

# *A Place for Margaret*

## ***Teacher Input***

You may wish to familiarize students with the time period of the book in some of the ways suggested below. If time is a problem, have a group of your best workers do the suggested research and present it to the class.

1. Draw a time line of the 20th century on computer paper or shelf paper. Spend a research period finding out important dates, inventions, medical discoveries, etc.
2. Research the year 1925. Find out about cars, planes, clothing, hairstyles, dances, movies, music, gangsters, etc. Who was Prime Minister, what was the population of Toronto, and what was in the news that year? Write information in brief newspaper-style articles. Print headings and draw pictures and put the information on a bulletin board for reference throughout the novel.
3. Have students interview friends or relatives who can tell them about the 1920s and share their findings with the class...

or

Invite seniors from a local nursing home to do a short presentation and answer students' questions.

Keep an ongoing chart as you read the novel to show how things were different in 1925. At the end of the novel, do a chart to show what things have remained the same.

## ***Novel Synopsis***

### **Chapter 1 — Starr**

Margaret Emerson lives in Toronto with her mom, dad and 8 siblings. In the summer of 1925 she is sent to her uncle's farm near Shelburne to recuperate from tuberculosis, also called T.B., which is a disease of the lungs. Since she has been forbidden to be near other children she is very lonely. She tries to befriend the workhorse, Starr, but frightens him away. A letter from home leaves her with mixed emotions—she misses her family but enjoys her privileges on the farm.

### **Chapter 2 — The Secret Signal**

Margaret feeds Starr treats and finally wins his trust, much to her uncle's consternation. Soon Starr learns Margaret's secret signal—a silent whistle. The two become inseparable.

### **Chapter 3 — My Dilemma**

By the end of August Dr. Tom says Margaret is cured but he wants her to stay awhile longer to be safe. Although she misses her family she decides to remain. She removes a sharp stone from Starr's hoof which pleases Uncle Herb. However, she does not reveal their secret signal.



**Chapter 12 — The Invitation**

- A. Draw and label the parts of a churn and explain how it is used.  
You may need research material.

- B. On a separate sheet, design a wedding invitation that Miss Maggotty might have sent to her guests.
- C. Miss Maggotty had very strong views about women's rights and would probably be called a "feminist" today.  
Do you think she should have had the word "obey" removed from the wedding ceremony? Give reasons for your answer.

---



---

- D. Compare this wedding with a wedding of today on the chart below.

	Miss Maggotty's Wedding	A Wedding of Today
Place		
Decorations		
Music		
Refreshments		

**Chapter 13 — The Letter**

- A. Pretend you are Margaret and have just received the letter from home.  
On a separate sheet, write her answering letter.
- B. Draw a picture to show the family photo that was sent to Margaret.

Write the family members' names under the picture.

**C. True or F**

Tell whether each statement is true or false and give a reason for your answer.

- Margaret's father is tired of having children. T F  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Margaret's mother was right in not telling her there was a new baby coming. T F  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Olive does not want another baby in the family. T F  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Margaret had no reason to be upset. T F  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Margaret's mother wants her to come home. T F  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Josephine was deliberately making Margaret jealous. T F  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Chapter 14 — Thief**

- A. Create a newspaper article to report the information of the theft as described in this chapter.

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---

- B. Using the word **Starr** or **Thief** write an acrostic poem to describe the theft.

S _____	T _____
T _____	H _____
A _____	I _____
R _____	E _____
R _____	F _____

- C. The thief got 15 years in prison. Do you think this was a fair sentence?  
Why or why not?  
If you were the judge, what would you have done?

---



---



---



---



---

**Chapter 19 — Saying Goodbye**

- A. List all the differences you can find between the first trip to Green Meadows and the second.

First Trip	This Trip

- B. Dramatize the scene from the time Margaret entered the kitchen to where she agrees to return to Green Meadows.
- C. Margaret made a decision that would affect her whole life.  
List the things you think will be good and the things you think might be bad or sad about the life she has chosen.

Good Things About Her Decision	Bad Things About Her Decision

Now tell why you think it was the right decision or the wrong decision over all.

---



---



---

### Chapter 5 — The Barn Raising

A. If you had been Aunt Marg how would you have solved the episode with Matty and his mother? Explain very carefully.

---



---

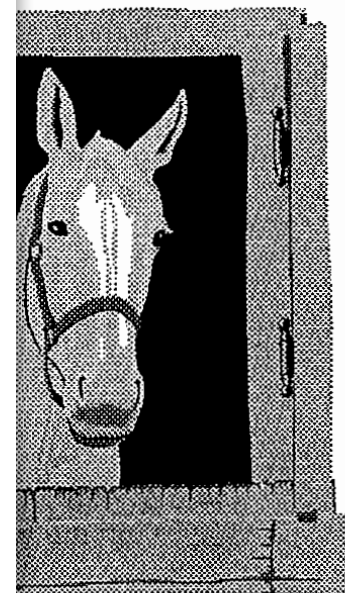


---

B. Construct a barn like the new one built for Uncle Herb. Use boxes, toothpicks, paper, etc. to build your structure.

C. Solve the word search using the words below.

- |               |            |             |               |
|---------------|------------|-------------|---------------|
| • barn        | • biscuits | • nails     | • constructed |
| • smouldering | • tarts    | • packed    | • raised      |
| • pies        | • lemonade | • corker    | • poles       |
| • cakes       | • hammer   | • framework | • stable      |
| • Starr       | • Matty    | • window    | • team        |
| • party       | • cook     | • lumber    | • saws        |



### A Place for Margaret

#### Follow-Up Activities

1. Make a diorama of a country school, a store, or the farm kitchen from the descriptions in the book. Use boxes, Plasticine and any other objects you need.
2. Have small groups of students act out a section of a chapter. When the dramatization is over, the rest of the class can find the pages in the book that were presented.

There are many kinds of horses. Research to find at least 6 different kinds and tell what kind you think Starr might have been.

Write a paragraph to predict how Margaret spent the next 10 years of her life, and what she ended up doing.

### Word Search Solution

#### Chapter 5—The Barn Raising (p.10)



ANSWER KEY