



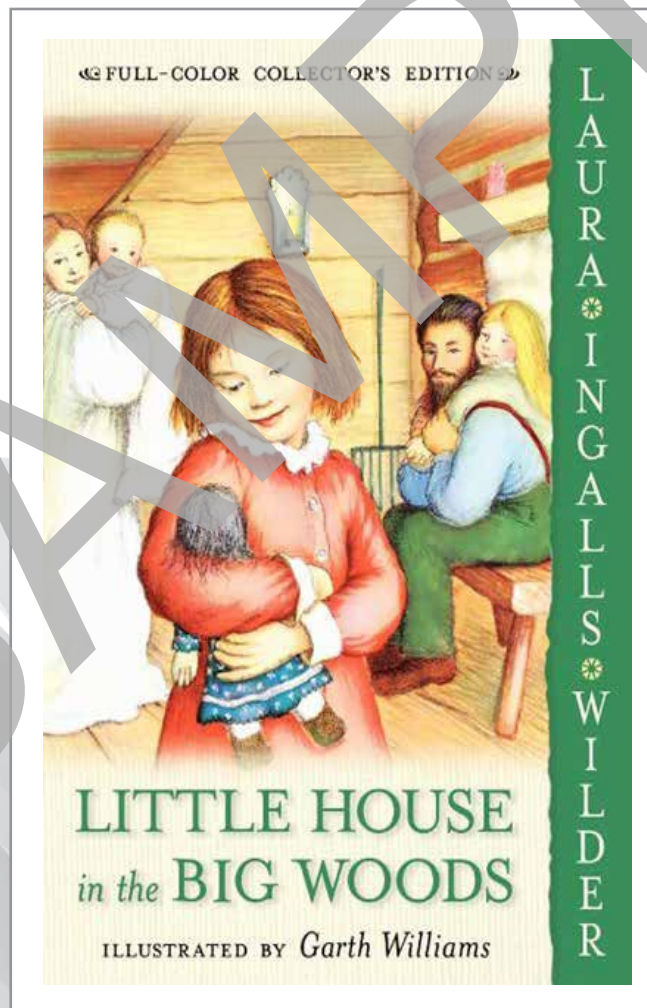
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 3-5

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Little House in the Big Woods

Laura Ingalls Wilder



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Little House in the Big Woods

Laura Ingalls Wilder

TEACHER GUIDE

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Skills and Strategies

Listening/Speaking

Listening for details, sound words, discussion, interviewing

Comprehension

Predicting, sequencing, comparison/contrast

Writing

Journaling, descriptive, narrative, diary, letter-writing

Thinking

Sorting, visualizing, research

Vocabulary

Multiple meanings, word mapping

Literary Elements

Similes, metaphors, story elements, personification, hyperbole, characterization

Summary

Beloved since being published in 1932, *Little House in the Big Woods*, tells of the author's childhood in a log cabin in Wisconsin. Laura's remembrances start out, "Once upon a time" and continue as from a child's view in telling about her life as a five-year-old. A full year is detailed and gives the reader a warm poignant glimpse into wilderness life in the nineteenth century. Always pleasantly upbeat, the tale focuses on survival of the family of five—providing food, shelter, safety, and emotional support to each other.

About the Author

Laura Ingalls Wilder was born in 1867 in Wisconsin. Her "Little House" books detail her family's pioneering experiences as the family moved from Wisconsin through Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa, and the Dakota Territory. After marrying Almanzo Wilder in 1885, she lived in Florida, Minnesota, and Missouri.

In 1932, when Wilder was 65, *Little House in the Big Woods* was published. Between 1932 and 1943, eight "Little House" books were written while Laura was living at Rocky Ridge Farm. Laura and Almanzo celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 1935. Laura Ingalls Wilder died in 1957.

The Little House stories were adapted for a television series, "Little House on the Prairie" and a Broadway musical, "Prairie."

Other Children's Books by Laura Ingalls Wilder

By the Shores of Silver Lake

The Long Winter

Little House in the Ozarks

Little House on the Prairie

Little Town on the Prairie

On the Banks of Plum Creek

These Happy Golden Years

Procedure for Teaching the Novel

The novel will be read one chapter at a time, using DRTA (Directed Reading Thinking Activity) method. This technique involves reading a section, predicting what will happen next (making

Chapter One: "Little House in the Big Woods" Pages 1-23

Plot Summary

Laura introduces the little log house in the Big Woods. The family prepares for winter.

Vocabulary

muskrats 2	mink 2	otter 2	wagon track 2
venison 5	hinges 6	hickory 7	smoldered 7
pantry 12	cautiously 13	cracklings 17	johnny-cake 17
pot-liquor 17			

Discussion Questions and Activities

1. What is the setting of the story? (*Wisconsin log cabin in the Big Woods in 1872*)
2. How did the family prepare for winter? (*They shoot a deer, smoke meat, salt meat, salt fish, slaughter a pig, tie onions into log ropes, hang peppers on threads in the attic, pile pumpkins and squashes in the attic, store yellow cheeses on the pantry shelves, and dry herbs for medicine in the attic.*) How do you prepare for winter? Compare on a T-diagram.

Suggested answers only (accept variations).

Your Preparations	Ingalls' Preparations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Storm windows•Weatherstripping•Get out winter clothes•Find mittens•Buy new boots•New winter jackets	

3. What playthings did Laura and Mary have? (*dolls, pig bladder ball, squashes and pumpkins to play house*)
4. Why did the author say, "The best times of all were at night"? (*page 20, warm, cozy, needs were met, etc.*)

Supplementary Activities

1. Compare your home to Laura's. (See T-diagram on next page.)

Your Home	Laura's
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Log cabin •Wisconsin •Trees all around •No other houses nearby

2. Writing: Laura's house is the little house in the Big Woods. What would you call your house if you were writing a book? your best friend's house? your grandparents' house?
3. Classifying: Start a listing of the foods mentioned in the book. Begin thinking of what you could have at a finale party when you finish the book. Which of the foods on your list have you eaten?
4. Start a class mural of the setting in the book. The mural will be a whole class cooperative effort including illustrations and narrative descriptions.

Chapter 2: "Winter Days and Winter Nights"

Pages 24-44

Plot Summary

Laura describes winter. Pa tells "The story of Grandpa and the Panther."

Vocabulary

panes 26 trundle bed 28 churn-dash 31 churn 31
 scramble 36 brindle 38

Discussion Questions and Activities

1. How did the Ingalls spend winter days?

Pa	Ma	Laura and Mary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Checking his trap line •Hunting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Wash on Monday •Iron on Tuesday •Mend on Wednesday •Churn on Thursday •Clean on Friday •Bake on Saturday •Rest on Sunday 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Help Ma with chores •Wipe dishes •Make beds •Make frost pictures

- How did the bear help Pa find the honey tree? (*The bear was getting honey for himself.*)
What were some examples of the plants and animals helping settlers? (*watch dog, animal tracks going toward water, small animals warning about predators*)

Supplementary Activities

- Research: How do bees make honey? Are there different kinds of honey?
- Writing: Describe your life in summertime. How is it different from Laura's summer?
- Analyzing: Who is the main character in the book? How do you know?
- Analyze the cookie dilemma on page 178 as a math problem.

Chapter 11: "Harvest"

Pages 199-211

Plot Summary

Pa and Uncle Henry work together at harvest time. The reader meets Laura's cousin.

Vocabulary

cradle 200	shocked 202	whetstone 204	sullen 204
tanned 205	steeped 209	horrified 210	monstrously 211

Discussion Questions and Activities

- Why did Pa and Uncle Henry trade work? (*efficiency, help needed when crops were ripe*)
- What kind of a person was Charley? Record your answers on an attribute web.

