

Bradford on Avon Barn Dwellers

Freddie Flea



Beatrix Bee



What can these insects tell you about the history of the barn?



Tock the Sheep Tick

Dewb the Deathwatch Beetle



Chuck the Spider

Barn Dwellers

Here are five autobiographies of creatures that have lived in or very near the barn since it was built.

They are presented in two ways: as five complete texts, where groups of five each with a different autobiography to read, can work together to solve the quiz and then, on the principle that if you can do something easy together you can go on to do something more difficult, can look at the thinky questions and make notes for later classroom discussion. We thought that this activity could be done during a visit to the barn where the atmosphere can improve the thinking and the classroom discussion could take place later in school. We have also divided up the texts into five sets of six cards. Our idea here for everyone to receive a card and then work together in groups to prepare an oral presentation to the rest of the class. If your class are confident readers, you might want to distribute the cards and then ask for the Part 1 cards to be read out, then the Part 2 cards and so on so that the class listens to five stories slowly revealed. If the class are confident talkers you might want to consider trying this activity out in the barn!

Webaddress: www.collaborativelearning.org/barndwellers.pdf

Last updated 25th January 2019

Our collaborative talk for learning activities are designed to:

...build on prior knowledge.

...move from concrete to abstract thinking.

...ensure everyone works with everyone else.

...extend social language into curriculum language.

...provide motivating ways to go over the same topic more than once.

For more details go to: www.collaborativelearning.org

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING PROJECT

Project Director: Stuart Scott

We support a network of teaching professionals to develop and disseminate accessible talk-for-learning activities in all subject areas and for all ages.

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Website: <http://www.collaborativelearning.org>

BRIEF SUMMARY OF BASIC PRINCIPLES BEHIND OUR TEACHING ACTIVITIES:

The project is a teacher network, and a non-profit making educational trust. Our main aim is to develop and disseminate classroom tested examples of effective group strategies that promote talk across all phases and subjects. We hope they will inspire you to develop and use similar strategies in other topics and curriculum areas. We want to encourage you to change them and adapt them to your classroom and students. We run teacher workshops, swapshops and conferences worldwide. The project posts online many activities in all subject areas. Our online newsletter is also updated regularly.

*These activities are influenced by current thinking about the role of language in learning. They are designed to help children learn through talk and active learning in small groups. They work best in non selective classes where children in need of language or learning support are integrated. They are well suited for the development of speaking and listening . They provide teachers opportunities for assessment of speaking and listening.

*They support differentiation by placing a high value on what children can offer to each other on a particular topic, and also give children the chance to respect each other's views and formulate shared opinions which they can disseminate to peers. By helping them to take ideas and abstract concepts, discuss, paraphrase and move them about physically, they help to develop thinking skills.

*They give children the opportunity to participate in their own words and language in their own time without pressure. Many activities can be tried out in pupils' first languages and afterwards in English. A growing number of activities are available in more than one language, not translated, but mixed, so that you may need more than one language to complete the activity.

*They encourage study skills in context, and should therefore be used with a range of appropriate information books which are preferably within reach in the classroom.

*They are generally adaptable over a wide age range because children can bring their own knowledge to an activity and refer to books at an appropriate level. The activities work like catalysts.

*All project activities were planned and developed by teachers working together, and the main reason they are disseminated is to encourage teachers to work more effectively with each other inside and outside the classroom. They have made it possible for mainstream and language and learning support teachers to share an equal role in curriculum delivery. They should be adapted to local conditions. In order to help us keep pace with curriculum changes, please send any new or revised activities back to the project, so that we can add them to our lists of materials.

www.collaborativelearning.org/barndwellers.pdf

Beatrix Bee



I'm Beatrix Bee and you'll see me about in the summer gathering nectar from flowers. I carry the nectar back to the hive for the worker bees who tuck it neatly into a honeycomb cell and beat their wings to fan out the moisture and thicken it into honey.

Our hive is very busy. We have our Queen bee, about 300 drones (the males), about 50,000 worker bees, 30,000 larvae and 6,000 eggs. I'm much too busy to do anything except gather nectar for the colony, but sometimes I fly through the new Barn on my way to find more flowers.

This morning, though, I'm going to avoid the Barn. I can see the carts and bullocks pulling loads of harvested corn into the Barn and I know that means that people are threshing corn on the special wooden floor they have laid on the ridged stones between the doors. They hit the sheaves of corn with flails to separate the grains of corn from the chaff (chaff is the covering on the kernels which nobody can eat). With a huge door open at one side and another at the other side, the people beat the harvested grain with flails, which are two pieces of wood joined together with leather straps, and the breeze helps to blow the chaff away. The people look very hot in their long robes made of coarse broadcloth and their woollen caps and I'm pleased I'm a bee out in the open air.

All that threshing makes the air very dusty and I don't want to fly through that in case I get lost so as it's a nice day I'll fly high over the top of the Barn.

Ah, there's the nice patch of flowers I'm heading for. Sorry, no time to talk now! I'm busy Beatrix Bee!



Threshing with flails. Thresh is like thrash and means hitting hard.

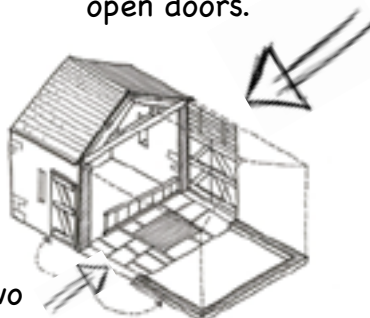
Wind blows the chaff away through the open doors.



Wheat berries for making flour

A sheaf is a bundle of wheat gathered in the field.

Ridged stones for laying the wooden floor between the two barn doors.



Chaff - the outer husk of the wheat

Beatrix Bee Part 1



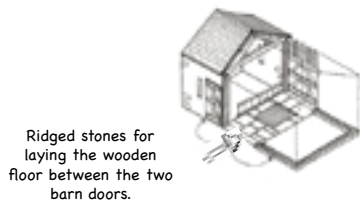
"I'm Beatrix Bee and you'll see me about in the summer gathering nectar from flowers. I carry the nectar back to the hive for the worker bees. They tuck it neatly into a honeycomb cell and beat their wings to fan out the moisture and thicken it into honey."



Beatrix Bee Part 3



"This morning, though, I'm going to avoid the Barn. I can see the carts and bullocks pulling loads of harvested wheat into the Barn and I know that means that people are threshing it on the special wooden floor they have laid on the ridged stones between the big open doors."



Beatrix Bee Part 5



"With a huge door open at one side and another at the other side, the breeze helps to blow the chaff away. The people look very hot in their long robes made of coarse broadcloth and their woollen caps. I'm pleased I'm a bee out in the open air."



Wheat kernels for making flour



Chaff - the outer husk of the wheat

Beatrix Bee Part 2



"Our hive is very busy. We have our Queen bee, about 300 drones (the males), about 50,000 worker bees, 30,000 larvae and 6,000 eggs. I'm much too busy to do anything except gather nectar for the colony, but sometimes I fly through the new Barn on my way to find more flowers."



Beatrix Bee Part 4



"They hit the sheaves of wheat with wooden flails to separate the berries or kernels of wheat from the chaff. Chaff is the covering on the kernels which nobody can eat. They gather up the corn kernels ready for the miller. They sweep the chaff out of the wide doorway where chickens pick up kernels they have missed."

A sheaf is a bundle of wheat gathered in the field.



Beatrix Bee Part 6



"All that threshing makes the air very dusty and I don't want to fly through that in case I get lost so as it's a nice day I'll fly high over the top of the Barn."

Ah, there's the nice patch of flowers I'm heading for. Sorry, no time to talk now! I'm busy Beatrix Bee!"



Dewb the Deathwatch Beetle



My name is Dewb (my name rhymes with 'tube') and I'm a deathwatch beetle. We get our name because when we are larvae we spend five years or more living in the wooden beams of old houses. People who are keeping awake at night while someone is dying hear us making a ticking noise in the house so they call us 'deathwatch'. My family did not live in anyone's house: we lived in the Bradford Barn.

The Tithe Barn is very old and after King Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries it became part of a farm. After several centuries it fell into a very bad state of repair. The Barn has all these wonderful wooden roof beams and, naturally, wood loving species - like us and the woodworm - had moved in long ago.

In the 1940s the Ministry of Works took ownership of the Barn because it was one of the finest examples of a monastic barn still in existence. They decided it was time to undertake some restoration work. And do you know one of the first things they did? They got rid of us deathwatch beetles! Evicted us from our home after hundreds of years...

The restoration work took them a long time because the War got in the way but by 1950 the beams had been renewed and the roof tiles had been replaced and the Barn looked beautiful.

None of us deathwatch beetles live here now. We are not far away! It seems to me that the Barn stands quietly waiting to see what will happen next.



A wooden beam that has been eaten by death watch beetle larvae.



A deathwatch beetle larva looks like this!

Dewb the Deathwatch Beetle



Part 1

"My name is Dewb (my name rhymes with 'tube') and I'm a deathwatch beetle. We get our name because when we are larvae we spend five years or more living in the wooden beams of old houses. People who are keeping awake at night while someone is dying hear us making a ticking noise in the house so they call us 'deathwatch'."

Dewb the Deathwatch Beetle



Part 2

"My family did not live in a house: we lived in the Bradford Barn. The Tithe Barn is very old. We arrived there in about 1450 when the barn was already over a hundred years old and the wood was just right for us to eat. After King Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries it became part of a farm."



A deathwatch beetle larva looks like this!

Dewb the Deathwatch Beetle



Part 3

"We loved living there, The Barn has all these wonderful wooden roof beams and, naturally, wood loving species – like us and the woodworm – bored holes to lay eggs and raise our children. After several centuries, partly because we were slowly eating it, the Barn fell into a very bad state of repair."



A wooden beam that has been eaten by death watch beetle larvae.

Dewb the Deathwatch Beetle



Part 4

"In the 1940s the Ministry of Works took ownership of the Barn because it was one of the finest examples of a monastic barn still in existence. They decided it was time to undertake some restoration work. And do you know one of the first things they did? They got rid of us deathwatch beetles! Evicted us from our home after hundreds of years..."

Dewb the Deathwatch Beetle



Part 5

"The restoration work took them a long time because the War got in the way but by 1950 the beams had been renewed and the roof tiles had been cleaned and replaced. The Barn looked beautiful."



Every stone tile was taken off the roof, cleaned and put back with a new peg to hold it.

Dewb the Deathwatch Beetle



Part 6

"None of us deathwatch beetles live here now. But we are not far away! It seems to me that the Barn stands quietly waiting to see what will happen next. What uses can you think of for the Barn?"

Tock the Sheep Tick



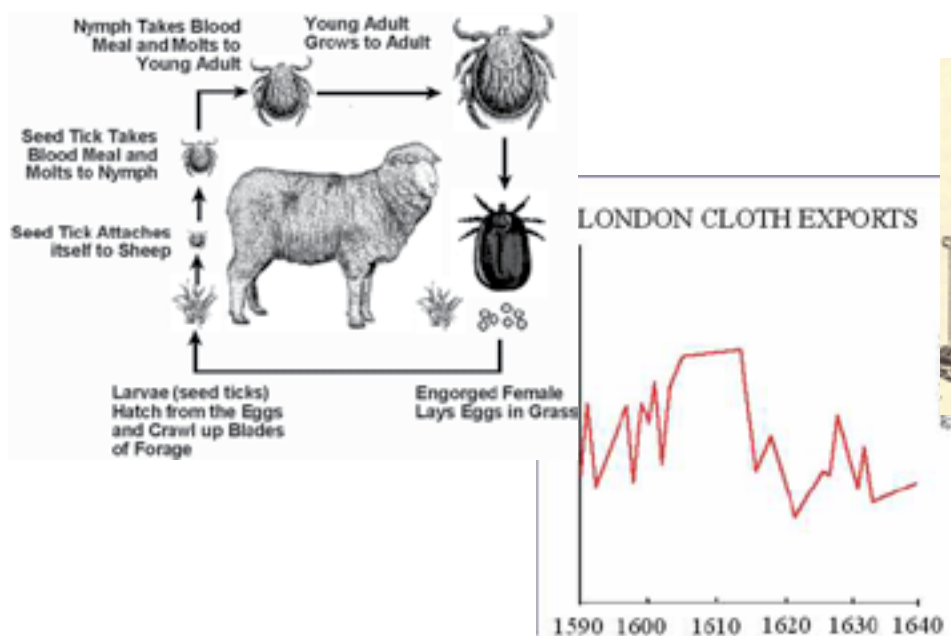
Good day to you. I'm Tock, the sheep tick. You humans don't like us very much. It's not my fault that you can get ill if I bite you. It's just the way I'm made. Anyway, I don't like you very much: I prefer sheep, they are far more interesting.

Back in the 1400s there were sheep all around the Bradford Barn. England produced enough wool for the country's own use and plenty more for cloth to be exported. Bradford on Avon went on to be a very successful wool town and if you look up at the hill, you will see where – much later – rows of houses called The Tory, Middle Rank and Newtown were built. The top storeys of these houses have high windows to let in the light so that the weavers could work long hours on their looms weaving undyed broadcloth. Women at their spinning wheels on the lower floors spun the wool to provide the yarn for their menfolk to weave. Whole families, including children, were involved in spinning and weaving.

In the 1570s, when Queen Elizabeth I was on the throne, a law was passed that all Englishmen, with the exception of the Nobles (who liked to wear fine clothing), had to wear a woollen cap to Church on Sundays. As everyone had to go to Church, this helped the wool trade and I think, since the wool trade needed sheep and I like sheep, that this was a very fine law indeed.

There was another outbreak of Plague in 1609 and the broadcloth industry was declining. In the early 1630s a Royal Commissioner, who was investigating complaints from the Merchant Venturers keen to protect their exports of undyed broadcloths, was thrown into the river here. Bradford weavers didn't want it known that they had largely given up making broadcloth in favour of the new coloured cloth.

You'll still see sheep about today and I don't mind that now they are bred for their meat as much as their wool: I'm happy that there are sheep to help us ticks in our life cycle.



A handloom for making broadcloth

Tock the Sheep Tick

Part 1



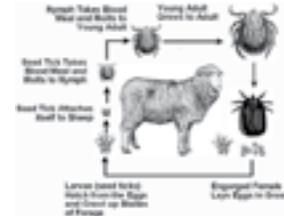
"Good day to you. I'm Tock, the sheep tick. You humans don't like us very much. It's not my fault that you can get ill if I bite you. It's just the way I'm made. Anyway, I don't like you very much either. I prefer sheep, they are far more interesting. You'll still see sheep about today and I don't mind that now they are bred for their meat as much as their wool: I'm happy that there are sheep to help us ticks in our life cycle."

Tock the Sheep Tick

Part 2



"Back in the 1400s there were sheep all around the Bradford Barn. England produced enough wool for the country's own use and plenty more for cloth to be exported. Bradford on Avon went on to be a very successful wool town."



Tock the Sheep Tick

Part 3



"If you look up at the hill above the town, you will see where - much later - rows of houses called The Tory, Middle Rank and Newtown were built. The top storeys of these houses have high windows to let in the light so that the weavers could work long hours on their looms weaving undyed broadcloth."

Tock the Sheep Tick

Part 4



"Women at their spinning wheels on the lower floors spun the wool to provide the yarn for their menfolk to weave. Whole families, including children, were involved in spinning and weaving."



A handloom for making broadcloth

Tock the Sheep Tick

Part 5



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Part 6



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Freddie Flea



My name is Freddie and I'm a flea. The year is 1349. My host and home was a nice fat black rat who lived in the basement of a weaver's house in London. He didn't bother much about me, apart from the occasional scratch with his paws. I can dodge them quite quickly.

One morning, my rat became ill and by sunset he was dead. Fortunately, I'd had a good feed of his blood, but I had to find another host or I'd be dead too. Close to me I saw something soft that looked like an animal so I leapt off the rat to take up my new home. Although it was soft like a creature I couldn't hear a heartbeat. There was no nice smell of blood for my next meal. Silly me, I'd jumped into a pile of cloth!

A human was near me and I thought I would give him a try but, before I had time to hop on, he picked up the pile of cloth and packed it into a trunk. It was very dark and frightening but I had to sit tight and wait to see what happened next. The trunk was packed onto a cart and we moved through the streets of London and open countryside until finally after many days and nights we came to rest in Bradford on Avon beside a huge barn.

By this time, I was really hungry and when the package was opened so that the merchant could take a look at how the material had been woven, I hopped onto the nearest living creature who happened to be a human. I really much prefer rats but I had to hop onto about twenty humans before I found one. I think I must have travelled all over the town.

What I didn't know was that my London rat died of the Plague and I had drunk his infected blood. When I bit the human I gave him the Black Death too. Within the year, more than half the people of the Abbey estates had died.



The worse plague year was 1349 but it returned every summer when fleas were plentiful.

Freddie Flea

Part 1



"My name is Freddie and I'm a flea. The year is 1349. My host and home was a nice fat black rat who lived in the basement of a weaver's house in London. He didn't bother much about me, apart from the occasional scratch with his paws. I can dodge them quite quickly."

Freddie Flea

Part 2



"One morning, my rat became ill and by sunset he was dead. Fortunately, I'd had a good feed of his blood, but I had to find another host or I'd be dead too. Close to me I saw something soft that looked like an animal so I leapt off the rat to take up my new home. Although it was soft like a creature I couldn't hear a heartbeat. There was no nice smell of blood for my next meal. Silly me, I'd jumped into a pile of cloth!"

Freddie Flea

Part 3



"A human was near me and I thought I would give him a try but, before I had time to hop on, he picked up the pile of cloth and packed it into a trunk. It was very dark and frightening but I had to sit tight and wait to see what happened next. The trunk was packed onto a cart and we moved through the streets of London and open countryside until finally after many days and nights we came to rest in Bradford on Avon beside a huge barn."

Freddie Flea

Part 4



"By this time, I was really hungry and when the package was opened so that the merchant could take look at how the material had been woven, I hopped onto the nearest living creature who happened to be a human. I really much prefer rats but I had to hop onto about twenty humans before I found one. I think I must have travelled all over the town."

Freddie Flea

Part 5



"What I didn't know was that my London rat died of the Plague and I had drunk his infected blood. Whenever I bit a human I gave him the Plague too. Within the year, more than half the people of the Abbey estates had died."



Freddie Flea

Part 6



"My descendants still live in Bradford but everything is much cleaner now, so we don't spend much time with humans. The Black Rats disappeared and the the Plague eventually went away."

Chuck the Spider

Hi! You down there. Look up and you might be able to see me. No? Well, OK, but I can see you. I'm up here on the rafters. Can you see my web where the sun catches it? That's right, I'm a spider.



I want to tell you how I got here. My name's Chuck, named after my great-great-great- I don't know how many times great-grandfather and he came here from the United States of America in 1945.

He didn't mean to come to England but you see he was living in a wheat field in Maine. When the wheat was harvested, my ancestor - Chuck the First - found himself harvested with all the grains of wheat and taken on a journey. He didn't mind all that much because he had always wanted to travel. He climbed to the top of the heap of grain and looked around him as he travelled all the way to the ocean. There was a sign that said Portland and he knew from the smell of salt and engine oil that he was at a harbour.

The next day, there was a lot of noise and the grain that had been Chuck's home for the past few days was lowered down, all the way down into the hold of a ship, on top of a number of army tanks.

Chuck didn't know it at first but he heard the sailors talking and realised that the tanks and the grain were on their way to Britain. Chuck's ship joined with others to form a convoy and they set sail. There were destroyers protecting the convoy and at night they travelled without lights, hoping to avoid the submarines. The subs were patrolling the seas to prevent the ships bringing supplies to Britain. Chuck could tell that the sailors were worried.

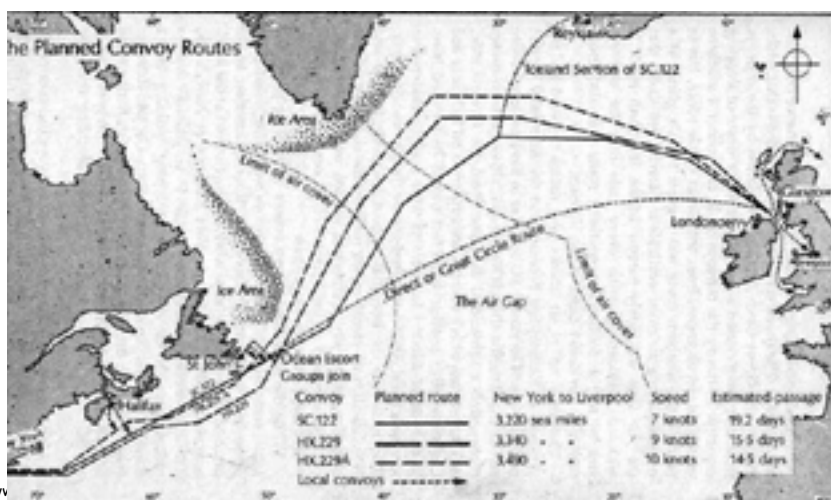
On the second night, one of the ships near them was hit by a torpedo and sank very quickly. The following night, more ships sank. Chuck's ship picked up survivors and there was an air of worry over the whole convoy. For a few nights, it seemed that they were out of danger but, as the crew began to relax, there was a crash and a shudder ran through the whole ship. Sea water poured through a gaping hole and the ship tilted.

Chuck was very frightened. The sailors were shouting to one another and the order was given to abandon ship. Chuck threw a web and swung onto the shoulder of a man who was running towards a lifeboat and climbed on board as it was lowered into the sea. The sailors were cold and frightened in the little boat in the middle of the ocean and Chuck scuttled into a pocket to keep warm and safe. Eventually, another ship doubled back and picked them up. Once on board, Chuck climbed out of the sailor's pocket and followed the scent of wheat to the hold where he was relieved to find himself back among the grain. Chuck hid himself and stayed in the dark where he hoped he would be safe. He didn't look out when he felt the grain taken out of the ship's hold and put onto trucks; he hid himself away as the truck pulled away from the docks and he stayed in the dark right until it was poured in a great heap inside an enormous barn.

A few days later, Chuck felt braver and made his way through the grain until he reached the top. He looked around him. It really was a huge barn and he gazed up at the roof timbers. It looked safe up

there and he began the long climb. From his vantage point among the spiders' webs and dust, Chuck watched and waited a long time. One day, the grain was collected and taken away to be ground into flour.

After the War ended, no more grain was brought to the barn and it stood empty for a long time.



Chuck the Spider Part 1



"Hi! You down there. Look up and you might be able to see me. No? Well, OK, but I can see you. I'm up here on the rafters. Can you see my web where the sun catches it? That's right, I'm a spider. I want to tell you how I got here. My name's Chuck, named after my great-great-great- I don't know how many times great-grandfather and he came here from the United States of America in 1945."

Chuck the Spider Part 2



"He didn't mean to come to England but you see he was living in a wheat field in Maine. When the wheat was harvested, my ancestor - Chuck the First - found himself harvested with all the grains of wheat and taken on a journey. He didn't mind all that much because he had always wanted to travel. He climbed to the top of the heap of grain and looked around him as he travelled all the way to the ocean. There was a sign that said Portland and he knew from the smell of salt and engine oil that he was at a harbour."

Chuck the Spider Part 3



"The next day, there was a lot of noise and the grain was lowered down, all the way down into the hold of a ship, together with a number of army tanks. Chuck didn't know it at first but he heard the sailors talking and realised that the tanks and the grain were on their way to Britain. Chuck's ship joined with others and they set sail. There were destroyers protecting the convoy and at night they travelled without lights, hoping to avoid the submarines. The subs were patrolling the seas to prevent the ships bringing supplies to Britain."

Chuck the Spider Part 4



"On the second night, one of the ships near them was hit by a torpedo and sank very quickly. The following night, more ships sank. Chuck's ship picked up survivors and there was an air of worry over the whole convoy. For a few nights, it seemed that they were out of danger but, as the crew began to relax, there was a crash and a shudder ran through the whole ship. Sea water poured through a gaping hole and the ship tilted."

Chuck the Spider Part 5



"Chuck was very frightened. He threw a web and swung onto the shoulder of a man who was running towards a lifeboat and climbed on board as it was lowered into the sea. Chuck scuttled into a pocket to keep warm and safe. Eventually, another ship doubled back and picked them up. Once on board, Chuck climbed out of the sailor's pocket and followed the scent of wheat to the hold. He felt the grain taken out of the ship's hold and put onto a truck. He stayed in the dark right until it was poured in a great heap inside an enormous barn."

Chuck the Spider Part 6



"A few days later, Chuck f made his way through the grain until he reached the top. He looked around him. It really was a huge barn and he gazed up at the roof timbers. It looked safe up there and he began the long climb. From his vantage point among the spiders' webs and dust, Chuck watched and waited a long time. One day, the grain was collected and taken away to be ground into flour. After the War ended, no more grain was brought to the barn and it stood empty for a long time."

Barn Dwellers Quiz

Can damage humans.

Can damage the structure of the barn.

Bring benefits to humans.

Came from another place to Bradford.

Can damage animals

Beatrix Bee

Dewb the Deathwatch Beetle

Freddie Flea

Chuck the Spider

Tock the Sheep Tick

Tick or Cross

Some Thinky Questions

Can you think of some other creatures, big or small, that might have lived in the barn?

Can you think of ways the barn can be used nowadays?

Can you think what might have been stored in the barn at different times?

At what times was the barn very vulnerable and very lucky not to be destroyed?

Can you think of the different jobs people from Bradford did in the barn over the years?

If you did the timeline activity, can you think of more events to put on the timeline.

Can you think of a question you would like the answer to?

You might want to make notes here to help you remember. This will help you when you have a classroom discussion later.