

Reading (4-Day)

Reading with Short Chapter Books

Week 1

Date:	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
<i>Clara and the Bookwagon</i>	chap. 1	chap. 2	chaps. 3–4	
<i>The Long Way to a New Land</i>				chaps. 1–2

Clara and the Bookwagon

Chapter 1

Setting

Maryland; early 1900s.

Overview

Clara wants to learn to read, but Papa thinks there is no time to read on a farm. When a traveling library in a horse-drawn wagon passes by, Clara and the librarian persuade Clara's father that reading is helpful and good.

To Discuss After You Read

Q: Does Clara know how to read?

A: *no—there is no one to teach her, and nothing to read*

Chapter 2

To Discuss After You Read

Q: How much do the books cost in the store?

A: *they are lent out free of charge, for it acts as a library*

Q: Is Papa happy that Clara could borrow a book?

A: *no—he thinks reading is for the wealthy; farm people do not have time to read*

Chapters 3–4

To Discuss After You Read

Q: What does Clara see while she is out working? [chap. 3]

A: *the book wagon—a wagon full of books that travels from place to place*

Q: How does the librarian think books can help farmers? [chap. 4]

A: *all people need to rest sometimes; reading is fun and can teach about farming*

The Long Way to a New Land

Chapters 1–2

Setting

The journey from Sweden to America in the late 1860s.

Overview

Since no rain fell in Sweden, Carl Erik and his family have nothing to eat. Their relatives in the United States invite the family to emigrate to the U.S. So the family sells their farm and starts the long voyage. First by buggy to the port, then a short ocean voyage to England, across England by train, then the long steamship voyage to New York.

To Discuss After You Read

Q: Why is Carl Erik hungry? [chap. 1]

A: *they and their neighbors had no rain during the growing season, so they could not grow crops*

Q: How did the family pay for tickets to America? [chap. 2]

A: *they sold their farm and most of their possessions* ■

Week 2

Date:	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8
<i>The Long Way to a New Land</i>	chap. 3	chaps. 4–5		
<i>The Long Way Westward</i>			chap. 1	chap. 2

The Long Way to a New Land

Chapter 3

To Discuss After You Read

Note: A doctor could see a smallpox vaccination because it leaves a little pox mark in the skin.

Q: How did the family journey to Liverpool?

A: *they spent three days under the deck of a ship; when they reached England, they took a train to Liverpool, which took another day*

Chapters 4–5

To Discuss After You Read

Q: What happened while sailing across the sea? [chap. 4]

A: *a storm came up, which made people seasick; everyone was locked under the deck, and some became ill with fever*

Q: Was Carl Erik happy to arrive in America? [chap. 5]

A: *yes—he got to eat bread and butter, his father had work, and they had hope for a better life*

The Long Way Westward

Chapter 1

Setting

From New York to Minnesota in the late 1860s.

Overview

After Carl Erik and his family reach New York, they have several more days of travel on several slow trains before

they reach their relatives in Minnesota.

To Discuss After You Read

Q: Describe the different railroad cars.

A: *the First Class cars have plush seats, lamps, and heated air; the Third Class seats have wooden benches and crowded conditions; people sleep on the floor*

Chapter 2

To Discuss After You Read

Q: Is everyone in America equal?

A: *no, some people are wealthy and can afford to pay for expensive tickets; yes, in that there are not lords and kings, which would be “higher” in the social structure than farmers* ■

Week 3

Date:	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11	Day 12
The Long Way Westward	chaps. 3–4			
Prairie School		chaps. 1–3	chaps. 4–5	chaps. 6–8

The Long Way Westward

Chapters 3–4

To Discuss After You Read

Q: What is the Svea Society? [chap. 3]

A: *people from Sweden who help the immigrants*

Q: How did the family travel to their new home? [chap. 4]

A: *by railroad and on a steamboat*

Prairie School

Chapters 1–3

Setting

Colorado in 1880.

Overview

Noah Bidson loves living on the prairie, and sees no use for reading and writing. When his Aunt Dora comes to teach him, he stubbornly avoids lessons for a week. Then Aunt Dora shows him how much more she knows about the prairie because she can read. Intrigued, Noah agrees to learn. And once he starts, he realizes he loves learning! He can understand the world around him better because of the books he reads.

Vocabulary

sod house: a house built with grass-covered soil that is held together in brick-like clumps by the roots. [chap. 1]

To Discuss After You Read

Q: What chores did Noah do? [chap. 1]

A: *hauled water, fed animals, kept snakes out of the house, kept the hearth fire lit*

Q: Why is Mrs. Bidson surprised when she sees her sister? [chap. 2]

A: *Dora was in an accident and became paralyzed*

Q: How does Noah avoid learning? [chap. 3]

A: *he excuses himself to do chores, which he does as slowly as possible; he knows his aunt can't chase him, so he simply stays away from the house*

Chapters 4–5

To Discuss After You Read

Q: How does Aunt Dora demonstrate to Noah that reading can be useful? [chap. 4]

A: *she asks him about his beloved prairie; when he doesn't know the answers, she reads facts and teaches him*

Q: How does reading help Aunt Dora? [chap. 5]

A: *it helps her understand what she sees and hears*

Chapters 6–8

To Discuss After You Read

Q: When Noah recites the alphabet, how do his parents respond? [chap. 6]

A: *his father smacks the table in excitement, and his mother claps for joy*

Read Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "Psalm of Life."

A Psalm Of Life

WHAT THE HEART OF THE YOUNG MAN
SAID TO THE PSALMIST

TELL me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!—
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

To Discuss After You Read

Q: What new tradition did the family begin after dinner?
[chap. 7]

A: *Noah would read to them*

Q: What can Noah read? [chap. 8]

A: *he can read the whole world—and he can write about it, too* ■