

Patchwork - The Little House Life of Laura Ingalls Wilder



Thursday, November 18, 2010

10:30am – 11:30am



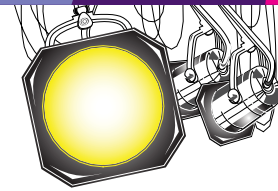
**SANDLER CENTER FOR THE
PERFORMING ARTS**

EDUCATION
takes center stage

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about the
SANDLER CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS



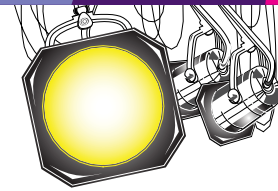
At the heart of every great city are its arts institutions – the centers of culture where residents and visitors can share great works of music, dance and theatre from the classics to the cutting edge. Now in its fourth season, the Sandler Center for the Performing Arts at Town Center provides these arts experiences to the students in Virginia Beach and beyond.

Expansive yet intimate, with not a bad seat in the house, the Sandler Center is the perfect setting for every kind of performance, from classical recitals and symphony concerts to modern dance and ballet, theatre and more. And while audiences of every kind are welcome, the Sandler Center offers a special invitation to the region’s young people. With the ultimate goal of “every child, every grade, every year,” the Sandler Center, in partnership with the Virginia Arts Festival’s WorldClass® Education Department, presents specially priced student matinees and public performances making world-class artists accessible to school children in Virginia Beach. And the excitement reaches beyond the stage as well, as the Sandler Center brings these renowned artists into area schools for performances and master classes. For teachers, the opportunities are immeasurable, offering exciting new ways to inspire and enhance their classroom teaching as they weave the arts into their lessons on history, language arts, math and science.

Thank you for joining us this season as we spark your students’ imaginations with the joy and power of the performing arts.



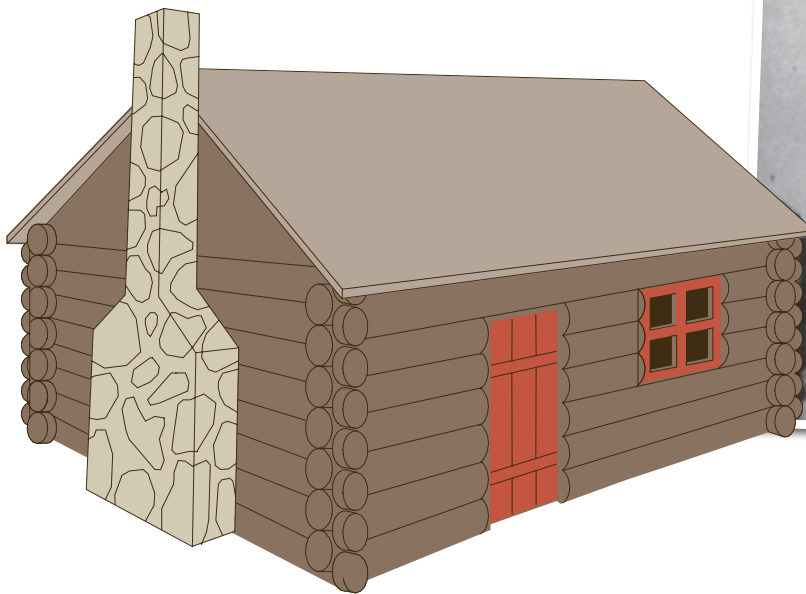
the little house life of laura ingalls wilder **PATCHWORK**



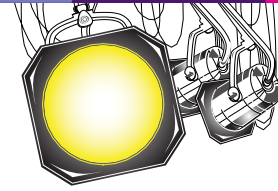
In Theatre IV's musical adventure, Laura Ingalls Wilder and her family relive the hardships and triumphs of their adventures on America's frontier as recorded in the patterns of their patchwork quilts.

"The Rocky Road to Kansas" recalls their journey west to stake a land claim under the Homestead Act of 1862. Their hope for a better life and sense of adventure sustain them on their long and dangerous trip, whether slipping and sliding in their covered wagon across the frozen Mississippi or almost overturning in the turbulent waters of a roaring creek.

"The Log Cabin" pattern reminds them of how Ma and Pa, with the help of Mr. Edwards, built their log cabin by hand, their own Little House on the Prairie. Their courageous pioneer spirit and love of family sustain them as hardships and disappointments force them to return to Minnesota where, as the "Dugout" pattern reminds them, they move to their most unusual house – a dugout in the bank of Plum Creek - where Laura meets a most unusual girl, Nellie Oleson.



BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER



before you go:

Read one of the *Little House* books. Talk about what you thought about the story. Would you like to have lived in the late 1800's? How would your life have been different? What are some of your favorite scenes in the book? Imagine what the play will be like. Actors will be portraying the characters. Imagine what a "real life" Laura or Mary would look like. What will the inside of their house look like? What sorts of things would they not have that you do have in your house?

while you're there:

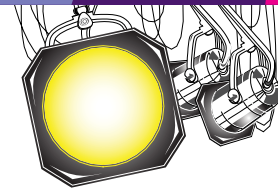
This play includes stories from all of the *Little House* books. Notice the differences and similarities between the books and the play. What could the author put in the book that the performers can't put into a play? What did the show add to the story?

after you've been:

Talk about the differences and similarities you noticed. Changing one work of art into another is called adaptation. The *Little House* books were adapted into a play. Sometimes artists turn books into movies, like *Harry Potter* or *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*. Sometimes a painter makes a picture after hearing a particular piece of music, or a songwriter writes a song about a photograph.

- 📅 **kindergarten & first grade activity:** Read a story or have one read to you. Draw a picture of something that happened in the book. Next, draw a picture of something that might have happened after the story ended. What might the main character have done next?
- 📅 **second grade through fifth grade activity:** Create a work of art in response to another work of art. Look at a photograph or a painting. Can you make up a story about what's happening in the picture? What does the picture make you feel? Happy? Sad? Write a poem about your feelings.

a geography worksheet
OUR COLORFUL COUNTRY



Between 1760 and 1850, American pioneers made new paths across the country. Many of the pioneers traveled west in covered wagons. At first, people went as far as the Mississippi River. They settled on the land alongside the river. When that area became too crowded, pioneers went farther and farther west in search of open land. Eventually people reached the west coast at the edge of the Pacific Ocean. Dreams of a new life, adventure, and lots of land to farm were exciting, but being a pioneer wasn't easy. The trails were tough to travel on and the weather could be either freezing or boiling hot. The pioneers had to live off the land and keep warm, dry, and healthy during long, hard trips.

Born February 7, 1867, Laura Elizabeth Ingalls began her life in the Big Woods of Pepin County, Wisconsin. Her pioneering journeys began just a few years later when Pa started his long search for a productive farm and a permanent home in the west. This journey continued for the next ten years as the Ingalls family moved often, faced hard luck and hard work, and shared many adventures which Laura recounted in her *Little House* books. For years, Charles and Caroline Ingalls looked for a permanent homestead without success. Finally Ma's concern for an education for her girls and opportunities for Mary, who was blind, led to one last move west to Dakota Territory.

📅 Look at a topographic map of the United States.

If you were a pioneer from Virginia, and you wanted to go to California to seek your fortune, what direction would you need to travel?

Notice the colors the map uses to identify different kinds of land. What color are:
The mountains?
The rivers?
The plains?

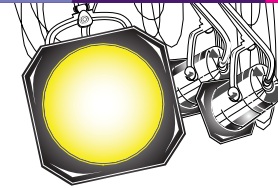
Locate the major rivers on your map. Which would you have to cross to get to California?

What mountain ranges would you have to cross?

Laura Ingalls Wilder's family traveled from Wisconsin to Kansas and back again. What river did they have to cross?

There are all different kinds of landscapes in the United States: coastal, mountain, and vast plains, as you can see from the colorful topographic map. Which kind of land would you like to live in? Why?

research and report
THE GREAT PLAINS



Explore one of the aspects of life on the Great Plains in the list below. Prepare a poster board with your findings. Include illustrations, either your own or pictures from magazines or the internet. Make it interesting and colorful!

The Homestead Act of 1862 encouraged many people to travel west and settle in the difficult environment of the Great Plains. Research and report on the Act. What did it say? What were the intentions behind it? What were the results of its passage?

The Ingalls family was among the hundreds of thousands of American citizens and immigrants who transformed the area in the late 1800's. Who were the people who settled in the Plains? Where did they come from? What were they hoping to accomplish in settling in the West?

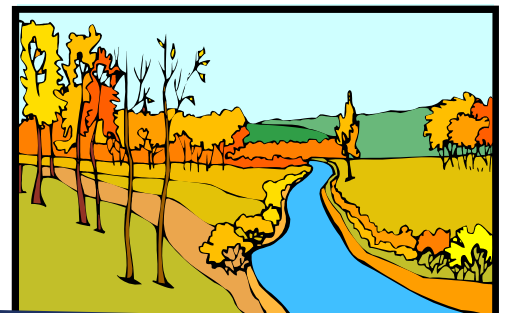
How did they get there? What were the modes of transportation used to carry the people and their things westward? What would each way of traveling have been like?

The Great Plains stretched from the Mississippi River out to the eastern edge of the Rocky Mountains. Imagine a vast region of rolling hills covered in wild grasses. These grasses supported a wide variety of wildlife. Discover the names and habits of the animals of the Great Plains. How did the settling of the area by large numbers of humans influence the animal population?

Life on the Plains was challenging because of its geography. What was the land like? What was the weather like? How did the people adapt to this new environment?

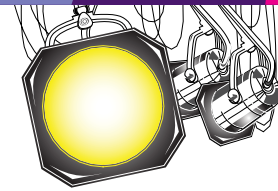
The settlers of the Great Plains had to be very creative in constructing their housing. What were their houses like? What materials were available for construction?

Who were the Native American people of the Great Plains? Explore the cultures of several tribes. What were their homes like? Their clothes? What were their religious beliefs?



some scrapbook projects

SCRAPBOOK YOUR DAYS



Each of the quilt squares you see in the play represents a special event for the Ingalls family. Laura says, "These quilts are my scrapbook." A scrapbook is a book filled with notes and mementos from the events of a life. Pictures, ticket stubs, invitations, and other collected things that help us remember important days in our lives are glued inside the pages.

☐ Choose one of the following scrapbook projects to create a record of some of the events of your life.

my everyday

Even ordinary days can be important. For each day in a week, collect a few things that represent something that happened to you that day. Write a few lines of description to explain why the object has meaning. You'll have to pay attention, as you're probably not used to thinking that an ordinary Tuesday can be important. What did you have for breakfast? What book are you reading? What season is it? You can draw or cut pictures from magazines of things that represent your day.

my very important days

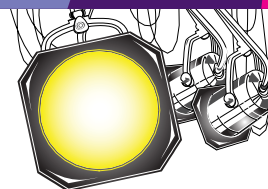
Choose 5 important events in your life and create a scrapbook page for each one. First, take some time thinking about what events you want to focus on. Sometimes important events don't seem that big of a deal at the time. Maybe your first day of school was scary, but the really big thing that happened was on the third day when you met your best friend. Once you know what events you want to commemorate, start collecting objects that represent those events. Write a few lines on each page describing what happened and why it was important to you.

my pioneer days

Imagine you were a member of a pioneer family, crossing the country from Virginia to the West. Create a five page scrapbook of objects and words that tell the story of the journey. Remember the changes in geography as the pioneers crossed the country. What sorts of things might you have seen on such a trip? Draw pictures or cut them out from magazines. Write descriptions of what you might have experienced.

some project ideas

CREATING A MEMORY QUILT



Laura and Mary received a very special gift at the end of the play. Their friends had made them a 'legacy quilt' that included all of their special family stories and memories. Bright colors and symbols were used to represent the different events.

me quilt

Make a quilt that tells us all about you. Cut nine squares out of construction paper. Now think: what are the most important things to know about you? How old are you? What activities do you like best?

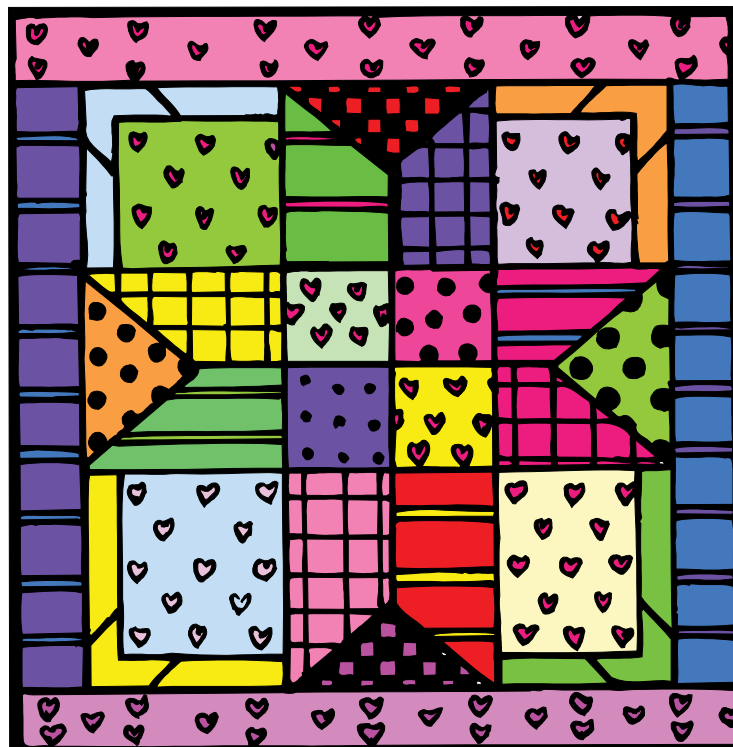
family quilt

Make a quilt that tells the story of your family. Think about the people (and pets!) in your family and some of the things you like to do. What does your home look like? Create a set of quilt squares using construction paper, scissors, and glue.

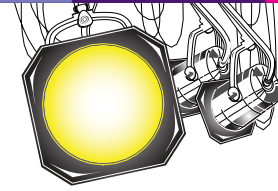
class quilt

Each member of your class will choose one very important event in his or her life, and create a 'memory quilt square' that illustrates that event. Think about how you can represent that event in one small square, without using any words. Using construction paper, scissors, and glue, create an image for your square.

Completed quilt squares can be tied together using a hole punch and yarn to create a Me, Family, or Class Memory Quilt.



SOME WRITING PROMPTS TO GET YOU THINKING



Laura Ingalls Wilder was born in 1867, before telephones, electricity, or automobiles changed the way Americans lived. Describe how your day would be different without any of these modern technologies. Start with waking up in the morning.

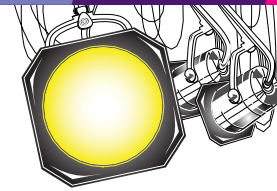
Laura Ingalls Wilder was born almost 150 years ago. A lot has changed since then. What changes do you think will have taken place in the way Americans live 150 years from now? What sorts of technological changes can you imagine?

When Laura was a little girl, her family moved many times. Each time, they had to decide what to bring with them and what to leave behind. Think about the things you use every day. Make a list of them. Now, divide the things into two categories: "needed" and "wanted." Which of the wanted things could you live without? What if you could only bring three wanted things with you? What would they be?

Sorry, no Toys R Us in the Dakota Territories. What will you play with now? Create a game from things you might find on the Great Plains.



BEHIND THE SCENES



The **writer** is where it all begins. The writer has an idea for a performance and writes many drafts, getting closer and closer to putting on the page what, so far, only exists in the imagination. But the writer has a story to tell, so the writer keeps working until he or she gets it just right.

Then the writer finds a **producer**. This job can be many things. The producer is the one in charge, the one who says 'yes' or 'no' to things like buying costumes and choosing performers. It's usually the producer's money that is being spent getting things ready. The producer hires someone who has experience in the theater, someone who will work closely with the people on stage and backstage, and this is the **director**. The Director reads the script, imagines the action on stage, and asks herself, "How should the final production look?" The director chooses all the performers.

There are lots of other very important people you might not have thought of. The **choreographer** designs the performers' movements, plans the dance moves, and works with the dancers, through many rehearsals, until they are prepared to perform the show.

Behind the dancers is, of course, music, which requires a **musical director**. This person determines the appropriate music and brings together the necessary musicians. He or she works with the musicians, again through many

rehearsals, until everyone is ready for the performance.

In order for all of this to look its best, and often to add drama to the show, the performance may require a **lighting designer** who determines how the stage should be lit - when the lights should be bright and when they can dim for effect, who to focus on, and how to control the mood. The goal of the lighting director is to make you feel things about what's happening onstage without you even realizing that the lights had something to do with it. Bright, colorful lights? Happy feelings. Dim, dark lighting? Sad or scared feelings.

A **costume designer** is someone who understands the power of what we wear. Clothes can tell us a lot about a character, create interest for the audience, bring color and excitement to the production, and help tell the story.

- Which one of these jobs do you think you would like to do? Watch the performance and look for evidence of work that went on behind the scenes. How did the lighting and costumes add to the performance? What you see happening on stage is only one part of the whole production. Enjoy the show, and remember that even if you're not a singer, actor, or dancer, there could still be a place for you in the world of theater.

A LETTER FROM LAURA INGALLS

A letter from Laura Ingalls Wilder written in the 1950's, from the Laura Ingalls Wilder House and Museum.

Dear Children,

I was born in the "Little House in the Big Woods" of Wisconsin on February 7 in the year 1867. I lived everything that happened in my books. It was a long story, filled with sunshine and shadow, that we have lived since "These Happy Golden Years." After our marriage Almanzo and I lived for a little while in the little gray house on the tree claim. In the year 1894 we and our little daughter Rose left Dakota in a covered wagon and moved to a farm in the Ozarks. We cleared the land and built our own farmhouse. Eventually we had 200 acres of improved land, and a herd of cows, good hogs, and the best laying flock of hens in the country. For many years we did all our own work, but now almost all of the land has been rented or sold. For recreation we used to ride horseback or in our buggy - later on, our Chrysler. We read and played music and attended church socials. In 1949 Almanzo died at the age of 92. We had been married 63 years. Our daughter, Rose Wilder Lane, the novelist, now lives in Connecticut.

You may be interested to know what happened to some of the other people you met in my books. Ma and Pa lived for a while on their homestead then moved into town where Pa did carpentry. After Mary graduated from the College for the Blind she lived at home. She was always cheerful and busy with her work, her books and music. Carrie worked for the DeSmet News for a while after finishing high school, and then she married a mine owner and moved to the Black Hills. Grace

married a farmer and lived a few miles outside DeSmet. All of them have been dead for some years now.

Several years before Almanzo's death he and I took a trip back to DeSmet for a reunion with our old friends. Many of the old buildings had been replaced. Everywhere we went we recognized faces, but we were always surprised to find them old and gray like ourselves, instead of being young as in our memories. There is one thing that will always remain the same to remind people of little Laura's days on the prairie, and that is Pa's fiddle. Every year at a public concert, someone plays on it the songs Pa used to play.

The "Little House" books are stories of long ago. Today our way of living and our schools are much different; so many things have made living and learning easier. But the real things haven't changed. It is still best to be honest and truthful; to make the most of what we have; to be happy with the simple pleasures and to be cheerful and have courage when things go wrong. Great improvements in living have been made because every American has always been free to pursue his happiness, and so long as Americans are free they will continue to make our country ever more wonderful. With love to you all and best wishes for your happiness, I am

Sincerely Your Friend,
Laura Ingalls Wilder

FEEDBACK FORM

We need your feedback to make our Education Programs even better! Please take a moment to complete this form and either return it to the **Sandler Center Education Department at 440 Bank Street Norfolk, VA 23510**, fax it to **(757) 282-2787** or e-mail your answers to **education@sandlercenter.org**.

1. Complete form
2. Attach or include student work (optional)
3. Return both to Sandler Center Education Department by mail, fax, or e-mail.

Education Event: _____
(please check) Matinee In-School Performance/Master Class

How did your students respond to the performance?

How did you prepare your students for this performance? Did you use the Education Guide? Which activities did you use? Were they helpful? Did students enjoy the materials?

How did this performance contribute to experiential learning in your classroom?

What role do the arts play in your school community? In your classroom?

If you could change one thing about your experience, what would it be?

Please include student work with this form, including letters, artwork, activity responses, and anything inspired by the performance.

(Optional)

Name: _____

School: _____

City: _____

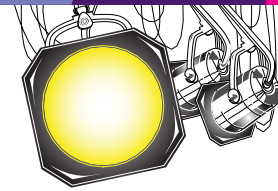
Would you like to be part of our database? Yes No



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student matinees

SANDLER CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS



Mad Science Presents Star Trek Live

Friday, February 18, 2011

10:30am – 12pm

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EDUCATION
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