

Extensive reading

Unit 2 Book 1

# Little House in the Big Woods






*by* Laura Ingalls Wilder





# Learning objectives








In this unit you will:

-  read about the life in the wilderness in the USA
-  learn to appreciate the narrative writing
-  understand Westward Movement in America
-  master how to preview a reading material
-  take a test on fast reading





# Unit overview

-  Pre-reading discussion
-  Background information
-  Text analysis
-  Notes to the text
-  Post-reading discussion
-  Reading skills
-  Exercises





# Pre-reading discussion

1. Do you want to live in the woods for a couple of days? Why?
2. What would you do if you meet big animals in the wilderness?





# Background information



# Laura Ingalls Wilder (1867—1957)

Born on February 7, 1867, in a log cabin at the edge of the woods near Pepin, Wisconsin, Laura Ingalls Wilder spent her childhood as part of the great pioneering-homesteading movement in the Midwest and Great Plains.





# Laura Ingalls Wilder (1867—1957)

Laura Ingalls Wilder is one of the twentieth century's most beloved and acclaimed writers for children.

In her books, Laura stressed the importance of family, faith, generosity, adaptability, endurance, resourcefulness, and humor and self-sufficiency.





## Laura's eight-volume series

Little House in the Big Woods 《森林中小木屋》  
(1932)

Farmer Boy 《农庄男孩》 (1933)

Little House on the Prairie 《草原上小木屋》  
(1935)

On the Banks of Plum Creek 《在梅溪边》 (1937)

By the Shore of Silver Lake 《在银湖岸》 (1939)

Long Winter 《好长冬天》 (1940)

Little Town on the Prairie 《草原小镇》 (1941)

These Happy Golden Years 《高兴金色年代》  
(1943)

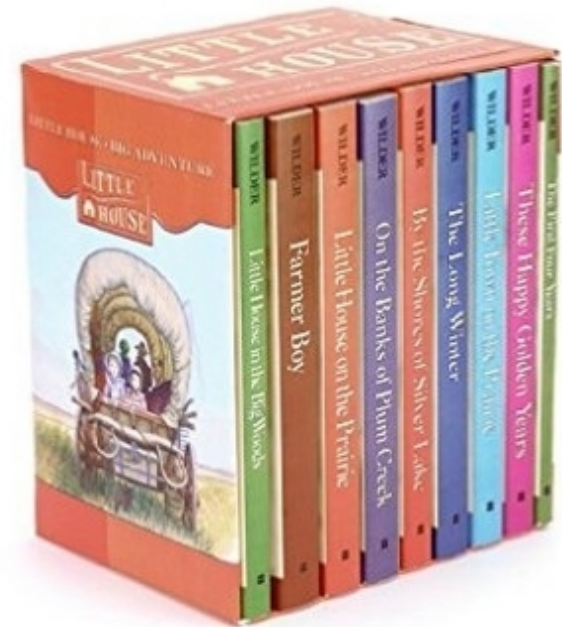






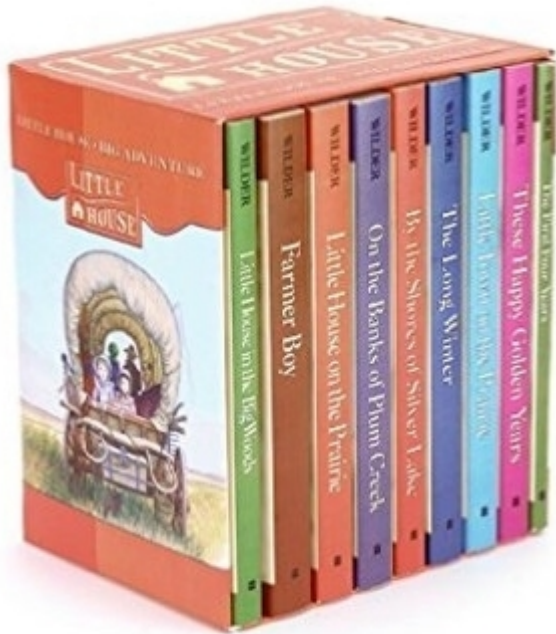
## Comments on *Little House Books*

Laura's daughter *Rose* became a famous writer in the early 1900s. *Rose* recalled the stories her mother had told her during her growing-up years, and thought that other children would be as interested in those pioneer stories as she was. She encouraged her mother to write down the stories, and Laura did.





# Comments on *Little House Books*



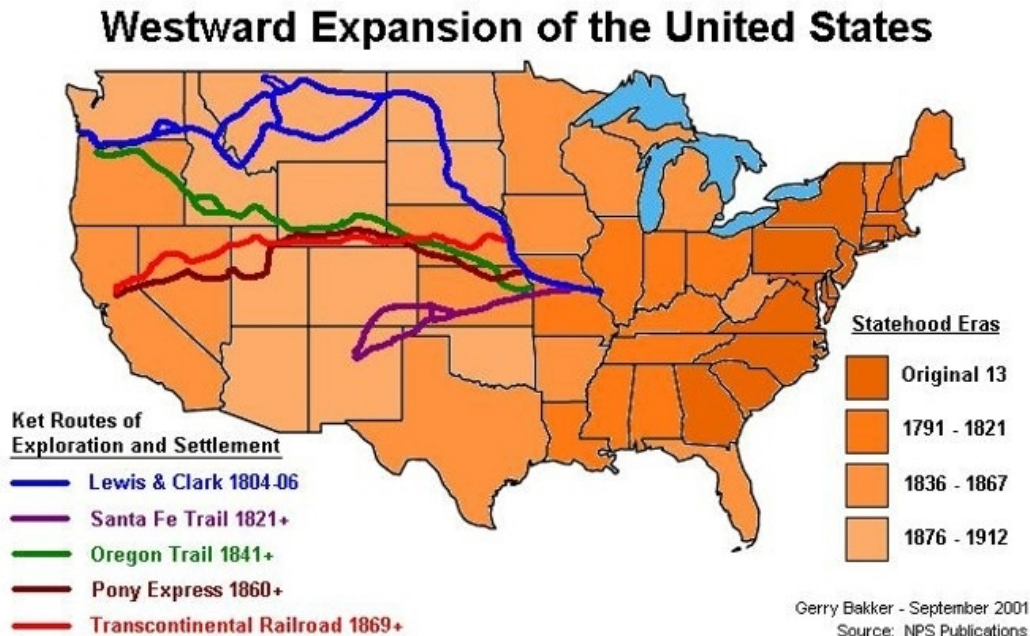
The eight *Little House books* have been cherished by generations of readers as both a unique glimpse into America's frontier past and a heartwarming, unforgettable story.





# Westward Movement in America

The westward movement began in the early 1600's with European settlements along the Atlantic Coast of North America. It continued until the late 1800's.





# Westward Movement in America

An abundance of land and other natural resources lured America's pioneers westward. The pioneers struggled westward across mountains, hills, and prairies on foot, on horseback and in covered wagons.



Some of them looked to the west for wealth or adventure. Others sought to improve their social position or increase their political power.





# Westward Movement in America

Fur traders, cattle ranchers, farmers, and miners led the push to the west. Merchants and other business people followed. These hard-working men and women faced great dangers, endured severe hardships, and suffered loneliness and boredom in the hope of making a better life for themselves and their children.



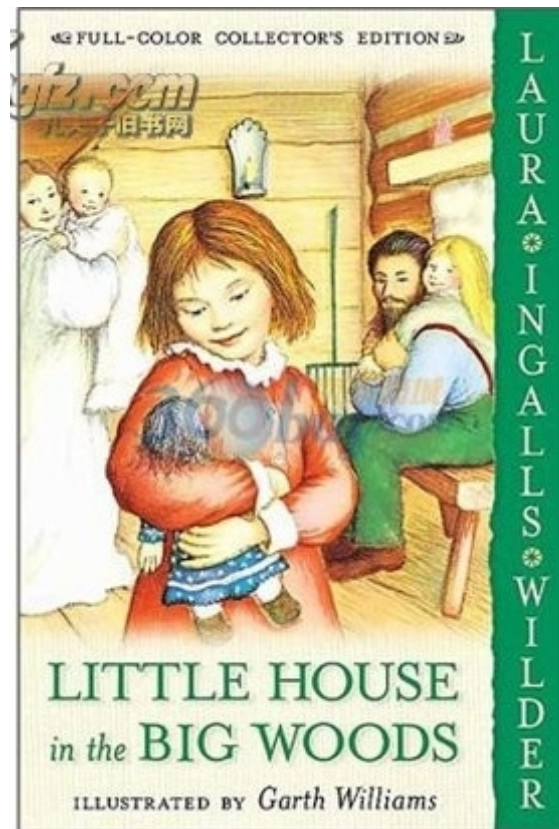


# Text analysis



# Understanding the title

*Little House in the Big Woods* is the first of the eight volume series and Laura Ingalls Wilder's first children's book. It's the story of Laura and her family and how life was for them in their log cabin deep in the woods.





# Determining the main idea

The main idea of the story is that \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. A big bear wanted to attack the family but it only managed to frightened the cattle on the farm.
- b. A man supported his family by hunting wild animals while his wife and children helped with farm work.
- c. A mother was helped by one of her daughters with the milking of the cow and they spent a night together while the father was away in town.
- d. A mother and her daughters living in the big woods encountered a big bear but got home safely.







# While-reading questions

1. Why did Pa go to the town?
2. Why was it better for the father to take a gun with him?
3. Why did Ma say that Laura was a good girl??
4. Why were Laura and Ma surprised to see the dark shape of Sukey, standing at the barnyard gate?
5. What is the function of the detailed description of the two animals' appearances ?
6. Why did Laura begin to cry?
7. What did the mother do that different from the usual days? Why?
8. What presents did Pa buy them?





# Text structure

Parts	Contents	Main ideas
1	1—8	Pa was away from home, trading his furs for necessities, and didn't come back when it was getting dark.
2	9—32	Ma and her daughters encountered a big bear, but got home safely.
3	33—35	Pa came back, nobody and critter was hurt.





# Elements in the story

- **Place:** in a big woods
- **Time:** in winter, at night
- **Social context:** far away from town;  
Pa didn't come back
- **Characters:** Ma, Pa, Laura, Mary,  
Carrie, a bear, Sukey





# Elements in the story



- **Plot:** Ma and daughters encountered a big bear but got home safely.
- **Atmosphere:** worried  
terrified
- **Conflict:** Ma protected themselves from the attack of bear.
- **Point of view:** third person





# Part 1 Introduction

1. Why did Pa go to the town?
2. Why was it better for the father to take a gun with him?





# Part 1 Introduction

## 1. Why did Pa go to the town?

Father went to town to trade the furs of the wild animals.





# Part 1 Introduction

2. Why was it better for the father to take a gun with him?

To protect himself from animals (danger)





## Part 2 Encountering the bear

1. Why were Laura and Ma surprised to see the dark shape of Sukey, standing at the barnyard gate?
2. What is the function of the detailed description of the two animals' appearances ?
3. Why did Laura begin to cry?
4. Why did Ma say that Laura was a good girl?
5. What did the mother do that different from the usual days? Why?





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