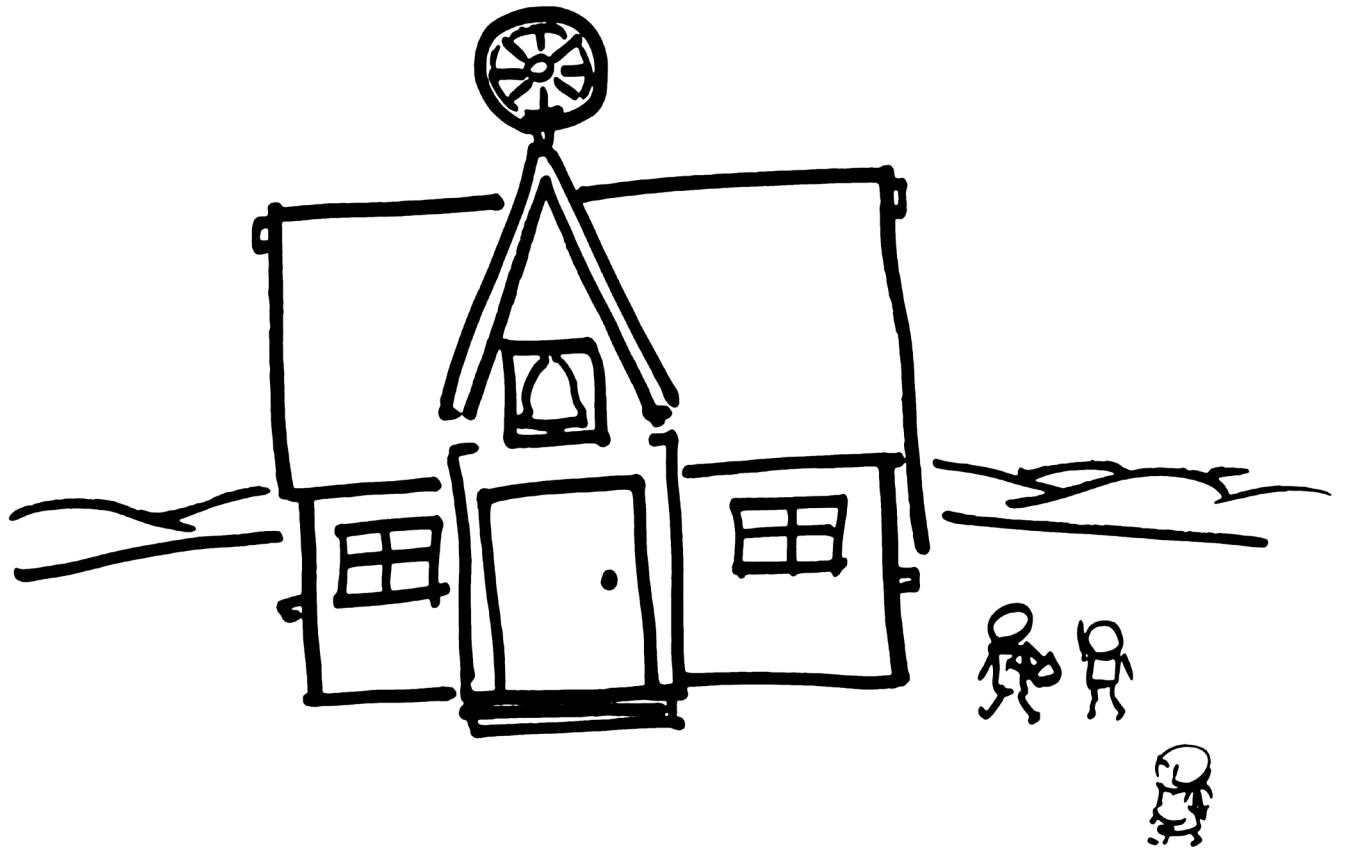


The Wheel on the School

Reading Guide

by David Kohl

For the book by Meindert DeJong



LOGOS PRESS
Elementary Literature Series

Upper Elementary Reading Guides

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Published by Logos Press
the publishing division of Logos School, Moscow, ID 83843.

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Cover Illustration: Mark Beauchamp

Excerpted from
Upper Elementary Literature: Volume IV by David Kohl.
ISBN 1-930443-52-8

About the Author

David Kohl teaches fifth grade at Logos School in Moscow, Idaho. He graduated from the University of Idaho with degrees in Wildlife Resources and Education. He has taught fifth grade at Logos School for 15 years. He is married with four children and attends Christ Church in Moscow.

Suggestions For Use

This literature guide is designed to be completed by a fifth grade student over the course of one semester. Students may certainly read more than the five books contained in this guide if they are so inclined. Five required books would be a reasonable goal for a school semester, but a lot depends on how much time - if any - you spend on projects, how much time daily you devote to reading, and what else you do in your reading program. For best results, parents may read and discuss the books and the questions with their students.

Books on the fifth grade literature list vary greatly in degree of difficulty. Your students may find some books harder to grasp than others.

Questions fall into three basic levels: literal, inferential, and evaluative; or, as someone put it, “on the lines”, “between the lines”, and “beyond the lines”. Some literal level questions have one right answer, but most questions have more possibilities.

Our typical reading period is about an hour long. First someone reads aloud to the class for 15 minutes from a book not on the literature list. It could be related to something we are studying in history, or it could be just for fun. For the remaining 45 minutes students read and answer the comprehension questions. If they finish early, they read a book of their choice.

Some editions of some books have no chapter numbers, so you may have to number them yourself.

A typical weekly cycle includes four days of new assignments; the fifth day is a catch-up day for students who need the extra time, or a free reading day for those who don't.

I require thorough, accurate answers in complete sentences, and I grade on content - which should include style - and mechanics. The questions should be thought of as more short essay than short answer.

Here are the four vocabulary steps used throughout this guide:

Vocabulary: The Four Steps

- A. Find the vocabulary word; write it in context.
- B. Guess the meaning from context; write it.
- C. Write the dictionary definition next.
- D. Finally, use the word in a sentence of your own.

Enjoy your books!

David Kohl
Moscow, ID
January 2002

The Wheel on the School

by Meindert DeJong

Name _____

Date _____

Chapters 1 - 2

1. What is the setting of the story? (time and place)

2. What does Lina decide is the reason the storks do not nest in Shora?

3. Grandmother Sibble agrees with Lina, but suggests other reasons storks don't nest there. What are they?

4. Why does Lina think the storks have already brought her luck?

5. The teacher had said if you begin to wonder why, maybe things would begin to happen.

A. What did he mean by that?

B. Explain why you agree or disagree with him.

The Wheel on the School

by Meindert DeJong

Name _____

Date _____

Chapter 3

1. Jella asked his mother why there were no storks in Shora. What did she say?

2. If what Jella's mother said was true, would there be anything that could be done? Explain why or why not.

3. If the number one reason is "no trees," why do you think they decide to begin by finding and placing a wagon wheel on top of the school?

4. Describe the storks' home when they are not in Holland, as the teacher imagines it.

The Wheel on the School

by Meindert DeJong

Name _____

Date _____

Chapter 4

1. What did Jella find in his own attic?

2. What did Jella do to make the farmer angry? Explain why it was or was not stealing.

3. Tell why the farmer was right or wrong in how he treated Jella.

4. How did the teacher manage to calm down the angry farmer?

Note: The farmer also liked bows and arrows when a boy, and he offers to teach Jella to make arrows.

5. Do the four vocabulary steps with **quavery**.

- A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
 - D. _____
-

The Wheel on the School

by Meindert DeJong

Name _____

Date _____

Chapter 5

1. How do the boys think mean old Janus lost his legs?

2. How did Janus really lose his legs?

3. Explain how Janus protects his cherry tree from birds or boys.

4. The author says, "Janus had become important . . . he had become a friend!" How did this mean old man become a friend to Pier and Dirk?

5. Do the four vocabulary steps with **dawdled**.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

The Wheel on the School

by Meindert DeJong

Name _____

Date _____

Chapter 6

1. Do the four vocabulary steps with **Providence**.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

2. How did the farmer happen to find the wheel?

3. Why does the farmer think Eelka is honest?

4. Explain how Eelka discovers he is strong.

5. What was Jella's attitude toward Eelka at the beginning of the chapter? How is it changed at the end?

The Wheel on the School

by Meindert DeJong

Name _____

Date _____

Chapter 7

1. How does Auka help the tin man get to Nes?

2. How does the author show and tell us that the tin man is very poor?

3. Explain how Auka is able to help both the tin man and the man with the brightly painted wheel.

4. Why does the man with the brightly painted wheel pay attention to Auka?

The Wheel on the School

by Meindert DeJong

Name _____

Date _____

Chapter 8

1. Briefly tell the story of Douwa's father's accident and rescue, and why there was a wheel under the boat in the first place.

2. In the space below, summarize the rest of the chapter.

The Wheel on the School

by Meindert DeJong

Name _____

Date _____

Chapters 9 - 10 no written work

Chapter 11

1. How does the author make the storm seem strong and terrible? Write down three or four examples of descriptive writing. (For example, he says the wind "...tossed them up like paper," and the wind made "a moaning, wolfish howl.")

2. Why does Lina's mother know that her father will go to church, even though he's exhausted? (The other fishermen feel similarly.)

3. How does the author let us know that Janus does not regularly attend church and feels somewhat embarrassed to be there?

Answer Key

The Wheel on the School

Chapters 1 - 2

1. What is the setting of the story? (time and place)

The story takes place in Shora, a tiny fishing village in Holland, on the shore of the North Sea. It doesn't seem to be modern times, but perhaps not too long ago.

2. What does Lina decide is the reason the storks do not nest in Shora?

"Our roofs are too sharp!"

3. Grandmother Sibble agrees with Lina, but suggests other reasons storks don't nest there. What are they?

She suggests lack of trees, storms, and salt spray.

4. Why does Lina think the storks have already brought her luck?

The storks had made a friend for her, Grandmother Sibble.

5. The teacher had said if you begin to wonder why, maybe things would begin to happen.

A. What did he mean by that? *opinion*

B. Explain why you agree or disagree with him. *opinion*

Chapter 3

1. Jella asked his mother why there were no storks in Shora. What did she say?

Storks don't come to Shora because they never did.

2. If what Jella's mother said was true, would there be anything that could be done? Explain why or why not.

Nothing could be done. They go back to the same nesting spots year after year. So if they didn't nest there, they never will, Jella's mother said.

3. If the number one reason is "no trees," why do you think they decide to begin by finding and placing a wagon wheel on top of the school? *possible: Trees take a long time to grow, so it would be much faster to put a wagon wheel on top of the school.*

4. Describe the storks' home when they are not in Holland, as the teacher imagines it.

He imagines the head of a big river deep in Africa, where the river is swampy. Nearby are zebras, lions, hippopotamuses and other animals.

Chapter 4

1. What did Jella find in his own attic? *Jella found a bow.*

2. What did Jella do to make the farmer angry? Explain why it was or was not stealing.

Jella found a wheel on a farm. He forced it loose from the mud and took it. The farmer said he stole it. The second part is opinion.

3. Tell why the farmer was right or wrong in how he treated Jella.

possible: The farmer was wrong to treat Jella as a thief. Jella had called out all over the farm, and he left a note with his name on it, saying he would return the wheel.

4. How did the teacher manage to calm down the angry farmer?

The teacher tells the farmer he looks like a man of understanding and reminds him that boys sometimes do foolish things; he explains the stork nesting project too.

5. (Vocabulary)

Chapter 5

1. How do the boys think mean old Janus lost his legs? *Pier and Dirk think a shark bit off Janus's legs.*

2. How did Janus really lose his legs?

A mosquito bit his legs. He scratched the bites and got blood poisoning. Since he delayed going to the doctor, they had to amputate his legs.

3. Explain how Janus protects his cherry tree from birds or boys.

His yard was surrounded by a high board fence studded with nails and broken glass. Janus sat in his wheel chair near the cherry tree and threw rocks at the birds or boys.

4. The author says, "Janus had become important . . . he had become a friend!" How did this mean old man become a friend to Pier and Dirk?

possible: Pier and Dirk tell him about their search for a wheel and admit they might have stolen some cherries while they were at it. They ask about his legs. Since they get to know each other they become friends.

5. (Vocabulary)

Chapter 6

1. (Vocabulary)

2. How did the farmer happen to find the wheel?

Eelka was snooping around trying to find a wheel. To keep an eye on him on the next farm, the farmer climbed into the hayloft of his old second barn and stumbled on an ancient wheel.

3. Why does the farmer think Eelka is honest?

“Fat, slow kids are usually pretty honest. They have to be; they can’t run away.”

4. Explain how Eelka discovers he is strong.

Eelka pulled Jella out of the canal, and he had held the ancient wheel up in the barn until the rope broke.

5. What was Jella’s attitude toward Eelka at the beginning of the chapter? How is it changed at the end?

Jella had viewed Eelka with some contempt. Now he respects him and is grateful.

Chapter 7

1. How does Auka help the tin man get to Nes?

The tin man’s wagon wheel was held together by pieces of wire which quickly wore through and had to be replaced. Auka twisted pieces of wire around the old wheel so the tin man didn’t have to stop and get down.

2. How does the author show and tell us that the tin man is very poor?

He only patched a few pots and pans. In Shora, only Janus bought anything, and that was only some scraps. He didn’t earn enough to buy as much as a spoke. “What can you do without money?” he said.

3. Explain how Auka is able to help both the tin man and the man with the brightly painted wheel.

Auka arranged for Evert to trade his new and painted wheel to the tin man for his wagon, and the tin man traded his old beat up wheel to Evert for the storks.

4. Why does the man with the brightly painted wheel pay attention to Auka?

Auka was very persistent and unusual, “bothering his head about other people’s troubles.”

Chapter 8

1. Briefly tell the story of Douwa’s father’s accident and rescue, and why there was a wheel under the boat in the first place.

Douwa’s father was a fisherman, but he hated the sea, and it made him seasick. Having a wagon wheel on the boat gave him comfort. A storm destroyed the fleet. A week after the storm, his father’s boat came back upside down. His father was still alive under the boat; Douwa cut him out and rescued him.

2. In the space below, summarize the rest of the chapter.

Douwa went to get the saw and shovel. Lina dashed off to the school to get help. They had to work fast and beat the tide and the coming storm. No one was at school, so Lina came back and helped Douwa get on the boat, then saw and dig. Douwa told some women to get a horse and wagon, both to get them and to get the waterlogged wheel to shore too. The tide was rising as Douwa and Lina waited on the upturned boat.

Chapters 9 - 10 no written work

Chapter 11

1. How does the author make the storm seem strong and terrible? Write down three or four examples of descriptive writing. (For example, he says the wind “...tossed them up like paper,” and the wind made “a moaning, wolfish howl.”)

possible: “The wind thundered up out of the North Sea, howled down the narrow street of Shora, shrieked under the heavy roof tiles, and made roaring sounds down the wide chimneys - the roar of a giant.”

2. Why does Lina’s mother know that her father will go to church, even though he’s exhausted? (The other fishermen feel similarly.)

Lina’s mother said, “Oh, he’ll be there. You can believe he’ll be there out of sheer gratitude for beating that storm to shore.”

3. How does the author let us know that Janus does not regularly attend church and feels somewhat embarrassed to be there?

Janus said, “Not too far down the aisle now. Not up to the pulpit, I’m not going to preach the sermon. Let’s stay in the back a little. I don’t want them all to get heart failure - Janus in church!” The people nudged one another and looked at him in unbelief.

Chapters 12 - 13 no written work

Chapter 14

1. Summarize chapter 14 in the space below:

The storm was almost over, so the fishermen went back to sea and the children went back to school. The teacher realized he had not wound the clock in the tower during the storm, so he began climbing the tower. He had left the iron door to the tower wide open, and the gate to the churchyard around the tower was open too.

The tots Linda and Jan went into the tower and the teacher locked it, not realizing they were there. Linda and Jan climbed up to get toward the light and finally reached the clock loft. Linda spotted two live storks.

Meanwhile people realized the tots were missing and searched for them. Jella and Lina found two storks that the storm had drowned. Linda saw Lina and Jella and yelled from the tower. Lina told Linda to strike the bell with a rock. Linda and Jan both did. Then people came and rescued them.

Chapter 15

1. Summarize chapter 15:

Linda and Jan finally persuaded the older people that there were two live storks in the water. With Janus lashed into the boat and rowing, several people raced to beat the tide and rescue the half-dead storks. They warmed the storks in the school house and then put them on the wheel on the school. The storks began nesting. There were storks nesting in Shora at last!

2. Explain why you liked or disliked the book, and give several specific reasons to support your like or dislike.
opinion