

Little House

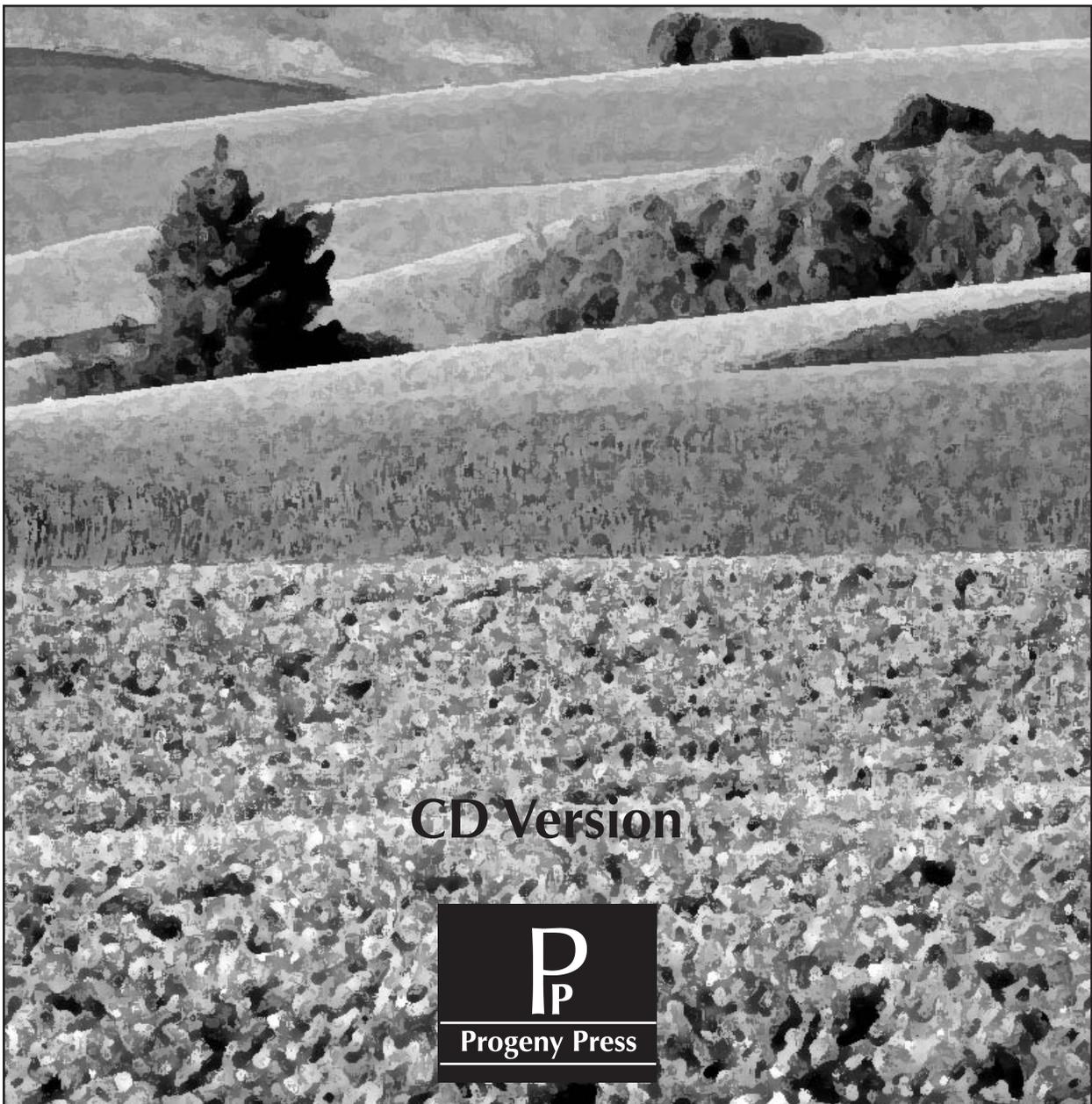


on the Prairie

Study Guide

by Rebecca Gilleland

For the novel by Laura Ingalls Wilder



CD Version



Progeny Press

Limited permission to reproduce this study guide.

**Purchase of this study guide entitles an individual teacher
to reproduce pages for use in the classroom or home.**

**Multiple teachers may not reproduce pages
from the same study guide.**

Sale of any printed copy from this CD is strictly and specifically prohibited.

Little House on the Prairie Study Guide

A Progeny Press Study Guide

by Rebecca Gilleland

edited by Michael S. Gilleland and Andrew Clausen

cover design by Michael S. Gilleland and Andrew Clausen

Copyright © 2002 Progeny Press

All rights reserved.

Reproduction or translation of any part of this work
beyond that permitted by Section 107 or 108 of the
1976 United States Copyright Act without the written
permission of the copyright owner is unlawful.
Requests for permission or other information should be
addressed to Reprint Permissions, Progeny Press,
PO Box 100, Fall Creek, WI 54742-0100.

Printed in the United States of America.

ISBN: 978-1-58609-322-8 Book

978-1-58609-238-2 CD

978-1-58609-413-3 Set

Table of Contents

Study Guide Author	3
Peer Review Panel	4
Note to Instructor	6
Synopsis	7
About the Novel’s Author	8
Background Information	10
Ideas for Pre-reading Activities	12
“Going West” through “The House on the Prairie”	13
“Moving In” through “A Roof and a Floor”	22
“Indians in the House” through “Fever ’n’ Ague”	29
“Fire in the Chimney” through “A Scream in the Night”	37
“Indian Jamboree” through “Going Out”	43
Overview	50
Circle the Pictures Activity Page	52
Essays	53
After-You-Read Activities	55
Additional Resources	57
Answer Key	61

Synopsis

Laura Ingalls is a small girl caught up in the westward expansion. When her Pa decides the Big Woods of Wisconsin is too crowded, the Ingalls family packs up and heads for open spaces.

Life is difficult in a small covered wagon, and the dangers they must face are many. When they decide to settle in Kansas, the work is constant, hard, and sometimes dangerous. They build a home and work the land only to find after a year that they have built three miles over the line into Indian Territory.

How the family handles losing everything is as inspiring as their hard work of the previous year.

“Going West” through “The House on the Prairie”

Vocabulary:

Synonyms:

A *synonym* is a word that means the same or nearly the same as another word. Using a thesaurus and/or a dictionary, find a synonym for each of the following underlined words.

1. Big CORDS of wood stood among the stumps.
2. One day, while they were waiting, a tall, LEAN man came out of the woods, riding a black pony.
3. She sat and thought COMPLAINTS to herself.
4. Purple shadows were gathering over the land, and the wind was MOURNING.
5. Only the wind moved STEALTHILY through the grass, and the large low stars hung glittering from the great sky.

Little House on the Prairie Study Guide

6. “We might go farther and fare worse,” Ma replied.

7. Ma brought the wooden pannikan of soft soap from the wagon.

8. She kilted up her skirts and rolled up her sleeves, and she knelt by the tub on the grass.

9. It was Providential that the foot was not crushed.

10. The sky was so full of light that not one star twinkled in it, and all the prairie was a shadowy mellowness.

Similes and Personification:

An author sometimes uses *similes* or *personification* to make writing more descriptive. A simile is a comparison that shows how two different things are alike. It uses the words *like* or *as* to compare. For example: “The moon glowed *like* a lantern.”

Personification gives human characteristics to animals, objects, and ideas. For example: “The door of the house closed with a sad little sigh as they left for the day.” In this sentence, the door is given the imagined ability to sigh sadly like a human.

Each of the following sentences contains either personification or a simile. Finish each sentence from the book and label with a **P** for personification, or an **S** for simile.

- ___ 1. (“Going West”) The shutters were over the windows, so the little house _____.

- ___ 2. (“Prairie Day”) These little creatures looked _____.

Little House on the Prairie Study Guide

- ___ 3. (“Prairie Day”) Their hind legs folded under their haunches, their little paws folded tight to their chests, and they looked exactly _____
_____.
- ___ 4. (“Camp on the High Prairie”) Only the wind _____
_____ and the large, low stars hung glittering from the great sky.
- ___ 5. (“The House on the Prairie”) She wanted to hide and be still in the tall grass _____
_____.
- ___ 6. (“The House on the Prairie”) He danced _____,
_____ while Pa’s fiddle kept on rollicking and his foot kept tapping the ground, and Laura’s hands and Mary’s hands were clapping together and their feet were patting, too.
- ___ 7. (“The House on the Prairie”) The sky was _____
_____ on the flat black land.
- ___ 8. (“The House on the Prairie”) A few notes fell _____
_____ into the stillness.

Questions:

1. Why did the Ingalls have to leave Wisconsin in the winter?

Little House on the Prairie Study Guide

2. What did Pa promise Laura she would see when they came to the west?

3. In the chapter “Camp on the High Prairie,” Pa is careful when preparing to make a fire. What does he do? Why does he do this?

4. What happens to Jack when they cross the creek?

5. Who is Mr. Edwards? How do he and Pa help each other?

Think About the Story:

6. Laura must say goodbye to her grandparents, her aunts, uncles, and cousins. Have you ever moved and had to say goodbye to family and friends? What are two ways to stay in touch with them?

Little House on the Prairie Study Guide

7. When Pa carefully builds a campfire on the prairie, he says, “Best be on the safe side, it saves trouble in the end.” Do you agree with this? Why or why not? Does Pa always do things the safest way?

Dig Deeper:

8. When the family was traveling, Laura gets tired of riding and starts complaining. Ma says, “Laura,” which meant she must not complain anymore. Though she doesn’t complain out loud anymore, Laura continues to complain in her head. Was complaining in her head wrong? Was she really obeying her mother? Why or why not? (You may wish to look at Proverbs 16:2 and Jeremiah 17:10.)
9. When God gave Moses the Ten Commandments, one of them was “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.” Is there a difference between obeying and honoring? Look up *obey* and *honor* in a dictionary, then define them in your own words.
10. Define *providence* in your own words. Read Matthew 6:25–34. Paraphrase these verses. To paraphrase something means to write it in your own words.

Little House on the Prairie Study Guide

11. List two or three incidents in these chapters that might show God's providence for the Ingalls.

12. In the chapter "Crossing the Creek," the Ingalls get into a lot of trouble when the creek suddenly rises. Do you think Pa made a wise decision when he decided to cross the creek? Sometimes when something is over and past, we can look back and see what we should have done, but how do we choose or make decisions in the first place?

13. List two instances when Laura was afraid. What gave her courage or made her feel safer? Read Isaiah 41:10, Roman 8:38, 39. What can we rely on when we feel frightened?

14. In the chapter "The House on the Prairie," Mr. Edwards and Pa help each other do things that they would have had difficulty doing alone. Read Proverbs 3:27, 28; Matthew 5:42; and Luke 3:11. What do these verses say about helping other people?

Little House on the Prairie Study Guide

Class Debate:

Does God protect us from all danger and sickness? Why or why not?

Optional Projects and Activities:

1. *Cook:* Make cornbread. Serve it with butter, honey, or molasses like Laura did.

Corn Bread

4 teaspoons dry yeast
1 cup lukewarm water
1 cup corn meal (white or yellow)
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup unbleached white or whole wheat flour
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup skim milk powder
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons nutritional yeast (optional)
2 tablespoons honey
3 tablespoons oil
2 eggs, beaten

1. Dissolve dry yeast in lukewarm water and allow to stand for 10 minutes.
2. Combine in a mixing bowl: corn meal, white or whole wheat flour, skim milk powder, salt, and nutritional yeast (if desired).
3. Combine honey, oil, and beaten eggs and add to dry ingredients, mixing well.
4. Gradually add dissolved yeast mixture, blending well into other ingredients.
5. Pour batter into a well-oiled 9×9-inch square pan. Place pan in warm area and allow corn bread to rise 30–40 minutes. Preheat oven to 350° F.
6. Bake in preheated oven for 30–35 minutes.

Yield: 6–8 servings.

Little House on the Prairie Study Guide

2. *Cook:* Taste molasses. Try this special treat:

Molasses Milk

1 1/2 cup cold milk

1–2 teaspoons dark molasses

Mix molasses into milk until frothy and well-blended. Delicious served with cookies.

3. *Creative writing:* Write a fictional letter from Laura back home to her Grandma and Grandpa. Tell them all she has done so far. Remember the five elements of a good letter.

	1) Heading: Date Your address
2) Greeting,	
	3) Body of the letter
	4) Closing, 5) Signature

4. *Mapping:* Use the map you made in the Ideas for Pre-reading Activities section or find a map of the midwestern United States and mark the Ingalls' route west. We can't be precise, but we know they traveled across the Mississippi River near Pepin, Wisconsin; went southwest through Minnesota, Iowa, and Missouri; then crossed into Kansas. They stopped near the Verdigris River, 40 miles from Independence. [*Optional:* Use a map or atlas and estimate how many miles they traveled.]

Little House on the Prairie Study Guide

5. *Art Project:* Make a star mobile. Using white or silver paper, cut out 5–10 large stars. [*Optional:* Buy a package of plastic glow-in-the-dark stars.] Cut varying lengths of thread or fishing line and tie or tape them to each star. Tie or tape the hanging stars to a clothes hanger, a small branch, or some other type of hanger, and hang your star mobile up somewhere in your bedroom so you can watch them as you fall asleep.

6. *Music:* Try to find some recordings of the songs Pa played for the family and Mr. Edwards. If you have difficulty finding recordings of fiddle music, you may wish to check out the website

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/hrhtml/hrhome.html>

which contains the period fiddle music of Henry Reed. Look for the titles under “Musical Genres,” then “Fiddle Tunes.” Another site is

<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Prairie/1867/fiddle.html>

which gives samples of songs Pa played, but the samples are of varying quality and different instruments. If you can find music to the songs you may wish to try singing them or playing them yourself.

7. *Writing:* Start a journal in which you list the ways people help each other in *Little House on the Prairie*. Record who helped who and what might have happened if they had not helped.

8. *Writing:* Remember to continue updating your keepsake journal from the “Ideas for Pre-reading Activities” section.

Little House on the Prairie Study Guide

9. Laura wants to release Jack because she is sure her mother is in danger and Jack could protect her. Answers may vary about whether her reason makes sense, but in general it does—one of the reasons they have Jack is to protect them from danger. Pa gets angry with the girls, however, because he knows that if Jack had attacked the Indians they may have killed Jack, but they almost certainly would have taken revenge on the family. Because the Indians weren't there to hurt anyone, if the dog had attacked them they probably would have taken that as hostility from the family and may have attacked the family.

10. Answers may vary. The verse in Proverbs says that just because we think something is right, doesn't mean that it really is; it may be very dangerous or bad. If Laura had let Jack off the chain—even though it seemed the right thing to do—the whole family might have been killed. Mr. Scott could not see a good reason for checking the well with the candle, but he almost died when he did not do it. The verse points out that we can't see the answers or the reasons for everything, so sometimes we need to obey without knowing the exact reasons.

11. She got mad because she then felt she had to give up her own beads, and she did not want to.

12. Laura gives up her beads only to compete with Mary in being a "good girl." She wanted to "act just as good." Her motivation was not kindness or love for Carrie. The verses in 1 Corinthians tell us we must love patiently, be kind, not be jealous, not boast, not be proud nor rude nor selfish. We must not be easily angered, we should rejoice in truth, protect and trust one another, always hope and not give up our love.

"Fire in the Chimney" through "A Scream in the Night"

Vocabulary:

1. massacre; 2. bristled; 3. uncinched; 4. quinine; 5. soberly; 6. savagely; 7. delayed; 8. contradict

Questions:

1. The top of the chimney, made of mud and sticks (called stick-and-daub), catches fire, and Ma goes outside and knocks down the burning portion. One of the burning sticks falls down into the cabin and under Mary's chair. Laura pulls the chair away from the stick and throws the stick back into the fireplace.

2. Pa squats next to the Indian at the fireplace, they eat together, and they smoke their pipes together.

3. Ma means that Pa needs to sell the furs to buy a plow and seeds. Without money from the furs, they would not be able to buy these things.

4. Mr. Edwards brought Christmas presents to Mary and Laura. He said Santa Claus could not cross the swollen creek, so he gave their presents to Mr. Edwards in Independence City.

5. A panther screams in the night. At first the family thinks it is a woman screaming at the Scotts' cabin and Pa goes to check. As Pa is on the way home, the panther screams from a treetop near him. After he gets safely home, he vows to hunt it until he kills it, but an Indian finds it and kills it first.

Think About the Story:

6. Answers may vary. Laura says she doesn't cry, but two big tears run down her cheeks and her throat chokes up because she is scared. Personal answers will vary. Note that Laura did not cry when things needed to be done. She cried a little after the worst was over. Sometimes letting our feelings out a little bit by crying can ease the pain or fear.

7. The wind is being personified with the phrases "the wind wailed," "it whispered sadly," and "the wind sounded like someone crying."

8. It took Pa four days to go to the store and back, so he goes to town only a couple of times a year. Answers will vary. Because he only goes once every few months, he must buy foods that will last: grains, beans, salted meat, spices, sugar, flour. He might buy something fresh for a treat, but for the most part if they can't grow it or hunt it, they can't get it fresh.

9. They listed a good house to live in, a warm fire, and a turkey. No, they didn't feel much better. Answers will vary. They enjoyed and were thankful for the things they had, but that didn't take away the disappointment of not getting presents for Christmas.

10. Laura and Mary each got a tin cup, a peppermint candy, a heart-shaped little cake, and one penny. Ma and Pa received some sweet potatoes for the meal. Comparisons will vary.

Dig Deeper:

11. Answers may vary. The two times that stand out are when Pa goes to town and Mr. Edwards comes and does the chores for the family, and when Mr. Edwards brings the Christmas gifts to the family. It would have been hard for Mr.