

## Riding Through Life: Exploring 'Little Britches'

Welcome! Today, we're diving into the world of Ralph Moody's 'Little Britches,' a fascinating look at growing up on a Colorado ranch in the early 1900s. This book isn't just a story; it's a memoir, meaning it's based on the author's real life. As we read, we'll pay close attention to how Ralph grows up, the challenges he faces, and the lessons he learns.

### Materials Needed:

- Your copy of 'Little Britches'
- Notebook or Journal
- Pen or Pencil
- Optional: Computer/tablet for looking up historical details

### Lesson Activities:

#### 1. Getting Started (10 mins)

Before we begin reading or discussing today's section, let's think about the title. What does 'Little Britches' suggest about the main character? What expectations do you have for a story set on a ranch over 100 years ago? Briefly jot down your thoughts in your journal.

#### 2. Reading Focus (Assign specific chapters beforehand - e.g., Chapters 1-3)

Read the assigned chapters of 'Little Britches.' As you read, pay special attention to:

- **Ralph (the narrator):** What kind of person is he at the start? What challenges does he face immediately? How does he react?
- **His Father:** What kind of relationship do they have? What important lessons does his father try to teach him?
- **The Setting:** What details help you picture the time and place?
- **Key Events:** Note down 1-2 events that seem particularly important or challenging for the Moody family.

#### 3. Character Close-Up: Ralph (15 mins)

In your journal, create a character sketch for Ralph based on these early chapters.

- List 3-5 words that describe his personality.
- Find at least two quotes from the text that support your descriptions.
- How does Ralph show his youth or inexperience? How does he show hints of the person he might become?

#### 4. Themes on the Trail (15 mins)

This book is rich with themes. Let's focus on a couple:

- **Resilience (Bouncing back from difficulty):** Where do we see the Moody family facing hardship? How do they handle it? Find one example.
- **Responsibility & Hard Work:** What jobs or responsibilities does Ralph have, even at his young age? How does the family view work? Find one example related to this.

Discuss your findings. How are these themes introduced early in the story?

### **5. Stepping Back in Time (Optional - 10 mins)**

The story takes place around 1906-1910. What was life like back then, especially in a place like rural Colorado? If you have internet access, briefly look up 'Colorado ranch life early 1900s.' What did you find surprising or interesting that connects to the book?

### **6. Personal Reflection & Wrap-up (10 mins)**

Think about Ralph's experiences so far.

- What's the biggest challenge he has faced in these chapters?
- Can you relate to any of his feelings or experiences, even though your life is very different?
- What is one lesson Ralph seems to be learning?

Write a short paragraph in your journal reflecting on one of these questions. Be prepared to share a thought if you're comfortable. Great work today exploring the beginning of Ralph's journey!