

# SARAH, PLAIN AND TALL

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## Objectives

1. *Comprehension*—Students will demonstrate understanding of the novel through written and verbal responses to sectional comprehension questions and whole-book activities which follow the Thoughtful Education learning styles.
2. *Vocabulary*—Using vocabulary from the novel, students will define familiar and unfamiliar words based on context.
3. *Reading Skills*—Through activities relating to or taken from the novel, students will demonstrate an understanding of the following reading skills: cause and effect relationships, using quotation marks in dialogue, and identifying adjectives and adverbs.
4. *Writing Activities*—Students will interact with and extrapolate from the novel to complete various creative writing assignments.

## Summary of Novel

Jacob Witting lives on the midwestern prairie with his two children, Anna and Caleb. Jacob's wife died shortly after Caleb's birth. Jacob writes an ad asking for a "mail-order bride." Sarah Wheaton, responding to his ad, moves from her home on the coast of Maine to visit the Witting family for the summer. Anna and Caleb are concerned that Sarah misses her home in Maine so much that she will not choose to remain with them and become their new mother. Sarah decides to stay.

# EMBARKING ON A JOURNEY

## Hook

**Objective:** Students will interact with concepts and vocabulary from the novel in order to obtain a basic understanding of the story before they begin reading.

### Directions for Playing “Rattle On!”

1. Divide the class into pairs of students. Combine two pairs together to form groups of four students. Designate pairs as Team A or Team B. The pairs will compete against each other in “Rattle On!” a game similar to “Outburst™.”
2. Distribute one copy of “Rattle On!” (pages 3–4) to each pair of students. The pages are labelled Team A and Team B.
3. Team A begins by naming the topic of one category for Team B. Team B then has 90 seconds to identify as many of the items for the topic as possible. In the second round, Team B names the topic. Team A guesses the items. Continue until each team has named three topics.
4. Team A keeps score for Team B, and Team B keeps score for Team A. A team scores one point for each correct answer they identify. If a team correctly identifies all ten items within the time limit, the team receives five extra points.
5. The team that chooses the topic may give clues to the other team, but there is no rule requiring the team to do so. One team in a group may give clues, while the other team chooses not to give clues.

### Closure

Discuss the topics with the class. Use the following questions as a guide.

*Which items were easy to identify?*

*Which items surprised you?*

*Were there any items that you think should have been included that were not?*

*Were there any items you did not understand?*

# RATTLE ON!

## TEAM A

### Things You See on the Prairie

grass	tumbleweeds
horses	sheep
farms	ponds
flat land	cows
wind blowing	dirt roads

### Things You See at the Seashore

shells	waves
seaweed	sand castles
people swimming	boats
sand dunes	cliffs
sunbathers	fishermen

### Adjectives for Someone Who is not Attractive

plain	weird
ugly	different
odd looking	funny
homely	simple
unsophisticated	common

# RATTLE ON!

## TEAM B

### Feelings a Child has When a Parent Dies

sadness	loneliness
despair	anger
grief	sentimental
hope the parent will return	denial
fear	withdrawal

### Farm Chores

milk cows	cook dinner
gather eggs	wash clothes
stack hay	pick crops
feed horses	clean barn
plow fields	chop wood

### Things People Didn't Have in the 1800s that Make our Lives Easier Today

lightbulbs	pencils/pens
stoves	paper
faucets	tractors
indoor bathrooms	air conditioning
washing machines	telephones