

Little House on the Prairie

THE LONG WINTER



Unit Study

Little House on the Prairie The Long Winter Unit Study

By Kathy Hutto

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Background Information

Who was Laura Ingalls Wilder?



Laura is standing on the right. Mary is sitting and Carrie is on the left.

Photo courtesy of the Laura Ingalls Wilder Home Association, Mansfield, MO.

Laura Elizabeth Ingalls was born February 7, 1867, near Pepin in the “Big Woods” of Wisconsin. Her father, whom she referred to as Pa, moved the family out west after learning about the Homestead Act (see below for more on the Homestead Act). Laura lived with her parents (Charles and Caroline) and three sisters. Their names were Mary, Caroline (but they called her Carrie), and Grace. In 1885, she married Almanzo Wilder. In 1894, they bought property in the Missouri Ozarks. They remained there the rest of their lives. They had one daughter named Rose. When Rose grew up she was a journalist and author. She urged her mother to write down the stories that she had heard growing up about Laura’s childhood. In 1932, Laura published the first book in the Little House series, *Little House in the Big Woods*. She continued writing other stories, all describing her younger years. Laura Ingalls Wilder died in 1957, just a few days after her 90th birthday.

Visit the following site to see a gallery of photos showing Laura and Almanzo’s life together.

http://lauraingallswilderhome.com/?page_id=229

See an excerpt from Becoming Laura Ingalls Wilder:

<http://www.nytimes.com/books/first/m/miller-wilder.html>

View a printable map of Laura's travels:

http://www.lauraingallswilderhome.com/?page_id=17

What was the Homestead Act?

The Homestead Act was passed by Congress in 1862. It allowed for citizens of the United States to claim 160 acres of land. There were certain conditions that had to be fulfilled in order to file for land.

The person had to:

- build a home on the land as well as take care of it
- live on the land at least six months out of the year
- be 21 years of age
- be a citizen of the United States

They had to do this for five years, and finalize the claim for the land within two years of fulfilling the five year requirement.

View the actual Homestead Proof paperwork for Almanzo Wilder [here](#) at the National Archives site.

Think about this...

If you were twenty one during this time period, would you try to get land because of the Homestead Act? Why or why not? Discuss.

You might think that the Homestead Act provided an easy way to get your own land, but the fact is, the land had never been farmed before. It would have taken about two years during that time period when there were no tractors or modern farming equipment to get the land ready and produce a good crop. Often the settler had to find other work in addition to preparing their land. They faced other challenges as well. They found that the more desirable land ended up in the hands of the railroad and spectators. That meant that to get really good land, they would have to pay high prices rather than accept the less desirable lands the government offered.

Charles Ingalls was inspired by the Homestead Act of 1862. He chose some land about 14 miles from Independence, Kansas and built a house. In 1870, he

and his family were forced to leave because the land they had settled on was Native American territory. They moved to DeSmet, South Dakota. They were the very first family who settled there. In 1880, they filed another claim (through the Homestead Act) for land that was about three miles from DeSmet. This is where they were living during The Long Winter. Due to severe blizzards, they had to live in town for eight months.

Pioneering Life:

Pioneering life was not easy.

Watch the following YouTube video called [Pioneer of the Plains](#) about Western Expansion.

Complete the sheet on the following page entitled, *Compare and Contrast*.

Discuss the following questions after watching the video:

What was the Western Expansion of the 1800's?

If your family decided to move and you were limited to being able to take 5 or your own things with you, what would you take?

What animals carried the pioneers west? (oxen and wagons)

What do the settlers have for supper? (corn meal mush)

Where are the animals kept at night? (tied to a tethering stick)

Were the neighbors friendly? (yes; they visit the family and stay until evening)

What entertainment does the family and the neighbors enjoy? (fiddle music)

What challenge do they first face? (cattlemen who believe the land is grazing land for their cattle)

What item shows proof that the land belongs to the settlers? (claim stakes)

What do they use for their first home? (dugout)

What has Pa planted already? (corn)

What kind of homes do they build next? (sod; lumber for window and door frames and for roof)

What is a fire guard? (2 plowed rings of several furrows each; between the rings, the grass is burned to protect the house from prairie fires)

The center of the household inside is the ___? (little round cookstove)

What are the children's chores? (collecting prairie grass, twigs, buffalo chips- which will be used for fuel for the fire)

Who does Pa meet toward the end of the film? (circuit riding minister)

The minister tells Pa he has heard that they will build a _____. (school)

How does Pa entertain the minister? (fiddle playing)

COMPARE & CONTRAST

Main Topic

1800's versus 2000's

Subtopic

Pioneering Days

Subtopic

Modern Times

ALIKE

DIFFERENT

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Maps:

View and print a map showing Laura's travels here:

<http://www.discoverlaura.org/travels.html>

What happened next?

Find out what happened next to Laura by visiting this site:

<http://www.discoverlaura.org/history.html>

Fieldtrips Online:

Online Exhibits: <http://www.discoverlaura.org/exhibits.html>

Video historic center: <http://www.discoverlaura.org/visit.html>

Tours of all the historic sites: <http://www.laurasprairiehouse.com/sites/index.html>

Arts and Crafts:

Prairie Town – paper houses

http://www.hoover.archives.gov/LIW/pioneertown/activities_pioneertown.html

Homemade butter (with toddler recipe cards) - <http://www.teaching-tiny-tots.com/toddler-recipes-making-butter.html>

Straw hat craft -

http://www.hoover.archives.gov/LIW/strawhat/activities_strawhat.html

Sunbonnet craft -

http://www.hoover.archives.gov/LIW/sunbonnet/activities_sunbonnet.html

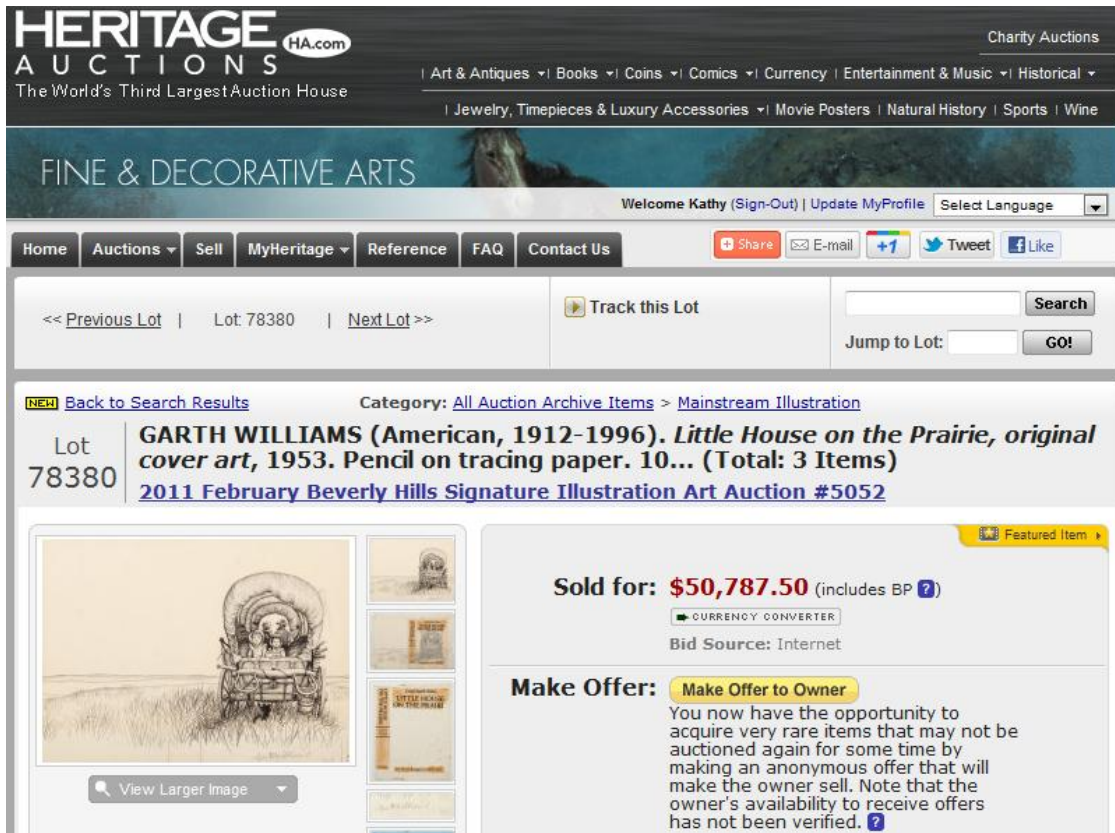
Corncob dolls and Fleece Scarf -

<https://kathyhutto.wordpress.com/shop/homeschool/little-house-on-the-prairie-the-long-winter/>

Recipes:

<http://www.laurasprairiehouse.com/recipes/>

Fun Fact:



The screenshot shows the Heritage Auctions website. The header includes the logo "HERITAGE AUCTIONS HA.com" and the tagline "The World's Third Largest Auction House". Navigation menus list categories like Art & Antiques, Books, Coins, Comics, Currency, Entertainment & Music, Historical, Jewelry, Timepieces & Luxury Accessories, Movie Posters, Natural History, Sports, and Wine. A banner for "FINE & DECORATIVE ARTS" is visible. The user interface shows a welcome message for "Kathy" and navigation options like Home, Auctions, Sell, MyHeritage, Reference, FAQ, and Contact Us. Social media sharing buttons for Share, E-mail, +1, Tweet, and Like are present. The main content area displays "Lot 78380" with a pencil drawing of a covered wagon in a field. The drawing is titled "GARTH WILLIAMS (American, 1912-1996). Little House on the Prairie, original cover art, 1953. Pencil on tracing paper. 10... (Total: 3 Items) 2011 February Beverly Hills Signature Illustration Art Auction #5052". The drawing is sold for \$50,787.50 (including buyer's premium). A "Make Offer" section is also visible, stating "You now have the opportunity to acquire very rare items that may not be auctioned again for some time by making an anonymous offer that will make the owner sell. Note that the owner's availability to receive offers has not been verified."

It will be interesting for your students to learn that some of Garth Williams' original sketches (drawn in 1953) for the Little House series of books have recently been up for auction. The cover for Little House on the Prairie had a pre-auction value of \$8,000 to \$12,000. The auction was held on February 11, 2011. The piece sold for \$50,787.50!

Lapbook

Directions:

After reading a chapter in your book, print and cut out the lapbook piece that corresponds to that chapter.

There is space on the front of most lapbook pieces for you to color a picture to represent that chapter. For example, on the Chapter 2 page, you may draw a hay bale; on the Chapter 3 page, you may draw a pie, etc.

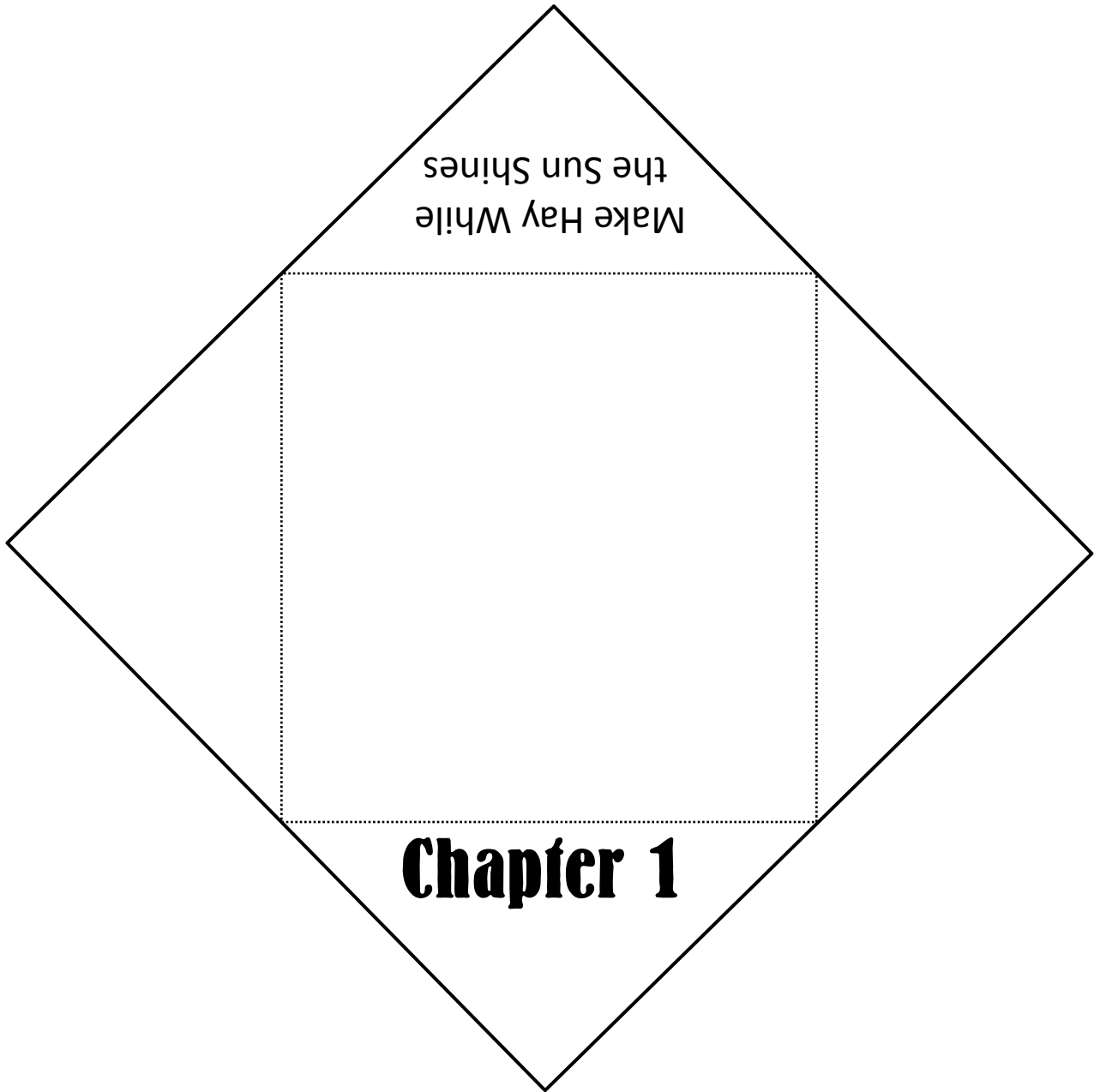
Write the questions and answers inside each lapbook piece. Glue inside your lapbook.

There is no right/wrong place to glue the pieces. Just place them wherever you'd like in the lapbook. For more room, tape 2 pieces of cardstock to the top and bottom of the lapbook when opened.

There are many tutorials on how to put a lapbook together online if you need help.

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

1. Why did Pa have to cut the hay all by himself with no help?
2. What was different about the water Ma had sent them to drink?
3. What made Pa think they would have a long winter this year?



Answers: 1. he had spent all his money on the mowing machine and all the neighbors were busy working their own farms. 2. ginger water 3. the muskrats had built very thick walls for their house

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

1. What errand did Pa send Laura on?
2. Who went to town with Laura?
3. What happened on the way home from town?

CHAPTER 2

An Errand to Town

Answers: 1. go to town and buy a new tooth for the cutter-bar 2. Carrie
3. Laura and Carrie got lost because Laura left the road

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

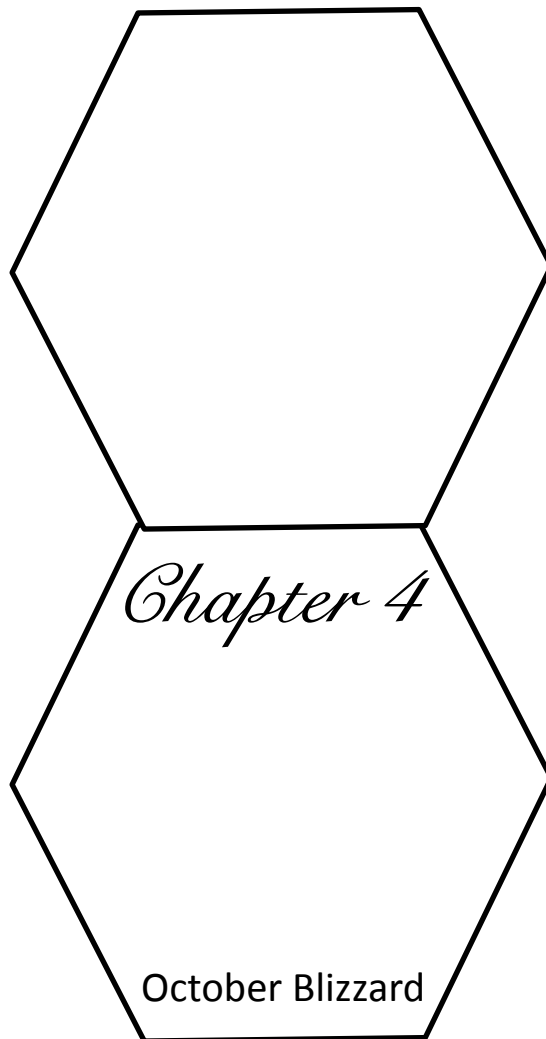
1. What was it time for the family to do?
2. What kind of pie was Ma going to make? What did it taste like?
3. What did Ma, Mary and Laura do while the pie was baking?
4. Why didn't Pa kill a goose or any other kind of bird?

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Answers: 1. get in their harvest 2. a green pumpkin pie; apple pie
3. knitting and sewing 4. they had flown south or hiding away

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

1. What was happening that surprised the family?
2. What did Pa do once his fingers got warm?
3. How long did the blizzard last?



Answers: 1. a blizzard in October 2. played the fiddle and sang 3. 2 more days and nights (or 3 days and 2 nights)

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

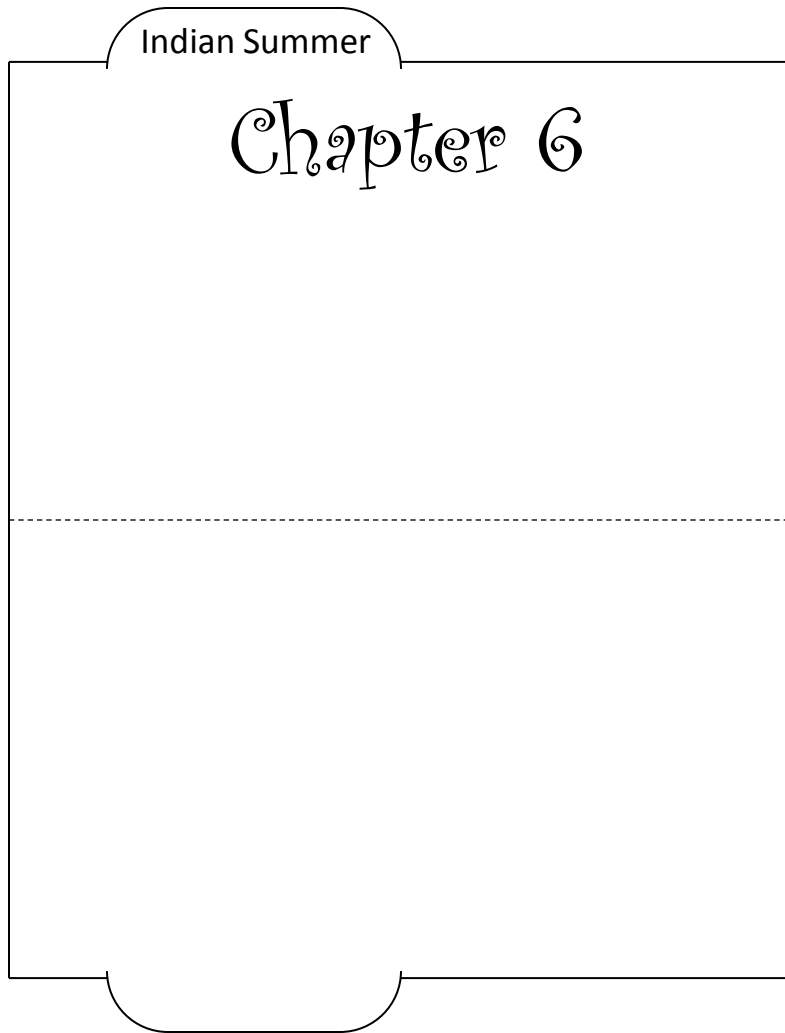
1. What did Pa see out by the haystacks?
2. Why didn't the cattle move?
3. What did Pa have in his pocket?
4. What was running around outside the hay?

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| | <p>Chapter 5</p> <p>After the Storm</p> |
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Answers: 1. cattle 2. their heads were frozen to the ground 3. a bird (an auk) 4. jackrabbits

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

1. What did Pa, Laura and Mary do by the lake?
2. What was Pa uneasy about?
3. What did Ma call this time of year?



Answers: 1. release the bird 2. the animals seemed to be getting ready for a hard winter 3. Indian summer

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

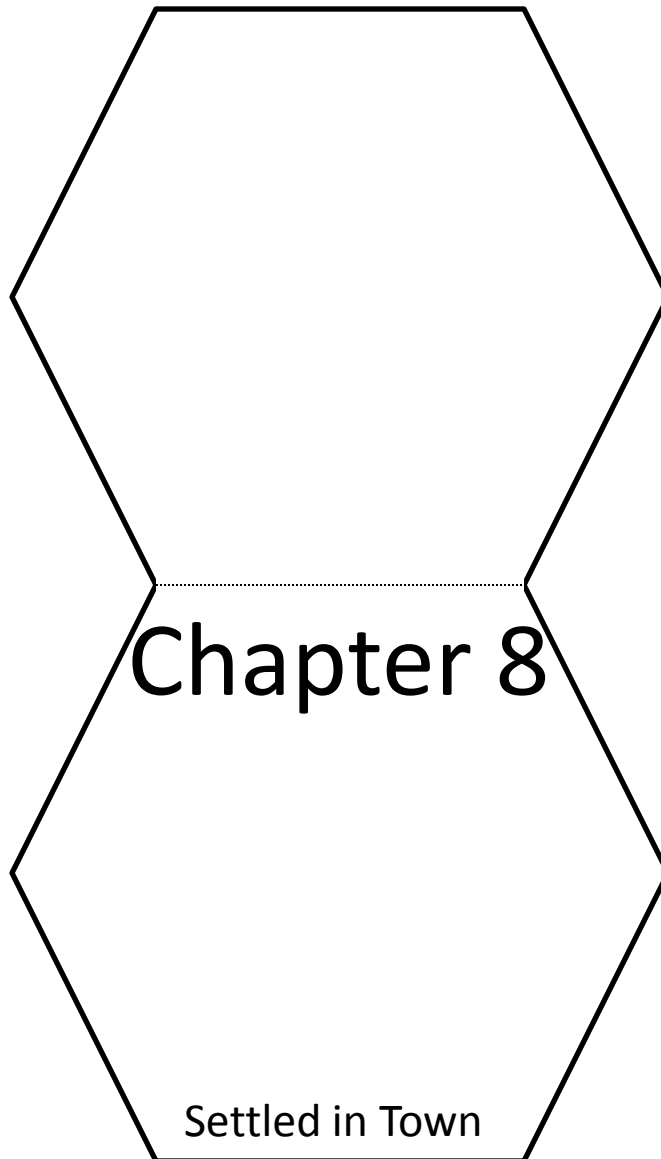
1. Who came up behind Pa when the men were talking at the store?
2. What did the Indian say?
3. What did Pa tell the family they were going to do?

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| | <h1>Chapter 7</h1> <p>Indian Warning</p> |
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Answers: 1. an Indian 2."Heap big snow come." 3. move to town

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

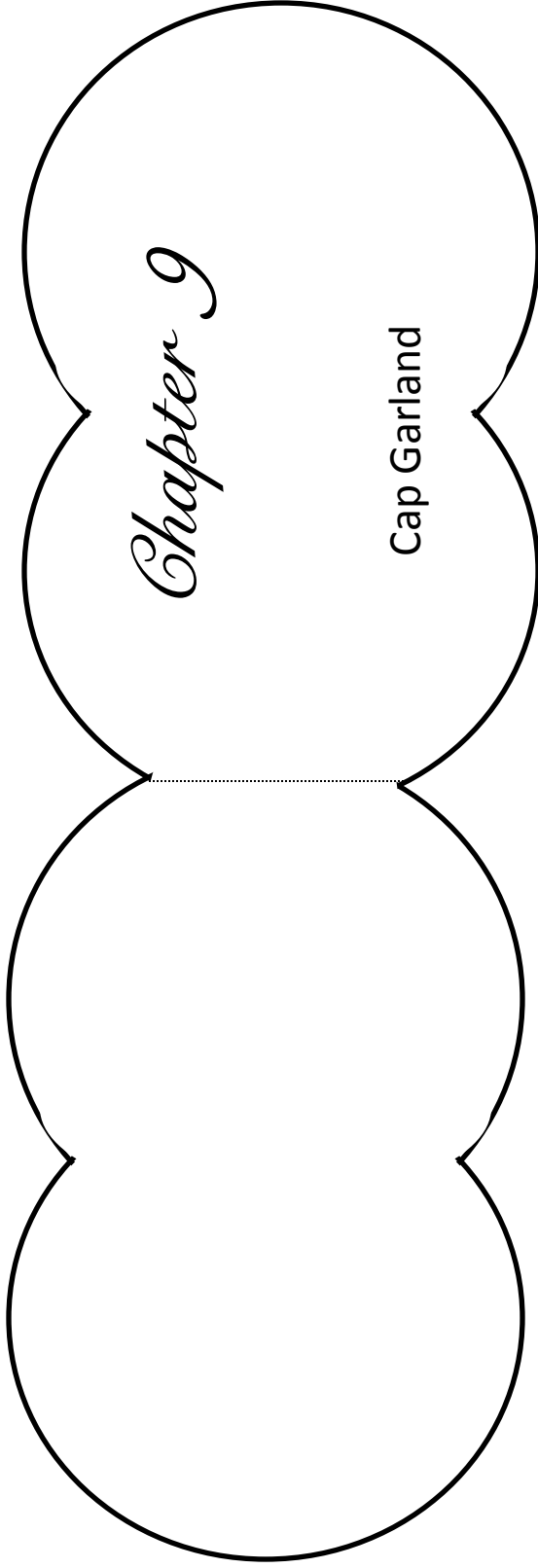
1. What building did the family move into?
2. Where would Laura and Carrie go the following day?



Answers: 1. Pa's store building 2.school

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

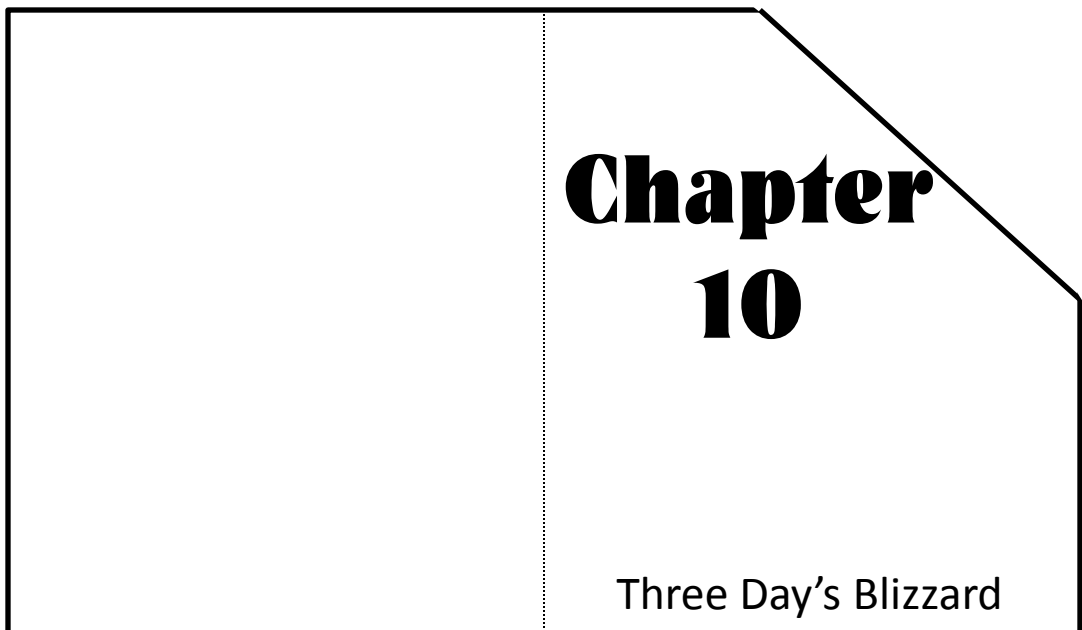
1. What did Laura do that surprised the boys?
2. What did the teacher read first?
3. Did the girls like school?
4. What happened during school one day that surprised everyone.



Answers: 1. caught a ball 2. the twenty-third Psalm 3. yes, they were sorry for the weekend to come 4. a blizzard came

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

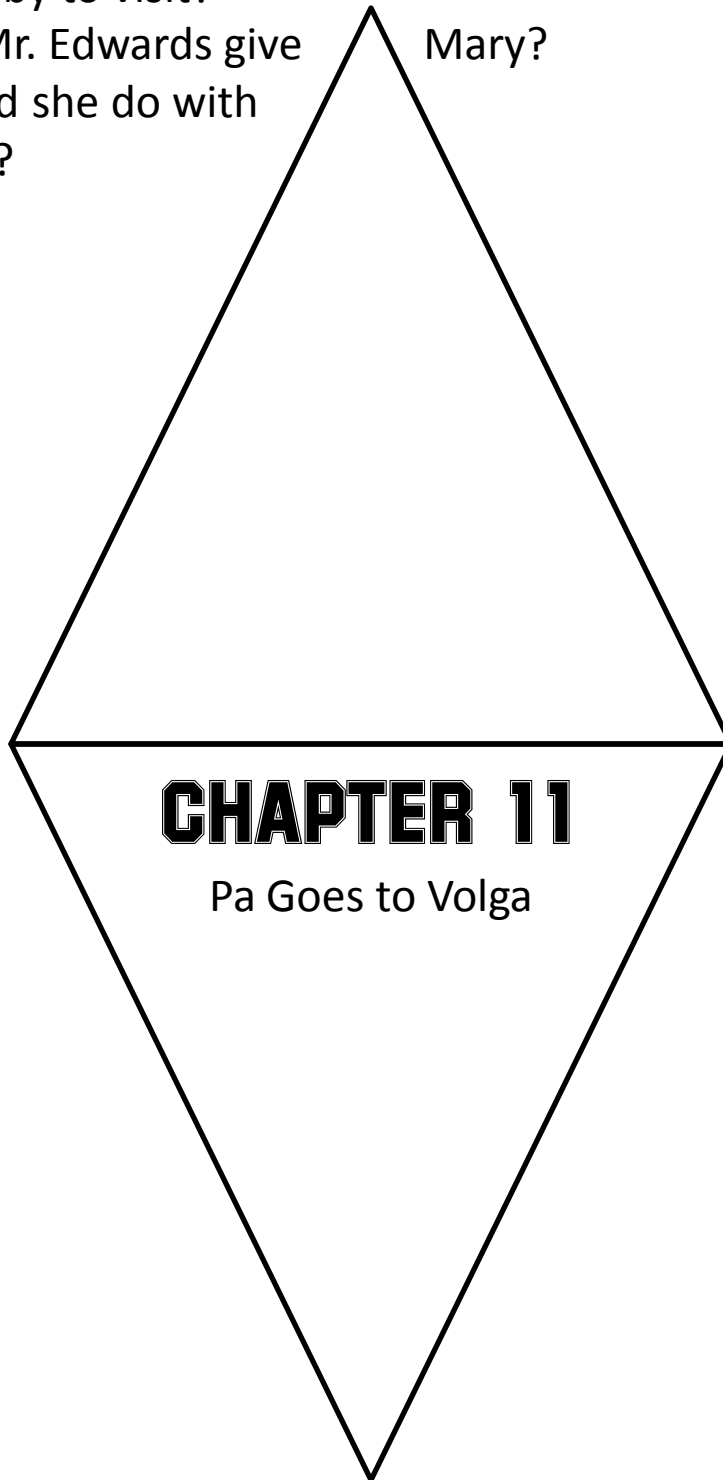
1. What could Almanzo make – even better than his mother?
2. How old should a homesteader be? How old was Almanzo?



Answers: 1. pancakes 2. 21; 19

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

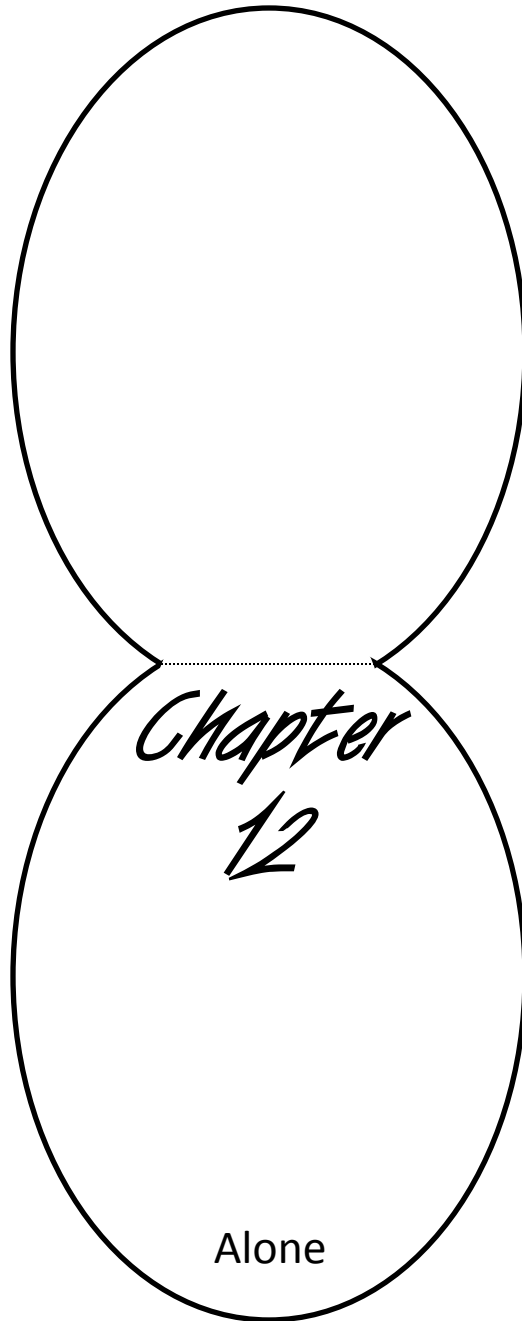
1. What did Pa and some of the other men go off to do?
2. Who came by to visit?
3. What did Mr. Edwards give Mary?
4. What would she do with the money?



Answers: 1. clear the tracks 2. Mr. Edwards 3. a twenty dollar bill
4. save it to go to college

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

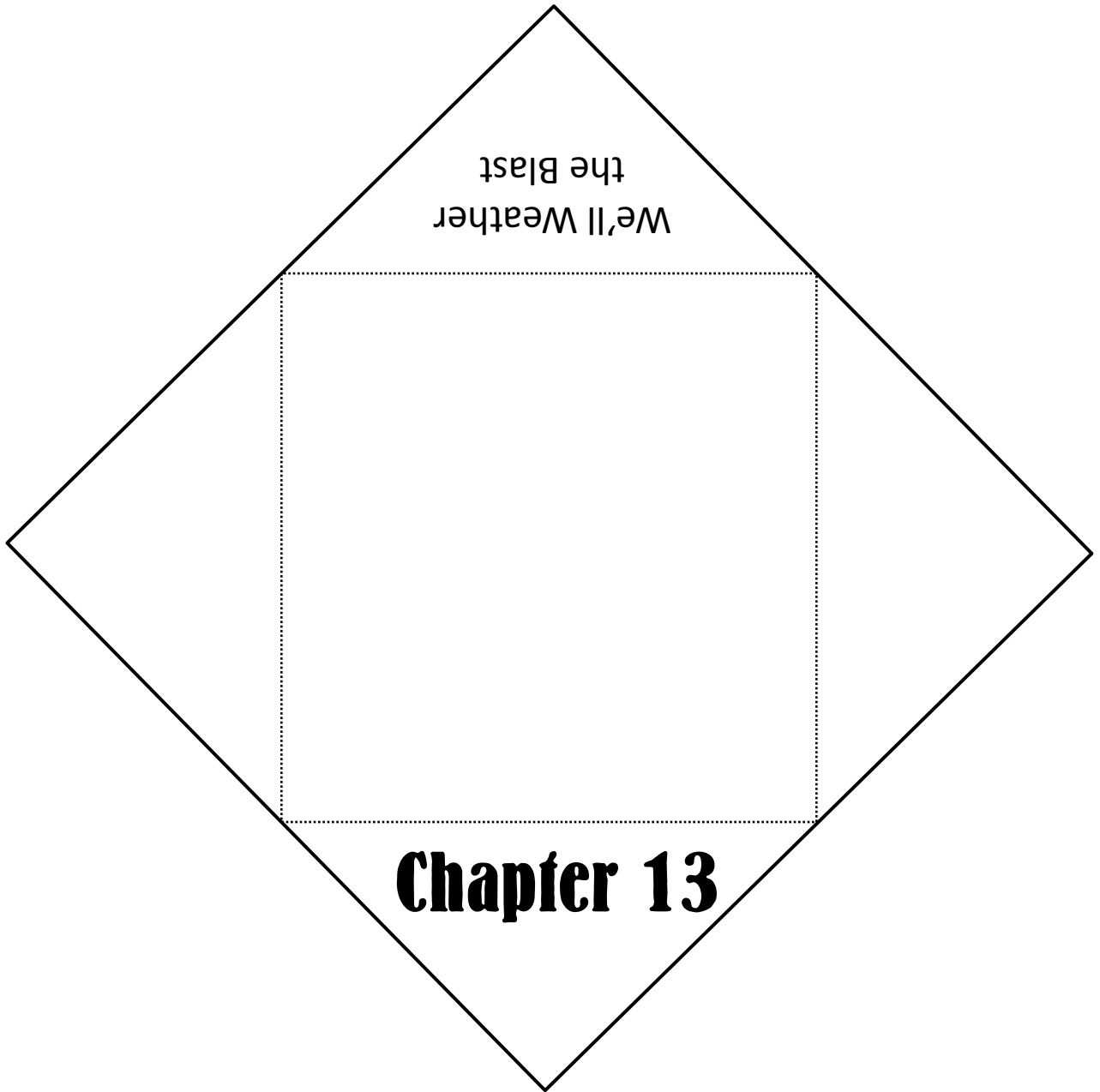
1. What did Pa do before bedtime?
2. Where did Mary say they could say their prayers?



Answers: 1. played the fiddle and sang 2. under the covers

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

1. Where did Pa go?
2. What did Ma and the girls do after Pa left?
3. When Pa returned, what did they do all afternoon?



Answers: 1. went to Fullers to hear the news 2. Sunday School lessons
3. sang hymns

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

1. How long did this blizzard last?
2. Where did Laura and Carrie go?
3. Who came by to visit the family?
4. What happened at the end of this chapter?

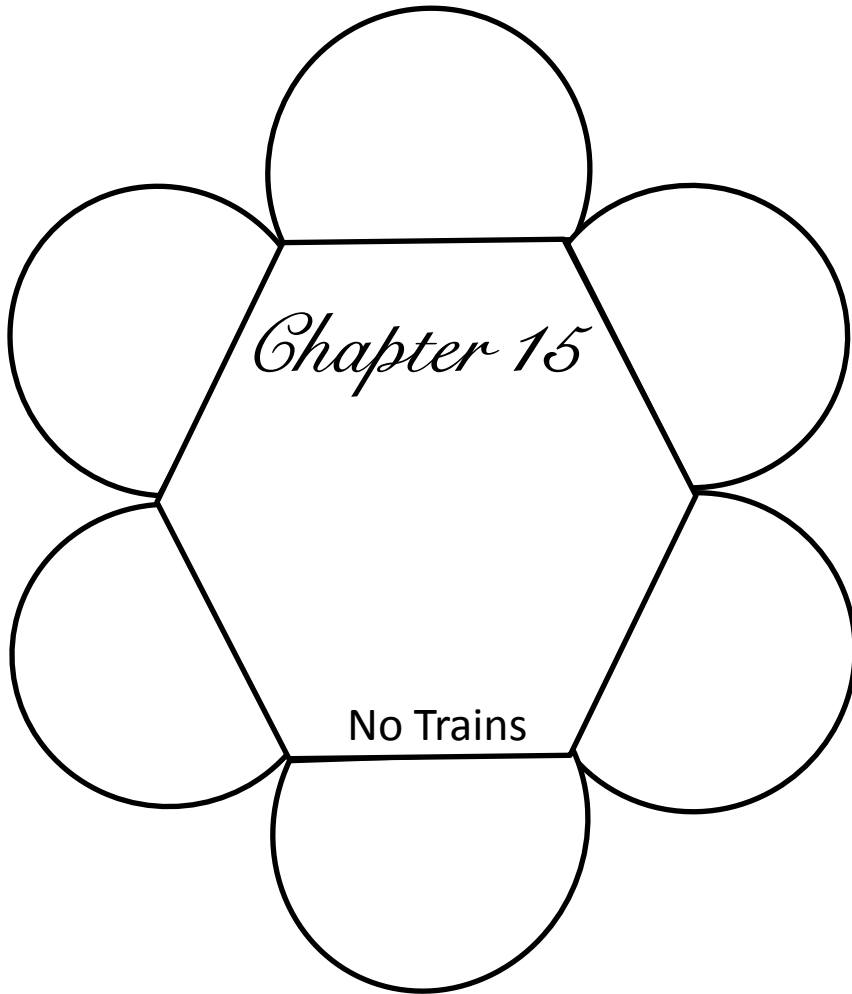
CHAPTER 14

One Bright Day

Answers: 1. two days 2.to school 3.Mr. Boast4. another blizzard was coming

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

1. Why was Laura discouraged?
2. Where do Pa go before supper?
3. Were the trains able to run now?



Answers: 1. she couldn't go to school 2. to do the chores and then to Fullers to find out the news 3. no, they would have to be dug out

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

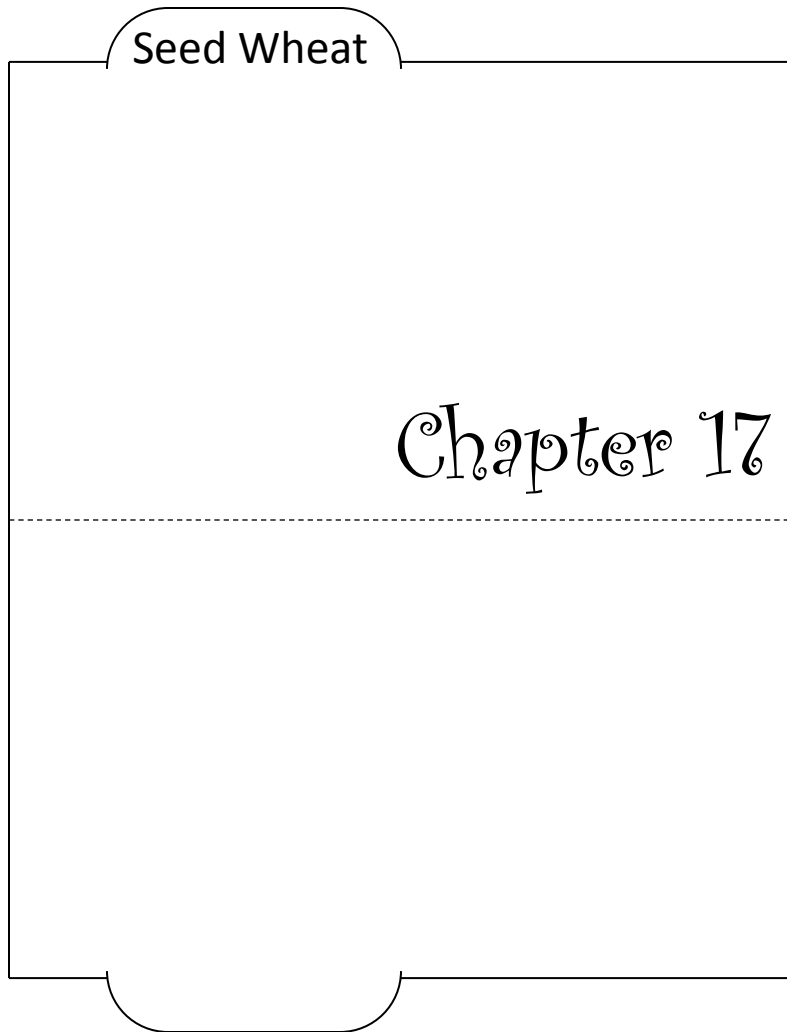
1. Why was there no school?
2. What had Pa made?
3. What kept Pa so long from coming home?

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| | <p>Chapter 16</p> <p>Fair Weather</p> |
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Answers: 1.the train couldn't get through with more coal to heat the school 2.a wooden sled to haul hay 3. the horses kept sinking the snow

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

1. What had Almanzo made?
2. Why did he make the wall?



Answers: 1.a wall to hold all his seed wheat 2.he didn't want anyone to know about his seed wheat

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

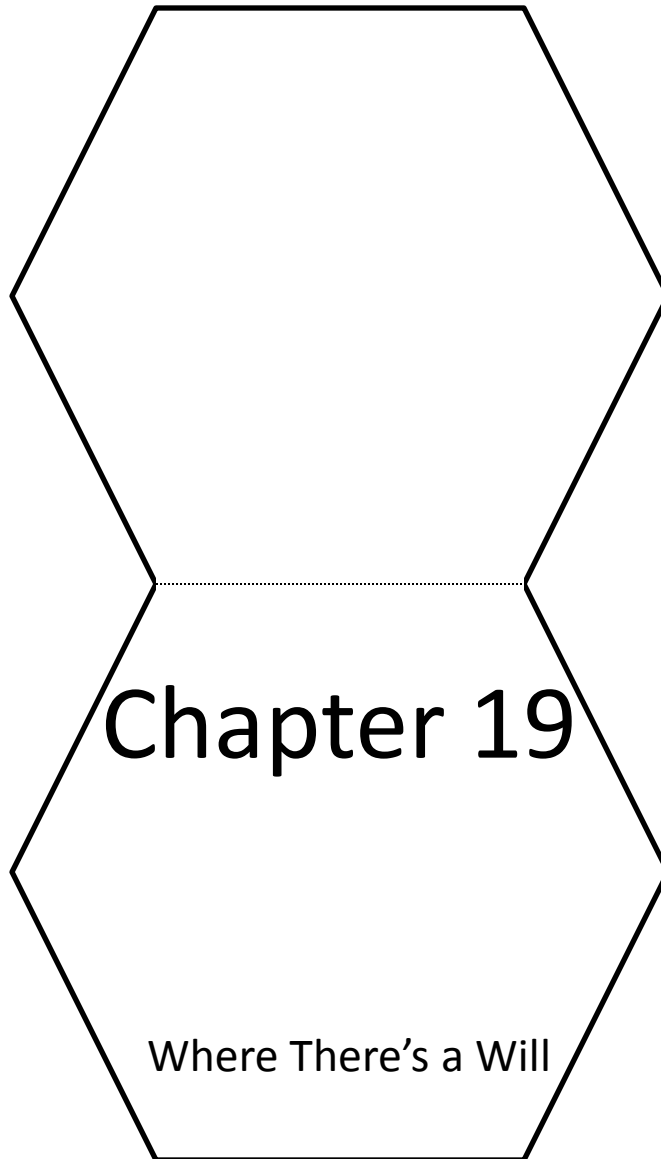
1. Who was the letter from?
2. What item was on the train that the family hoped would arrive by Christmas?
3. What did Pa get for Christmas?
4. What did the family eat for Christmas dinner?
5. What did the family burn after the coal was gone?

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| | <h1>Chapter 18</h1> <p>Merry Christmas</p> |
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Answers: 1. Rev. Alden 2. a barrel from Rev. Alden with clothes, gifts, and a turkey 3. suspenders 4. oyster soup 5. hard sticks of hay

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

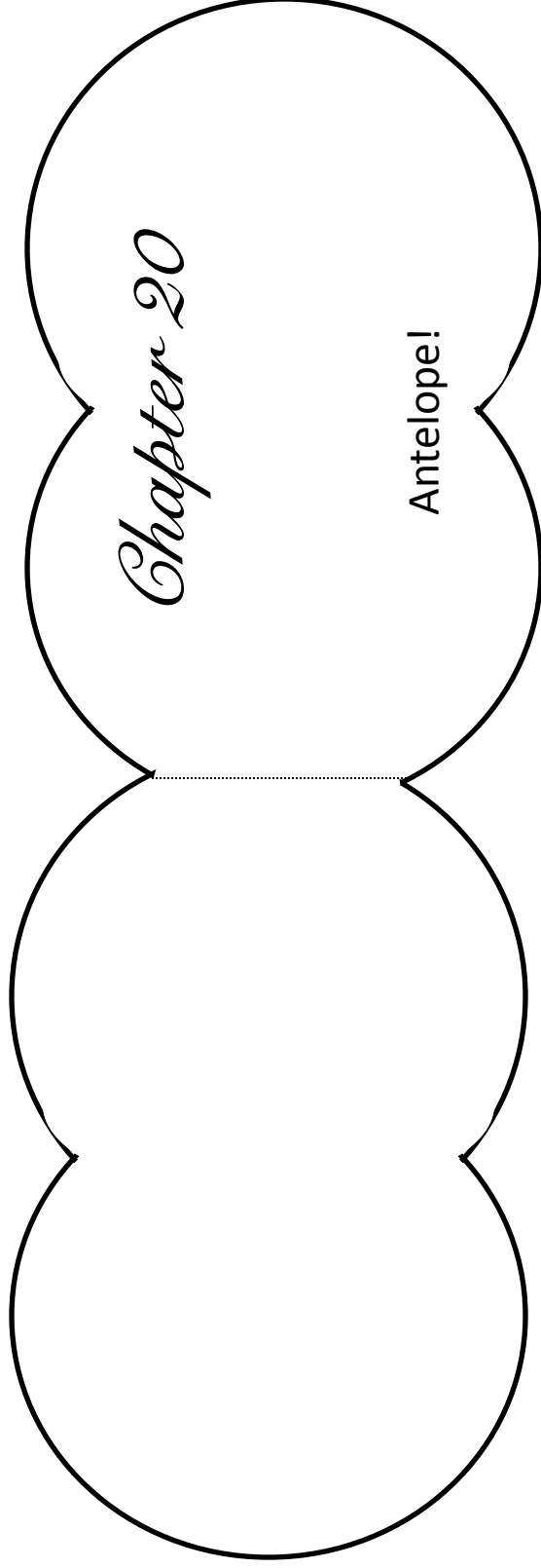
1. What did Pa teach Laura how to do?
2. What did Pa bring back to use as flour?
3. What did Ma make for light?



Answers: 1. twist hay for the fire 2. wheat 3. a button lamp

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

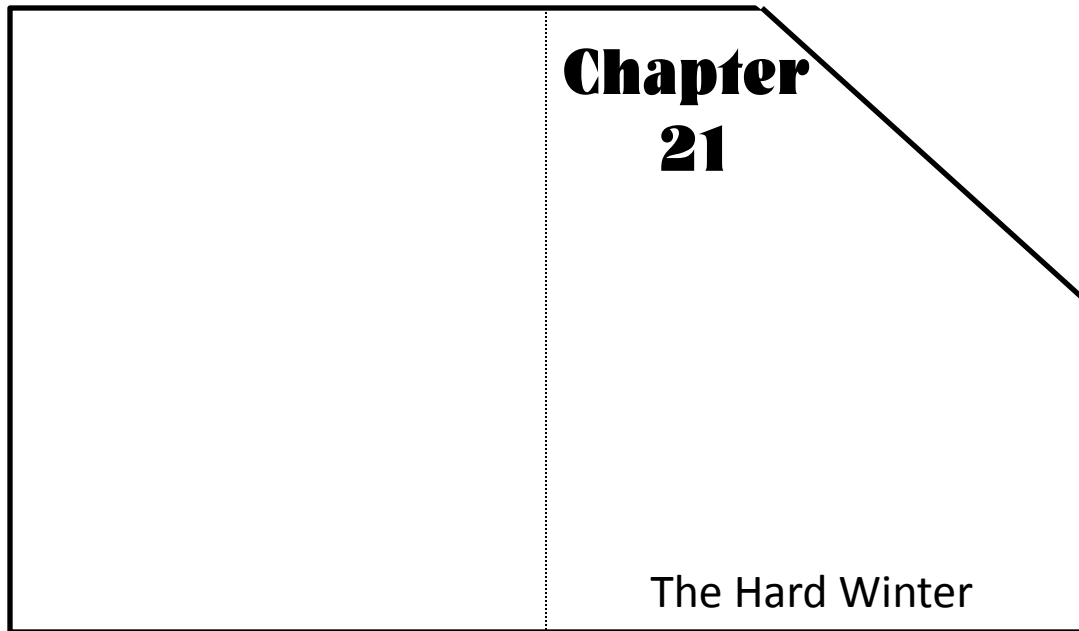
1. What did the men go off to hunt?
2. What happened to Almonzo's horse, Lady?
3. Did Almonzo's horse come back?



Answers: 1. antelope 2. she ran away 3. yes

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

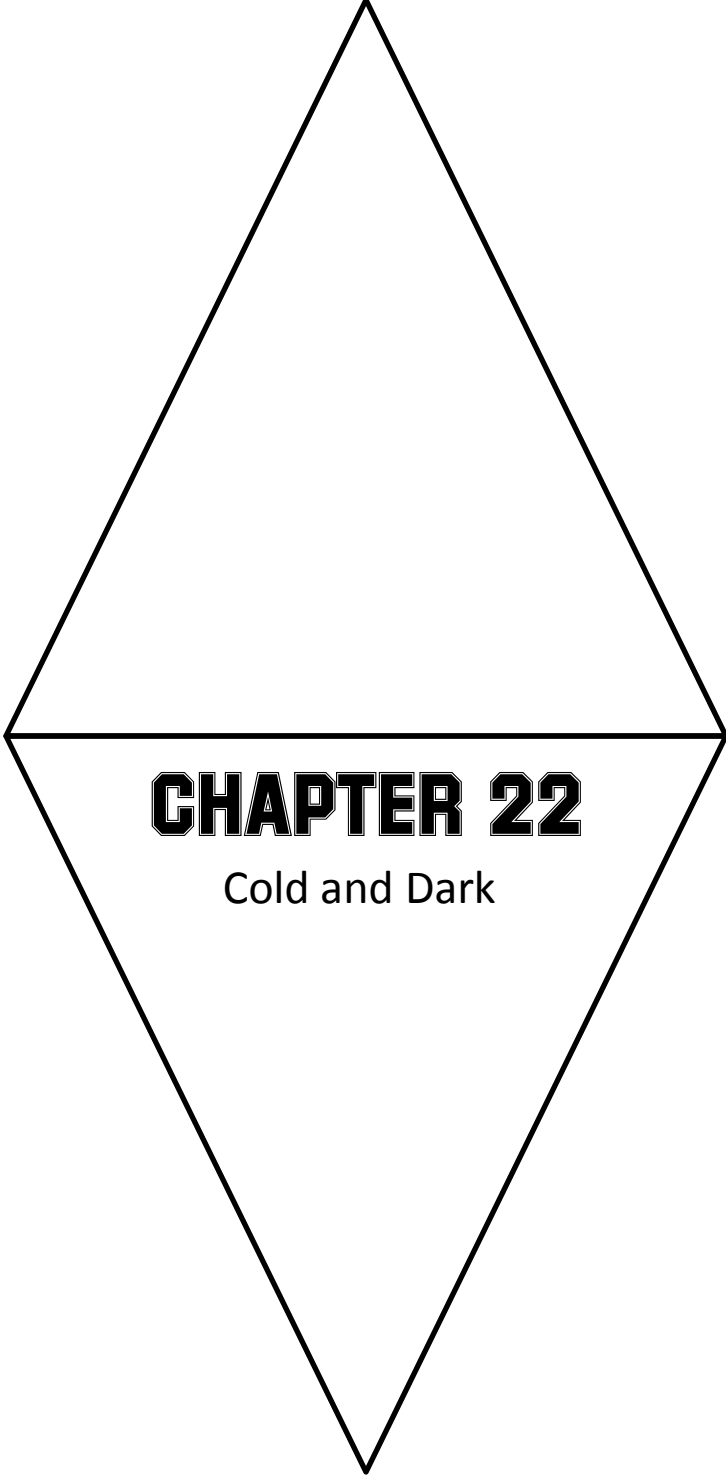
1. What did Pa have in his package?
2. Pa told the girls a story about ____.



Answers: 1. beef 2. the superintendant of a train...

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

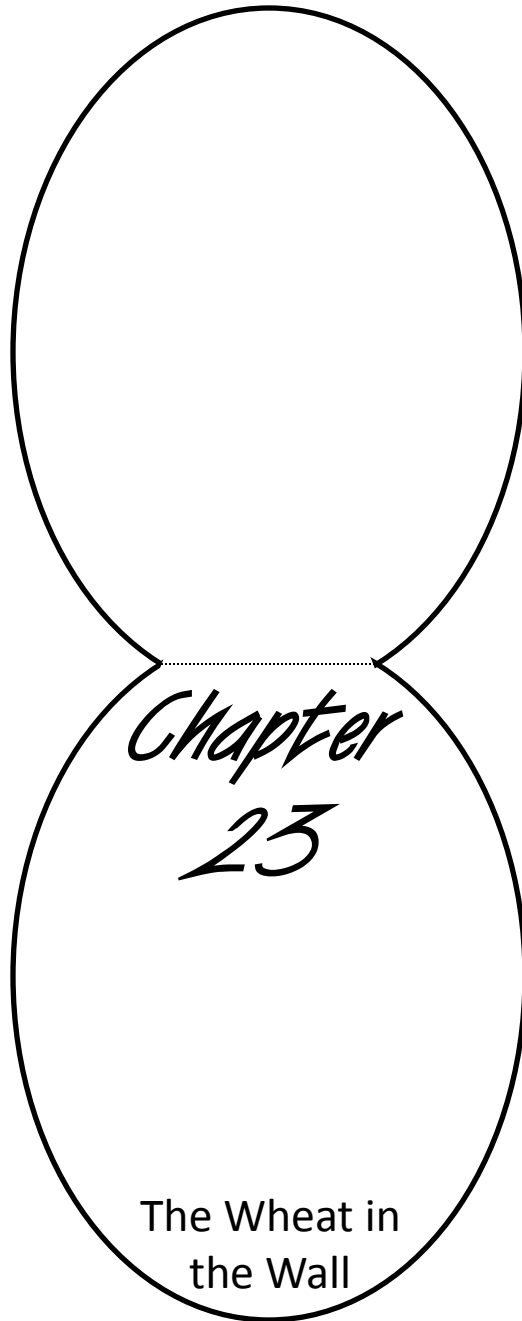
1. What did the girls recite?
2. What did Pa make that made his chores so much easier?
3. What did Pa read about?
4. What did Laura ask Pa to do? Why?



Answers: 1. speeches and poems 2. a tunnel in the snow 3. Africa
4. play the fiddle; she didn't want to hear the noise of the blizzard

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

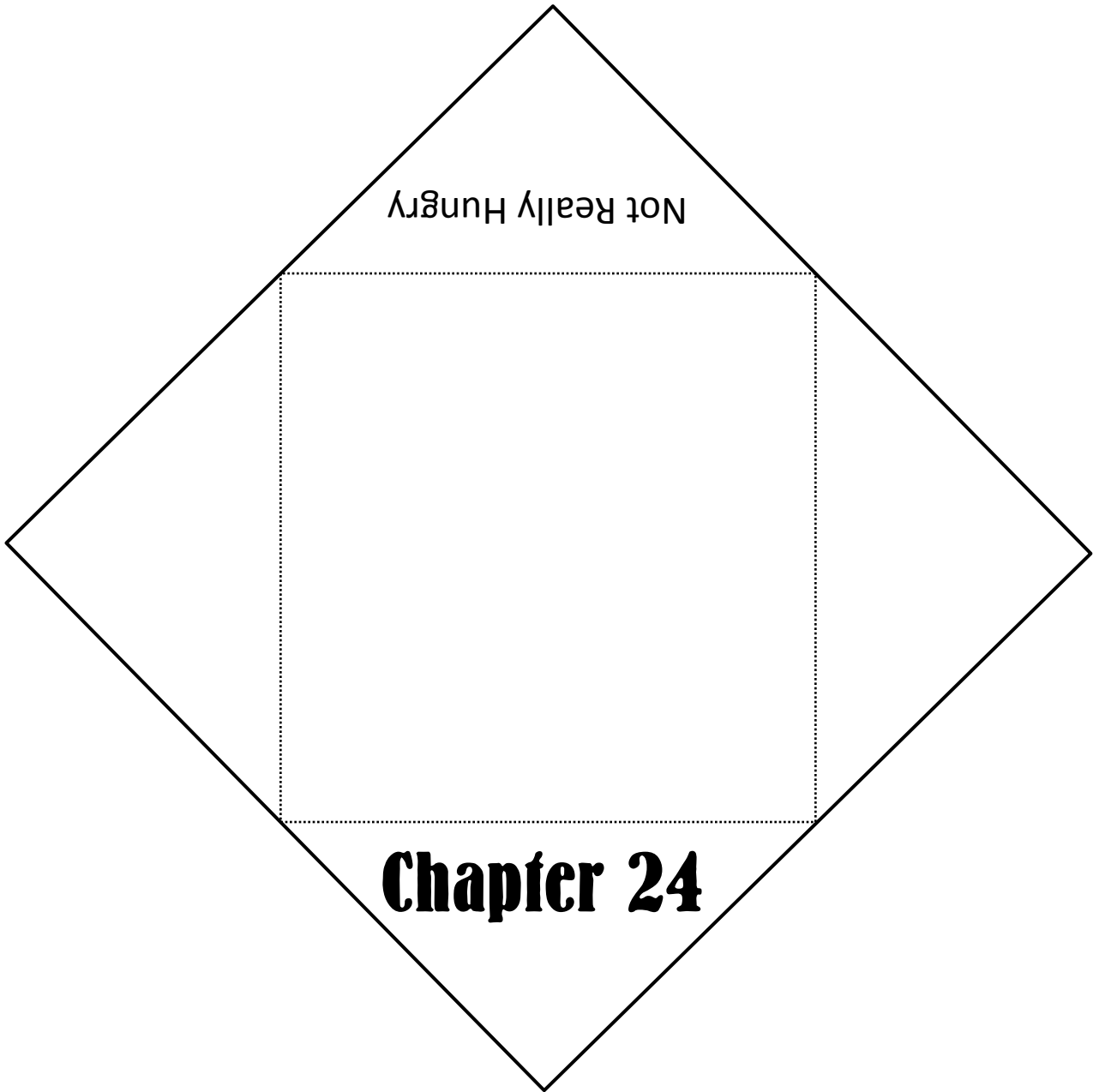
1. What did Pa do with the milk pail?
2. How much did he pay for the wheat?



Answers: 1. filled it with Almanzo's seed wheat 2. 25 cents

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

1. What did Ma say the storm was making them?
2. What had Ma been saving that she would now fix for dinner?



Answers: 1. half-asleep 2. a codfish

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

1. What had Almanzo been thinking about doing?
2. What did Royal say about his idea?

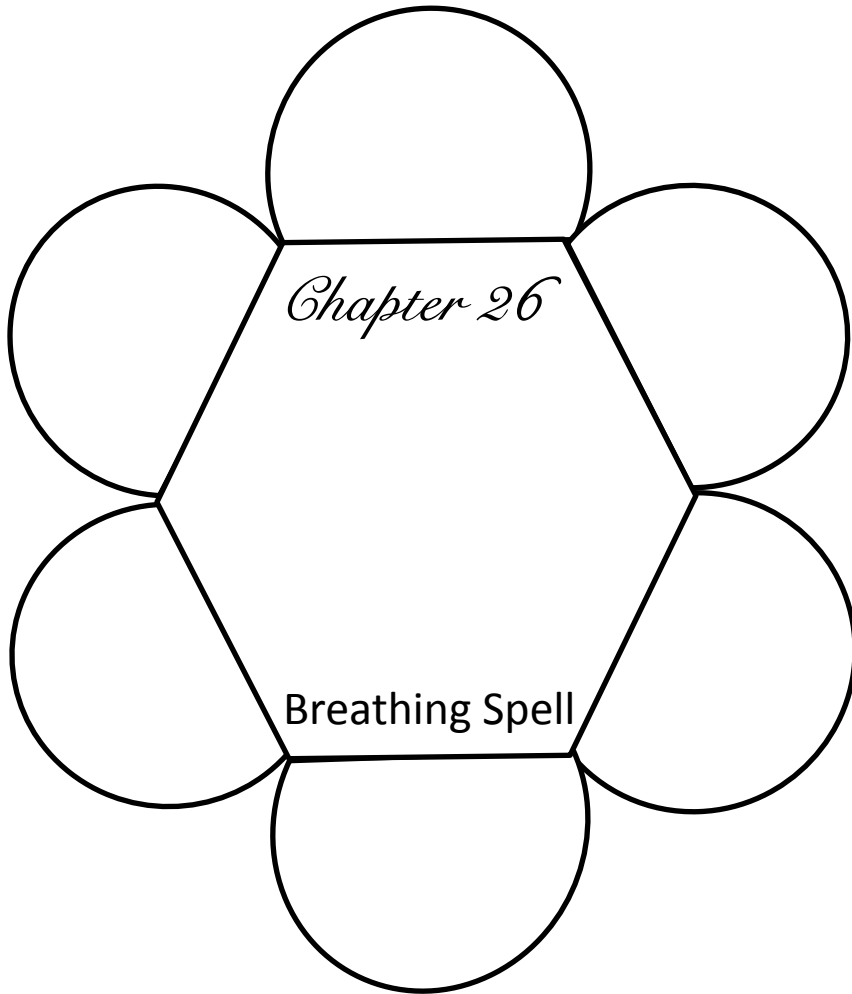
CHAPTER 25

Free and Independent

Answers: 1. going after the wheat that they heard a farmer had raised south of town 2. It was a bad idea, but he would go too.

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

1. What news did Pa bring back from Bradley's drugstore?
2. What happened that would prevent the boys from starting out the next day to look for wheat?



Answers: 1. Almonzo Wilder and Cap Garland had gone after the wheat south of town 2. another blizzard

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

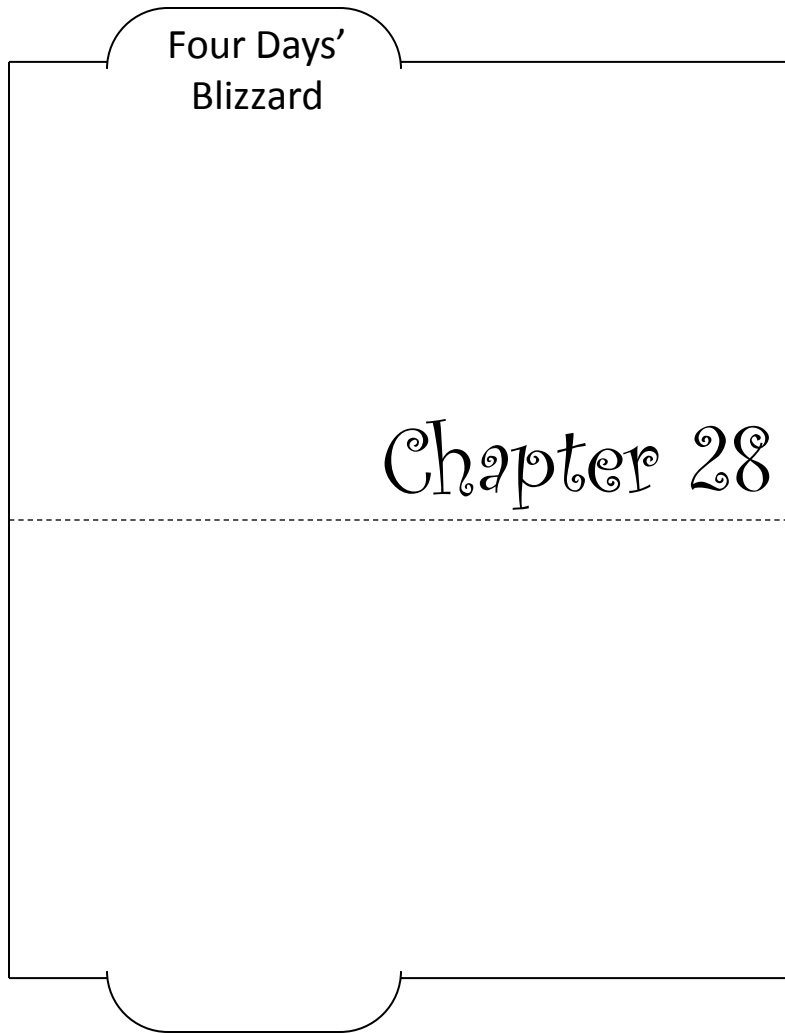
1. What time did Almanzo get up?
2. What landmark did they look for?
3. How much money did Almanzo offer the farmer for his wheat?
4. Did the farmer agree to sell?

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| | <p>Chapter 27</p> <p>For Daily Bread</p> |
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Answers: 1. 3:00AM 2. the Lone Cottonwood Tree 3. \$1.25/bushel 4. yes

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

1. What did the family do to help pass the time?
2. What happened to make the family pray for Almanzo and Cap?



Answers: 1. sang 2. another blizzard

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

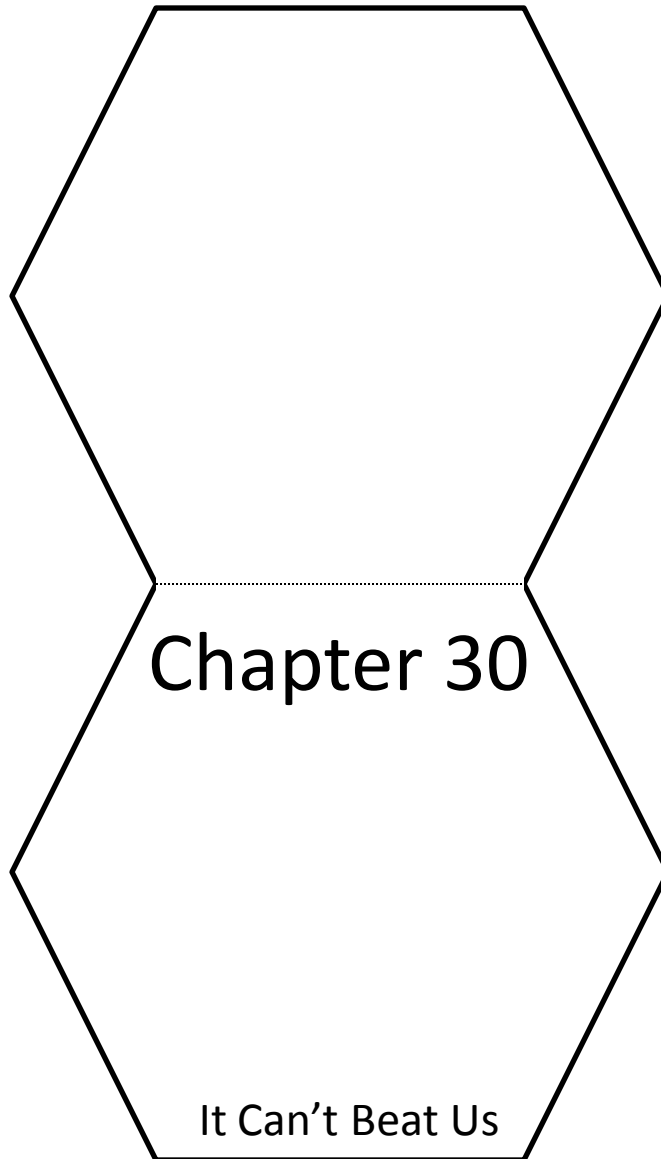
1. What did Almanzo do to his horse that he had never done before?
2. What did Almanzo have to do to his feet? Why?
3. How much did Loftus at first want to charge for the wheat Almanzo and Cap got? How much did he charge after Mr. Ingalls and the others talked to him?

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| | <h1>Chapter 29</h1> <p>The Last Mile</p> |
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Answers: 1. beaten him to make him go faster 2. rub his feet with snow; they were frozen 3. \$3.00/bushel; \$1.25

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

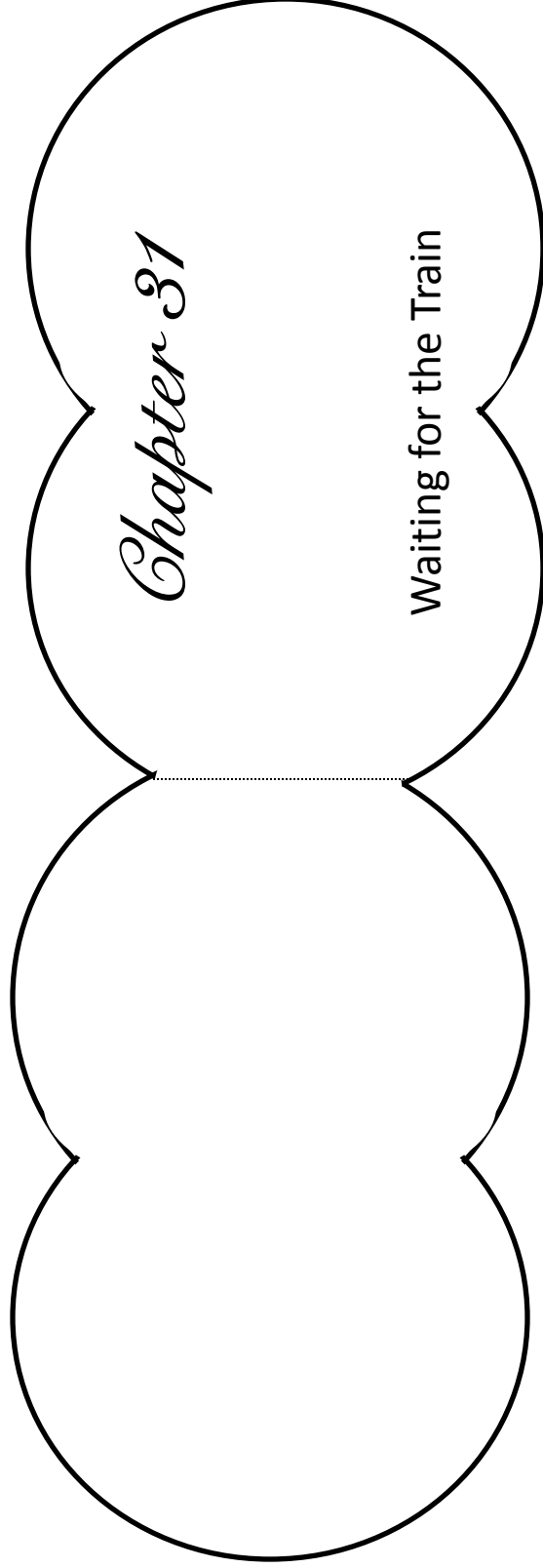
1. What time of year had finally come?
2. What did Laura wake Pa up to tell him?



Answers: 1. spring 2.the Chinook (the wind of spring) is blowing

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

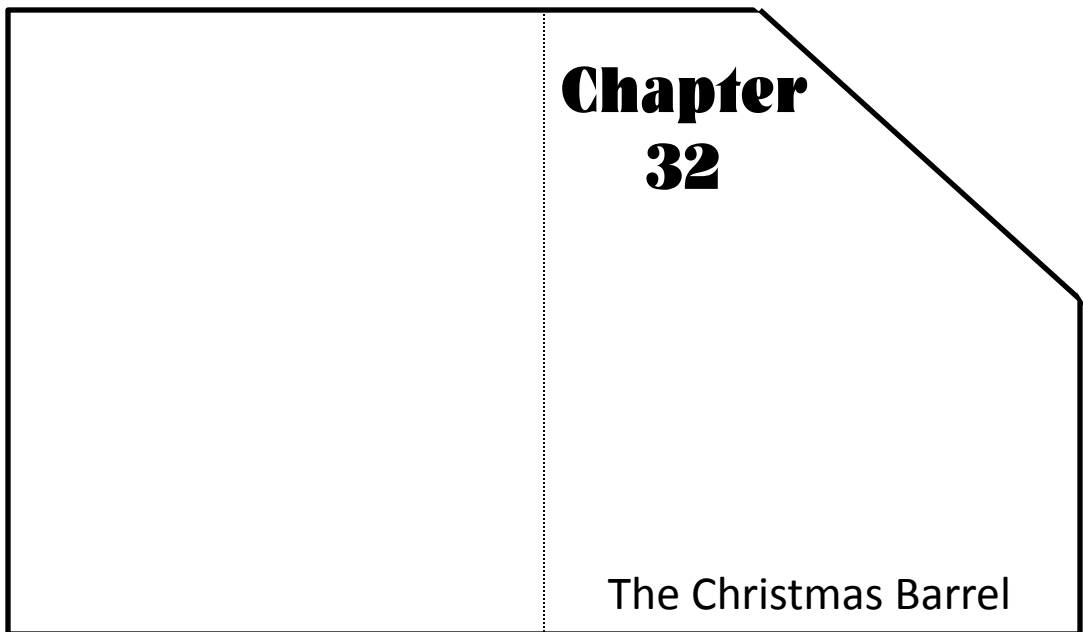
1. What did the family have for breakfast?
2. What did the train bring?



Answers: 1. small biscuits with the last of the wheat 2. telephone poles, farm machiners and one emigrant car with a little food,

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

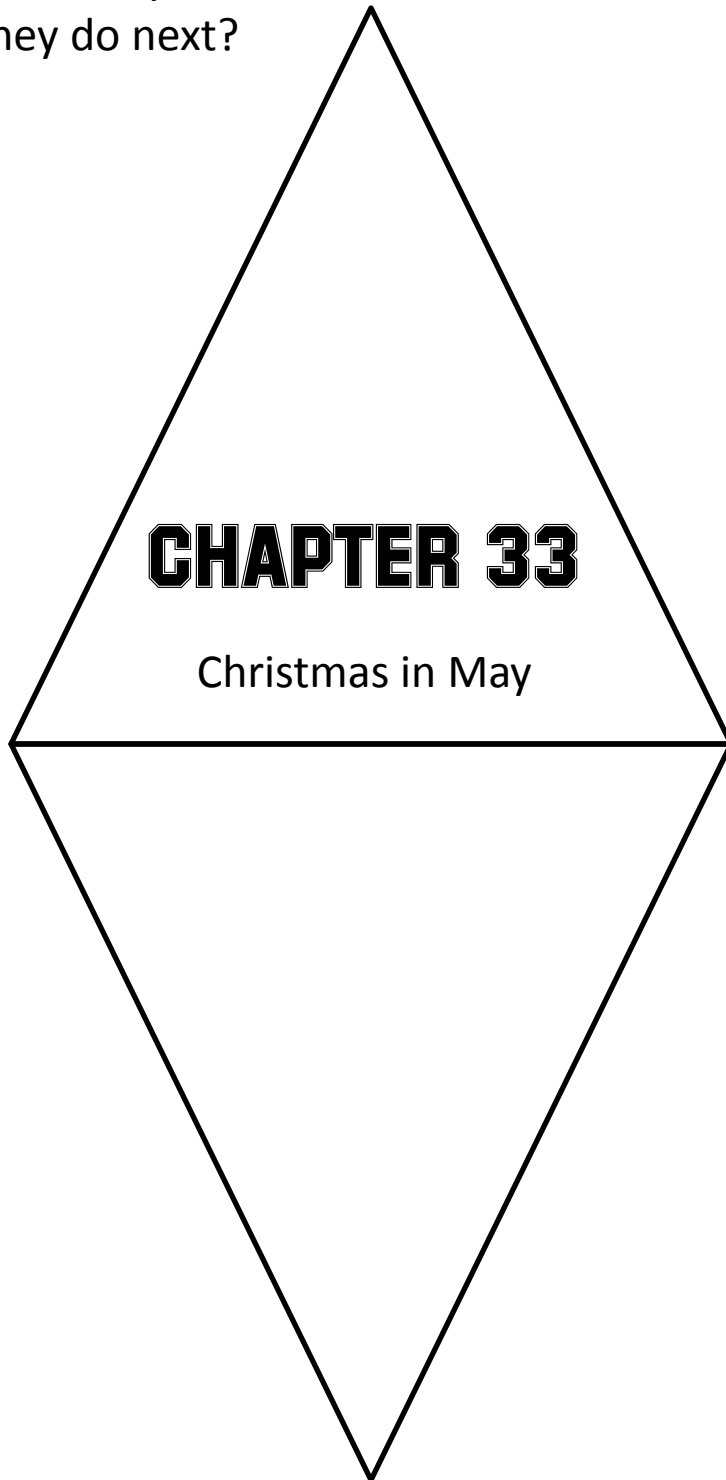
1. What did the second train bring?
2. What did Laura get?
3. What did Ma say to Mr. Boast?



Answers: 1. the Christmas barrel 2. embroidery silks and thin cardboard 3. bring Mrs. Boast and have a Christmas dinner in May

Write and answer the following questions inside the cutout:

1. What did the family and the Boasts have for dinner?
2. What did they do next?



Answers: 1. turkey, stuffing, potatoes, cranberries, pies and a cake 2. Pa played the fiddle and they sang

