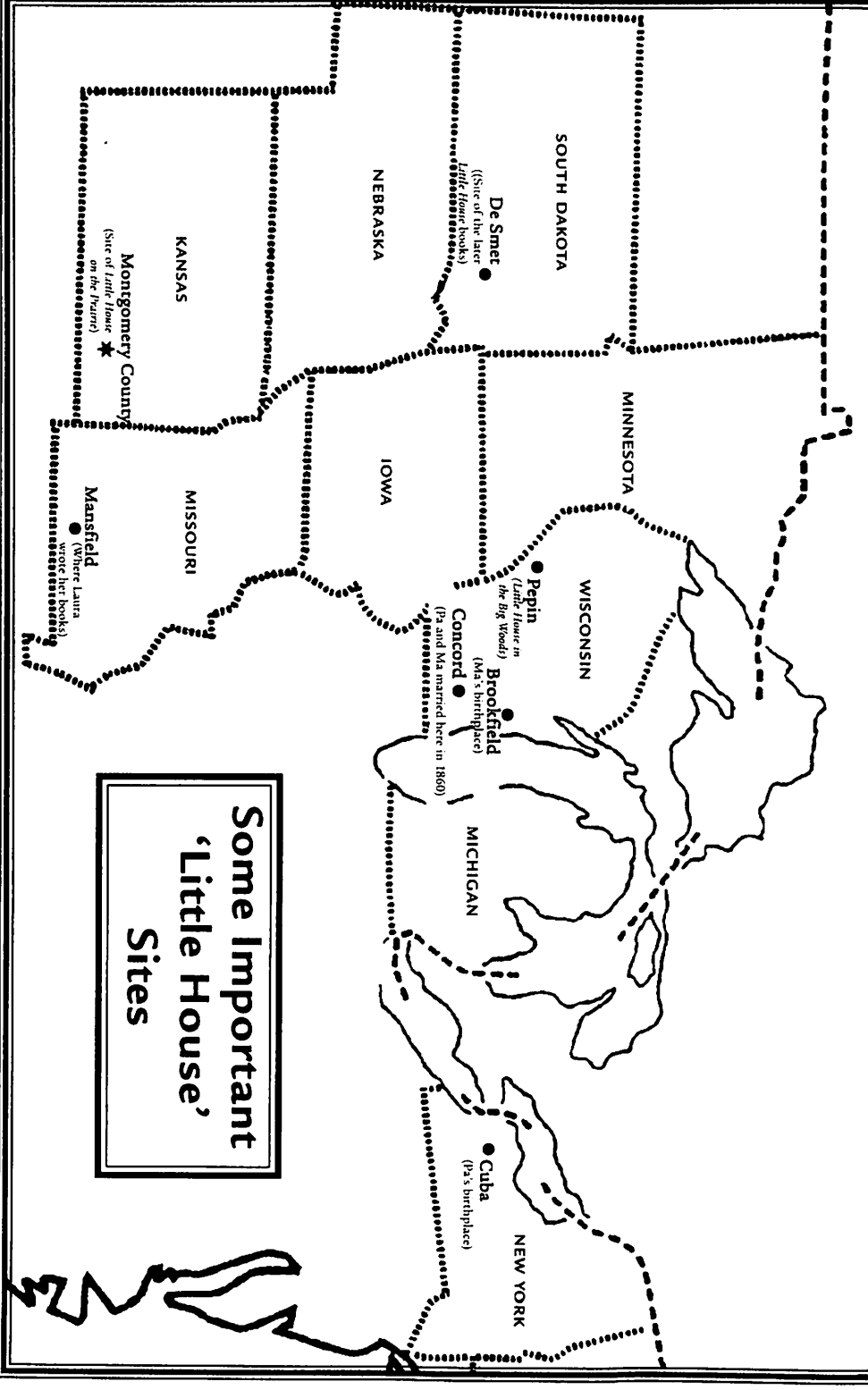


*Little House
In The Big Woods*



Laura Ingalls Wilder

NEW EDITION



SOUTH DAKOTA

De Smet
(Site of the later
Little House books)

NEBRASKA

KANSAS

Montgomery County
(Site of Little House
on the Prairie) ★

MINNESOTA

IOWA

MISSOURI

Mansfield
(Where Laura
wrote her books)

WISCONSIN

Pepin
(Little House in
the Big Woods)

Brookfield
(Ma's birthplace)

Concord
(Pa and Ma married here in 1860)

MICHIGAN

Cuba
(Pa's birthplace)

NEW YORK

Some Important
'Little House'
Sites

Chapter 1 – Little House in the Big Woods

A long time ago – back in the 1870s – a little girl lived in the Big Woods of Wisconsin, in a little grey house made of logs.

The great, dark trees of the Big Woods stood all around the house, and beyond them there were other trees and beyond them were more trees. As far as a man could go to the north in a day, or a week, or a whole month, there was nothing but woods. There were no houses. There were no roads. There were no people. There were only trees and the wild animals who had their homes among them. 5

To the east of the little log house, and to the west, there were miles upon miles of trees, and only a few little log houses scattered far apart in the edge of the Big Woods. 10

So far as the little girl could see, there was only the one little house where she lived with her father and mother, her sister Mary and baby sister Carrie. A wagon track ran before the house, turning and twisting out of sight in the woods where the animals lived, but the little girl did not know where it went, nor what might be at the end of it. 15

The little girl was named Laura and she called her father, Pa, and her mother, Ma. In those days and in that place, children did not say Father and Mother, nor Mamma and Papa, as they do now.

At night, when Laura lay awake in the trundle bed, she listened and could not hear anything at all but the sound of the trees whispering together. Sometimes, far away in the night, a wolf howled. Then it came nearer, and howled again. 20

It was a scary sound. Laura knew that wolves eat little girls. But she was safe inside the solid log walls. Her father's gun hung over the door and good old Jack, the brindle bulldog, lay on guard before it. Her father would say, 25

“Go to sleep, Laura. Jack won't let the wolves in.”

So Laura snuggled under the covers of the trundle bed, close beside Mary, and went to sleep.

The house was a comfortable house. Upstairs there was a large attic, pleasant to play in when the rain drummed on the roof. Downstairs was the small bedroom, and the big room. The bedroom had a window that closed with a wooden shutter. The big room had two windows with glass in the panes, and it had two doors, a front door and a back door. 30

Winter was coming. The days were shorter, and frost crawled up the window panes at night. Soon the snow would come. Then the log house would be 35

almost buried in snowdrifts, and the lake and the streams would freeze. In the bitter cold weather Pa could not be sure of finding any wild game to shoot for meat.

5 The bears would be hidden away in their dens where they slept soundly all winter long. The squirrels would be curled in their nests in hollow trees, with their furry tails wrapped snugly around their noses. The deer and the rabbits would be shy and swift. Even if Pa could get a deer, it would be poor and thin, not fat and plump as deer are in the fall.

10 So as much food as possible must be stored away in the little house before winter came.

Pa owned a pig. It ran wild in the Big Woods, living on acorns and nuts and roots. Now he caught it and put it in a pen made of logs, to fatten. He would butcher it as soon as the weather was cold enough to keep the pork frozen.

15 Once in the middle of the night Laura woke up and heard the pig squealing. Pa jumped out of bed, snatched his gun from the wall, and ran outdoors. Then Laura heard the gun go off, once, twice.

20 When Pa came back, he told what had happened. He had seen a big black bear standing beside the pigpen. The bear was reaching into the pen to grab the pig, and the pig was running and squealing. Pa saw this in the starlight and he fired quickly. But the light was dim and in his haste he missed the bear. The bear ran away into the woods, not hurt at all.

Laura was sorry that Pa did not get the bear. She liked bear meat so much. Pa was sorry, too, but he said,

“Anyway, I saved the bacon.”

25 The garden behind the little house had been growing all summer. It was so near the house that the deer did not jump the fence and eat the vegetables in the daytime, and at night Jack kept them away. Sometimes in the morning there were little hoofprints among the carrots and the cabbages. But Jack’s tracks were there, too, and the deer had jumped right out again.

30 Now the potatoes and carrots, the beets and turnips and cabbages were gathered and stored in the cellar, for freezing nights had come.

Onions were made into long ropes, braided together by their tops, and then were hung in the attic beside wreaths of red peppers strung on threads. The pumpkins and the squashes were piled in orange and yellow and green heaps in the attic’s corners.

35 Then one day Uncle Henry came riding out of the Big Woods. He had come to help Pa butcher. Ma’s big butcher knife was already sharpened, and Uncle

“Supper was solemn. After supper, Grandpa’s father read aloud a chapter of the Bible, while everyone sat straight and still in his chair. Then they all knelt down, and their father said a long prayer. When he said ‘Amen’ they got up from their knees and each took a candle and went to bed. They must go straight to bed, with no playing, laughing, or even talking. 5

“Sunday morning they ate a cold breakfast, because nothing could be cooked on Sunday. Then they all dressed in their best clothes and walked to church. They walked, because hitching up the horses was work, and no work could be done on Sunday.

“They must walk slowly and solemnly, looking straight ahead. They must not joke or laugh, or even smile. Grandpa and his two brothers walked ahead, and their father and mother walked behind them. 10

“In church, Grandpa and his brothers must sit perfectly still for two long hours and listen to the sermon. They dared not fidget on the hard bench. They dared not swing their feet. They dared not turn their heads to look at the windows or the walls or the ceiling of the church. They must sit perfectly motionless, and never for one instant take their eyes from the preacher. 15

“When church was over, they walked slowly home. They might talk on the way, but they must not talk loudly and they must never laugh or smile. At home they ate a cold dinner which had been cooked the day before. Then all the long afternoon they must sit in a row on a bench and study their catechism, until at last the sun went down and Sunday was over. 20

“Now Grandpa’s home was about halfway down the side of a steep hill. The road went from the top of the hill to the bottom, right past the front door, and in winter it was the best place for sliding downhill that you can possibly imagine. 25

“One week Grandpa and his two brothers, James and George, were making a new sled. They worked at it every minute of their playtime. It was the best sled they had ever made, and it was so long that all three of them could sit on it, one behind the other. They planned to finish it in time to slide downhill Saturday afternoon. For every Saturday afternoon they had two or three hours to play. 30

“But that week their father was cutting down trees in the Big Woods. He was working hard and he kept the boys working with him. They did all the morning chores by lantern-light and were hard at work in the woods when the sun came up. They worked till dark, and then there were the chores to do, and after supper they had to go to bed so they could get up early in the morning. 35

“They had no time to work on the sled until Saturday afternoon. Then they

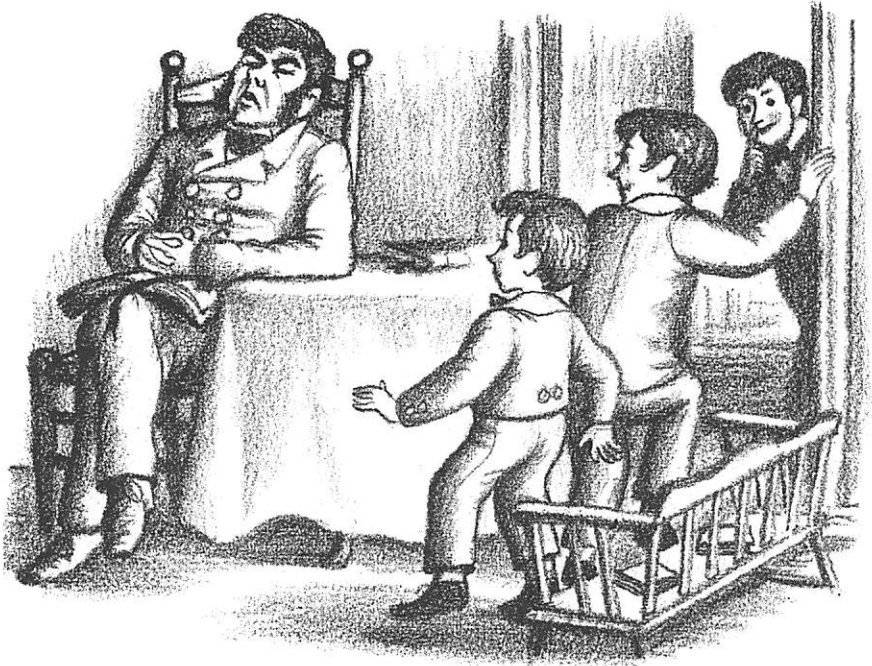
worked at it just as fast as they could, but they didn't get it finished till just as the sun went down, Saturday night.

“After the sun went down, they could not slide downhill, not even once. That would be breaking the Sabbath. So they put the sled in the shed behind the house, to wait until Sunday was over.

“All the two long hours in church next day, while they kept their feet still and their eyes on the preacher, they were thinking about the sled. At home while they ate dinner they couldn't think of anything else. After dinner their father sat down to read the Bible, and Grandpa and James and George sat as still as mice on their bench with their catechism. But they were thinking about the sled.

“The sun shone brightly and the snow was smooth and glittering on the road; they could see it through the window. It was a perfect day for sliding downhill. They looked at their catechism and they thought about the new sled, and it seemed that Sunday would never end.

“After a long time they heard a snore. They looked at their father, and they



ran to the garden and got a big pan of earth, while Aunt Polly took Charley into the house and undressed him.

They made a big panful of mud, and plastered him all over with it. They rolled him up in an old sheet and put him to bed. His eyes were swollen shut and his nose was a funny shape. Ma and Aunt Polly covered his whole face with mud and tied mud on with cloths. Only the end of his nose and his mouth showed. 5

Aunt Polly steeped some herbs, to give him for his fever. Laura and Mary and the cousins stood around for some time, looking at him.

It was dark that night when Pa and Uncle Henry came from the field. All the oats were in the shock, and now the rain could come and it would not do any harm. 10

Pa could not stay to supper; he had to get home and do the milking. The cows were already waiting at home, and when cows are not milked on time they do not give so much milk. He hitched up quickly and they all got into the wagon. 15

Then Pa told about the yellow-jackets' nest, and he said,
"It served the little liar right."

Chapter 10 – The Wonderful Machine

The days were growing shorter and the nights were cooler. One night Jack Frost passed by, and in the morning there were bright colours here and there among the green leaves of the Big Woods. Then all the leaves stopped being green. They were yellow and scarlet and crimson, and golden and brown. 20

Along the rail fence the sumac held up its dark red cones of berries above bright flame-coloured leaves. Acorns were falling from the oaks, and Laura and Mary made little acorn cups and saucers for the playhouses. Walnuts and hickory nuts were dropping to the ground in the Big Woods, and squirrels were scampering busily everywhere, gathering their winter's store of nuts and hiding them away in hollow trees. 25

Everyone was busy now, for all the garden vegetables must be stored away. Laura and Mary helped, picking up the dusty potatoes after Pa had dug them from the ground, and pulling the long yellow carrots and the round, purple-topped turnips, and they helped Ma cook the pumpkin for pumpkin pies. 30

Autumn was great fun. There was so much work to do, so many good things to eat, so many things to see. Laura was scampering and chattering like the squirrels, from morning to night. 35

One frosty morning, a machine came up the road. Four horses were pulling it, and two men were on it. The horses hauled it up into the field where Pa and Uncle Henry and Grandpa and Mr. Peterson had stacked their wheat.

5 Two more men drove another, smaller machine after it. Pa called to Ma that the threshers had come; then he hurried out to the field with his team. Laura and Mary asked Ma and then they ran out to the field after him. They might watch, if they were careful not to get in the way.

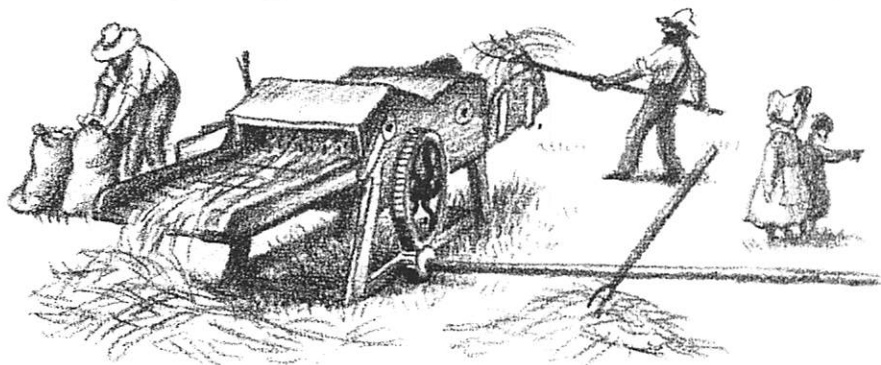
10 Uncle Henry came riding up and tied his horse to a tree. Then he and Pa hitched all the other horses, eight of them, to the smaller machine. They hitched each team to the end of a long stick that came out from the centre of the machine. A long iron rod lay along the ground, from this machine to the big machine.

15 Afterwards Laura and Mary asked questions, and Pa told them that the big machine was called the separator, and the rod was called the tumbling rod, and the little machine was called the horsepower. Eight horses were hitched to it and made it go, so this was an eight-horsepower machine.

20 A man sat on top of the horsepower, and when everything was ready he clucked to the horses, and they began to go. They walked around him in a circle, each team pulling on the long stick to which it was hitched, and following the team ahead. As they went around, they stepped carefully over the tumbling rod, which was tumbling over and over on the ground.

Their pulling made the tumbling rod keep rolling over, and the rod moved the machinery of the separator, which stood beside the stack of wheat.

25 All this machinery made an enormous racket, rackety-banging and clanging. Laura and Mary held tight to each other's hand, at the edge of the field, and



'WHEN' WORDS

always	Why do you <i>always</i> get up so late?	immer
usually	normally; mostly	normalerweise
often	I <i>often</i> play with my friends in the afternoon.	oft; häufig
sometimes	not very often; from time to time	manchmal
never	Children in Nigeria <i>never</i> see snow.	nie(mals)
again	If you can't do it the first time, try <i>again</i> !	wieder; noch einmal
as soon as	Start your homework <i>as soon as</i> you come home!	sobald
whenever	at any time; Come again <i>whenever</i> you like.	jedesmal, wenn

MOVEMENT

to drop	1. The apple <i>dropped</i> from the tree to the ground. 2. I'm sorry - I <i>dropped</i> the glass, and it broke.	fallen fallen lassen
to slam	to close s.th. loudly, usually a door	zuknallen (Tür)

USEFUL WORDS

if	I'll help you today <i>if</i> you help me tomorrow.	wenn; falls
when	<i>When</i> the thief saw the policeman, he ran away.	als (sobald)
every	Julia wears a ring on <i>every</i> finger.	jede(-r, -s)
only	I have <i>only</i> one ring.	nur
almost	nearly; Don't go away - dinner is <i>almost</i> ready.	fast; beinahe
even	This is so easy that <i>even</i> a young child can do it.	auch; selbst; sogar
enough	The poor man is hungry - he doesn't eat <i>enough</i> .	genug
hardly	She speaks so quietly that I can <i>hardly</i> hear her.	kaum
nothing but	nothing except; She eats <i>nothing but</i> fruit.	nichts als; nur
together	The two girls walk to school <i>together</i> every day.	zusammen
empty	<i>opp.</i> full; My purse is <i>empty</i> - I've got no money.	leer
plenty of	Don't hurry - we've got <i>plenty of</i> time!	reichlich; genug
as much (...) as possible	Some teachers like to give their classes <i>as much</i> homework <i>as possible</i> .	so viel (...) wie möglich
to belong to	This book <i>belongs to</i> me - it is mine.	gehören
safe	Will the baby be <i>safe</i> alone?; <i>opp.</i> in danger	sicher
to hide	to put s.th. where people can't find it (to hide, hid, hidden)	verstecken; verbergen
to carry	He <i>carried</i> his schoolbag to the table.	(in Händen) tragen
to wear	Policemen and soldiers <i>wear</i> uniforms. (to wear, wore, worn)	tragen (Kleider)
to wait (for)	We <i>waited</i> at the bus stop till the bus came.	warten (auf)
to make sure	I think the party starts at six, but I must <i>make sure</i> .	s. von etw. überzeugen
sure	I'm <i>sure</i> the key is here - I saw it this morning.	sicher
to pay atten- tion to	Say that again please - I wasn't <i>paying attention</i> . (to pay, paid, paid = (be-)zahlen)	Aufmerksamkeit schenken; beachten
to pile heap	to put a lot of things on top of one another pile - lots of things on top of one another	(auf-)häufen Haufen

Vocabulary Page by Page

See list of short forms on page 42.

☞ The following annotations are intended to help pupils work on the text, not to be learned from the lists "as is". Teachers will have no difficulty in cutting or skipping those items unnecessary for pupils' active vocabulary at this level.

CHAPTER 1 - LITTLE HOUSE IN THE BIG WOODS

PAGE 3

Wisconsin	state in the North of the USA	Bundesstaat in den USA
log	trunk of a tree that has been cut down	Baumstamm
beyond	farther on; on the other side of	darüber hinaus
far	How <i>far</i> is New York from London?	weit
nothing but	nothing except; She eats <i>nothing but</i> fruit.	nichts als; nur
among	in the middle of; The house stands <i>among</i> the trees.	(mitten) unter
mile	1.6 kilometres	Meile
scattered far apart	not together, but a long way away from each other	weit verstreut
edge	the outside end of s.th.	Rand
only	<i>Only</i> five children came to school - the rest are sick.	nur
track	<i>h:</i> narrow road in the country	<i>h:</i> Weg
trundle bed	low bed on wheels, which you can push under a larger bed	Rollbett
to whisper	to speak very softly; She <i>whispered</i> so that she would not wake the baby.	flüstern
together	The two girls walk to school <i>together</i> every day.	zusammen
sometimes	not very often; from time to time	manchmal
to howl	to make a long, loud noise like a wolf	heulen
again	If you can't do it the first time, try <i>again</i> !	wieder; noch einmal
scary sound	noise that makes you afraid	schauriges Geräusch
safe	Will the baby be <i>safe</i> alone?; <i>opp.</i> in danger	sicher
gun	thing that shoots out bullets, e.g. to kill animals	Gewehr
brindle	brown, with bands of white and black	scheckig
to be on guard	The farm is safe - two big dogs <i>are on guard</i> .	Wache halten
to snuggle	to get into a warm, comfortable position	zusammenkuscheln
comfortable	A <i>comfortable</i> bed is pleasant to sleep in.	bequem; gemütlich
attic	room inside the roof of a house	Dachboden
to drum	to make a noise like a drum (= <i>Trommel</i>)	trommeln
shutter	cover for a window	(Fenster-)Laden
panes	pieces of glass (= <i>Scheiben</i>) in a window	<i>h:</i> Fensterrahmen
to crawl	<i>h:</i> to move slowly	kriechen

Exercise 32 – What (pages 11–12)

*Imagine that you are Pa, and that your father is asking you questions.
Give your answers in full sentences.*

For example: What couldn't you find? ⇨ I couldn't find the cows.

1. What were you afraid of?
2. What seemed larger now?
3. What looked strange?
4. What did you stop and listen for?
5. What were your legs scratched by?
6. What struck you, when you ran through the bushes?
7. What did you keep on calling?
8. What did the voice say?
9. What did you do then?
10. What did you see by the barn, when you came out of the woods?

Exercise 33 – Asking Questions (page 12)

You are talking to Pa. Ask him ...

1. ... if his hair stood straight on end.
2. ... why his hair stood straight on end.
3. ... if he started to run.
4. ... why he started to run.
5. ... if he forgot all about the cows.
6. ... what he forgot all about.
7. ... if the thing in the dark came after him.
8. ... who the thing in the dark came after.
9. ... if he ran with all his might.
10. ... how he ran.
11. ... if something grabbed his foot.
12. ... whose foot something grabbed.

Exercise 34 – Making Sentences (pages 10–13)

See the instructions for Exercise 23.

1. Every evening, before
2. ... always made sure that
3. Whenever
4. When I was
5. My father/mother told me ... to
6. One day I was early, so I thought
7. I ..., but
8. ... is old/clever/quick/strong enough to

Exercise 35 – Vocabulary (pages 10–13)

1. What is the name for the *piece of metal that a gun fires*?
2. What do we call the *part of the gun that looks like a long tube*?
3. What is the opposite of *clean*?
4. How would we describe a tree *with nothing inside*?
5. What is another word for *to shout*?
6. He came very late, so we had to for him.

7. What is another word for *frightened* or *afraid*?
8. What is the word for *to do what someone says*?

Exercise 36 – Did You Understand the Chapter? (pages 10–13)

1. Why did Pa clean the gun every evening?
2. What was the first step in loading the gun?
3. How did Pa use the ramrod?
4. “*The gun was always loaded.*” Can you think of some examples (from Chapters 1 and 2) of when Pa needed to use the gun quickly?
5. Why must Pa kill a big animal with only one shot?
6. Why did Pa’s father tell him never to play in the woods?
7. Why did Pa spend longer in the woods one day?
8. What happened when he called the cows?
9. Why did he begin to run so fast?
10. What did he find when he got home?
11. Can you find the point in Pa’s story where he probably lost his toe nail?
12. Why did Pa’s father beat him?

Exercise 37 – Retelling the Story (pages 10–13)

See the instructions for Exercise 13. Do at least one topic as written work!

1. Loading the Gun (10,7–10,25)
2. The Gun (10,27–11,8)
3. The Voice in the Woods, Part I (11,10–11,26)
4. The Voice in the Woods, Part II (11,27–12,8)
5. The Voice in the Woods, Part III (12,9–13,11)

Exercise 38 – What and Where (page 13)

CHAPTER 4

1. Where were the great snowdrifts banked?
2. What did Pa use to make a path to the barn?
3. Where were the horses and cows?
4. What did Laura and Mary stand on?
5. Where did great icicles hang?
6. Where did Pa’s breath freeze in white frost?
7. What did Ma bake?
8. What did she let Mary and Laura do?

Exercise 39 – Put into the Present Tense (page 13)

Be careful of the sentences with more than one verb! Here there are no extra warnings!

1. Christmas was coming.
2. Laura and Mary stood by the window and looked out.
3. Icicles hung from the eaves of the house.
4. Pa’s breath hung like smoke, when he came along the path.
5. Ma baked bread, crackers and pies, and filled a jar with cookies.
6. Aunt Eliza and Uncle Peter were coming to spend Christmas.
7. Laura and Mary heard the ringing of sleigh bells.
8. Then a big bobsled came out of the woods and drove up to the gate.

Exercise 40 – Short Answers (pages 13–14)

1. Did Laura’s aunt, uncle and cousins come the day before Christmas?

24. to weep	wept	wept	weinen
* 25. to meet	met	met	treffen, begegnen
* 26. to feel	felt	felt	(s.) fühlen
* 27. to kneel	kneelt	kneelt	knien
28. to bleed	bled	bled	bluten
* 29. to feed	fed	fed	füttern
30. to flee	fled	fled	fliehen
31. to lead	led	led	führen
* 32. to leave	left	left	weggehen, verlassen
* 33. to hold	held	held	halten
34. to deal	dealt	dealt	handeln, s. befassen mit
* 35. to mean	meant	meant	bedeuten
* 36. to lean	leant	leant	(s.) lehnen
37. to dream	dreamt	dreamt	träumen
* 38. to read	read	read	lesen

GROUP 4 – LEARN (ALLE VERBEN DIESER GRUPPE GEHEN AUCH MIT -ED STATT MIT -T!)

* 39. to burn	burnt (burned)	burnt (burned)	(ver-)brennen
40. to learn	learnt (learned)	learnt (learned)	lernen
* 41. to smell	smelt (smelled)	smelt (smelled)	riechen
42. to spell	spelt (spelled)	spelt (spelled)	buchstabieren
* 43. to spoil	spoilt (spoiled)	spoilt (spoiled)	verderben
44. to spill	spilt (spilled)	spilt (spilled)	verschütten

GROUP 5 – SEND

45. to bend	bent	bent	biegen, beugen
46. to lend	lent	lent	(ver-)leihen
* 47. to send	sent	sent	schicken, senden
* 48. to spend	spent	spent	(Geld) ausgeben; (Zeit) verbringen
* 49. to build	built	built	bauen

GROUP 6 – FIND

* 50. to find	found	found	finden
51. to bind	bound	bound	binden
52. to grind	ground	ground	mahlen; schleifen
53. to wind	wound	wound	winden

GROUP 7 – THINK

54. to buy	bought	bought	kaufen
* 55. to bring	brought	brought	bringen
* 56. to think	thought	thought	denken
* 57. to fight	fought	fought	kämpfen
* 58. to catch	caught	caught	fangen
59. to teach	taught	taught	lehren, unterrichten

GROUP 8 – WRITE

* 60. to drive	drove	driven	fahren
* 61. to rise	rose	risen	aufgehen (<i>Sonne</i>); s. erheben
62. to write	wrote	written	schreiben
* 63. to ride	rode	ridden	reiten

GROUP 9 – SHOOT

* 64. to get	got	got	bekommen; werden
* 65. to forget	forgot	forgotten	vergessen
* 66. to shoot	shot	shot	schießen
* 67. to shine	shone	shone	scheinen, glänzen
* 68. to lose	lost	lost	verlieren

GROUP 10 – SPEAK

* 69. to speak	spoke	spoken	sprechen
70. to steal	stole	stolen	stehlen
* 71. to break	broke	broken	(zer-)brechen
* 72. to freeze	froze	frozen	frieren, gefrieren
* 73. to wake up	woke up	woken up	aufwachen; -wecken
* 74. to tell	told	told	erzählen, sagen
75. to sell	sold	sold	verkaufen
* 76. to choose	chose	chosen	(aus-)wählen

GROUP 11 – WEAR

* 77. to wear	wore	worn	(<i>Kleider</i>) tragen
78. to tear	tore	torn	zerreißen
79. to swear	swore	sworn	schwören, fluchen
* 80. to bear	bore	borne	ertragen
			(born = geboren!)

GROUP 12 – HIDE

* 81. to hide	hid	hidden	(s.) verstecken
* 82. to bite	bit	bitten	beißen
83. to light	lit (lighted)	lit (lighted)	anzünden
* 84. to slide	slid	slid	gleiten, rutschen

GROUP 13 – 'W' VERBS

* 85. to know	knew	known	kennen, wissen
* 86. to blow	blew	blown	wehen, blasen
* 87. to grow	grew	grown	wachsen; werden
* 88. to throw	threw	thrown	werfen
* 89. to fly	flew	flown	fliegen
* 90. to draw	drew	drawn	zeichnen; ziehen
* 91. to show	showed	shown	zeigen
92. to sow	sowed	sown	säen
* 93. to sew	sewed	sewn	nähen
94. to saw	sawed	sawn	sägen