

APPlause!

K-12 Performing Arts Series



*Enriching lives, sparking imaginations,
and inspiring a love of learning through the arts!*

ArtsPower Theater on Demand: Laura Ingalls Wilder

October 15, 2022 - April 15, 2023

APPlause!

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Before the performance...

Familiarize your students with what it means to be a great audience member by introducing these theatre etiquette basics:

- Arrive early enough to find your seats and settle in before the show begins (20-30 minutes).
- Remember to turn your electronic devices OFF so they do not disturb the performers or other audience members.
- Remember to sit appropriately and to stay quiet so that the audience members around you can enjoy the show too.

PLEASE NOTE:

***THIS EVENT IS SCHEDULED TO LAST APPROX 70 MINUTES.**
10:00am – 11:10am

- Audience members arriving by car should plan to park in the Rivers Street Parking Deck. There is a small charge for parking. Buses should plan to park along Rivers Street – Please indicate to the Parking and Traffic Officer when you plan to move your bus (i.e. right after the show, or after lunch) so that they can help keep everyone safe.
- Adults meeting a school group at the show will be asked to sign in at the lobby and wait to be escorted to their group by a security guard.



LAURA INGALLS WILDER

Historical Context - Activity Guide

Overview

Students will engage with an online play that introduces them to professional theatre and connects to their language arts curriculum. They will also learn about the book's author Laura Ingalls Wilder, important dates in American history from 1800 to the author's birth in 1867, and an Ingalls Family Timeline.

Skills Developed

These activities are designed to advance students' skills in:

- determining the meaning of words, including vocabulary, and phrases as they appear in the "Historical Context" guide for students
- integrating knowledge gained from the text and photographs appearing in the guide with the show's performance
- observing the social-emotional skills of the characters in the musical.

Materials

The guide titled, "Historical Context," that may be reprinted for students.

Instructions

After seeing the performance, explain to your students that they will be learning about the Ingalls family and the historical events that inspired the family's travels throughout the Midwest between 1869 to 1883.

Follow Up

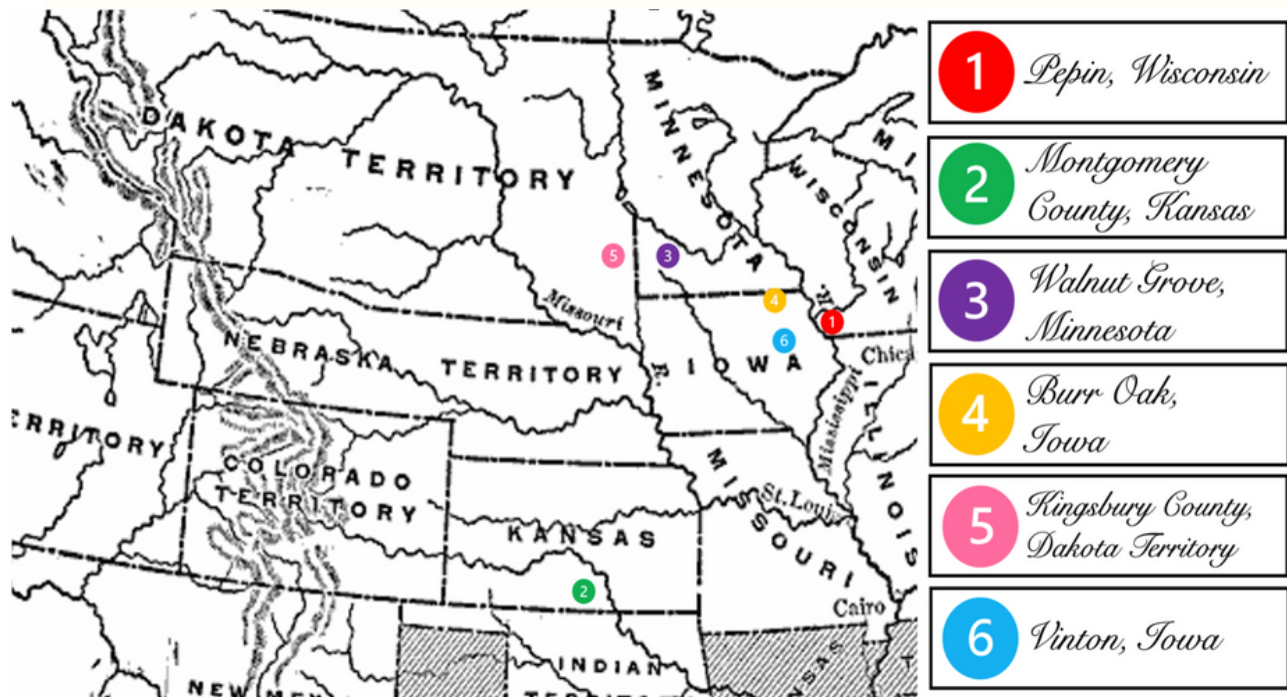
Discuss these questions with your students:

1. Why do you think Laura's experiences led her to wanting to write about her life?
2. Do you think the Ingalls family traveling from place to place was commonplace or unique for that time period?

LAURA INGALLS WILDER

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

A Historical Timeline of Important Events and Ingalls Family Life



Map of where the Ingalls family travel.

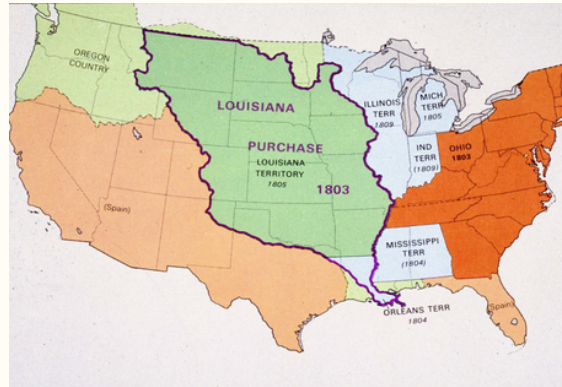
From History to Musical

ArtsPower's production is a dramatic retelling of a portion of Laura Ingalls Wilder's life. Laura, Mary, Baby Carrie, Ma, and Pa were all real people. This is a brief timeline of their actual lives. Included are historical events that give context to what was happening during the time period.

1803

The Louisiana Purchase

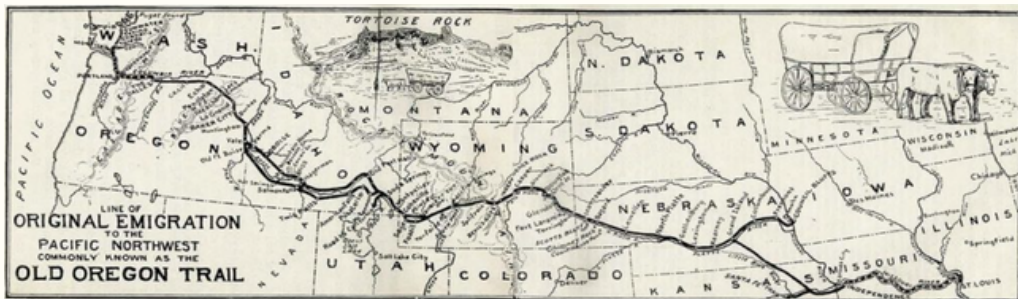
The purchase from France extends the land encompassed by the United States from between the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains between the Canadian border and the Gulf of Mexico.



1843

The Oregon Trail

The migration of settlers connecting the Missouri River to the valleys in Oregon. The wagon trail allowed Americans to begin to expand west developing trade routes, roads, and towns along the way.



1848-1855

The Gold Rush

The discovery of gold in Coloma, California leads many people to move west.



1860

Pony Express

Created as the easiest means of communication between the east and west.

Laura mentions needing to send a letter via The Pony Express in the play.



1862



The Homestead Act

The United States government encouraged people to move west by providing settlers with 160 acres of land at a very low price which they then had to farm and live on for five years.

1865

January 10th

Mary Amelia Ingalls is born in Pepin, Wisconsin.

April 15th

President Abraham Lincoln is shot by John Wilkes Booth and dies the next morning.

December 6th

The Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution abolishing slavery in the United States is ratified.



Mary Amelia Ingalls

1867

February 7th

Laura Elizabeth Ingalls is born in Pepin, Wisconsin.



1869

May 10th

The Transcontinental railroad is built connecting the eastern and western parts of the United States is finished.



September

Pa, Ma, Mary, and Laura move to the Osage Diminished Reserve (Indian Territory) in Montgomery County, Kansas

1870

August 3rd

Caroline Celestia "Carrie" Ingalls is born in Montgomery County, Kansas.



1871

Spring

The family leaves the Indian Territory and moves back to their house in Pepin, Wisconsin.



1873

Grasshopper Plagues

The Ingalls family and hundreds of other farmers lose their crop. For five years, from 1873 to 1877, grasshoppers destroyed wheat, oat, corn, and barley fields in Minnesota and surrounding states. In 1876 alone, grasshoppers visited forty Minnesota counties and destroyed 500,000 acres of crops.

1874

February

The Ingalls family travels to Walnut Grove, Minnesota settling on the banks of Plum Creek. They first live in a sod house and later Pa builds a house.



1876

The family sells the Plum Creek Farm, leaving Walnut Grove to briefly run a hotel in Burr Oak, Iowa.



1877

May 23rd

Grace Pearl Ingalls is born in Burr Oak, Iowa.

Fall

The Ingalls family returns to Walnut Grove, Minnesota



1879

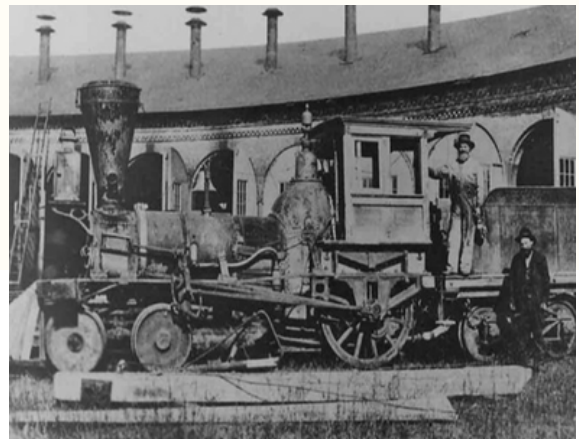
Winter

Mary gets sick and goes blind.

In "By the Shores of Silver Lake" Laura talks about Ma, Carrie, and Mary getting sick and Mary losing her vision. She attributes Mary's vision loss to Scarlet Fever – a very common and deadly illness at the time. However, a 2013 study concluded the cause was more likely meningoencephalitis based on other of Laura's writings and symptomatology.

Fall

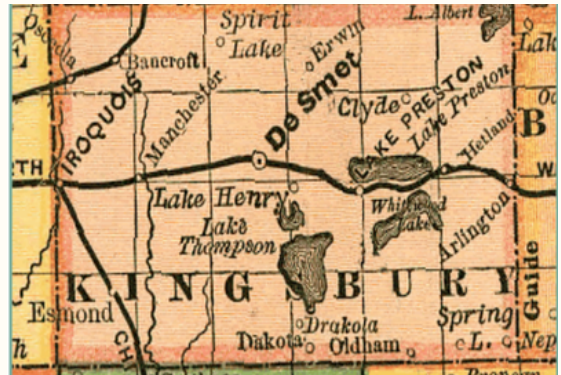
Ma and the girls follow Pa to the Dakota Territory where Pa is working for the Chicago and North Western Railway in Silver Lake.



1880

Spring

Pa builds a house in Kingsbury Country, near the De Smet townsite in Dakota Territory.



1881



Fall

Mary leaves to attend the Iowa College of the Blind in Vinton, Iowa.

1883

December

Laura gets her first teaching certification and begins teaching at the Bouchie school in De Smet.



Resource Links

Explanations of Westward Expansion

<https://www.history.com/topics/westward-expansion/westward-expansion>

<http://www.american-historama.org/1841-1850-westward-expansion/westward-expansion.htm>

<https://www.historynet.com/westward-expansion>

The Homestead Act

<https://www.archives.gov/legislative/features/homestead-act>

<https://www.nps.gov/home/learn/historyculture/aboutthomesteadactlaw.htm>

Timeline of Laura Ingalls Wilder

<https://littlehouseontheprairie.com/history-timeline-of-laura-ingalls-wilder/>

Mary Ingalls's Illness

<https://www.nbcnews.com/healthmain/what-real>

LAURA INGALLS WILDER

Meet the Actors - Activity Guide

Overview

Students will engage with an online musical that introduces them to professional theatre and connects to their language arts curriculum. They will watch an interview with the show's actors to learn about their experiences performing in ArtsPower's drama, *Laura Ingalls Wilder*.

Skills Developed

These activities are designed to help students:

- understand the process of how actors prepare a show's script for a stage performance
- learn how actors follow agreed-upon rules for speaking and listening
- listen to professional actors and their thoughts about performing in the show.

Materials

Video interview with the actors (11 minutes).

Instructions

1. Explain to your students that they will learn what it is like to be an actor in a professional musical. Discuss the question, What do you think is the most important thing an actor should know when performing in a show?
2. Watch "An Interview with the Actors."

Follow Up

Discuss the following questions:

- Do you think you would like to be an actor based on what you've learned? Why or why not?
- Prior to filming, ArtsPower toured *Laura Ingalls Wilder*, which means their actors traveled across the U.S. and Canada performing in theatres, performing arts centers, university auditoriums, and schools. What do you think that was like? What do you think was the most difficult aspect of touring and traveling?

LAURA INGALLS WILDER

Behind the Scenes - Activity Guide

Overview

Students will engage with an online musical that introduces them to professional theatre and connects to their language arts curriculum. They will learn about the different elements of a scene and how the actors prepare to perform in the musical theatre production of ArtsPower's *Laura Ingalls Wilder*.

Skills Developed

These activities are designed to advance students' skills in:

- understanding and evaluating how theatre conveys meaning
- perceiving and analyzing how scenes transform from the rehearsal process through the performance
- synthesizing knowledge and personal experiences to gain a deeper understanding of theatre
- relating theatre performances with societal, cultural, and historical context.

Materials

Video titled, "Behind the Scenes" (2.5 minutes)

Instructions

1. Before you watch the video, ask the question: What do you think is the most important thing an actor should know when performing in a show?
2. Watch the video that is in three sections: 1) Read Through; 2) Blocking; and 3) Filming.

Follow Up

With your students, brainstorm all the things the actors did onstage to convince you of their roles. Discuss the ways in which each actor used voice, body language, and facial expressions to portray a character in a convincing way.

LAURA INGALLS WILDER

Acting Out A Scene - Activity Guide

Overview

Students will engage with an online musical that introduces them to professional theatre and connects to their language arts curriculum. They will learn about the elements of a scene and then have the chance to act out a scene from the show.

Skills Developed

These activities are designed to advance students' skills in:

- determining the main ideas of a text and interpreting them appropriately
- using intention, emotion, and public speaking skills to portray a character
- adapting their speech to a variety of contexts and tasks
- working with peers to present a short performance.

Materials

Video excerpt from ArtsPower's *Laura Ingalls Wilder*.

Copies of "Laura Ingalls Wilder – Printable Script Scene" for your students.

Instructions

1. Ask the opening question: What theatrical elements are needed to transform dialogue, or words in a script, into a live performance?
2. Watch video clip found on the site.
3. Ask your students to describe any observations they have about the way the scene was acted or what the actors did to make you believe they were the characters.
4. Assign students in groups of four to play Pa, Ma, Mary, and Laura. Boys or girls can read any of the parts. Have them practice the stage directions, in parentheses in the script, to understand how to speak the lines or how to move. Do not read the words in parentheses aloud.
5. Once the students have practiced the scene, each pair may present it to the class. You can choose to add props, costumes, or other elements.

Follow Up

Discuss these questions with your students:

- How did it feel to read from the script?
- Was performing the scene fun? Why or why not?
- Do you better understand the characters in the show after portraying them
- Would you like to do more scene study and acting work?

LAURA INGALLS WILDER

The Ingalls Family Leaving for Kansas

Wisconsin, 1874. The Ingalls Farm.

(LAURA is on stage. MA enters and crosses to a large trunk, and starts to pack an old patchwork quilt into the trunk. LAURA starts to put on a smock overlay over her dress.)

MA *(to LAURA) (happily busy)*

Laura, I thought you were going to pack this away.
(LAURA crosses to MA.)

LAURA

Hey Ma, what am I gonna be when I get older?

MA

What?

LAURA

What am I good at?

MA *(kindly, but unfortunately in a hurry)*

Laura dear, I don't have time right now.

LAURA *(frustrated)*

But...

MA *(looking over the trunk) (more to*

herself)

Hope that's everything.

(MA starts to exit)

LAURA *(trying to get her attention)*

Ma...

MA *(while exiting, looking back at LAURA)*

And why aren't you wearing your sunbonnet?

LAURA *(frustrated) (trying to get her attention)*

But Ma...

(too late – Ma has exited)

(Mary enters. She is looking over one of her books)

MARY

(with book - referring to it)

(to LAURA) (excited about facts & figures)

So when we travel all the way to Kansas, we'll go through three states. Do you know how many miles that is?

LAURA *(wasn't really listening)*

Huh?

MARY *(referring to book)*

According to this.

LAURA *(not really caring)*

I don't know.

MARY *(excited)*

Give ya' a hint. If we travel 30 miles a day, it'll take almost one month to get there.

(LAURA doesn't like this game).

LAURA *(to change the subject)*

(a sudden idea) (excited)

Let's go fishin'!

MARY *(taken back)*

Huh?

LAURA

We could dig for worms!

MARY *(a grossed-out sound)*

E-ew-ooo!!!

(MARY walks off.)

(LAURA is annoyed/frustrated at MARY's reaction.)

(PA has entered and started to pack things for the big move.)

(Frustrated, LAURA spots PA and runs over to him.)

LAURA

Hey, Pa? What's the one thing I'm good at - that nobody else can do?

PA

Huh?

LAURA *(explains) (frustrated)*

Mary's the smartest. But who am I? *(LAURA sits on the bench.)*

PA *(teasing her - to make her laugh)*

You're a half-pint!

LAURA *(out of frustration)*

Pa!

PA *(continues to tease her) (laughs,*

explaining)

Minute you were born - I said: "so small - only a half-pint of sweet cider - half drunk up!"

LAURA

Hey, Pa? Why are we movin'?

PA *(excitedly)*

Big woods of Wisconsin just ain't big enough!

LAURA (*agreeing*)

Yeah!

PA (*planning*) (*excited*)

Kansas territory – hardly a soul out there – ‘cept Indians.
(*pause*)

LAURA (*a bit scared*)

Oh?

PA (*hearing her hesitate*)

Well, what’s the matter?

LAURA (*tries to hide it*)

Nothin’.

PA

Ya’ wanta go, don’t ya’?

LAURA

Well, sure, but...

PA

But what?

LAURA

Well, between you and me – sounds kinda scary.

PA (*laughs*)

It is.

LAURA

See.

PA

But what else?

LAURA

Huh?

PA

What else?

LAURA (*thinks*)

Well...I guess...it sounds kinda excitin' too.

PA (*happy, proud*)

There! Good! See? Ya' got it!

LAURA

Got what?

PA (*excited*)

Pioneerin' spirit!

LAURA

What's that?

(*PA sits next to LAURA*)

PA (*explains*) (*excited*)

Well, it's when you're kinda scared about goin' someplace, but at the same time, ya' just can't wait to get there!

LAURA (*getting excited too*)

And then what?

PA

Ya' just keep headin' west!

LAURA (*thinking out loud*)

Scary but excitin'!

PA *(laughs) (explaining, excited)*

Country's growin', Half-pint – changin'. But some things – like pioneerin' spirit – that'll always be around – no matter what!

LAURA *(hopefully)*

But will things be better out west?

PA *(laughs) (confident)*

Well, I hope so.

LAURA *(frustrated again)*

They gotta be! I'm nobody around this place.

LAURA INGALLS WILDER

Playwriting - Activity Guide

Overview

Students will engage with an online musical that introduces them to professional theatre and connects to their language arts curriculum. They will learn about the elements of a scene and have the chance to rewrite a scene from the show.

Skills Developed

These activities are designed to help students:

- understand the basic structure of dialogue and how it informs the audience about the characters' thoughts, feelings, and intentions
- experience what it is like to write dialogue for a script.

Materials

Printed copies of the writing prompt for you students.

Instructions

1. Ask your students "What theatrical elements are needed to transform dialogue, or words in a script, into a live performance?"
2. Read the following to your students: Playwrights write lines of dialogue for the actors to speak. These lines provide the information about the plot (story) and characters. The playwright gives actors stage directions in the parentheses to understand how to speak the lines or how to move. These are not to be read aloud.
3. Ask your student(s) to think about how they would write their own scene. Their scene should depict just one of the two following situations:

At the end of the play, Laura decides she is leaving to become a teacher. Pa is unsure of her decision and suggests that she stay with him, Ma, and Baby Carrie. Write a scene where Pa convinces Laura to stay with the family on the farm. Use what you know about their relationship to make Pa's argument to convince her to stay as realistic as possible.

OR

After Nellie is mean to Laura during their meeting in front of the General Store, Laura decides to play a trick on her and convinces her to climb into a sack. While this stunt is intended to teach Nellie a lesson, it is not the kindest way for Laura to react to Nellie's unkindness. Write a scene where Laura confronts Nellie to talk with her about why she would say such unkind things about Laura and her family. Although you might resolve the conflict between Laura and Nellie, you do not have to end the scene this way.

Have your students work in groups of three to four to write a new scene for the musical. The scene should be 2-3 pages in length and formatted like the script from the show so that we know who is talking and what feelings the student(s) want(s) them to express by including those directions in parentheses before the actor's lines of dialogue.

Follow Up

Once students have written their new scenes, they may present them in front of the class.

LAURA INGALLS WILDER

Becoming the Playwright

What is a Playwright:

Playwrights write lines of dialogue for the actors to speak. These lines provide the information about the plot (story) and characters. The playwright gives actors stage directions in the parentheses to understand how to speak the lines or how to move.

Playwriting Prompt:

Choose one of the following:

At the end of the play, Laura decides she is leaving to become a teacher. Pa is unsure of her decision and suggests that she stay with him, Ma, and Baby Carrie. Write a scene where Pa convinces Laura to stay with the family on the farm. Use what you know about their relationship to make Pa's argument to convince her to stay as realistic as possible.

OR

After Nellie is mean to Laura during their meeting in front of the General Store, Laura decides to play a trick on her and convinces her to climb into a sack. While this stunt is intended to teach Nellie a lesson, it is not the kindest way for Laura to react to Nellie's unkindness. Write a scene where Laura confronts Nellie to talk with her about why she would say such unkind things about Laura and her family. Although you might resolve the conflict between Laura and Nellie, you do not have to end the scene this way.

The scene should be formatted like the script so that the actors know who is talking and what feelings you want the actors to express by including those directions in parentheses before the actor's lines of dialogue.

APPlause!

K-12 Performing Arts Series

Enriching lives, sparking imaginations, and inspiring a love of learning through the arts!

Arts education and outreach programming at Appalachian is committed to connecting university arts resources to a diverse audience of community arts patrons, teachers and learners in the campus community, and in the public, private and home school network across our region. In doing so, the series strives to broaden and deepen arts experiences for audiences of all ages, while ensuring access to the arts for young audiences, building future audiences for the arts, and inspiring a love of learning through the arts.

Every season, affordable music, dance, film, and theatre events are offered to students and their teachers from K-12 classrooms across the region. Students experience everything from high-energy acrobatics and Appalachian music to international dance and literary classics brought to life through theatrical productions. In recent seasons, more than 8,000 students across our region have attended APPlause Series events.

This academic year, in addition to five in-person performances, the APPlause! Series will offer three virtual performances that are completely free and offer compelling programming to connect to K-12 classrooms, thanks in large part to generous donors who believe in supplying educators with arts programming that will spark creativity and inspire a love of learning.

Thank You to Our Sponsors!

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JAMES G. HANES MEMORIAL FUND
&
STEVE AND SUE CHASE.

