have to get a Lego?

Chapter Ten

Banks and Macie react in different ways when they discover Ava and Dean. Describe how both respond to finding mice in the room. How would you have reacted?

What items do Ava and Dean each grab? Explain how they are both trying to help each other by grabbing these items. What does this show about their relationship?

What do you think Code Brown stands for?

Chapter Eleven

Why do you think the Abbey children decide to save Dean and Ava?

When Banks thanks Dean for giving back the Lego, Dean is unable to answer him. The narrator says that, “even if Dean could talk, he didn’t know what to say. There aren’t words for what he was feeling.” What do you think he was feeling? Why was he feeling this?

If you were Banks and Macie, would you have saved the mice? Why or why not?

If you were Dean, would you have given back the Lego? Why or why not?

Chapter Twelve

Why do you think Dean and Ava never knew about the secret tunnels before?

How do Ava and Dean's parents respond to them exploring? Were you surprised by this response? Why or why not. What kind of response were Ava and Dean expecting?

How did Banks surprise Ava and Dean at the end of the book?

When Ava and Dean think about the Abbey kids, they think about how it "was exciting, but also dangerous" to live in a house with kids. What might be exciting about it? What might be dangerous about it?

The book ends with the narrator saying, "One thing was for certain. The Abbey kids and the Squeakerton mice were ready for some adventures in their home – the beautiful White House." Predict what other adventures they may get into.

Fun Facts

How does looking at the floor plans of the White House help you understand the story better?

After reading the "Fun Facts," what are some other potential adventures that Ava and Dean might get into?

What was Lindsey Leavitt's main purpose by including the "Fun Facts" at the end of the book?

Compare and contrast present and past Inaugurations. How have they changed? How have they stayed the same?





Whole Book Questions

The first chapter of the book tells the reader that the top-secret information about mice in the White House is out. But the narrator asks that you don't blame the book. Instead, "Blame Ava and Dean. They almost blew it for everyone." Summarize what Ava and Dean did to make the narrator blame them.

What are some potential dangers to mice living in The White House?

Do you think it would be fun to live in the White House? Why or why not? Use specific examples from the book to support your answer.

Based off of the information you read in the book, list ways that mice and people are the same and different.

Select three different pictures from the book and describe how each helps to tell you more about the characters, setting, or plot.

Ava and Dean discover that Banks room is full of boxes. Dean doesn't know how they will be able to go through all of the boxes, but Ava wants to keep looking for a Lego. Dean thinks about Ava and feels that, "he was older, but sometimes his sister was smarter. Or maybe not smarter...bolder." (Chapter 7) Do you agree with Dean? Does Ava seem to be smarter and bolder? Why or why not? In what ways do we see Ava being smarter or bolder than Dean? In what ways is Dean smart and bold?

What words would you use to describe Ava in this book? Select three words and explain why you chose them. Do the same with the character of Dean.

Describe the setting of *Commander in Cheese*. How is this setting important to this story?

How are Ava and Dean like you? How is the two of them different from you?

Would you want to be friends with Ava and Dean? Why or why not?

How does Ava and Dean's view of the new kids change throughout the book?

Who are the secondary characters in the book? Identify a minimum of three and discuss why they are important to the story.

There are many conflicts in the book. Identify two conflicts and explain how they are solved.

There are many jobs for the mice in the White House: Body guard, Takers, Technology/Wiring Specialist, and the person in charge of the mice living in the White House. What other jobs do we see in the book? What job would you want? Why?

Chapter 11 includes a two lists. One is the good news and one is the not-so-good-news. (Chapter 11) Create a similar book for the ending of the book. What is the good news at the end? What is the not-so-good-news at the end?

The narrator comments multiple times that mice are smart. What are ways we see them being smart in the book?

What are two new and interesting things you learned about the White House or past presidents? Write these two things down and explain what made them interesting to you.

The title of the book is *Commander in Cheese: The Big Move*. Come up with a new one and explain why you chose it using details from the book to show your view.

Where do we see some of the Fun Facts happening in the story, *Commander in Cheese: The Big Move*? Link up specific facts with events in the story.

After reading the Fun Facts at the end of the book, what do you think would be your favorite part of Inauguration day? Explain why.





Whole Book Projects

When Ava and Dean try to figure out what to do about Clover being in the room, Dean suggests they think about what Thomas Jefferson would do. Ava said he'd write a Peace Treaty, but Ava tells them that they don't have time for that. You do have time, so your task is to write your own Peace Treaty between the mice and humans or mice and Clover. What would it say? What would you promise to do? What would you promise never to do?

Ava has a lot of things she dreams about doing. Write about a personal dream that you have. Describe it in details.

In Chapter 11, Dean tells Ava about how "Thomas Jefferson also knew that sometimes you have to give up something good for something better." Write about a time when you had to do this.

In Chapter Six, we get Mice Rules for living in the White House. Create your own Mice Rules for your house or school.

Dead thinks it's a bad idea to go through the boxes to look for a Lego and tells Ava this. She replies by saying, "What if the great Amelia Earhart had decided flying across the Atlantic was a bad idea? She never would have come to the White House to meet President Coolidge. And we wouldn't have a piece of her chewing gum in the Treasure Rooms." (Chapter 7) Write about a time you took a risk like Amelia Earhart.

The narrator says, "even mice knew the president needed a private space." (Chapter 2) Write about a time when you needed some private space.

Dean makes the choice to give the Lego back to Banks, "Dean made a decision to do something kind for the kids because they had saved his life. It wasn't an easy choice. His stomach actually hurt." Write about a time you had to make a choice to give something up to help someone else.

There are many historical people mentioned in the book (such as Thomas Jefferson, Sasha Obama, Amelia Earhart, President Coolidge, William Howard Taft, William Henry Harrison, or any of the other past presidents of the United States). Select one to research and then present three interesting facts you learned about them to your class.

Select one of the rooms on the second floor of the White House. How would you design it if you lived there? Design your own White House room and then write an explanation about why you decorated it the way that you did.

The first floor of the White House is open for tours. Research the rooms that are on the first floor, select one and write a report about that room. What makes this room unique? What is in it? What is it used for?

Select a scene that doesn't have a picture with it. Create your own picture to go with it that will provide additional detail about the characters, plot, or setting.

Ava and Dean love Legos. Create a Lego representation of one of the rooms in the White House! Write a paragraph describing the room that you created.

Pretend you are Ava and Dean and write a letter to Banks and Macie. What would you tell them? What do you want to say about mice living in the White House? How do you feel about having a new family move in?

Write a letter to Lindsey Leavitt, the author of the book. What would you ask her about the book? What do you want to know that wasn't included in the book? What questions do you have? What is your favorite part?

Pretend you are a newspaper reporter and get to interview Ava and Dean about their adventure. What questions would you ask them to find out all the important information about what happened? What kind of answers would they give? Now write this all up as an actual newspaper article!

Select one of the chapters and create a script so you can perform it in front of your classmates. After you perform it, compare and contrast the play version with the written version in the book. What were the things you like about each version? What did you not like about each version? What made each version different? How were they the same?

Create titles for each of the chapters in the book. Make sure each of them reflect and go along with what is happening in each of the chapters.

Research different pets that past presidents have had in the White House. What kind of pet did he have? What was its name? What is a fun fact about it? Find pictures of the pet. Select one president to examine and share your findings with the class.

In the section labeled, "Inauguration Day: Present," we learn that "music, poetry, and prayers are also part of the ceremony." Select a president from the last thirty years and research what music, poetry, or prayers they used in their ceremony. Share what you found with the class.



Pretend you are the president! What would your inauguration day look like? Create the following:

- The opening to your inauguration address
- A song that would be played
- A poem that would be read

Select a president (use the section at the end of the book that lists all of our presidents) and research his inauguration. Create your own facts about that president's inauguration day.

Select a president (use the section at the end of the book that lists all of our presidents) and read the opening paragraphs of their inauguration address. Summarize what he is saying.

Select one of the Fun Facts that you find particularly interesting. Then, research that fact in more detail and create a presentation to teach you class about it.

Create a poster with pictures from past inaugurations. Select from the following and focus on that one topic:

- Swearing-in ceremony
- Inaugural Address
- Parade or limousine ride back to the White House
- Inaugural balls

**This guide aligns with Common Core Standards in Reading Literature,
Reading Informational Texts, and Writing:**

ELA-Literacy.RL.2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.10, 3.1, 3.1, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.9, and 3.10

ELA-Literacy.RI.2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.10, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6, 3.7, and 3.10

ELA-Literacy.W.2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3