

Answers to Student Questions

Excerpt One -- Clearing the Land

1. Cut trees on their land; 2. With neighbors the Pardees; 3. Bark of black ash trees; 4. Covered with trees, a forest; 5. Trees all around home shaded it early in morning and most of afternoon; 6. A pair of or two oxen; 7. Provide milk, cream and butter; 8. For all the hard, physical labor needed to prepare raw materials, build house, clear land and plant crops; 9. Father needed to know or learn how to-- handle and sharpen an axe, safely fell trees, assemble logs into house, peel bark for roof, attach roof, care for animals like oxen and cow, plant and raise crops.

Excerpt Two -- Mosquitoes

1. The very wet ground; 2. They carried them on their shoulders; 3. They stopped the cow and oxen from wandering away from the house; 4. The smoke from fires; 5. Yes, but they chased him until he got near his house; 6. The mosquitoes didn't like to leave the shade of the trees; 7. Their wings make a humming sound; 8. It made smoke that filled the room; 9. There were no screens on the windows or door; 10. Trees were cut down and land was drained of water.

Excerpt Three --Troublesome Indian

1. To get fire-water, or alcohol, to drink; 2. To brag about things he had done; 3. He did not respect him because he seemed afraid; 4. Kill and scalp him; 5. Father wanted to kill the Indian before the Indian killed him; 6. Mother; 7. Of natural causes; 8. John Pardee, the Nowlin's neighbor; 9. He had cut down a tree the Indian thought belonged to him; 10. No, they were always afraid.

Excerpt Four --Loneliness

1. After the family moved to Michigan; 2. Back to her home to visit friends; 3. That he was moving to Michigan with his wife; 4. Mother's sister, Abbie; 5. It cheered her up; 6. In Ohio; 7. 40 acres; 8. Along the creek; 9. That groups of families, towns, stores and schools were getting closer to them and had almost reached them; 10. You would probably be lonely for other children and would miss relatives and old friends.

Excerpt Five -- Cowbell

1. A bell; 2. So that the family could hear where she was going; 3. Walked for a way in the direction that they went and listened for the bell; 4. Yelled at them and threw a stick to get them moving; 5. Take any answers on this...instinct, sense of smell, ability to navigate by sun, stars; 6. Four days; 7. An Indian; 8. By following their tracks; 9. A silver half-dollar and father's thanks; 10. Because the family depended on them so much (for milk, work in the fields, and perhaps meat) **and** they were fond of them.

Excerpt Six -- Wild Animals

1. Deer, wolves and bear; 2. Could see them, see their foot tracks, see where they had eaten or slept; 3. Two wolves; 4. Deer hair laying on the snow; 5. Two bare spots where hair had been; 6. They thought the bear was their mother, father or brother; 7. Dropped down, walked a distance, jumped over a hedge and disappeared into the woods; 8. Yes, because they didn't expect to see it and it was big and dangerous; 9. The tracks of the bear near the window; 10. Four feet away.

Excerpt Seven --Life in our House

1. Just one; 2. Two windows; 3. Cooked food, baked bread, sewed and mended clothing; 4. He meant they had big appetites and were hungry at meals; 5. Curtains that hung around the bed; 6. On the top shelves of the family cupboard; 7. In the attic; 8. It had short sleeves and he wore it to work hard in hot weather; 9. Not as much as a big house, but it was harder work because they had no vacuum cleaners, cleaning solutions or other modern cleaning tools; 10. Sewed, cooked, baked, scrubbed the tabletop with ashes, washed and dried laundry, watched children, and other things kids might think of.

Excerpt Eight -- Making Space for Crops

1. By cutting brush around the edge of the ridge; 2. His son, William; 3. Two acres (about the size of a football field); 4. They tried to burn them; 5. A handspike; 6. Yes, no, who knows; 7. Seeds; 8. An ax; 9. The trees that grew there before they were cut down; 10. For enough space and so that the crops could get sunlight (the trees shaded the land) and water (the trees roots absorbed much water)