

“The Long Rifle” & “Christmas”

Vocabulary:

Complete the sentences by filling in the correct vocabulary word. The words and their definitions are given to you below.

whittled:	carved wood with a knife
dusky:	partially dark, gloomy
china:	porcelain, glassware
notched:	edged with v-shaped hollows
sleek:	smooth and glossy
ravine:	gorge or gully
savage:	wild, untamed, cruel, fierce
flatirons:	irons for pressing clothes

1. “He was so _____, I thought he was going to bite me,” said Aunt Eliza.
2. He hung it carefully against the log wall between the windows, and Ma stood her little _____ woman on the shelf.
3. Aunt Eliza’s _____ were hot on the stove, ready to put at their feet in the sled.
4. With another clean, greased cloth he rubbed it all over, outside, until every bit of it was oiled and _____.
5. It was _____ in the path, and dark in the woods.

Little House in the Big Woods

6. In each stocking there was a pair of bright red mittens, and there was a long, flat stick of red-and-white-striped peppermint candy, all beautifully _____ along each side.
7. Pa had _____ the hooks out of a green stick with his knife, and had driven their straight ends deep into holes in the log.
8. Prince followed close behind her, looking back into the _____ now and then.

Questions:

1. Pa's gun is important and he keeps it loaded and ready on hooks over the door. What is it used for? Do any of the children ever touch it?

What might happen if the children disobeyed and touched the gun?

2. A *moral* is a lesson that a story can show or teach you. What is the moral of *The Story of Pa and the Voice in the Woods*?

Little House in the Big Woods

3. A *simile* is a figure of speech that compares something we can imagine with something we want to describe. For example, if you want to describe your dog you might say: *His fur is as black as tar*. Because we know how black tar is, we can get a better idea of the color of your dog. Find and complete these similes taken from the reading.
- a. . . . great icicles as large at the top as Laura's arm. They were _____ and full of sharp lights.
- b. She lay _____ and looked at the fire-light flickering on the log walls, and listened to Uncle Peter.
- c. He whittled them with his knife, he rubbed them with sandpaper and with the palm of his hand, until when Laura touched them they felt _____.
4. When Ma says, "Laura, aren't you going to let the other girls hold your doll?" what does Ma really mean?
5. What do all the children do on Christmas day when it is too cold to play outside?

Little House in the Big Woods

Dig Deeper:

6. What does each child receive for Christmas? How does this compare to what you normally receive for Christmas?

7. Why do you think they were happy?

8. Would you be happy with one pair of mittens and one piece of candy? Why or why not?

9. Read the following verses:

Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

Hebrews 13:5

Little House in the Big Woods

Using a thesaurus or dictionary, look up the word *content*. Write your own definition here.

According to these verses, why should we be content with what we have? What does our true contentment depend upon?

Projects and Activities

1. *Grow Crystals.* When moisture forms crystals on windows we call it frost. You, too, can grow crystals. Mix 1/2 teaspoon of alum with 1/4 cup of hot water in a glass. Insert a pipe cleaner. The crystals should grow up the pipe cleaner in one day. Use a magnifying glass to study them.
2. *Carve Soap.* With only a knife Pa carved pieces of wood to make a beautiful shelf for Ma. For a whittling project, carve soap into beautiful shapes. Use soft bar soap such as Ivory. Use a dull pocket-knife, cheese or butter knife without sharp edges. Cover your table with newspaper to catch the shavings. Choose a simple design such as carving a flower onto one side of the soap or making designs along the edges. When you become skilled at carving, you may want to try a more difficult design or try carving on a soft wood. Note: This activity should be closely supervised by an adult.
3. *Make Pancake Men.* Using a prepared mix or your favorite recipe, prepare pancake batter. Heat your frying pan and add oil. Carefully spoon batter into the shape of a man, making a body, a head, arms and legs. Enjoy with maple syrup or honey and butter just as Laura did.
4. *Make a Clove-studded Apple.* Choose a firm red apple for each child and have a large amount of whole cloves available. Simply poke the cloves into the apple until every bit of the apple is covered tightly with cloves. (If you wish to use fewer cloves, use a smaller apple.) Tie a ribbon around the apple. Set it somewhere to scent a room in the house or give it as a gift.