

Young Audiences of Massachusetts

Educational Materials

Please forward to teachers

7/29/09

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Characters Educational Theatre: *Caroline Ingalls*

Grade levels: 6-12

Many children have grown up reading the Little House series books by Laura Ingalls Wilder. This program gives students a chance to meet her mother, Caroline, and to learn more about pioneer life during the mid-late 1800s. Caroline will reminisce about family and community customs, Indian lands, children's manners, primitive living conditions, and even personal encounters with wild animals.

LEARNING GOALS:

1. To examine the Little House series with the literary, historical and personal context in which Laura Ingalls Wilder conceived and wrote them.
2. To explore the experience of living 19th century American history.
3. To broaden learning experiences in other subject areas through drama.

PRE-ACTIVITY SUMMARY: *Chores Now and Then*

Compare everyday living on the frontier in the 1860s to today. How did people wash the laundry on the frontier? How did they clean the dishes? Have students work in groups to compare and contrast everyday chores. If possible, illustrate the "now" and "then" tasks.

POST-ACTIVITY SUMMARY: *Ohio to South Dakota 1872*

Have your class plan an imaginary trip from Ohio to South Dakota in 1872. Consider the type of transportation, budget, food and risks. Discuss the final itinerary and have your students decide if they would want to take this trip.

CURRICULUM LINKS:

English Language Arts, History and Social Science, Theater, Women's Studies

PRE-ACTIVITY: CHORES NOW AND THEN

LEARNING GOAL:

To explore the difference between pioneer life and life today

MATERIALS/PREPARATION:

Laura Ingalls Wilder books

TIME:

1 hour

TIPS FOR THE TEACHER:

* Choose an excerpt that really describes the pioneer / frontier lifestyle.

* Good books about pioneer life: [A Pioneer Woman's Memoir](#), by Arabella Fulton and [Frontier Life](#), by David Ritchie.

STEP 1:

Read an excerpt from a book about pioneer life.

STEP 2:

Discuss the differences between life in the 19th century and now. Choose one daily chore to explore with the class (i.e. laundry).

STEP 3:

Make a chart to compare how a certain chore was done then and how it is done now. Go through all the steps that were required in the 19th century (such as: *carry water, build fire, heat water, pour into the wash tub, scrub clothes against a scrub board, etc.*) and the steps required now. Discuss the differences between chores then and now.

STEP 4:

Have students work in groups to come up with other chores and create "then and now how-to" comparison charts. Ask students to write out the steps to demonstrate the differences.

EXTENSIONS:

1) **Discuss** how some of Mrs. Ingalls' opinions might be construed as racist today. For example, how do you think her fears might have influenced her view of Native Americans?

2) **Trace** the development of some of Caroline's household appliances. Some are rooted in antiquity; others were not invented until Ma Ingalls' day or later.

3) **Compare** food production in the late 1800s and late 1900s.

4) **Teach** your class a simple square dance, like the Virginia Reel. Have students make up their own square dance calls.



POST-ACTIVITY: OHIO TO SOUTH DAKOTA 1872

LEARNING GOALS:

- * To understand the lives of pioneers
- * To incorporate the study of math and geography into the study of pioneer life by using critical thinking skills

MATERIALS/PREPARATION:

Map, calculators

TIME:

2 45-minute sessions

TIPS FOR THE TEACHER:

- * The class will consider the route to be taken, the time of year to travel, the best type of transportation, how much money, food and water will be needed, and safety and health precautions. (While doing this, students must remember the year is 1872.)

STEP 1:

Plan a trip from Ohio to South Dakota in 1872. Use the information from the *Caroline Ingalls* presentation to help plan the trip.

STEP 2:

Divide the class into groups and have the following tasks written on pieces of paper. Ask students to answer these questions:

1. Draft an itinerary. How long will your trip be? When should you travel?
2. Study maps and plan a route. What are the main routes, and the pros and cons of each? What means of transportation will you use? Are there any public transportation possibilities?
3. Plan a budget. How much money will you need for meals, transportation, etc.? Is it possible to barter for supplies? What can you use to barter?
4. Make plans for food and water. How much food will you pack? What kind? How will you prepare the food before you go? What seeds and tools will you need to begin farming?
5. Consider the health and safety concerns for the trip. What medicines will you need? What special precautions should you take?

STEP 3:

Research each task.

STEP 4:

Present and discuss all aspects of the trip. Ask students if they would want to make this journey and if they consider it worth the risk, and have them explain why or why not.

EXTENSIONS:

- 1) **Note** some of the ordinary things Ma had to do each day. What were some of the unusual, heroic things she did?
- 2) **Compare** what you have in your house with what the Ingalls family had in their home.



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RESOURCES:

Anderson, William. Prairie Girl: The Life of Laura Ingalls Wilder. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2004.

Ingalls Wilder, Laura. Little House on the Prairie. 1935.

Strom Collins, Carolyn and Wyss Eriksson, Christina. The World of Little House. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1996.

Strom Collins, Carolyn and Wyss Eriksson, Christina. Inside Laura's Little House. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2000.

Laura Ingalls Wilder Museum Society web site - www.liwms.com

VOCABULARY:

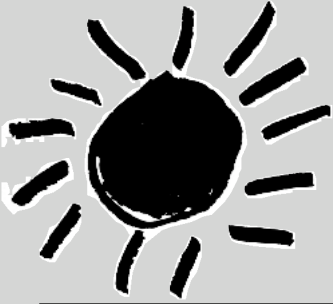
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|------------------|---|----------------|--------------|------------|
| haycock | velocipede | "boughten" | saleratus | fascinator |
| reticule | nigh ox | off ox | gee | haw |
| mattock | ambrotype | soddy | "beeves" | suffrage |
| temperance | puncheon floor | dust devils | mosquito bar | nankeen |
| ought (a number) | spider (not the creature with eight legs) | "flour doings" | barter | |

ABOUT THE PERFORMER:

A graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design and a former teacher, Marcia Estabrook began performing her characters in 1982. In addition to her Characters Educational Theatre performances, Marcia has been a featured storyteller at the Three Apples and the Big Apple Storytelling Festivals, the John F. Kennedy Library, the Old South Meeting House, the Martin Van Buren Historical Site in Kinderhook, NY, the Deerfield Museum, Old Sturbridge Village, Channel 5's "Tank Away" and Fox 25's "Americana". Marcia has been the keynote speaker at the New England Kindergarten Conference and has also performed and conducted workshops at the CT Storytelling Festival. Marcia appeared in "The Raven and the Dove" and "Town Called a River". She has consulted for the Rhode Island Children's Museum and the National Park Service. Marcia is a member of Solo Together and Historical Entertainments, and is proud to have been twice a nominee for the National Performer of the Year Award from Young Audiences.

ABOUT YOUNG AUDIENCES:

Young Audiences of Massachusetts (YAMA) is the oldest, largest and most utilized arts-in-education organization in the state and one of the largest in a national network of 33 chapters. For over 45 years, YA has been serving as a link between teaching artists and the region's school children, providing dance, storytelling, music and theater programs to children in schools, libraries and hospitals in the form of assembly performances, workshops and residencies. The organization's mission is to encourage lifelong engagement with the arts by making them an integral part of every child's education.



Young Audiences of Massachusetts

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MASSACHUSETTS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS CONNECTIONS

Characters Educational Theatre: *Caroline Ingalls*

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| <i>Language Arts 2</i> | ...pose questions, listen to the ideas of others, and contribute their own information or ideas in group discussions. |
| <i>Language Arts 3</i> | ...make oral presentations that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience, purpose, and the information to be conveyed. |
| <i>Language Arts 9</i> | ...identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read, heard, or viewed. |
| <i>Language Arts 13</i> | ...identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and meaning of nonfiction material. |
| <i>History 1</i> | Chronology and Cause...understand the chronological order of historical events and recognize the complexity of historical cause and effect. |
| <i>History 2</i> | Historical Understanding...understand the meaning, implications, and import of historical events, while recognizing the contingency and unpredictability of history. |
| <i>History 4</i> | Society, Diversity, Commonality, and the Individual...learn the complex interplay that has existed from the beginning of our country between American ideals and American practice. |
| <i>Arts-Theatre 1</i> | Acting...develop acting skills to portray characters who interact in improvised and scripted scenes. |
| <i>Arts-Theatre 5</i> | Critical Response...describe and analyze their own theatrical work and the work of others using appropriate theater vocabulary. |
| <i>Arts-Theatre 10</i> | Interdisciplinary Connections...apply knowledge of the arts to the study of English language arts, foreign languages, health, history, and social science, mathematics, and science and technology/engineering. |

