

My First Little House Books

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Promoting Geographic Knowledge Through Literature Workshop
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Lesson Overview:

My First Little House Books look at the life and times of a family during the pioneer times. Each book tells about a different “adventure” in the life of the Ingalls family. The story lines, as well as the illustrations, lend themselves very nicely to comparing the differences between life then and now.

Purpose of the Lesson:

*To explore the life and times of Laura Ingalls Wilder and her family in the woods of Wisconsin

*Compare our life and geographic location to that of Laura Ingalls Wilder

Connection to National Geography Standards:

Essential Element: The World in Spatial Terms

Standard #1

Essential Element: Places and Regions

Standard # 4

Essential Element: Uses of Geography

Standard # 17 and #18

Theme: Human Environment Interaction and Place

Suggested grade levels:

Grades 2-4

Materials:

*Multiple copies of My First Little House Books; Winter Days in the Big Woods

*Copies of “Journal Pages” (see attached)

*Pencils

*United States map

*Crayons

Procedure:

*As a part of a pioneer unit, or as a mini-unit itself, introduce the class to the My First Little House Books Series.

*Read “Winter Days in the Big Woods” to the class.

*After reading it, fill out the first page of the “Journal” together as a class. As you do the setting, use a United States map to have the children help you locate the state in which the story takes place and the state in which you live. Talk about some of the similarities and differences you see from looking at the map and looking at the pictures in the book. In describing the setting, be sure to return to the text of

the story to review and use some of the same vocabulary used by the author.

*The next day, have the children reread the story with partners, and then as a class retell the story using the “First, Next, Then, Finally” sequence in the journal.

*Review with the children some of the things that occurred in the book that are not similar to what they do in their everyday lives today and discuss why.

*Look for at least one similarity between the life of the family in the book, and the life of today’s family.

*Ask the children to draw and discuss what they think would have been their favorite part of the day if they were a character in the book.

Evaluation:

*Class discussions

*Review of completed journal pages

References:

Wilder, Laura Ingalls; My First Little House Books: Winter Days in the Big Woods. Harper Trophy ISBN 0-06-023022-3

Extensions:

*Use various titles from the series and allow the children to work independently or with partners to complete more journal pages with each book.

*Create a venn diagram comparing the geography of our town with that of the story.

*Take pictures from the story, and scan in the face of each child in your class over the top of the face of one of the characters in the picture. Have the student write a story, or a letter to someone, as if they were this character. In the story or letter, have them use many adjectives to help describe the setting of the land they are living in. Have them write about their day in the life of this character.

My First Little House Books

Journal

Name: _____

Title:

State:

Season:

Describe the setting:

Story Summary:

First, _____

Next, _____

Then, _____

Finally, _____

What did the members of the family do during the day that is different from what you do during the day?

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What did they do during the day that you might also do during your day?

Draw a picture of what your favorite part of the day would have been if you were a character in the story.