

A Turtle Book Lesson Plan

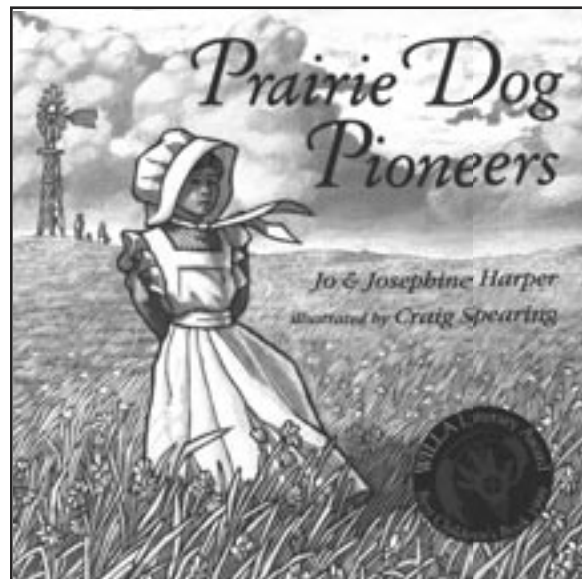


Dear Teacher or Librarian,

Here are ideas to help you enrich your students' reading experience and their understanding of important curricular concepts.

The blackline masters on pages 3 and 4 of this guide can be used for discussion, direct teaching, and assessment of student comprehension and vocabulary development. Lesson plans for all Turtle Books may be found on our website: www.turtlebooks.com.

Enjoy reading!



Before You Read

To introduce the book, identify and discuss the title, author, and illustrator. *What are pioneers? What is a prairie dog?*

Take a picture walk through the first few pages of the book. *Do you think this story takes place now or long ago? Where do you think the pioneers are going?*

As You Read

Help children develop an expanded academic vocabulary. Make sure children understand the meaning of unfamiliar words as they occur in the story.

<i>parched ground</i>	<i>slicker</i>	<i>windburnt</i>	<i>thunderheads</i>
<i>caprock</i>	<i>double-team</i>	<i>sod</i>	<i>buggy</i>
<i>flash flood</i>	<i>mandolin</i>	<i>pulse</i>	<i>cliff</i>

After You Read

Ask students to discuss the following questions:

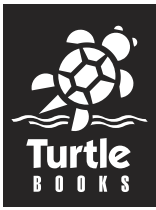
What does the phrase “prairie dog pioneers” mean?

How did Mae Dean feel when her father made their wagon go faster up the caprock?

What reason did Mae Dean’s father give her for speeding up the caprock?

Give each student a copy of pages 3 and 4 of this guide. Page 3 is in the form of a book report. It has prompts and models to help children think about concepts of print, story genre, and story elements. It also has an activity for students to complete. Page 4 is a crossword puzzle that focuses on vocabulary from *Prairie Dog Pioneers*. You might make a transparency of each and use an overhead projector so you and the children can do the pages together.

Answers for page 4. **Prairie Dog Pioneers Crossword Puzzle:** Across: 1. Prairie, 2. Land, 3. Grass, 4. Dugout. Down: 5. Pioneers, 6. Wagon, 7. Sod, 8. Dog



Using This Guide

Using the activities for *Prairie Dog Pioneers* will help you meet the following Social Studies Standards, Geography Standards, and Language Arts Standards:

Social Studies Standards

Environment and Society
Places and Regions
People, Places, and Environments
Time, Continuity, and Change

Geography Standards

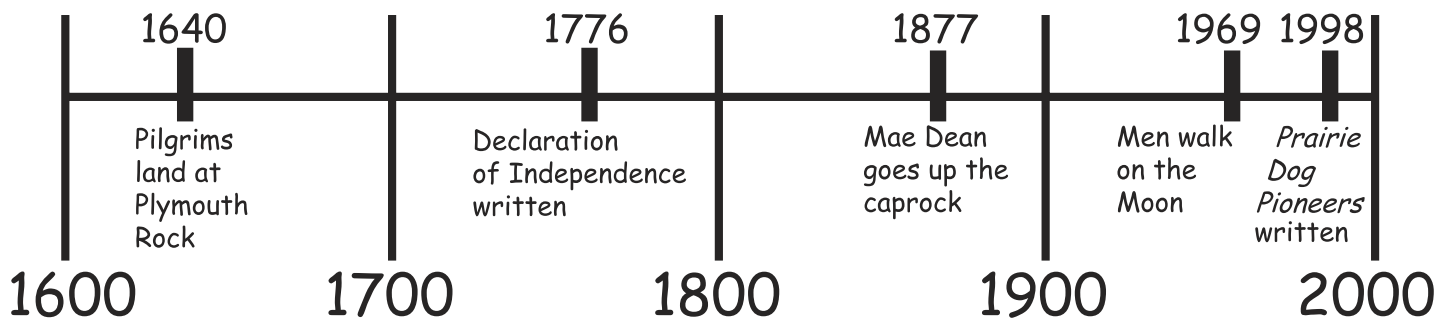
Landforms: prairie
Interaction of life forms with each other

Reading and Language Arts Standards

- Concepts of print: author, illustrator
- Book genre
- Story elements: setting, characters
- Story vocabulary
- Story summary

Cross Curricular Activities: Mathematics and Social Studies

Copy this time line onto the chalkboard. Have children use it to answer these questions



1. Which important event in our history occurred in the 1700s?
2. How many years after the Pilgrims landed did Mae Dean's family go up the caprock?
3. How many years after the Declaration of Independence did Mae Dean's family go up the caprock?
4. Which event on the timeline was the most recent.

Cross Curricular Activity: Music

At the end of *Prairie Dog Pioneers* is the song "Home on the Range." Invite the children to sing it with you.

Bibliography– Prairie Dog Pioneers

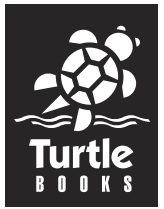
Tess, by H.J. Hutchins.
Annick Press, 1995

A Prairie Alphabet, by Jo Bannatyne-Cugnet.
Tundra Books, 1994

Prairie Willow, by Maxine Trottier.
Stoddart, 1998

If You're Not From the Prairie, by Dave Bouchard.
Atheneum, 1995

Prairie Dogs, by Dorothy Hinshaw Patent.
Clarion Books, 1993



Author _____

Illustrator _____

What kind of story is this?

fiction or nonfiction
realistic or fantasy

Story Elements

Setting: The story begins in a town called _____.

The rest of the story takes place on the _____.

Characters: The three main characters are Mae Dean, her _____, and Mr. _____.

Problem: Mae Dean doesn't understand why her father has to _____ so quickly up the _____.

Solution: Her father explains to her that he had to drive quickly because the rain was about to cause a _____ that might wash the ground beneath their wagon away.



Story Summary

The story begins when Mae Dean's family moves out of their _____. They began their trip in a _____ wagon. When Mae Dean's father wants to drive up the side of the _____, he speeds up the _____. Mr. _____ carries Mae Dean. After the travelers have arrived, Mae Dean is _____ at her father. By the end of the story, her father explains why the family has come so far. Mae Dean understands.

