

QUICK CARD: WATERSHIP DOWN



<i>Reference</i>	<i>Watership Down</i> . Richard Adams. (1972) ISBN-13: 978-0743277709
<i>Plot</i>	Unable to move their Threrah, a group of Sandleford warren rabbits flee the coming destruction their friend and companion Fiver has foreseen. Battling their natural enemies, unfriendly rabbits from other warrens, and their own foolishness, the rabbits eventually succeed in establishing a new warren on Watership Down.
<i>Setting</i>	The English Countryside between Kingsclere and Whitchurch. Various rabbit warrens and the fields between. The entire story takes place between Spring and Fall of one year.
<i>Characters</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hazel – the main character, and leader of the vagabond rabbits. He isn't large, but he is faithful, level-headed, and is concerned for the group rather than himself alone. • Fiver – Hazel's brother and the "seer" rabbit. It is his visions of terror that induces the rabbits to make their journey, and his sixth sense that keeps them from disaster on the way. • Bigwig – not only the largest rabbit of the group, but also the largest hearted. Bigwig is protector of the little guy, champion of the underdog. He sometimes lacks discernment, but having gained his trust and respect, he remains faithful to the end. • El-ahrairah – Fabled king of the rabbits, honored for his cleverness. • Blackberry – a fellow wanderer with Hazel and Fiver and the rest. He is the brains in the operation. When confronted with a river to cross, it is he who conceives of and produces a "boat." When faced with a silver wire of despair, it is he who discovers a way to unearth it. He is a clear thinker, and a shrewd mind.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holly – Captain of the Owsla in the original warren. Escaped death with his companion, Bluebell, to tell of the horrors that overtook the others. • Dandelion – chief storyteller of the group. He spun yarns that created diversions for the rabbits when they were stuck in tight spots, keeping them from becoming “tharn.” • Cowslip – head rabbit from the warren on the journey. He was large, and beautiful, but deceitful and self-centered, living in a false reality. • Strawberry – another rabbit in the dangerous warren. His doe Nildro-hain (literally, “Blackbird’s Song”) is killed before the others leave the warren. He escapes with the others and becomes one of Hazel’s band. • Woundwort – Oversized chief rabbit of the Efracan warren. Although a strong leader, he was despotic, tyrannical, and self-seeking • Kehaar – wounded seagull befriended by Hazel and the others. Became a loyal ally to the rabbits. • Thethunthinnang – Literally, “Movement of the leaves.” Doe from Efracan who, like Fiver, saw into the future. • Hyzenthlay – Literally, “Shining –dew-fur” or fur shining like dew. Another Efracan doe. She helped Bigwig stage the escape with the does from Efracan. • Blackavar – disgraced and wounded buck from Efracan. Despite the odds, Bigwig refused to leave him in honor of his spirit, however broken. • Vervain – Right hand man to General Woundwort. The other rabbits of Efracan hated him for his cruelty. • Rabscuttle – El-ahrairah’s companion and friend in all his escapades. • Prince Rainbow – Royal ruler in El-ahrairah’s fabled world. Always seeking to subdue El-ahrairah and keep him from his tricks. • Frith – the sun, personified as a god by the rabbits • Black Rabbit of Inle – fabled rabbit of death, whose coming denotes the end for the rabbit he calls. • Silver – a “quiet, straightforward fellow” • Pipkin – the smallest of the rabbits, a runt of the litter. • Buckhorn – traveller from the Sandleford warren • Speedwell – traveller from the Sandleford warren • Silverweed – poet from the “beautiful warren” who sings a kind of death-ridden, diseased poetry. Frightens Fiver.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bluebell – Holly’s companion and court jester. He cheered the troops with his foolish jokes and word play. • Clover – one of the hutch rabbit does from Nuthanger Farm. • Boxwood – male hutch rabbit from Nuthanger Farm. • Laurel – the third hutch rabbit from Nuthanger Farm. He was caught by the men and taken back to the hutch. • Haystack – a female hutch rabbit from Nuthanger Farm. • Mouse – The rabbits’ kindness towards him saved his life and led to information that saved their warren. • Captain Bugloss – a ranking officer in the Efracan owsla. • Captain Campion – another ranking officer in the Efracan owsla. The one who led Woundwort to the Watership warren. • Chervil – another ranking Efracan officer. Head of the Near Hind Mark, under whom Bigwig served and deceived many. • Nelthilta – a pretty, young, and impetuous doe in the Efracan near hind mark. Nearly gave away Bigwig and the rest. • Captain Mallow – Efracan officer killed while reconnoitering Holly and the rest.
<i>Conflict</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Man vs. Man/ Animals against animals: The rabbits struggle against “eli” (other animals that hunt them), against evil and diseased rabbits (the strange warren with Cowslip and the Efracan warren with Woundwort), and with themselves (Hazel and his pride, Bigwig and his foolish bravado) • Man vs. Nature: Animal against man – Man is rabbit’s natural enemy, as he is all other animals’ enemy. He alone of the created order does things for reasons not concerning survival. • Man vs. Self/ Animal against self – Woundwort against the other rabbits, Hazel against his pride, Bigwig against his fear
<i>Theme</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership – What makes a good leader? Compare and contrast Hazel, the Threrah of Sandleford warren, Bigwig, Cowslip, and Woundwort. Who is the ideal leader of this group? What are the positive and negative characteristics of each listed? What is the fatal flaw of each? What is strength?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courage – The rabbits, as common to their kind, startle easily and are timid creatures. Even so, they accomplish great things against formidable odds. How are the rabbits like us? Are they courageous? What is courage? What made them courageous? • Faithfulness – Define faithfulness and explain its function in the story. • Shrewdness – Compare and contrast El-ahrairah and Woundwort. Both are clever and shrewd. What makes the one a hero and the other an anti-hero? Is shrewdness a boon or a negative character quality? Why? Does this translate to humankind? Is this a biblical concept? (Use references.) • The Ideal Society – What kind of a society (governmental organization) does Hazel and his band fall under? What kind of government does the Efrafan society represent? How about the strange warren to which Cowslip belongs? What are the pros and cons of these differing societies? What are some real, human governmental systems that mirror these rabbit societies? Can you name some historical personalities that reflect the same personalities as the leaders in the story? According to Richard Adams, what is an ideal society? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Literary Devices</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthropomorphism – Attributing human qualities to non-human creatures. Anthropomorphism makes this a study in human nature and society as much as one of animal-kind. • Symbolism – an extended metaphor used to further the thematic ideas of the story • Circumstantial Irony – device by which the circumstances are the opposite of what was expected • Foils – two characters whose similarities force a discussion of differences between them, usually to accentuate the characteristics of the protagonist by contrast