

## Pronounce & Spell

prairie      hauled      wandered      visitor      aunt

### Vocabulary: Write the meaning of each bold word or phrase.

1. built a **sod** house \_\_\_\_\_  
grass-covered
2. He made sure the ... **hearth** fire was lit \_\_\_\_\_  
the floor of a fireplace
3. Free as a **lark** \_\_\_\_\_  
singing bird
4. to give you **schooling** \_\_\_\_\_  
education
5. I can **hardly** read or write \_\_\_\_\_  
barely; scarcely
6. **stormed** out of the house \_\_\_\_\_  
rushed madly (angrily)

### Comprehension Questions: Answer in complete sentences.

1. In what year did the Bidson family move? \_\_\_\_\_  
The Bidsons moved in 1880.
2. From where did they move? \_\_\_\_\_  
They moved from Maine to Colorado.

3. How old was Noah? \_\_\_\_\_  
Noah was nine when his family moved.
4. List four ways Noah helped the family on the prairie:
  1. \_\_\_\_\_ hauled water
  2. \_\_\_\_\_ fed the animals
  3. \_\_\_\_\_ made sure the house was free of snakes
  4. \_\_\_\_\_ made sure the hearth fire stayed lit
5. Who was coming to visit? \_\_\_\_\_  
Noah's Aunt Dora was coming to visit.

## Discussion

1. What was life like in 1880? Talk about how moving and setting up a house would be different then.
2. Look at a map. Locate Maine and Colorado. Discuss how the family might have traveled and how long the trip might have taken.
3. Talk about the reasons Noah's parents probably had for wanting a good education for Noah.
4. Reread the final sentence in the chapter. This is a sentence to remember. Noah believes the stars are unimportant and he believes reading is unimportant. Do you think he is correct about *either*, *both*, or *neither*? Explain.

Discussion Question answers are in the Appendix.

## Pronounce & Spell

trout                  scout                  barrel                  bridge

**Vocabulary:** Write the meaning of each bold word or phrase.

1. once got himself **stranded** \_\_\_\_\_  
left with no way home \_\_\_\_\_
2. beside the **moccasins** of his friend \_\_\_\_\_  
leather shoes with a soft sole, typically with beading \_\_\_\_\_
3. **peered** over the edge \_\_\_\_\_ looked \_\_\_\_\_

**Comprehension Questions:** Answer in complete sentences.

1. How did the scout help Tommy? \_\_\_\_\_  
He rescued him from the dry bank. \_\_\_\_\_
2. What was unusual about Tommy? \_\_\_\_\_  
It appeared he didn't need water. \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the exaggerated part of the story? \_\_\_\_\_  
The scout and Tommy took long hikes together. \_\_\_\_\_
4. How did the scout feel when Tommy did not follow him across the bridge?  
He felt confused and curious, but ultimately happy that his friend ended up where he belonged. \_\_\_\_\_

## Discussion

Reread the title of the story. What does that expression mean?

*When a fish is not in the water, it seems odd and out of place. A "fish out of water" is an expression used when a person is in an unexpected place or situation.*

## Pronounce & Spell

climb                  rainbow                  axe

**Vocabulary:** Write the meaning of each bold word or phrase.

1. Her owner was a **lumberjack** \_\_\_\_\_  
someone who makes a living cutting down trees \_\_\_\_\_
2. strapped an axe on each of Annabel's **hind** legs \_\_\_\_\_ back \_\_\_\_\_
3. Then he **hoisted** a jar of honey \_\_\_\_\_ lifted with the help of something (rope) \_\_\_\_\_
4. **made short work** \_\_\_\_\_ dealt with or finished something quickly \_\_\_\_\_

**Comprehension Questions:** Answer in complete sentences.

1. What outrageous thing does the story say Annabel would do for a pot of honey?  
She would climb a rainbow. \_\_\_\_\_
2. How did the lumberjack make good use of Annabel's fondness for honey? \_\_\_\_\_  
He strapped axes to Annabel's hind legs and had a jar of honey hung in the tree for her to climb after. \_\_\_\_\_  
*\*Children should never play with axes. Remember, these stories are exaggerated and outrageous!*
3. What was Annabel's reward for helping the lumberjack? \_\_\_\_\_  
She got to eat the honey. \_\_\_\_\_

## Discussion

Discuss several ways this story fits the model of a folk tale. (See characteristics of folk tales in the Introduction.)

*It is unlikely that a lumberjack would own a bear who works with him; it is impossible for a bear to climb a rainbow; it is a clever — though ridiculous and very dangerous — idea to have a bear chop down a tree by following a pot of honey on a string.*

## Pronounce & Spell

quilt	against	daughters	brought
comfortable	knees	eyes	listening
thought	knew	eight	cradle

### Vocabulary: Write the meaning of each bold word or phrase.

1. The spring night was cold, and Sarah drew her warm **cloak** close.

coat

2. "Keep up your courage," her mother had said **fastening** the cloak under Sarah's chin.

buttoning

3. she and her father were going all the way into the wilderness of **Connecticut**

a colony

4. Against a tree Sarah's father sat, his **musket** across his knees.

gun

5. A fox, Sarah. He is calling to his **mate**.

the mother of his cubs

6. Sarah could see her worried little mother ... **clucking and fussing** like a mother hen.

preparing with great concern, bustle, and fussiness

### Comprehension Questions: Answer in complete sentences.

1. Where are Sarah Noble and her father traveling? \_\_\_\_\_

They are traveling to new land in Connecticut.

2. What noises does Sarah hear in the wilderness? \_\_\_\_\_

She hears an owl, a fox, and a wolf.

3. Why did the rest of the family stay behind? \_\_\_\_\_

Some of the children were too young to go.

4. What is Sarah's special talent? \_\_\_\_\_

She can cook.

5. List each member of the Noble Family. \_\_\_\_\_

Besides the mother and father, there are a number of children: Sarah, John, David,

Stephen, Mary, Hannah, Margaret, the baby.

6. What does Sarah tell herself when she becomes nervous? \_\_\_\_\_

"Keep up your courage, Sarah Noble!"

## Activity

Read the author's note at the beginning of the book.

- When did the story take place?
- What parts of the story are true?
- The genre of this story is Historical Fiction. What do you think that means?
- Find Connecticut and Massachusetts on a map. Trace the Nobles' route from Westfield, MA, to New Milford, CT.

## Pronounce & Spell

Wisconsin	hollow	crawled	barrel
scattered	whole	cellar	hickory
fierce	howled	wolves	Pepin

**Vocabulary:** Write the meaning of each bold word or phrase.

1. Foxes had **dens** in the hills and deer **roamed** everywhere.  
a) n. places where animals live  
b) v. wandered
2. Jack, the **brindle** bulldog, lay on guard  
adj. having a gray or brown streak or pattern or a patchy coloring
3. That day, Pa and Ma and Laura and Mary had fresh **venison** for dinner.  
n. deer meat
4. The deer and the rabbits would be shy and **swift**.  
adj. fast
5. The green chips **smoldered** and filled the hollow log with thick, choking smoke.  
v. burned and smoked without flame
6. But the light was **dim** and in his **haste** he missed the bear.  
a) adj. not bright  
b) n. hurry

## Activity

To **compare** things means to tell how they are **alike**. To **contrast** things means to tell how they are **different**. Think about the list below and then compare and contrast:

- the food you eat and the food Laura's family might eat
- how you usually get your food and how Laura's family got theirs
- where your food is stored and where Laura's food was stored

## Comprehension Questions

1. If you travel to the north of the Little House in the Big Woods, what will you find?  
If you travel to the north, you will find nothing but woods and the wild animals in them.  
What will you find to the east and to the west? To the east and to the west you will find miles of trees and a few little log houses spread apart.
2. List the people who live in the Little House. Laura, Pa (Laura's father), Ma (Laura's mother), Mary (Laura's sister), and baby Carrie (Laura's sister)
3. What sounds can Laura hear at night from her trundle bed? Laura can hear the sound of the trees whispering, and sometimes a wolf howling.
4. Laura feels safe in her solid cabin when she hears the wolves. What makes her feel safe?  
Her father's gun hanging over the door and their bulldog Jack make her feel safe.
5. Jack paced up and down before the door, growling.  
The hair stood up along his back and he showed his sharp,  
fierce teeth to the wolves.
6. Where do the children play when the rain drums on the roof? When it rains, the children play in the large attic.
7. How does Laura know winter is coming? Laura knows winter is coming because the days are shorter, and there is frost on the window panes at night.