

Patch Program

Her Story—Laura Ingalls Wilder

Purpose

This patch program was developed to encourage girls to think about the past. By exploring her story, girls can learn about themselves and reflect on what stories they are making today, tomorrow and in the future. This patch program is a great tie in with the *It's Your Story – Tell It!* journey series.

Requirements:

Complete 3 discover, 1 connect and 1 take action activity.

DISCOVER

1. Visit a historical site or exhibit featuring life in the 1880s or design your own exhibit researching important events from Laura's life and share it. Compare what you learn and see what you know about Laura's life. You can take the tours in person or take a virtual tour online. Did you know that one of Laura Ingalls Wilder's home was right here in Missouri? In fact, it's in one of the counties that is part of GSMH! Mansfield, Missouri in Wright County is where she lived for a period of time and she wrote her "*Little House*" books.
2. Cook a meal over a campfire or bake bread from an old recipe that Laura's family might have used. Hard tack (recipe below) was a popular food when traveling in the 1800s because it required easy-to-find ingredients and it did not spoil easily. Would you like to eat this for a month or two while your family traveled across the country in a covered wagon?

Recipe for Hard Tack

Ingredients:

- 2 cups of flour
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup water
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon of salt (optional)

1. Mix all the ingredients into a dough and press onto a cookie sheet to a thickness of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch.
 2. Bake in a preheated oven at 400 degrees F^o for half an hour. Don't cut now.
 3. Remove from oven, cut dough into 3-inch squares, and punch four rows of holes, four holes per row into the dough (a fork works nicely).
 4. Flip the crackers and return to the oven for another half hour.
3. Hand-sew a simple sunbonnet, apron, or patchwork square.
 4. View an authentic covered wagon or find pictures of a covered wagon and create a model from wood, paper, or other materials. Learn about the history of the Conestoga wagon.
 5. What toys did children in Laura's time have and play with? Find modern day examples of these and make a list of them. Check your local library or online for information.
 6. Using only natural items, make a craft that Laura's family may have made.
 7. Research Laura Ingalls Wilder's life. How does Laura's life compare to yours? How does it differ? Tell your family or troop about what you discover.

CONNECT

1. Do some reading. Laura Ingalls Wilder became famous for the book series she wrote about her childhood as a pioneer. Depending on your age, read or be read one of Laura's books. Have a Laura Ingalls Wilder book club discussion at one of your troop meetings.
2. Play two games that Laura played at school. Examples might include: Uncle John, Ring-Around-The-Rosey and Bean-Porridge Hot. Some other old fashioned games that you can try your hand at are Hopscotch, Hide the Thimble, Drop the Handkerchief, Blind Man's Bluff, Checkers, or Cat's Cradle.
3. Sing a song. Pa played his fiddle and sang songs in all of the "Little House" books and it was one of Laura's fondest memories. Sing some of these historic songs with your family or Girl Scout troop.
 - a. Camptown Races
 - b. Buffalo Gals
 - c. Pop Goes the Weasel
 - d. Star Spangled Banner

TAKE ACTION

1. For girls in grades K-5: Note how many toys children in Laura's time had. Compare what you have learned to how many you have. Are there toys that you no longer play with? Would other children enjoy playing with them? As a troop or family, collect toys that are no longer needed and recycle them by donating to local charities.
2. For girls in grades 6-12: Donate your time to helping at a local charity stocking toys and other items.
3. Plant a garden and grow vegetables like Laura's family did. Donate the produce to a local food pantry.
4. Research and develop a service project that connects you to Laura Ingalls Wilder. Let us know what you come up with so we can pass it on to other troops.

