

# Children's Literature Across the Curriculum Ideas

Created by students at the University of North Carolina Charlotte

**Title:** *Sarah Plain and Tall*

**Author:** Patricia MacLachlan

**Grade level:** 3-4

**Summary:** **Sarah**, Plain and Tall is a mail order wife. Papa places an ad for a wife to help take care of him and the children. Their mother has died. Sarah comes all the way from Maine to take care of this family.

## Reading/Writing Connections

1. Show students the title page. Invite predications about the story.
2. Students will read the story, dividing it into chapters per day until complete.
3. Give each student their jackdaws. Explain that they are to respond to the ad, just as Sarah, Plain and Tall did. The correct parts of a letter will be used including a return address, greeting, body, closing and salutation. Give students time to respond to the ad.
4. Have students to exchange their letters with a partner and have the partner try to write an ad in response to their letters.

## Vocabulary/Spelling

barn	dune	field	hearthstones	hiss	paddock
pungent	sea	squall	wagon	windmill	windstorm

## Library Connections

1. Share other books: Laura Ingalls Wilder's account of her life on the prairie.
2. Direct students to areas in the library where they can find more information on prairie life and Maine.
3. Share another prairie story about prairie life.

## Science/Mathematics Connections

1. Use timelines to display a sequence of events.
2. Use appropriate units of measurement for length. (miles and kilometers)
3. Classify soil using their five senses and identify any differences.
4. Explain/discuss a front or storm and safety precautions in severe weather.

## Social Studies

1. Discussion focusing on the author's description of Maine and the prairie.
2. Explain how to read the key on a map. Locate and identify five oceans from a given list of oceans.
3. Describe and identify a variety of water forms.
4. Role play the roles of Sarah, Papa, Anna and Caleb.

**Title:** *Sarah, Plain and Tall*  
**Author:** Patricia MacLachlan  
**Grade:** 3

**Summary:** When their father invites a mail-order bride to come to live with them in their prairie home, Anna and Caleb are captivated by her and hope she will stay.

### Language Arts Connection

1. Read chapter one. Give this chapter a title. Explain why you chose this title.
2. Write a letter to your pen pal. Describe yourself. Tell what you look like, things you like to do, etc.
3. Draw a picture of what Caleb saw when Sarah arrived at their house.
4. How is Caleb and Anna's typical day different from yours? How is it similar?
5. Do you think Sarah is going to stay? Give clues that support your answer.
6. What is Sarah's cat's name? Is this a good name? Explain.

### Vocabulary/Spelling

bonnet	collection	conch	energetic
gathering	hearthstones	lantern	murmured
pesky	pitchfork	portion	prairie
sputtering	squalls	twentieth	windmill

### Library Connection

1. Other books by Patricia MacLachlan  
*Arthur for the Very First Time* 1980  
*Tomorrow's Wizard* 1982  
*Cassie Binegar* 1982  
*Unclaimed Treasure* 1984  
*The Facts and Fictions of Minna Pratt* 1988  
*Journey* 1991

### Science/Mathematics Connection

1. Using *America's Prairies* by Frank Staub as a resource, talk about different characteristics of a prairie.
2. Compare these organisms to sea plant and animals.
3. Graph the results of the students opinions on whether Sarah will stay or not.
- 4.

### Social Studies Connection

1. Talk about families. Is your family similar to Anna and Caleb's family?
2. Discuss frontier and pioneer life. How is it similar and different to the way we live today?
3. Find Maine on a map or globe. What is to the east of Maine? West? North? South?