

Lesson 6: Life on the Prairie

Getting Started

? Big Ideas

- What attachments do people have to their environments?
- How do people's lives revolve around their environment?



Facts and Definitions

- Music can reflect the environment and activities of a time and place.

⦿ Skills

- Write structured, informative narratives. (LA)
- Retell written messages by clarifying or summarizing. (LA)
- Read independently for extended periods of time. (LA)
- Use personal experiences and knowledge to interpret written and oral messages. (LA)



Materials

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|---|---|
| ✓ <i>Sarah, Plain and Tall</i> by Patricia MacLachlan | ✓ book about wildflowers* (Activity 3 - optional) |
| ✓ brass brad | ✓ cardstock paper |
| ✓ colored construction paper or tissue paper | ✓ crayons or colored pencils |
| ✓ glue | ✓ green pipe cleaners |
| ✓ journal | ✓ scissors |

Introduction

Explain to your child that in today's chapter Sarah learns more about Kansas and shares a song that she sang in Maine. If your child has ever moved to a new place, ask him to describe what it feels like to leave a place with which you are familiar and to go to a new place with new people whom you do not know.

Reading and Questions

Ask your child to read Chapter 4 in the book. Let him read each of the following questions after reading the chapter. Then he can answer some questions in his journal, and others he can discuss with you.

1. Why do you think Sarah brought her collection of shells?
 - Answers will vary.
2. Are there any clues that suggest Sarah might stay in Kansas?
 - She often says "we" will do something in either winter or summer. This suggests that she plans to stay with them at least until summer.
3. What kinds of activities do Sarah and the family do together?
 - They sing, pick flowers, cook, and talk. Sarah cuts both Caleb and Papa's hair.
4. How are the activities described in the book different from those you do at your home?
 - Answers will vary.
5. What is different about life on the prairie 100 years ago than life today?
 - Today people must do much less work by hand. There are more machines to help do the work, and travel is not so difficult. People in the West can take vacations to the East.

Activities

Activity 1: Journal Entry

Encourage your child to write a journal entry that describes Anna's thoughts on the day spent with Sarah.

Activity 2: A New Song

Discuss that music is a very important part of the book. At the beginning of the book the family is missing music and songs. When Sarah comes, their lives are filled with songs again.

Ask your child the following questions:

- Why do people sing?
- When do people sing?
- How does music make people feel?

Explain to your child that a long time ago, people wrote songs with lyrics focused on daily life in the environment. The official Kansas state song is "Home on the Range." Teach your child the song. (The music and lyrics are on the page, "Home on the Range.") Tell him that this is also a song about the environment. Discuss the lyrics and how they reflect life on the prairie.

In this chapter Sarah teaches them a song that she sang in Maine — "Summer Is Icumen In." Ask your child to write a new song that Sarah might sing about her life on the prairie. Include details about farm life and the prairie.

Note: If your child plays an instrument, encourage him to use the instrument in his song.

Activity 3: Wildflower Field Guide

Explain to your child that wildflowers grow in nature and are not planted or taken care of by people. Discuss the fact that wildflower seeds travel through the air and land on the dirt. These seeds become implanted in the soil naturally, without the help of a person. With the right kind of soil, rain, and sunlight, the seeds grow into beautiful wildflowers.

Wildflowers

www.movingbeyondthepage.com/link/407

Ask your child to record the names of the wildflowers mentioned in the book that are found in the Kansas environment. (Choices include Indian paintbrush, prairie violet, wild rose, clover, daisy, woolly ragwort, and sunflower.) Find pictures of and information about five different types of flowers mentioned in the book using an encyclopedia, nature field guide, or the Internet. This site is a good source of information about wildflowers found in Kansas.

Note: For this site, search for "prairie grounset" for woolly ragwort, "prairie wild rose" for wild rose, and "white clover," "red clover," or "golden prairie clover" for clover.

<http://www.kswildflower.org>

Let your child pick five of the flowers mentioned to create a guidebook of wildflowers. On each page he can write the name of the wildflower and draw a colored illustration of the flower. Next he can record places where the flower grows and one other interesting fact about the flower. If your child is an advanced writer, encourage him to write in complete sentences. He can then cut the pages apart and attach them with a brass brad to create a book.

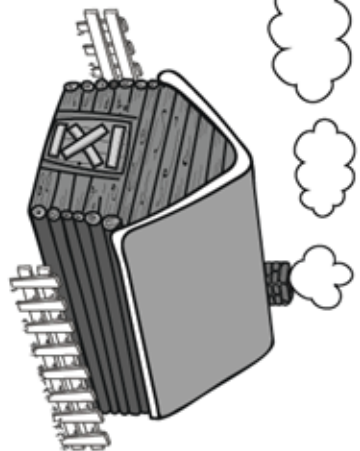
Activity 4: Making Flowers

After your child has finished his "Wildflower Field Guide," he can make examples of the wildflowers, using green pipe cleaners for stems and construction paper or tissue paper for the petals. Encourage him to make the flowers look authentic by following their actual color and petal pattern. To make the flowers 3-D, he can cut a circle from cardstock, color the circle the same color as the flower, and poke a hole in the center just large enough to insert the pipe cleaner through. Then he can tie off the pipe cleaner so that it will not slip through the hole. The petals can be glued on the round disc in the appropriate design.

Wrapping Up

Ask your child what he thinks Sarah enjoyed most about the day spent with the family. Ask him what Sarah might be thinking about whether she will stay in Kansas or go back home.

Home on the Range



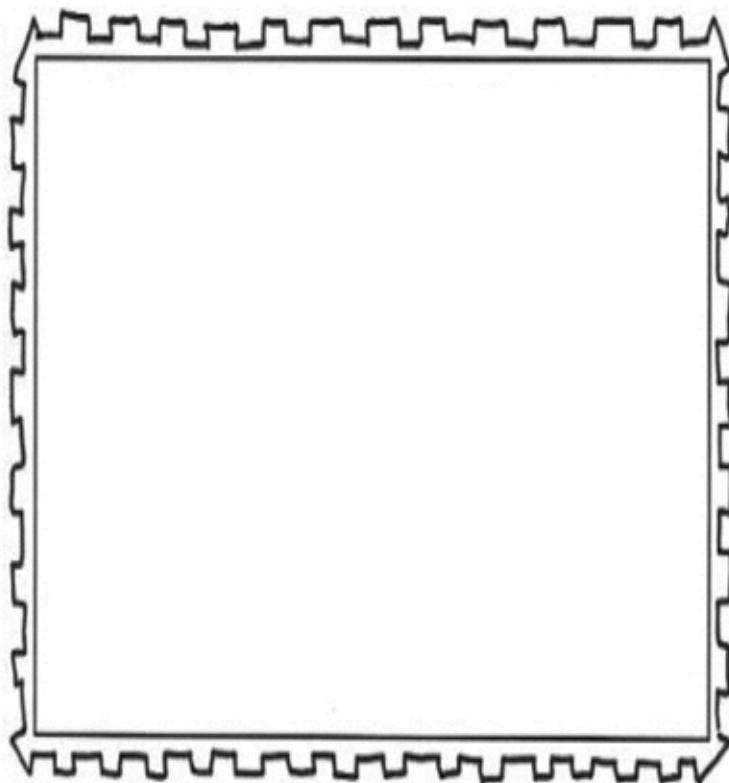
Andante
p

O give me a home where the buffalo roam, where the
 6 deer and the antelope play, where seldom is heard a dis-
 12 cou-ra-ging word, and the skies are not cloudy all day
 18 Home, home on the range where the deer and the
 23 an-te-lope play; where seldom is heard a dis-cou-ra-ging
 29 word, and the skies are not cloudy all day.

Wildflower

Field

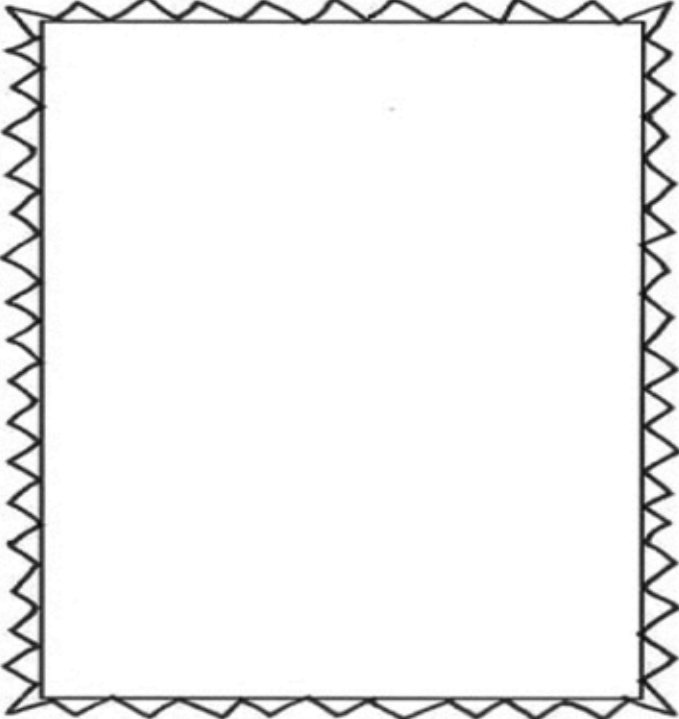
Guide



Name: _____

Where it grows: _____

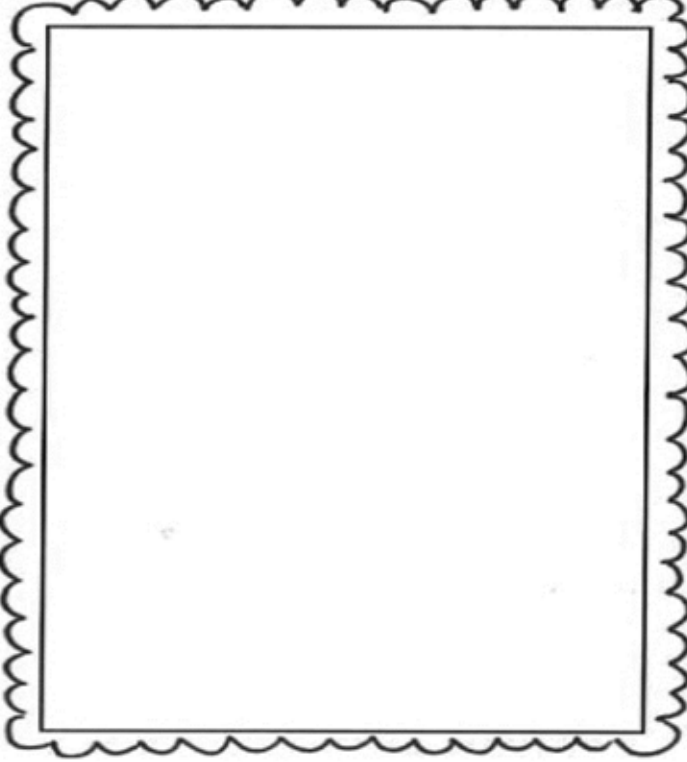
Interesting fact: _____



Name: _____

Where it grows: _____

Interesting fact: _____



Name: _____

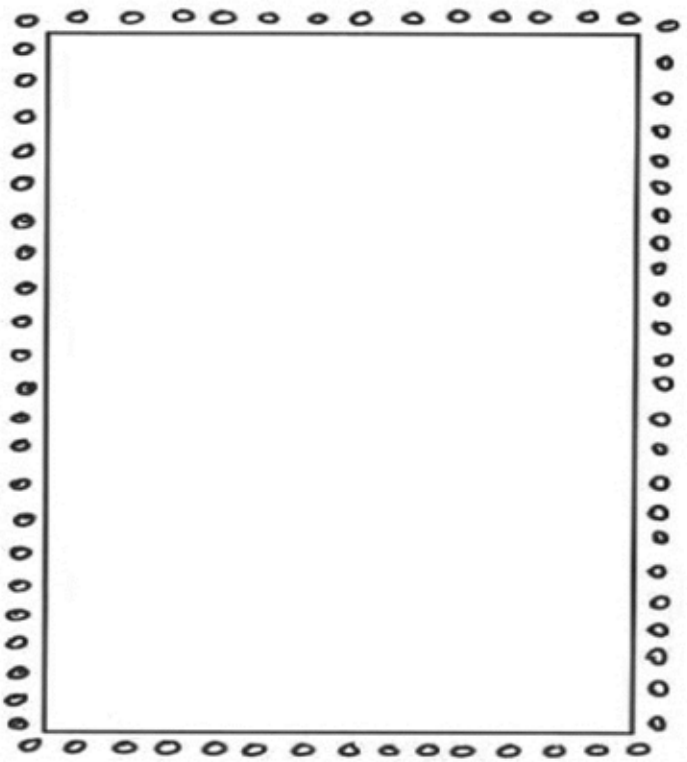
Where it grows: _____

Interesting fact: _____

Name: _____

Where it grows: _____

Interesting fact: _____



Name: _____

Where it grows: _____

Interesting fact: _____

