

## Extended Response about Rats

You read *Oh, Rats! The Story of Rats and People* and "The Giant Rat that Saves Lives." You learned that rats can benefit humans and can be a danger to them. How are rats a benefit to humans? How are they a danger to humans? Use details from the texts to support your response.

In your response, be sure to:

- explain how rats benefit humans
- explain how rats are a danger to humans
- and use details from the texts to support your response.

**Texts:** *Oh, Rats! The Story of Rats and People* (Chapters One, Two, and Three) and "The Giant Rats That Save Lives" (<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/19/opinion/sunday/nicholas-kristof-the-giant-rats-that-save-lives.html>).

In both *Oh, Rats!* and "The Giant Rats That Saved People," we learn about how rats can benefit humans and how rats can be a danger to them. There are many ways rats benefit humans, and there also are a few ways they are a danger to humans.

In many ways, rats benefit humans. For example, in "The Giant Rats That Saved People," rats are helping save people's lives by finding land mines. Humans are usually slow at finding land mines, but the text says, "A rat can clear 20 times as much." Also, rats can help diagnose tuberculosis. The text says, "A HeroRat can screen 100 samples in 20 minutes." This is much faster than a human. The text also says, "The rats are also much more accurate than a human with a microscope." This part shows they are much better than humans, which is a benefit. In *Oh, Rats!*, rats benefit people because people can eat them to get the nutrients they need. In the text it says, "rat meat is rich in protein," which is something people need a lot of.

In other ways, rats can be a big danger to humans. For example, in *Oh Rats!*, rats can gnaw through iron cabinets a half-inch thick to get at food. In *Oh, Rats!* the text says, "they have even gnawed through dam walls, starting floods that wash away entire villages." That could really destroy your home and community. Also, the text says that "rats eat or destroy between one-fifth to one-third of the human food supply." This is a lot of food that people can't eat because it's eaten or spoiled by rats.

In conclusion, rats benefit humans in many ways, but they also can be really dangerous to humans, particularly to their communities and to their food. This makes it hard to decide if we should be trying to get rid of rats or celebrating the ways rats are helping us. What do you think we should do?