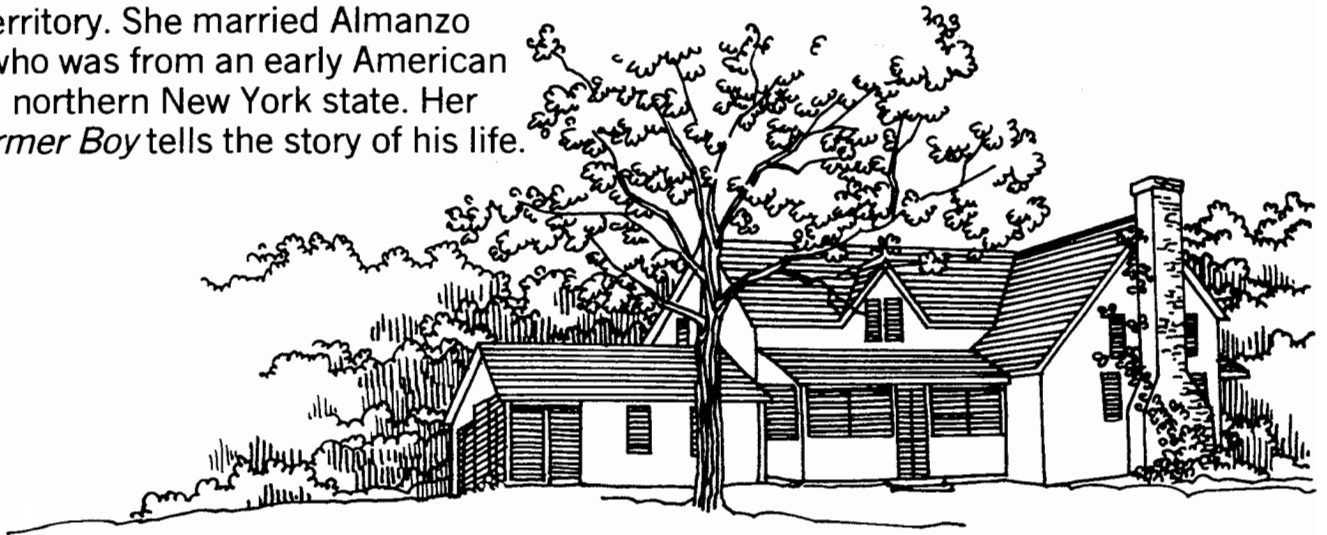


# Laura

One of the best historical pictures of the prairies and woods of the pioneer West was given to us by a woman, Laura Ingalls Wilder. When she was sixty-five years old, she finally stopped long enough to write of her experiences on the frontier. Her *Little House* series of books became well known and well loved. Children everywhere enjoyed reading about the wild adventures of young Laura. A TV series, *Little House on the Prairie*, later used stories from these books.

Laura was born in Wisconsin and moved with her family from place to place in Dakota, Minnesota, and in Indian territory. She married Almanzo Wilder, who was from an early American family in northern New York state. Her book *Farmer Boy* tells the story of his life.

Laura's diary, *On the Way Home*, makes good reading. It is a record of a trip that she and her husband took during a hot, dusty summer. They were searching for a new homestead. The two drove in high temperatures, nearly choking on dust and heat, but never giving up the hope that they would find the right place to settle. At last they arrived in a peaceful spot in the Ozarks, which Laura grew to love. There, near Mansfield, Missouri, she got her dream home. It was a white farmhouse. And there she made dreams for all pioneers with her *Little House* series.



## Main Idea

1. This story tells about the history of a
  - a. trip to the Ozarks.
  - b. pioneer woman.
  - c. white farmhouse.

## Significant Details

2. Which of Laura's books is about her husband's life?
  - a. *On the Way Home*
  - b. *Little House on the Prairie*
  - c. *Farmer Boy*

## Context Clues

3. *Pioneer* means about the same as
  - a. early.
  - b. modern.
  - c. future.

## Inference

4. Laura had a lot of
  - a. money.
  - b. sickness.
  - c. courage.

## Drawing Conclusions

5. How can you tell that Laura had a good memory? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Following Through

6. Read *On the Way Home*. Write a similar record of one day in a trip you have taken.

# You're Never Too Old for LEGO™ Building Blocks

Most toys appeal to children of certain age groups. LEGO™ building blocks can be enjoyed by young children, teens, parents, grandparents, and even great-grandparents.

LEGO™ Systems, Inc. was founded in 1932 in Denmark by Ole Kirk Christiansen. Throughout the years, the family-owned company has been guided by the words of their founder: "The world of the child is as limitless as his imagination, as colorful as his dreams. Let a child create and he will build a world much richer and more fantastic than any grown-up may think of."

The name LEGO™ comes from the Danish words "leg godt" meaning "play well." The word LEGO™ also means "I assemble" or "I build" in Latin.

The development and widespread use of plastic after World War II made possible the creation of modern LEGO™ building bricks and opened up the international market. Introduced in 1949, the automatic binding bricks, forerunner of today's LEGO™ building bricks, were studded on top and hollow underneath so they could be stacked and taken apart.

When the company introduced a brick with studs on top and tubes underneath in 1958, sales increased dramatically. This design allowed greater versatility and stability. Tall structures could be built in almost any shape, even an eleven foot dinosaur!

What can you build with LEGO™ blocks? Almost anything. The creative possibilities are limitless. Did you know that six, eight-stud bricks of the same color can be put together in 102,981,500 different ways? That's almost 103 million possible combinations!

The continued popularity of LEGO™ building bricks can be credited to the company's philosophy, handed down from their founder: "Only the best is good enough."



# You're Never Too Old for LEGO™ Building Blocks (cont'd)

Many of the people who work for LEGO™ have a dish of LEGO™ building bricks on their desks. When things get rough, playing with LEGO™ building bricks for a few minutes can be very relaxing.

The LEGO™ company also employs staff members whose main job is to build giant structures out of LEGO™ building bricks—like a seven foot LEGO™ gorilla done for the Cincinnati Zoo. Wouldn't that be a fun job to have?

Children spend about five billion hours a year with LEGO™ bricks. Over 11 billion LEGO™ building bricks are sold each year in 118 countries. More than 300 million children all over the world have played with LEGO™ bricks. Many of those children have grown up, but their fascination with LEGO™ bricks has continued. No one is ever too old to enjoy LEGO™ building blocks.

1. What is the main idea of this article? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the author's purpose?  
\_\_\_\_\_ to inform          \_\_\_\_\_ to entertain          \_\_\_\_\_ to persuade
3. When and where did the LEGO™ company begin?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Why do you think LEGO™ building blocks appeals to people of all ages?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How did LEGO™ building blocks get their name?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What was the most interesting fact you learned from this article?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you agree with the quotation from the founder of the company? Explain your answer.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Spring in Wisconsin

It doesn't matter how many robins arrive, what the date is on the calendar, what the Old Farmer's Almanac predicted, or how many ground hogs notice their shadows. Spring arrives in Wisconsin in its own good-natured time.

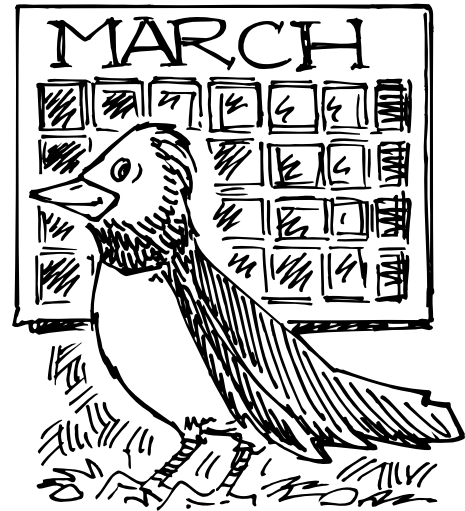
Sometimes spring creeps in quietly from the south as the days slowly get longer and warmer. The change from winter to spring occurs so gradually people may forget the last time they used their snow shovels or wore their winter boots.

Some years, spring jumps out of winter, almost overnight. One day there's snow on the ground and, suddenly, the next day people notice the snow has melted, buds are sprouting, and everyone is wearing lighter jackets.

Most years, spring is neither gradual and continuous nor sudden. It's more like a war between spring and winter that rages on for a month or more. Some days, spring seems to have won. The temperature soars to 60 degrees. Everyone smiles as they shed winter coats.

But spring has not won the war, only a battle, a minor skirmish. A day or two later everyone can be up to their eyeballs in snow. The rain can change quickly from a gentle spring shower to a horrible ice storm coating trees and wires and roads in glistening treachery.

Every spring is a little different. People can anticipate and hope that winter will end soon, but they can't hurry it along. They can only wait and see when spring will finally triumph again for another year.



1. What verbs does the author use to describe how spring arrives?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the main idea of this article?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Write a short paragraph that describes the arrival of a season where you live. Use active verbs.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_