

Welcome to Maple Hill!

Materials Needed:

- Copy of the book "Miracles on Maple Hill" by Virginia Sorensen
- Notebook or paper
- Pencil or pen
- Optional: Crayons or colored pencils

Introduction: What is a Miracle? (10 mins)

Let's start by thinking about the title, "Miracles on Maple Hill." What do you think a miracle is? Can miracles be big things, like someone getting well when they were very sick? Can they be small things, like the first flower blooming in spring? Discuss your ideas. The book explores different kinds of miracles, especially those found in nature and family life.

Reading Time (20-30 mins)

Today, let's read the first few chapters of "Miracles on Maple Hill" (Suggest specific chapters, e.g., Chapters 1-4). As you read, pay attention to:

- Who are the main characters introduced so far? (Especially Marly and Joe)
- Where does the story take place? What is Maple Hill like?
- Why did the family move to Maple Hill? What challenges are they facing?

Let's Talk About It! (15 mins)

After reading, let's discuss:

- What are your first impressions of Marly? How does she feel about moving?
- Describe the father (referred to often as Daddy). What clues does the book give us about why they needed a change?
- What is the atmosphere like at Maple Hill compared to the city they left?
- Did anything surprise you in these first chapters?
- Mr. Chris is an important neighbor. What role do you think he will play?

Word Wonders (10 mins)

Let's look at some words from our reading:

- **Miracle:** An extraordinary and welcome event that is not explicable by natural or scientific laws and is therefore attributed to a divine agency. (Or, more simply for the story: a wonderful and surprising event).
- **Grumpy:** Bad-tempered and sulky.
- **Sap:** The fluid, chiefly water with dissolved sugars and mineral salts, that circulates in the vascular system of a plant. (Think tree juice!)
- **Sugaring-off:** The process of boiling maple sap to make maple syrup or sugar, often celebrated with a party.

Try using each word in a sentence related to the story or your own life.

Activity: Picture Maple Hill (15 mins)

Based on the descriptions in the book, draw a picture of what you imagine Maple Hill looks like. Think about the farmhouse, the woods, the sugarbush. What season is it in the part you read? Try to show that in your drawing. (Optional: Label parts of your drawing).

Wrap-up (5 mins)

Today we started our journey to Maple Hill! We met Marly's family and learned why they moved. We talked about miracles big and small. What are you most excited to find out as we read more?