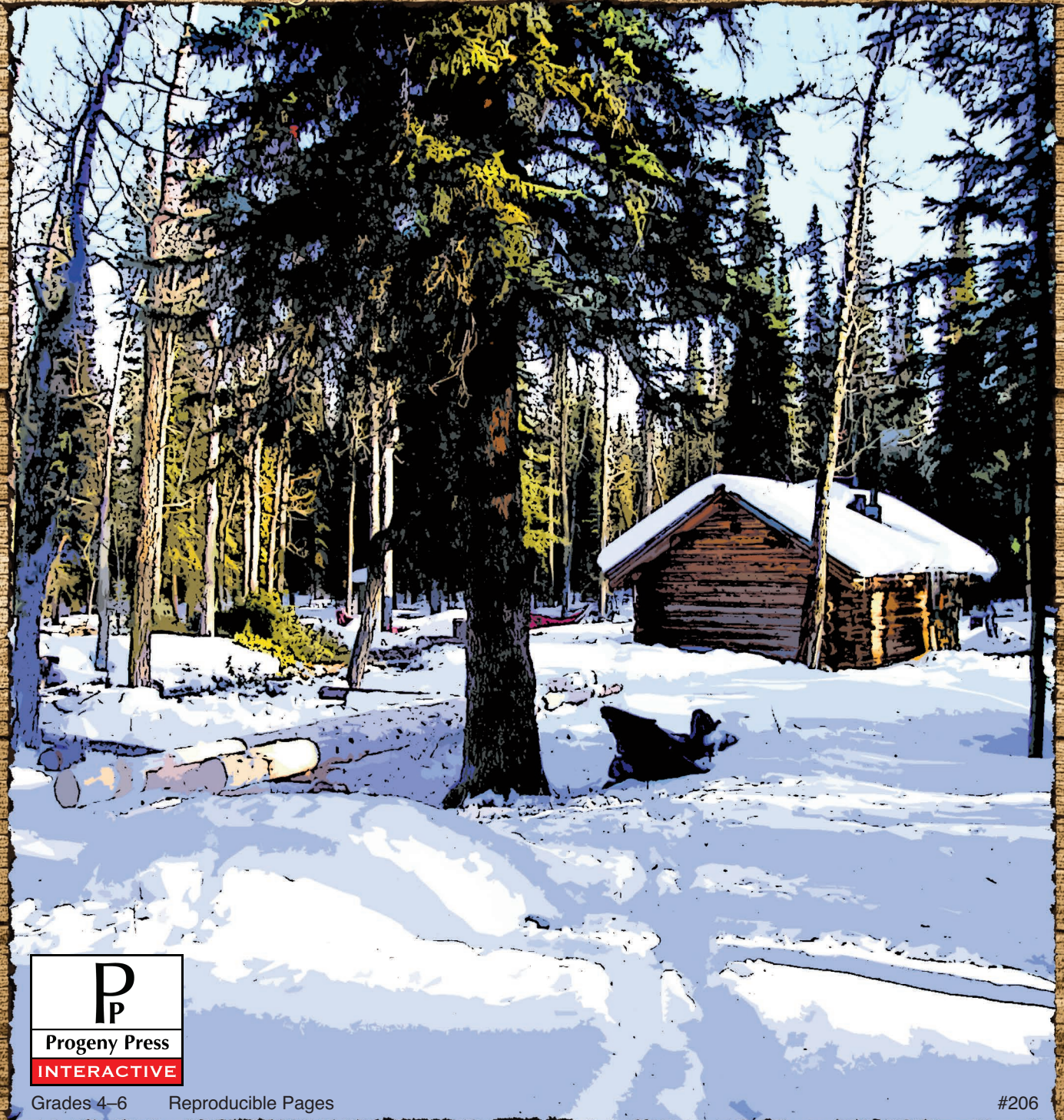


Little House in the Big Woods

Study Guide

by Rebecca Gilleland

Laura Ingalls Wilder's Little House Series



Grades 4-6

Reproducible Pages

#206

Table of Contents

Note to Instructor	4
Synopsis	5
About the Author	6
Background Information	8
Before-you-read Activities	9
“Little House in the Big Woods” & “Winter Days and Winter Nights”	10
Projects and Activities	16
“The Long Rifle” & “Christmas”	18
Projects and Activities	23
“Sundays” & “Two Big Bears”	24
Projects and Activities	28
“The Sugar Snow” & “Dance at Grandpa’s”	29
Projects and Activities	33
“Going to Town” & “Summertime”	35
Projects and Activities	40
“Harvest,” “The Wonderful Machine” & “The Deer in the Wood”	41
Projects and Activities	45
Crossword Puzzle	47
After-you-read Activities	49
Additional Resources	51
Answer Key	Separate File

Synopsis

In this recollection of Laura Ingalls Wilder's childhood, Laura tells her story of growing up in the Big Woods of Wisconsin in the 1860s. There are no houses for miles around, just the Ingalls family in their little log cabin: Charles and Caroline (Pa and Ma), Mary, Laura, and baby Carrie.

Little House in the Big Woods follows the day-to-day events in the life of Laura Ingalls over the course of a year. The story begins as the family makes preparations for the cold winter, storing away food and preserving meat. Through the long nights Pa tells stories and entertains the girls with his fiddle. In the spring the family makes maple syrup. Summertime means long, hard work in the fields, and fall means harvest time. As the seasons change, the chores and the play of Laura and her sister, Mary, also change. *Little House in the Big Woods* is a delightful look at family life on what was then the frontier.

Little House in the Big Woods Study Guide

Dig Deeper:

10. Read James 3:14:

But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts
do not boast about it or deny the truth.

What is bitter envy? What made Laura feel envy toward Mary?

11. Have you ever been jealous? What made you feel jealous? Who can you talk to about it?

12. Read Romans 12:17:

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in
the eyes of everybody.

What do you think Laura should have done when Mary bragged about her curls?

13. Pa tells Laura that she must obey him no matter what Mary does to her.
Imagine that you were in Laura's place. Would this be difficult for you to do?
Why or why not?

Projects and Activities

1. *Cheese-making.* If possible, visit a cheese factory to observe cheese being made. Teachers: Check your local library for educational videotapes on cheese-making. Buy fresh cheese curds and buttermilk. Let students sample each.
2. *Honey Harvest.* Teachers: check with your local library for educational videotapes on beekeeping and honey production. If someone in your area keeps bees, arrange a visit. Observe honey being removed from the honeycomb. Buy fresh honey and serve on crackers or bread.
3. *Reports:* Write a 1–2 page report on one of the following subjects:
 - a. The moon (Ma told them it was dead and cold)
 - b. Cheese-making and varieties of cheese
 - c. Honeybees and honey production
 - d. Beekeeping

Little House in the Big Woods Study Guide Answer Key

“The Long Rifle” & “Christmas”

Vocabulary:

1. savage; 2. china; 3. flatirons; 4. sleek; 5. dusky; 6. notched; 7. whittled; 8. ravine.

Questions:

1. Pa uses his gun to hunt game and to protect the family from wild animals. Laura and Mary help Pa load the gun, but only Pa actually touches the gun. Answers will vary. Pa always keeps the gun loaded and ready. If any of the children play with it, they might cause it to go off and someone could be hurt.

2. Answers will vary. The moral could be any of the following: Always obey your parents. There is a good reason for what your parents tell you to do. If Pa had not stopped to play by the way, he would not have gotten hurt.

3. a. like glass; b. still as a mouse; c. soft and smooth as silk.

4. What Ma really means is that Laura shouldn't be selfish. Ma is telling Laura to share.

5. They all sat on the floor together and looked at pictures in the Bible and in Pa's big green animal book.

Dig Deeper:

6. Each child received a pair of mittens and one long peppermint stick. Laura also got a rag doll. Answers will vary.

7. Answers will vary.

8. Answers will vary.

9. Answers will vary. *Content* may mean complacent, satisfied, easygoing, at ease, having peace of mind, serene, cheerful, happy, resigned, at rest, snug, or comfortable. We should give thanks in *all* circumstances, because regardless of what we do or do not have God has promised to never leave us. Our true contentment depends on that promise—that God will never leave us.

“Sundays” & “Two Big Bears”

Vocabulary:

1. b; 2. c; 3. a; 4. d; 5. c.

Questions:

1. The sled hit a pig and the pig squealed all the way down the hill. Grandpa's father was awake and standing in the doorway as Grandpa and his brothers—and the pig—slid past. “Tanned their jackets” is probably a variation of the phrase “tanned their hides” (jackets being made from hides) and means the same thing: the boys were given a good smack with a switch.

2. Pa went to town to trade his furs.

3. Pa has to leave behind his gun because there were so many furs to carry. Ma worried about Pa coming home in the dark without his gun because of wild animals.

4. Answers will vary but should resemble the following: Laura follows Ma. They see the dark shape of the cow in the barnyard. Ma tries to open the gate, but it bumps the cow. Ma reaches over and slaps its shoulder and tells the cow to move. The lantern light suddenly shines not on the cow, but a bear! Ma tells Laura to walk back to the house. Laura obeys. Before Laura gets part of the way back Ma picks her up, lantern and all, and runs into the house and slams the door.

5. Ma tells Laura she is a good girl because Laura did exactly as Ma told her to do, she did it quickly and she did not ask why.