

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS – PATHWAYS

Title: *Living like Laura Ingalls Wilder*

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Theme: Laura Ingalls Wilder

Historical Period: National Expansion & Reform: 1815-1860
<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/timeline/>

Lesson Module Overview: Students will actively be involved when learning about what life was like for Laura Ingalls Wilder. Students will explore primary resources from the Library of Congress as well as other resources given to them by their teacher. The Library of Congress resources include documents, images, and posters for the corresponding time period. Through activities and reader's theater, students will dig deep into investigating what life was once like on the prairies of North America.

Grade Range: Middle Level (5-6th grade)

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Lesson Module

Day 1

Title: *Using Maps to understand Journeys: Our Lifelong Travels*

Learning Goals:

Knowledge:

- Students will learn about the different areas of the Midwest, and where Laura Ingalls Wilder and her family lived.
- Students will learn about the journeys Laura Ingalls Wilder and her family encountered and the path they made.

Skills:

- Students will be exploring primary sources by using maps, globes and other geographical sources.
- Students will create a map of their individual travels using images and maps.

Disposition:

- Students will develop an empathetic awareness of the ways in which some people traveling during this time period and the struggles they faced.
- Students will develop an ability to evaluate maps and think about the past and how people were faced with complex problems.

National Council for the Social Studies Themes:

<http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands>

Time, Continuity, & Change: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the past and its legacy.

People, Places, and Environments: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments.

Individual Development and Identity: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of individual development and identity.

Materials Needed

Map of the Midwest

Marker

“A Covered Wagon” Primary Resource Document

Paper is map of United States on one side and Iowa on the other

Writing Utensils

Lesson Procedures:

Introduction:

1. Ask students what they think about when hearing the words “Traveling around the Midwest in a covered wagon.” Reference the students to the primary source that is displayed in the classroom, which is an image of a covered wagon like the one the Wilder family had.
 - a. Discuss the time it would take for a family to cover a long distance in a covered wagon and the supplies that the family may need.
 - b. Have the students estimate these answers and then do a Think, Pair, Share so that the students can collaborate with each other.
2. After hearing the students respond to the primary source and sharing their thoughts refer the students to a map of the Midwest in front of the classroom.
3. Inform the students that today we are going to be looking at a map of the Midwest, and discussing the journey Laura and her family went on. We will not get into too much detail as we will learn about these places later on in the unit. However, today we are learning about her journey.
 - a. Later on the lesson we will draw a map of the places we have lived or have been too and talk about the differences between how we travel today compared to when Laura and her family journeyed in the Midwest.

Development:

1. Share the source document #1 of the covered wagon. Tell the students how Laura used this type of transportation throughout her journey. Cars were not invented at this time and this was her only means of travel.
2. Start by showing students a map of the Midwest. Have the student’s answer where Laura was born. Asking this type of question will be a pre-assessment tool so I know how to modify the lesson.
3. Laura was born in 1967 near Pepin, Wisconsin. Have the students come up to the classroom map and find Pepin. Discuss what the home may have looked like or how big the town may have been. Do not correct the students as this can become another lesson later in the month. Additionally, show the students the primary source #2 of what her home looked like. After discussing Pepin, have the student’s research or else guess where she went next with her family.
4. They traveled to Indian Territory near Independence, not the one in Iowa but in Kansas. Explain that the family moved mostly so that Pa could find a good farm. One that had rich soil and lots of land.
5. After living in Kansas for 2 years, Laura and her family moved back to Pepin in 1871. During this part of the discussion allow the students to collaborate and talk about why they believe Laura and her family moved back? This allows them to interact and express their ideas.
6. Point out that after living in Pepin for three more years the family moved to PlumCreek Minnesota. During this time it may be important for the students to know the timeline of their journeys and notice how much the family moved around.

7. This is a key section for the students as we start to discuss Laura moving and living in Iowa for 1 year. Have the students look closely at an Iowa map since they can make connections to their own travels and discuss the town she lives in which is Burr Oak Iowa. Remind the students that when reading her books it does not talk about her living in this town but that she did for a short time. During this time of the lesson allow the students to interact with each other and explore the Iowa map in depth and help them understand the distance between the towns.
8. After living in Iowa for a short time Laura moves with her family back to PlumCreek Minnesota, where Pa finds good land and wants to settle here for a few years. Have the students discuss what it would be like returning to a place they used to be from and the feelings that may occur.
9. Two years later, the Wilder family moves to the Dakota Territory and settle near the town of De Smet. During this time I would give the students time to interact and recall some of the information they have just learned. They can write down interesting facts in the journals and anything they may have to add about the topic.
10. At this point it is up to the time frame left for the lesson but the teacher can include that Laura's blind sister Mary left her family to go to Iowa. She attended the Iowa College for the Blind in Vinton and continued her education here. The students and talk about what it must be like to be blind and travel through so many places without the use of their sight.
11. Finally it comes to the end of Laura's journey as her family and her settle in Missouri in the year of 1894. At this point in the lesson have the students count and talk about the number of times Laura as moved.
12. To get the students engaged give them a map of the United States on one side of the piece of paper and the state of Iowa on the other side. Have the students map out their journeys throughout their life and this project can be taken home so the parents can be included and assist their children.
13. Have the students return their maps when finished to make a time travel class map.

Culmination:

1. Begin to create a collage of all the places the students have traveled. Additionally, as large map of the United States or Iowa could be used to show the areas the students have been and make a collection of all of this data and let the students see the variety within the classroom.
2. Using this type of accumulation allows for the students to see the distance between places and the importance of time. This can then be used for the students to write in their journal about what they do when traveling in a car and how it is different from when Laura would ride in her covered wagon.

Assessment:

1. As the students to look at their drawings and write down two things they learned from today's lesson. It can deal with how Laura's travels are different

from our travels today's or any other information the student learned. Additionally, have the student's write one question they have about Laura's travels, and try to use this information for future planning.

Lesson Module

Day 2

Title: *Taking a Census: Past and Present*

Learning Goals:

Knowledge:

- Students will understand why taking census is important to the nation.
- Students will understand how the population in the Midwest has changed over the past 100+ years
- Students will be able to clearly explain differences between family censuses of the late 1800's to today.

Skills:

- Students will learn how to successfully fill out a census ballot of the 1880's
- Students will participate cooperatively in group discussions
- Students will participate in small group activities in a corporative manner

Dispositions:

- Students will be able to evaluate different perspectives about why a census is important
- Students will be able to think critically about what has happened in the past 100 years to make the census/population higher in the Upper Midwest region

National Council for the Social Studies Themes:

<http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands>

Time, Continuity, & Change: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the past and its legacy.

Power, Authority, & Governance: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions.

Civic Ideals & Practices: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people create, interact with, and change structures of power, authority, and governance.

Materials:

- Map of upper Midwest (Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin) (Appendix I)
- One copy of 1880 and 1900 census ballot for each student (Appendix I)
- Pencils
- Paper
- Smart Board
- Social Studies Journals

Lesson Procedure:

Introduction:

1. Begin the lesson by writing 1880 – 4,048,300 on the board. Next to that write 2010 – 15,524,037. (*Note to teacher, use the year’s census that is closest to your class. For example if you teach in 2015, use 2014’s census for the Upper Midwest states)
2. Ask the students “What do you think these two numbers represent?” Give them a few minutes to write down their answer.
3. Start a class discussion of what all the possibilities are that these numbers could represent.
4. Once a student guesses population, pose the question,
 - a. “Do you think the 1880 number for population is the population for the whole country or just parts of it?”

Let the students lead a discussion of what they think. Then guide the discussion to the beginning of the lesson.
5. Explain to the students that this is the population for the Upper Midwest that includes the Dakotas, Minnesota, Michigan, Iowa, and Missouri. Tell the students

that Laura Ingalls Wilder lived around these areas for most of her life and the census ballots we will be looking at today were done in Laura Ingalls' territory.

6. On the board, write the questions:
 - a. "How accurate do you think the 1880 census number is? Why?"
 - b. "How accurate do you think the 2010 census number is? Why?"
 - c. "What factors have caused the growth in population since 1880?"

Tell the students to be thinking about these two questions as they are doing the activity.

Development:

1. Split class into groups with 3 to 4 students each.
2. Hand out the copies of the 1880 census and the 1900 census.
3. Have the students look at the different columns on the ballots.
4. Ask the students to figure out the number of families represented, their level of education, place of origin, and their economic status. Make sure that each student is writing down the answers on their own piece of paper.
5. After students have finished that, have the students look at Laura's age on each census. One says she is 13 in 1880 and then 32 in the 1900 census. Both were done in June. Ask the students, "How can this be? Which one is correct? What may be a reason for the error?"
6. Have students conduct a census of their own household using the same format that was used during Laura Ingalls Wilder's time period.

Culmination:

1. After the students have conducted a census of their own household, collect the information. You may use this as a formal or informal piece of assessment.
2. Lead the group in a reflection discussion and post questions such as:
 - a. What did you learn from this activity?

- b. What did you conclude about Laura Ingalls Wilder's age? What could have been the error?
- 3. Go back to the two questions that were posted on the board at the beginning of the lesson:
 - a. "How accurate do you think the 1880 census number is? Why?"
 - b. "How accurate do you think the 2010 census number is? Why?"
 - c. "What factors have caused the growth in population since 1880?"

Have the students discuss these three questions. As the teacher, sit back and let the students take the lead. Be there as a guide if students have questions, do not understand why the 1880 census may or may not be accurate, or if the class gets off topic.

Assessment:

- 1. Use the census the students conducted on their own household to see if they understood how to read the 1880 census ballots.
- 2. Ask the students to write in their Social Studies journal and answer the following question:
 - a. What similarities and differences did you notice in the census ballots from Laura Ingalls Wilder and your household?
 - b. What could be the reason for some of the differences?
 - c. Name three reasons the population in the Upper Midwest has grown so much in the past 130 years.
- 3. You may also assess by walking around the classroom and listening in on student conversation when they are working on their activity. Also, assess them during class discussion at the end of lesson.

Lesson Module

Day 3

Title: *Laura's First Encounter with Native Americans*

Learning Goals:

Knowledge

- Students will learn about pioneer life on the prairie of Indian country.
- Students will learn about the Osage Indian Tribe.

Skills

- Students will participate in a Reader's Theater about Laura Ingalls Wilder's first encounter with Native Americans.
- Students will explore various types of primary sources such as images, paintings, and maps.

Dispositions

- Students will begin to develop an ability to evaluate multiple perspectives, and think critically about the past.

Corresponding NCSS Themes: <http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands>

CULTURE- Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE- Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the past and its legacy.

PEOPLE, PLACES, AND ENVIRONMENTS- Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments.

INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS, AND INSTITUTIONS- Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions.

POWER, AUTHORITY, AND GOVERNANCE- Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people create, interact with, and change structures of power, authority, and governance.

Materials Needed:

Large chart paper (or whiteboard)

Markers

Book: *Little House on the Prairie* by Laura Ingalls Wilder

Copy of Reader's Theater script (One for each student reading) (Found in Appendix III)

Picture: *Suspicious Guests* <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2003675416/>

Picture: *Chief of the Little Osages* <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/00650880/>

Painting: *Pioneers in Kansas* <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2010720935/>

Map: Kansas Rivers <http://geology.com/lakes-rivers-water/kansas.shtml>

Map: American Indians in Kansas <http://www.native-languages.org/kansas.htm>

Map: Tribes of the Indian Nation

http://www.emersonkent.com/map_archive/native_american_tribes_map.htm

Lesson Procedures:

Introduction-

1. Begin by saying, “While reading *Little House on the Prairie* so far we know that the Ingalls live in Indian country and have almost completed building their new log cabin. Laura has been excited to see Indians. We are going to look at a picture called “Suspicious Guests” to get a feeling of what it might have been like to encounter an Indian or a pioneer for the first time.”
2. Show the picture on an overhead projector or Smart Board so all students can see the picture. Have students individually write down how they think the pioneers feel and how the Native American feels.
3. Start a T chart on a large piece of paper (or on the board) and title it “How would you feel if...” One side will say “Native American” and the other side will say “pioneer.” Have students orally share what they wrote down. Record ideas on chart and give students time to justify their feelings.
4. After discussion on feelings, ask students if they see any stereotypes in the picture. They should notice the Native American doing the common “How?” greeting with his hand in the air and that there are only male pioneers shown. This question should lead to a discussion based on critical thinking by students.

Development-

1. “Now that we have thought about what it felt like to be in a situation like that, let’s read to find out how Laura and her family felt during their first encounter with Native Americans. May I have six volunteers to participate in the Reader’s Theater?”
2. Volunteer’s will read the script included in this lesson module and their peers will listen to them read aloud.

****Note to teachers:** Sometimes Reader’s Theaters are practiced before they are performed. However, during this lesson the student’s will not practice beforehand because they will only be reading in front of their peers. Also, some parts in the script, like the two narrators, should be given to more advanced readers. If lower level readers volunteer, give them parts for Laura, Mary, or Ma. Before students read aloud, remind them to pay attention to notes in parenthesis, like (whispering). These tell them how to read their line.**

Culmination-

1. After the Reader’s Theater, let students who were listening to the reading summarize what happened. This will lead to a class discussion that depends on what the listeners really pick up on.
2. Next, ask students how they think the Ingalls felt when the Indians came to their house. How do they think the Indians felt? Compare and contrast those feelings to the T chart made at the beginning of the lesson.
3. Ask students to describe what the Indians looked like based off of how they were described by their peers during the Reader’s Theater. Next, show the students the illustration of the Indians on page 139 off the book. Ask students to point out details that they may have forgotten before seeing the picture.
4. While still showing the illustration from the book, show students the picture Chief of

the Little Osages and the painting *Pioneers in Kansas*. Ask students to silently look all three pictures and compare and contrast the images of the Native American's in all three images. They will write down their ideas. (These ideas will be used in the assessment piece.)

5. Divide students up into pairs. Give each pair of students a piece of paper with the images of the 3 maps listed under materials. Tell students that they should look at pages 52 and 53 of their *Little House in the Prairie* books to find out a close location to where the Ingalls are living. Based on this answer they will use the map to locate the setting, and then use the other maps to figure out what which tribe was close to where the Ingalls were living. What type of Indians do you think visited the Ingalls home? (These answers will be used in the assessment piece. The students should find out that the Indians probably belonged to the Osage tribe.)

6. Once they figure out the tribe that the Indians belong to, tell students to do further research either on the computers or the books in the classroom. (This will also be used in the assessment piece.)

Assessment:

Students will work in pairs to write 3 paragraphs (3-5 sentences in each paragraph). One paragraph will be about the ideas that they wrote while comparing and contrasting all of the images. The second paragraph will be about how they used their map skills to figure out which tribe the Indians belong to. The third paragraph will be new information that they learned about the Osage tribe while conducting their research on the Internet or in books.

Lesson Module

Day 4

Title: *Cooking with Laura Ingalls Wilder*

Learning Goals:

Knowledge

- Students will understand cooking terms and use them properly.
- Students will develop an understanding of the types of food Laura and her family ate.
- Students will begin to understand Midwestern geography.

Skills

- Students will participate in creating a dish discussed in the *Little House* books.
- Students will begin exploring various types of primary sources such as books, documents and cookbooks.

Dispositions

- Students will begin to develop an ability to evaluate multiple perspectives, think critically about the past, and understand the complexity of historical issues.

National Council for the Social Studies Themes:

<http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands>

Time, Continuity, & Change: *Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the past and its legacy.*

People, Places and Environments: *Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments.*

Individual Development and Identity: *Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of individual development and identity.*

Materials Needed:

Cornmeal

Baking Soda

Eggs

Salt

Buttermilk

Bacon Drippings

Measuring Spoons/Cups

Mixing Bowl

Spoon

Cast Iron Skillet

Oven

Copy of *Laura Ingalls Wilder Country Cookbook* compiled by Laura Ingalls Wilder

Copy of *A Little House Traveler: writings from Laura Ingalls Wilder's journeys...* by Laura Ingalls Wilder

Lesson Procedures:**Introduction**

1. Begin a discussion with the students about Laura's travels. (They will have already read a book or parts of a book). Ask the students what they think it would have been like to live the way Laura Ingalls Wilder and her family did.
2. Have the students lead the discussion with their opinions and thoughts. Add in questions such as "why do you think so" or "what makes you believe that"? occasionally to guide students.
3. Ask the students to think about how much room they would have when they moved long distances. How many things do you think the family got to take with them? What kinds of things would be essential and why?
4. If they moved quite a bit and lived in very rural areas, where would their food come from? Have them think about the parts of books they've read to see if they remember any specific foods.
5. Show maps of Laura's travels to the students to emphasize the distance of the travels and also how often they happened.
6. Because they weren't able to take a lot of things with them and they had to rely on themselves for food, ask the students what kinds of food would be easy to obtain and what they could make with those items.

Development

1. Discuss with the students their ideas for food and then explain a cornbread recipe that was used often in Laura's life.
2. Describe why this recipe would be easy to make wherever the family was.
3. Have the students break into groups of 3 or 4 and hand out recipes to each group.
4. Go over the recipe as a class, making sure that everyone understands the measurements of each ingredient.
5. Have students split the recipe into jobs and divide up the work.
6. Have groups one by one (or if more ovens are available) bake their cornbread.

Culmination

1. Have students discuss their own groups approach to making their cornbread.
2. Let other groups taste each other's cornbread and comment to make sure the right amounts were used or if something seemed off about the cornbread.
3. Have the students write in their Social Studies journals about the difference between the cornbread they made and other foods they eat now. Comment on flavor, texture, smell, etc.

Assessment

1. Have students complete a one-page summary in their own words describing how they living styles of Laura Ingalls Wilder affected their eating habits and the ingredients used. Also have them complete a short quiz using basic measurement and geographical questions.

APPENDIX I: IMAGES AND GRAPHIC MATERIAL FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

1. Image

A covered wagon like the one Laura and her family would have used to travel across the Midwest. Came from the collection of John C. H. Grabill.



2. Image

The home Laura Ingalls Wilder was born in. This is the place that started her stories and love for life.



3. Image

1. Image: map of the Midwest with dates and cities of where Laura Ingalls Wilder traveled and lived.



http://images.fanpop.com/images/image_uploads/Map-of-the-Ingalls--Travels-laura-ingalls-wilder-294591_601_525.jpg

4. Image

This is an image of the 1880 census form that Laura Ingalls Wilder and family would have filled out.

[illegible]

6. Image

This image is what part of the upper Midwest looked like in 1878. This is the time period in which Laura Ingalls Wilder and her family were moving around these parts.



7. Image

Suspicious Guests drawn by H.F. Farny. Print shows a Native approaching four men around a fire cooking a meal, in the background are two Natives seated on horseback.

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2003675416/>



8. Image

Chief of the Little Osages. Little Osage chief, head-and-shoulders portrait, facing left.
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/00650880/>



9. Painting

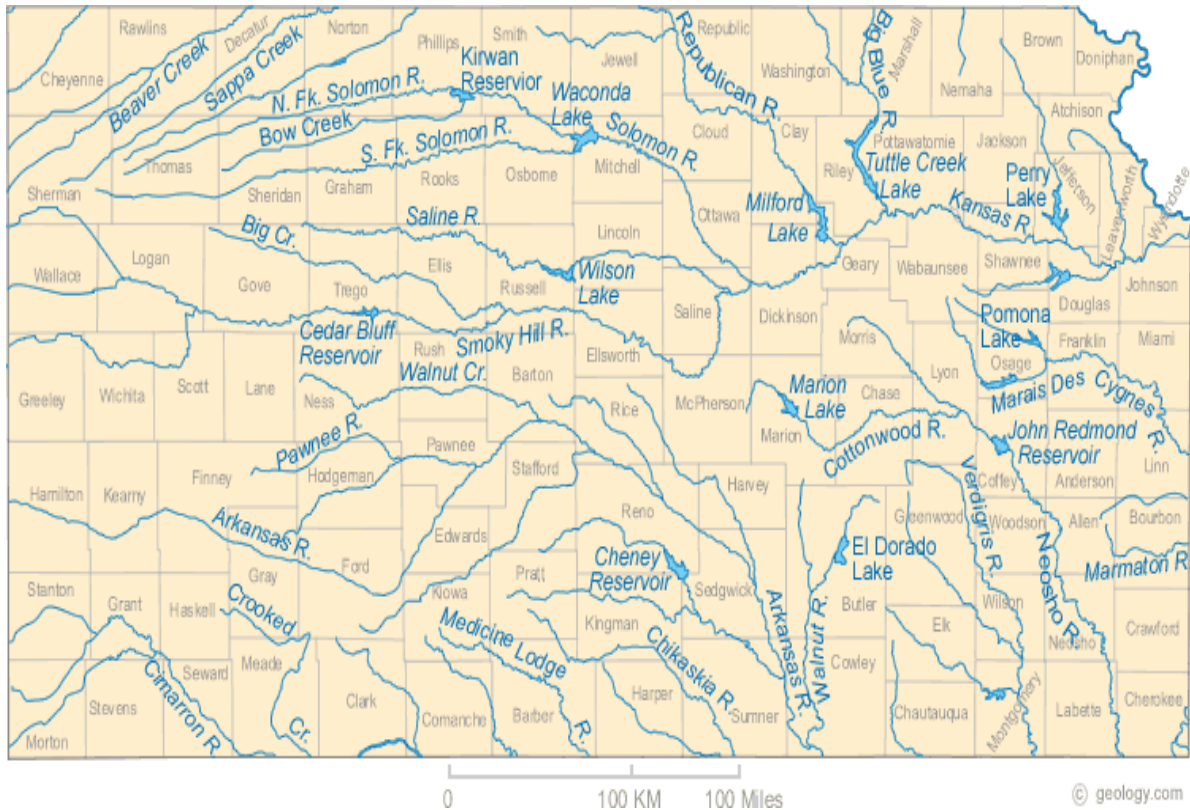
Pioneers in Kansas. This is a painting that hangs in the U.S. Courthouse, in Wichita, Kansas. It was painted by Ward Lockwood, in 1935 with oil paints. The original painting measures 4' 8" x 10' 6". <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2010720935/>



Images from Other Resources

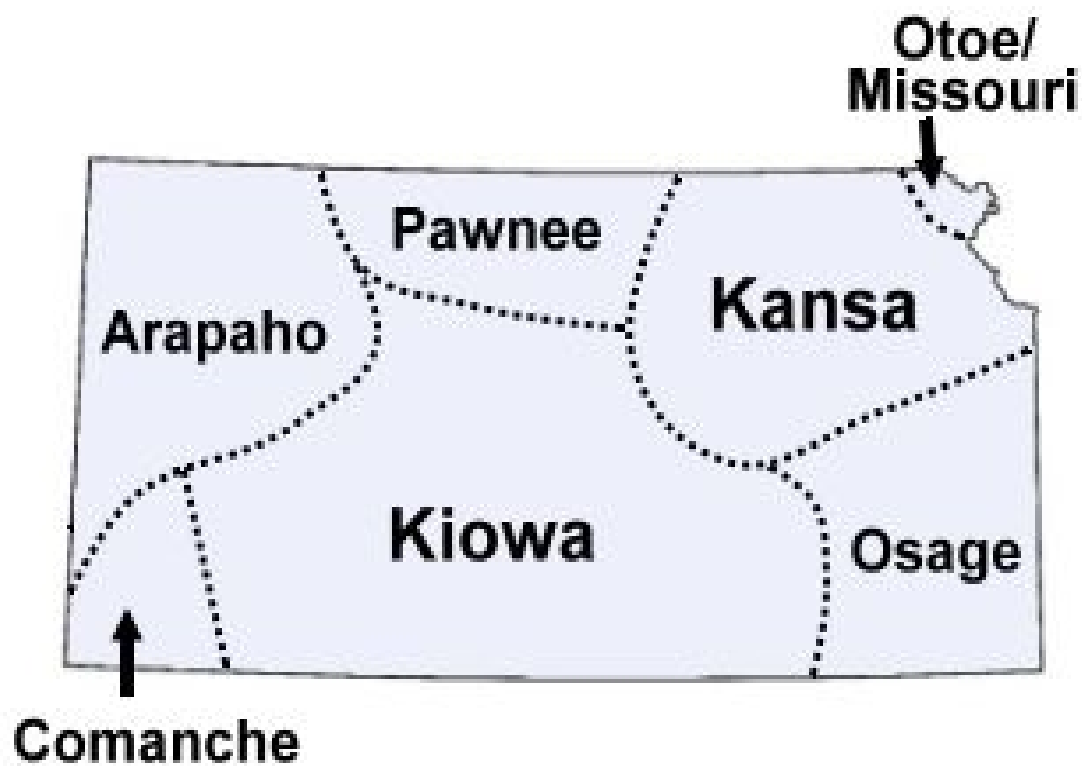
Map:

Kansas Rivers: This is a picture of a map of all the rivers in Kansas. In the book *Little House on the Prairie* the Ingalls talk about settling near the Verdigris River.
<http://geology.com/lakes-rivers-water/kansas.shtml>



Map:

Native American Tribes in Kansas: This map is a rough estimate of the territories of the Native American Tribes in Kansas. <http://www.native-languages.org/kansas.htm>



APPENDIX II BIBLIOGRAPHY AND WEBLIOGRAPHY

Bibliography of Children's Literature

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- Wilder, Laura Ingalls. (1933). *Farmer Boy*. New York :HarperCollins.
- Wilder, Laura Ingalls. (1937). *On the Banks of Plum Creek*. New York :HarperCollins.
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- Wilder, Laura Ingalls. (1940). *The Long Winter*. New York :HarperCollins.
- Wilder, Laura Ingalls. (1941). *The Town on the Prairie*. New York :HarperCollins.
- Wilder, Laura Ingalls. (1943). *These Happy Golden Years*. New York :HarperCollins.
- Wilder, Laura Ingalls. (1971). *The First Four Years*. New York :HarperCollins.
- Wilder, Laura Ingalls. (1962). *On the Way Home*. New York :HarperCollins.
- Wilder, Laura Ingalls. (1974). *West From Home*. New York :HarperCollins.

Webliography

America's Story from America's Library

A student friendly site that includes pictures, timelines and easy to understand information.

http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/recon/jb_recon_ingalls_1.html

Census of Population and Housing 1880 Census

This site is full of PDF files that cover a wide range of information about census reports from 1880. The PDF used in lesson module day 2 is found in Volume 1. Great resource for teachers to share with students during class!

<http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1880.html>

Core Literature: Little House on the Prairie

"This website has a lot of resources for teachers and students about the book Little House on the Prairie. There is also information about author and other books written by her."

http://tct.murrieta.k12.ca.us/reading/grade4/core_lit/little_house_on_the_prairie/

Laura Ingalls Wilder Historic Homes

"Welcome, the Laura Ingalls Wilder Memorial Society is located in the heart of De Smet, South Dakota, Laura Ingalls Wilder's "Little Town on the Prairie"." This site also has a variety of frequently asked questions and answers about the life of Laura Ingalls Wilder.

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

Laura Ingalls Wilder's Little House on the Prairie

A student friendly website that includes crafts, recipes, books and music all tied to the Little House books. It also includes a teacher page.

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

Literature: "Little House on the Prairie" by Laura Ingalls Wilder by University of Missouri

"These sites have activities that go along with the book "Little House on the Prairie" by Laura Ingalls Wilder. Includes reading, writing, vocabulary, and mapping activities that can be used in the classroom. There are also hands-on cooking and craft activities. Includes a link to an eThemes Resource on Laura Ingalls Wilder and her other books."

<http://ethemes.missouri.edu/themes/630>

Little House on the Prairie

"Listed here are sites that provide discussion questions, activities, fun sites and author sites that all have to go along with the book Little House on the Prairie by Laura Ingalls Wilder."

http://www.cape.k12.mo.us/blanchard/hicks/Reading%20Pages/Little%20House/Little_House.htm

National Archives: Little House in the Census - Almanzo and Laura Ingalls Wilder

This website has government documents containing the 1880 census and 1900 census which both contain information from Laura Ingalls Wilder's family.

<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/wilder/>

The Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum: Laura Ingalls Wilder

This website has information for teachers to help plan lessons on Laura Ingalls Wilder, and activities for students to complete. There is a variety of learning and craft activities.

<http://www.hoover.archives.gov/>

The Pathfinder Project: Laura Ingalls Wilder

This pdf is full of information and resources for teachers to give their students. It includes, books, websites and call numbers.

<http://www.thepathfinderproject.org/pathfinders/LauraIngallsWilder%20Elementary>

APPENDIX III READER'S THEATER

Reader's Theater for *Little House on the Prairie*, Chapter 11 "Indians in the House."

By Laura Ingalls Wilder

This script is based off of the script from TeacherVision.com found at
<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/us-history/drama/6531.html>

Characters: Laura, Mary, Ma (Caroline), Pa (Charles), Narrator 1, and Narrator 2.

Narrator 1: "Since the Ingalls family moved West, Laura has hoped to see Indians. Even through their log cabin stands close to an old Indian trail, Laura has been disappointed, until one day her father goes hunting, leaving the dog, Jack, to guard his home and family."

Pa: "No, Jack. You must stay here and guard the place." (looks at Mary and Laura)

"Don't let him loose, girls."

Narrator 2: "Laura and Mary feel sorry for Jack and play near him all morning. Suddenly Jack starts growling and Laura grows frightened because Jack has never growled at her before. She looks over her shoulder, where Jack is looking, and sees two wild men coming walking on the Indian trail toward their house."

Laura: (whispers) "Mary! Look!"

Narrator 1: "They were tall, thin, fierce-looking men. Their skin was brownish-red. Their heads seemed to go up to a peak, and the peak was a tuft of hair that stood straight up and ended in feathers. Their eyes were black and still and glittering, like snake's eyes."

Mary: (whispers) “Indians!”

Laura: (whispering to Mary) “Jack’s here, Jack won’t let them hurt us. We’ll be safe if we stay close to Jack.”

Mary: (still whispering) “They are in the house. They are in the house with Ma and Carrie.”

Narrator 2: “Then Laura began to shake all over. She knew she must do something. She did not know what those Indians were doing to Ma and Baby Carrie. There was no sound at all from the house.”

Laura: (in a louder whisper) “Oh, what are they doing to Ma?”

Mary: (whisper) “Oh, I don’t know!”

Laura: “I’m going to let Jack loose. Jack will kill them.”

Mary: “Pa said not to.”

Laura: “He didn’t know Indians would come.”

Mary: (almost crying) “He said not to let Jack loose.”

Narrator 1: “Laura thought of little Baby Carrie and Ma, shut in the house with those Indians.”

Laura: “I’m going to help Ma!”

Mary: “We mustn’t leave Ma in there alone.”

Narrator 2: “Mary and Laura tear themselves away from Jack’s protection and force themselves to enter the cabin where Ma was bending over the fire, cooking something. Laura hides behind a wooden plank that is leaning against the wall. She lets one of her eyes peep out so she could see the wild men.”

Narrator 1: “First she saw their leather moccasins. Then their stringy, bare, red-brown legs, all the way up. Around their waists each of the Indians wore a leather thong, and the furry skin of a small animal hung down the front. The fur was striped black and white, and now Laura knew what made that smell. The skins were fresh skunk skins.”

Narrator 2: “A knife like Pa’s hunting-knife, and a hatchet like Pa’s hatchet, were stuck into each skunk skin. Their arms were folded on their chests. Laura looked again at their faces, and she dodged quickly behind the slabs.”

Narrator 1: "High on their foreheads and above their ears where hair grows, these wild men had no hair. But on top of their heads a tuft of hair stood straight up. It was wound around with string, and feathers were stuck in it."

Narrator 2: "Laura heard Ma take the cover off of the bake-oven. After a while she heard them eating the cornbread that Ma had baked. They ate every morsel of it, and even picked up the crumbs from the hearth. When every crumb of the cornbread was gone the Indians rose up."

Narrator 1: "The skunk smell was stronger when they moved. One of them made harsh sounds in his throat again. Ma looked at him with big eyes; she did not say anything. The Indian turned around, the other Indian turned, too, and they walked across the floor and out through the door. Their feet made no sound at all."

Ma: (Sighs a long, long sigh.)

Mary: "Do you feel sick, Ma?"

Ma: "No. I'm just thankful they're gone."

Laura: (Wrinkling her nose) "They smell awful."

Ma: "That was the skunk skins they wore."

Laura and Mary: (talking to Ma) “We left Jack and came into the house because we were afraid the Indians would hurt you and Baby Carrie.”

Ma: “You are brave little girls. Now we must get dinner. Pa will be here soon and we must have dinner ready for him. Mary, bring me some wood. Laura, you may set the table.”

Narrator 2: “Laura had just finished setting the table when Pa arrived home with a big rabbit and two prairie hens that he got while hunting.”

Laura and Mary: “Pa, oh, Pa! Indians!”

Pa: “What’s all this? What’s all this? Indians? So you’ve seen Indians at last, have you, Laura? I noticed they have a camp in a little valley west of here. Did Indians come to the house, Caroline? ”

Ma: “Yes, Charles, two of them. I’m sorry, but they took all of your tobacco, and they ate a lot of cornbread. They pointed to the cornmeal and made signs for me to cook some. I was afraid not to. Oh Charles! I was afraid!”

Pa: “You did the right thing. We don’t want to make enemies of any Indians. Whew! What a smell!”

Ma: “They wore fresh skunk skins. And that was all they wore.”

Pa: "Must have been thick while they were here."

Ma: "It was Charles. We were short of cornmeal, too."

Pa: "Oh well. We have enough to hold out awhile yet. And our meat is running all over the country. Don't worry, Caroline."

Ma: "But they took all of your tobacco."

Pa: "Never mind. I'll get along without tobacco till I can make that trip to Independence. The main thing is to be on good terms with the Indians. We don't want to wake up some night with a band..."

Ma: (Shakes her head as a way to tell Pa to stop speaking.)

Pa: "Come on, Mary and Laura! We'll skin that rabbit and dress the prairie hens while that cornbread bakes. Hurry! I'm as hungry as a wolf!"

Narrator 1: "The girls sat on the woodpile in the wind and sunshine and watched Pa work with his hunting-knife."

Pa: "I'll salt this skin and peg it out on the house wall to dry. It will make a warm fur cap for some little girl to wear next winter."

Narrator 2: "Laura and Mary couldn't stop thinking about the Indians."

Laura: "Pa, if we would have turned Jack loose, he would have eaten those Indians right up."

Pa: (in a dreadful voice) "Did you girls even think of turning Jack loose?"

Laura: (head is bowed and whispers) "Yes, Pa."

Pa: "After I told you not to?"

Mary: (choked up) "Yes, Pa."

Pa: (sighs a long sigh) "After this you girls remember always to do as you're told. Don't you even think of disobeying me. Do you hear?"

Mary and Laura: (whispering) "Yes, Pa."

Pa: "Do you know what would have happened if you had turned Jack loose?"

Mary and Laura: "No, Pa."

Pa: "He would have bitten those Indians. Then there would have been trouble. Bad trouble. Do you understand?"

Mary and Laura: “Yes, Pa.”

Laura: “Would they have killed Jack?”

Pa: “Yes. And that’s not all. You girls remember this: You do as you’re told, no matter what happens.”

Mary and Laura: “Yes, Pa.”

Pa: “Do as you’re told, and no harm will come to you.”

Narrator 2: “It is not easy for Laura to be obedient. Sometimes she feels jealous of Mary, who seems truly to enjoy being good. But on the wide, flat prairie each is the other’s only playmate. The months of building a new home and preparing for the future give the girls, as well as their parents, busy days filled with work, play, and many exciting challenges.