

Ox-Cart Man

Study Guide

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For the book by
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Synopsis

Ox-Cart Man is a simple and rhythmic story of a man who fills his ox-cart with all the goods his family has produced over the last year and takes them to market. After selling everything, he buys a few items and walks home. The book follows the year's cycle of work, through the seasons. Through hard work and cooperation, the family, as a unit, provides for itself.

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6. What do you have that was made far away in another country? List at least three things. _____

7. Why do you think the farmer bought gifts for everyone and mints for the family to share, but no gift for himself? _____

8. What did everyone do with their new gifts? _____

9. Read Colossians 3:23: “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men . . .” Did the ox-cart man and his family do their work with all their hearts? Why or why not? _____

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10. Read Proverbs 6:6–8: “Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest.” A sluggard is someone who is lazy. The ant is the opposite. Describe what the ant is like. _____

In what ways is the farmer like the ant? _____

11. Predict what would happen to the family if they did not work during the winter? _____

What if they did not work during the rest of the year? _____

Answer Key

Note: Most of the questions in Progeny Press study guides deal with students' understanding and interpretation of issues in the novel; therefore, most answers will be individual to the student. Progeny Press answer keys are designed to be as inclusive as possible for the teacher and/or parent, giving enough background and information to judge whether the student has grasped the essence of the issue and the question. We try to point out some directions students' answers might take, which directions might be best, and some errors that may appear. Students are not expected to answer as completely as the answers provided in the Answer Key.

Before-you-read Activities

1. Discussions will vary.
2. Answers will vary.
3. Spring, March 21st, March, April, May; Summer, June 21st, June, July, August; Autumn, September 21st, September, October, November; Winter, December 21st, December, January, February
4. Answers will vary but should mention that the harvest is in the fall.

As-you-read Activities

1. The students' answers should match within reason.
January: carve a new yoke, saw planks, split shingles, embroider, carve brooms, make linen, make candles.
February: carve a new yoke, saw planks, split shingles, embroider, carve brooms, make linen, make candles.
March: tap sugar maples, boil sap down.
April: sheared sheep, spun yarn, weave and knit.
May: plant garden, gather feathers, collect honey.
June: gather feathers, collect honey, tend garden.
July: gather feathers, collect honey, tend garden.
August: harvest garden.
September: harvest garden, pick apples.
October: go to market.
November: stitch new harness, daughter sews, son whittles.
December: carve a new yoke, saw planks, split shingles, embroider, carve brooms, make linen, make candles.
2. Answers will vary.

Vocabulary

Synonyms:

1. sheared: cut, clipped, snipped, shaved, cropped;
2. shawl: wrap, scarf, cloak, mantle, veil, cape, muffler;
3. linen: cloth, fabric;
4. carved: cut, whittled, chiseled;
5. coins: money, funds, cash;