

Little House Vocabulary Adventure

Materials Needed:

- A copy of a *Little House on the Prairie* book (any in the series will work)
- Index cards or small pieces of paper
- Plain paper (construction paper or drawing paper works well)
- Crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- A pencil
- Stapler or a hole punch with yarn/string

1. Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, Kiddo 1 will be able to:

- Define at least 5 new vocabulary words found in *Little House on the Prairie*.
- Use the new vocabulary words correctly in a sentence, either spoken or written.
- Create an original illustrated story or comic strip that incorporates the new vocabulary words.

2. Alignment with Curriculum Standards

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.4:** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning word and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3:** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

3. Lesson Activities (Approx. 45-60 minutes)

Part 1: The Word Harvest (10 minutes)

Goal: To introduce the new vocabulary words in a fun, contextual way.

1. **Introduction:** "Today, we're going on a word adventure, just like Laura and Mary went on adventures in the big woods and on the prairie! We're going to 'harvest' some interesting words from the book that people used back then."
2. **Word Finding:** Together, look through a chapter of a *Little House* book. Hunt for interesting or unfamiliar words. You can use pre-selected words or find them together. Here are some great ones to start with:
 - **Venison** (deer meat)
 - **Calico** (a type of patterned fabric)
 - **Trundle Bed** (a small bed that rolls under a bigger one)
 - **Churn** (the action of making butter)
 - **Commotion** (a noisy fuss or disturbance)
 - **Tallow** (animal fat used for candles)
3. **Create Word Cards:** Write each word on its own index card. On the back, write a simple, kid-friendly definition. For example, for "Calico," you could write "pretty, colorful cloth for dresses."

Part 2: Pioneer Charades (10 minutes)

Goal: To build a physical and memorable connection to the words.

1. **The Game:** Mix up the word cards in a pile.
2. **Act It Out:** Kiddo 1 picks a card without showing it to you. They must act out the word. For

example:

- **Churn:** Pretend to push a butter churn up and down.
 - **Commotion:** Run around in a circle looking panicked and flustered.
 - **Trundle Bed:** Pretend to pull something out from under a bed and then lie down on it.
3. **Guess and Define:** Once you guess the word, have Kiddo 1 try to define it in their own words, using the definition on the back of the card as a clue if needed. Take turns acting out the words.

Part 3: My Little Prairie Dictionary (15 minutes)

Goal: To apply understanding through illustration and writing.

1. **Create the Pages:** Give Kiddo 1 several sheets of plain paper. For each vocabulary word, they will create one page of their "dictionary."
2. **Illustrate and Write:** On each page, Kiddo 1 should:
 - Write the vocabulary word at the top.
 - Draw a picture that shows the meaning of the word. (e.g., for **venison**, draw a plate with deer meat on it; for **calico**, draw a dress with a flower pattern).
 - Write one sentence using the word. Example: "Laura wore her new **calico** dress to town."
3. **Assemble the Book:** Once the pages are done, help Kiddo 1 create a cover page titled "My Little Prairie Dictionary." Staple the pages together or use a hole punch and yarn to bind the book.

Part 4: Wrap-Up: A Prairie Tale (5 minutes)

Goal: To creatively synthesize the learning in a fun conclusion.

1. **Storytelling Prompt:** "Now it's your turn to be the author! Tell me a short story about a pioneer family. Try to use at least three of our new words."
2. **Share the Story:** Listen as Kiddo 1 tells their story. It doesn't have to be written down—this is about oral application and creativity! Applaud their clever use of the new words.

4. Assessment

- **Formative (During the Lesson):**
 - Observe participation and understanding during the Pioneer Charades game.
 - Review the sentences written for the "Little Prairie Dictionary" to check for correct word usage.
- **Summative (End of Lesson):**
 - The completed "My Little Prairie Dictionary" serves as a portfolio of understanding, combining illustration, definition (implied through drawing), and application in a sentence.
 - The final oral "Prairie Tale" demonstrates the ability to use the vocabulary creatively and correctly in a narrative context.

5. Differentiation and Extension

- **For Extra Support:**
 - Provide sentence starters for the dictionary activity (e.g., "Ma cooked the _____ for dinner.>").
 - Focus on just 3-4 words instead of 6.
 - Look at pictures in the *Little House* books together to find visual clues for the words' meanings.
- **For an Extra Challenge (Extension):**
 - Encourage Kiddo 1 to write their "Prairie Tale" down as a short story or a comic strip,

using all of the vocabulary words.

- Have them go on a "word hunt" for 5 more pioneer words from the book and add them to their dictionary independently.
- Challenge them to find an object in your house that is a modern version of a pioneer item (e.g., a sleeping bag is like a bedroll, butter from the store instead of from a churn).