

# RUNAWAY RALPH

## RUNAWAY RALPH

By Beverly Cleary

Themes: Fantasy & Imagination, Friendship

Grade Level: K - 6

Running Time: 40 minutes

## SUMMARY

Out on the open road, Ralph has a string of fur-raising adventures. Bruised and limping, he survives and encounter with a behemoth camper truck, only to fall prey to Catso, the resident cat at Happy Acres Summer Camp. Rescued from Catso, Ralph is put in a cage on a diet of green pellets. His rescuer is Garfield, an unhappy boy attending Happy Acres. The two quickly become friends, especially when Garfield discovers Ralph can talk. When Garfield is accused of stealing Karen's watch, Ralph persuades him that running away doesn't solve problems. Ralph helps Garfield clear his name and takes his revenge on Catso at the same time. Having learned that the wild is not necessarily better than home, even with all its problems, Ralph returns to the Mountain View Inn. He is last seen happily giving his younger relations rides with his motorcycle.

## OBJECTIVES

After viewing, the audience will be able to:  
¥ Describe how enthusiasm for reading, writing, and communication is enhanced by bringing a favorite book to life.

¥ Discuss the program's theme of friendship.

## BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Read the book, *RUNAWAY RALPH*, and other books in the series to the class.

## AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Use these discussion topics, activities, and questions to review the program material.

- ¥ What makes the image of a mouse on a motorcycle so funny and unusual? Have your students imagine and draw animals enjoying other unexpected activities.
- ¥ Garfield is reluctant to attend camp. Why? What are the benefits and drawbacks of attending camp? Write a story or draw pictures of your best and worst experiences at camp.
- ¥ Ralph decides to run away but convinces Garfield not to do so. Why? Have your students write or draw pictures about a time they felt like running away. Why did they decide against it?
- ¥ How do Ralph and Garfield meet? Why do they become friends so quickly?
- ¥ What does Garfield do for Ralph and what does Ralph do for Garfield?
- ¥ What kind of a mouse do you think that Ralph is? creative thinker? resourceful? adventurous? disobedient? cautious? How can you tell?
- ¥ What kind of person do you think Garfield is? How can you tell?
- ¥ Did Ralph construct a trap for the cat?
- ¥ When Ralph is found in the sleeping quarters, some kids scream. Why do mice frighten some people?
- ¥ Draw a picture of Ralph doing something from the program, book, or your own imagination.

Write a brief description of the picture.

- ¥ Do you have a pet? Draw a picture of him or her and write a story about something you and your pet do together. If you don't have a pet, make one up.
- ¥ What are the responsibilities of pet owners? Have each pet-owning student consult several manuals on pet care to ensure that his or her pet is cared for properly. Have students report on changes made in pet care due to this research.
- ¥ Read *RUNAWAY RALPH*, *THE MOUSE AND THE MOTORCYCLE*, and *RALPH S. MOUSE*. Do you have a favorite? Report about the book you read.

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