



A Land of Opportunity

6_A

Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes

Making Predictions About the Read-Aloud

5 minutes

On a U.S. map, show students the area that makes up the Midwest of the United States. Also show students the area of Northern Europe (Germany, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark) on a world map or globe. Tell students that today's read-aloud is about two immigrants from Northern Europe who moved to the countryside in the Midwest. Tell students that they moved to a farm in the state of Wisconsin. Tell students that other immigrants moved to nearby states, including Minnesota. Help students locate Wisconsin and Minnesota on a U.S. map. Ask students to predict how living in the countryside as an immigrant might be different from living in the city.

Vocabulary Preview

5 minutes

Midwest

1. The characters, Lars and Karin, in today's read-aloud emigrated from Sweden to the *Midwest* in the United States.
2. Say the word *Midwest* with me three times.
3. [Point out the Midwestern region of the U.S. on a map: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.] The Midwest is the northern central part of the United States.
4. In the Midwest there is plenty of land on which to farm.
5. [Help students write *Midwest*, which is circled on their *Immigration U.S. Map*.] Let's write the word *Midwest* on your maps, where it belongs. Show your partner where the East Coast, West Coast, and Midwest are located on your maps.



Homestead

← **Show Image 6A-1**

1. In today's read-aloud you will hear that Lars and Karin decided to settle in the Midwest because they could live and work on their own *homestead*.
2. Say the word *homestead* with me three times.
3. A homestead is land that someone settles on to live and farm.
4. Many families moved West where there was enough land to build their homesteads.
5. [Show additional images of homestead in the Midwest.] How would you describe this homestead? Why do you think people need a large piece of land to build their homestead?

Purpose for Listening

Tell students to listen carefully to find out whether or not their predictions are correct.



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← Show image 6A-1: Lars with dirt in hand, with Karin

Lars and Karin Andersson looked out over the field. The rich, dark brown soil of Wisconsin reminded them of the best farmland back in Sweden. Lars knelt down and scooped up some dirt in his hand, and Karin thought, “Lars can ‘read’ the soil the way some people can read books. Somehow he knows if it is good or bad for growing crops.”

1 *Land* means an area of ground. Lars will turn this land into farmland. *Land* can also mean to come down out of the air, as an airplane or a bird does.

Now Lars stood up. “This is fine land,” he told his wife.¹ She could hear excitement in his voice. “Here we will grow wheat and corn. Over there,” he said pointing, “we can raise dairy cows for milk and butter.”

Karin walked a few feet away and said, “And over here we can build a house and raise a family.”

“Yes,” Lars agreed, “that is the most important thing of all.”



← Show image 6A-2: Poor European farmers

The Anderssons, like many other immigrants who settled in the American Midwest, came from Northern Europe. This means they emigrated from countries like Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and other nearby European nations and then moved to the United States.² These immigrants brought with them their knowledge of farming and a strong sense of working together as families and as neighbors.

2 [Ask a volunteer to point to the countries mentioned on a world map or globe.]

Immigrants like the Anderssons came to the United States because they could not own land in Europe. In Europe, kings and princes kept tight control over who was allowed to buy and own land. People who were not friends of the king, or of a rich nobleman or noblewoman whose family had owned land for many years, had trouble buying farmland. Without owning farmland, it was hard for many people in Northern Europe to make a living.³ Friends of the Anderssons who had already settled in Wisconsin

3 How do you think you might feel if you had to be friends with the king in order to own land?

and nearby Minnesota had written letters back home to Sweden saying, “Join us in America! Things are different here in the United States. Here you don’t have to be the king’s friend to buy and own land; you just have to be willing to work very hard.”



← **Show image 6A-3: Abraham Lincoln**⁴

4 Who remembers the name of this U.S. president?

5 One acre of land is almost the same size as an American football field. Can you imagine owning and farming 160 football fields worth of land?

6 according to the law

During the American Civil War, in 1862, the American government under President Lincoln gave huge amounts of government-controlled land to homesteaders. A **homestead** is land someone settles on to live and farm. The government made it easy for farmers to own as much as 160 acres of land, which was more than enough for a successful farm.⁵ A homesteader had to build a house on the land and farm the land for at least five years. At the end of that time, for a fee of eighteen dollars, the person or family would **legally** own the land.⁶

Many different people could become homesteaders. For example, unmarried men or women could become homesteaders. People coming to America as immigrants could become homesteaders. The United States gave all sorts of people a chance to own land and make a new life. Millions of people from across the United States and immigrants from many other nations came to the Midwest to lend their farming skills and worked hard to build up the United States.



← **Show image 6A-4: Lars and Karin coming to Wisconsin**

7 Many people had to sell everything they owned in order to afford to immigrate to the United States. [Ask a volunteer to point to Wisconsin on a U.S. map.] What immigration center do you think they went through?

With the hope of owning land and making a better life for themselves and their children, Karin and Lars sold nearly everything they owned in Sweden, bought tickets to America, crossed the sea on a ship, and ended up among the low, gently rolling hills of Wisconsin.⁷

Now that they had made it to Wisconsin, they had to decide what to do with their land. Lars said to Karin, “We will leave that patch of forest for now and start with the land that is already cleared. We will get a mule and a plow to loosen the soil and get the land ready to plant. To afford this, we will have to borrow some money and add that to the money we still have left from Sweden.”



← **Show image 6A-5: Lars and Karin working on their farm**

“And we will build a house,” Karin said. “It doesn’t have to be a big one. We can add on to it later when we’re more settled and have earned more money.”

And that is what they did. All across the Midwest of the United States, other immigrant farmers were doing the same things—working hard and starting a new life. Working long, hard hours, immigrants and other homesteaders turned the American Midwest into some of the finest farmland on Earth, pitching in to help one another through hard times, and sharing the joy of one another’s successes in this new land. With the help of their neighbors, the Anderssons built a house partly shaded by the trees they had decided to leave standing. They built a barn and painted it red. They grew wheat and corn to sell, and paid back the money they owed. They watched over every dollar they earned and every penny they spent. In time, both the little house and their family grew bigger. They now had a boy, Stefan, and two girls, Ingrid and Margareta.



← **Show image 6A-6: Family getting ready**

One day, five years after they arrived in the United States and claimed their land, the Anderssons were ready to pay their eighteen dollars so that their land, along with their house, barn, and farmland, would be theirs—**officially** approved by those in charge. That morning, the whole family took turns bathing in the large metal tub in the kitchen, into which they poured warm water heated on the stove.⁸ Because it was such a special day, they dressed in their best clothes, which they usually saved for church. Karin even dressed up little Margareta in her best outfit. Then Lars said, “It is time. Everyone get into the wagon.” With a cry of “Git up!” to the two mules he had hitched to the front of the wagon, Lars shook the reins, and they started down the five miles of dirt road toward town. As they passed each neighboring farm, the neighbors waved and called out, “Congratulations, Karin!” or “We’re proud of you, Lars!”⁹ Karin and Lars waved back and smiled—they were grateful for the **support** of their neighbors.

8 Remember, this story takes place in the late 1800s before there were bathtubs and showers like we have today.

9 How do you think the Anderssons felt?



← **Show image 6A-7: Mr. Ellgard congratulating the family**

At last the Anderssons reached town. Lars stopped the wagon in front of a government building and helped Karin and the children from the wagon. They walked inside and up to the counter. Proudly, Lars told the clerk, “Good morning, Mr. Ellgard. We have come to claim our land.”

Less than five minutes later, Mr. Ellgard smiled and held out his hand to shake.

“Congratulations, Lars,” he said. “Congratulations, Karin.” Then he turned to the two oldest children, Stefan and Ingrid, and said, “And congratulations to you, too. Thanks to your mother and father, one day you will own the land, too.” And Lars and Karin Andersson, farmers and now official landowners, proudly walked out the door and took their family home.

Discussing the Read-Aloud

15 minutes

Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

1. *Evaluative* Were your predictions correct about how life for immigrants who settled in the countryside was different than life in the city? Why or why not? (Answers may vary.)
2. *Literal* Where did Lars and Karin emigrate from or leave? (Sweden, in Northern Europe)
3. *Inferential* Why did Lars and Karin settle in the Midwest rather than in a big city? (They wanted to own their own land for farming and could not farm in a big city in the United States.)
4. *Literal* What pull factor brought Lars and Karin and other immigrants from Northern Europe to the Midwest? (the opportunity to own their own land for farming)
5. *Inferential* Why was the United States a “land of opportunity” for Lars and Karin? (They would be able to own their own land and make a better life for themselves and their children.)
6. *Evaluative* How would America be different today if immigrants like Lars and Karin did not settle in the Midwest? (Answers may vary.)

7. *Evaluative* Compare and contrast the new lives of immigrants to the Midwest like the Anderssons and the new lives of Chinese immigrants to the West Coast like Lin Wen and his father as described in “Gold Mountain.” (Answers may vary.)
8. *Evaluative* Did this story take place long ago or is it a modern story? (long ago) How do you know? (traveled in a wagon, bathed in a metal tub, etc.)

[Please continue to model the *Think Pair Share* process for students, as necessary, and scaffold students in their use of the process.]

I am going to ask a question. I will give you a minute to think about the question, and then I will ask you to turn to your neighbor and discuss the question. Finally, I will call on several of you to share what you discussed with your partner.

9. *Evaluative Think Pair Share:* If you were an immigrant during the 1880s to 1920s, where do you think you might have lived: the city, or the countryside? Why? (Answers may vary.)
10. After hearing today’s read-aloud and questions and answers, do you have any remaining questions? [If time permits, you may wish to allow for individual, group, or class research of the text and/or other resources to answer these questions.]

Word Work: Support

5 minutes

1. In the read-aloud you heard, “Lars and Karin waved back and smiled—they were grateful for the support of their neighbors.”
2. Say the word *support* with me.
3. *Support* is the help or encouragement you give to someone, especially during hard times.
4. The homesteaders offered support to their new neighbors in creating their farms by letting them borrow some tools and volunteering to help them plow and plant seeds.
5. Is there someone at home or at school who has given you support in doing something? For example, “Aunt Jenny gives me support on my homework.” Try to use the word *support* when you tell about this person.

[Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students' responses: " _____ has given me support by . . . "]

6. What's the word we've been talking about?

Use a *Discussion* activity for follow-up. Directions: [Split students into five small groups. Assign each small group a point.] We will review the ways different groups and people gave support the immigrants who moved to America. In your small group, make a list or draw a picture of how this group or person gave support the immigrants when they first moved to the United States.

1. How did the Native Americans give support to the Pilgrims?
2. How did Charles Steinmetz's friend, Oscar, give support to Charles?
3. How did Uncle Brendan give support to Sean and Fiona's family?
4. How did Mr. Wong give support to Lin Wen and his father?
5. How did homesteaders in the Midwest give support to one another?



Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day



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Note: Extensions may have activity options that exceed the time allocated for this part of the lesson. To remain within the time periods allocated for this portion of the lesson, you will need to make conscious choices about which activities to include based on the needs of your students.

Extensions

20 minutes

↔ Multiple Meaning Word Activity

5 minutes

Definition Detective: Land

Note: You may choose to have students hold up one, two, or three fingers to indicate which image shows the meaning being described, or have a student walk up to the poster and point to the image being described.

1. In the read-aloud you heard the word *land* in this sentence, “This is fine *land*. . . Here we will grow wheat and corn. Over there, we can raise dairy cows.”
2. With your partner, think of as many meanings or ways you can use the word *land*.
3. [Show Poster 3M (Land).] Which picture on the poster shows the way *land* is used in the read-aloud?
4. *Land* also means other things. *Land* means to return or go back down to the ground. Which picture shows this meaning of *land*?
5. *Land* also means a country or nation. For example, America is a land of opportunity. Which picture shows this meaning of *land*?
6. Did you or your partner think of any of these definitions?
7. Now quiz your partner on the different meanings of *land*. For example you could say, “America is a land of many freedoms. Which *land* am I?” And your partner should say, “That’s number ‘2.’”

Adjectives and Adverbs

Note: The purpose of these syntactic activities is to help students understand the direct connection between grammatical structures and the meaning of text. These syntactic activities should be used in conjunction with the complex text presented in the read-alouds. There may be variations in the sentences created by your class. Allow for these variations, and restate students' sentences so that they are grammatical.

1. We know that some words describe other words.
Words that describe nouns—people, places or things—are called adjectives.
Words that describe verbs—action words—are called adverbs.
2. In the read-aloud you heard Lars and Karin's neighbors say, "We're *proud* of you, Lars." Proud is an adjective that means feeling pleased and happy for someone else. Who does *proud* describe? (the neighbors)
Proud is an adjective that describes a noun—*the neighbors*.
3. In the read-aloud you also heard, "Lars and Karin, now official landowners, *proudly* walked out [of the office] and took their family home."
Proudly is an adverb that means an action is done in a way that shows the person is pleased and happy with himself or herself. What action does *proudly* describe? (*walk*)
Proudly is an adverb that describes a verb—*walk*.
4. I will ask some questions. If my question asks you to describe a noun, use an adjective in your answer. If my question asks you to describe a verb—an action—use an adverb in your answer. [Place stress on the italicized words.] (Answers may vary. Suggested answers have been provided.)
 - How did Lars and Karin *walk* out the office? (Lars and Karin walked proudly.)
 - How did Lars and Karin's *neighbors* feel about Lars and Karin becoming landowners? (The neighbors were proud of Lars and Karin.)

- What is the *countryside* like? (The countryside is large, vast, spacious, fertile, green, etc.)
 - What is a big *city* like? (A big city is busy, crowded, noisy, bustling, etc.)
 - How do you think *immigrants* felt when they first arrived in America? (Immigrants felt hopeful, happy, tired, exhausted, grateful, etc.)
 - How did some people treat the immigrants? (Some people treated the immigrants hostilely.)
5. What are words that describe nouns called? (Adjectives describe nouns.)
What are the words that describe verbs—action words—called? (Adverbs describe verbs.)

↔ Vocabulary Instructional Activity

5 minutes

Word Work: Congratulations

1. In the read-aloud you heard that as Lars, Karin, and their family passed each neighboring farm, the neighbors waved and called out, “*Congratulations, Karin!*”
2. Say the word *congratulations* with me three times.
3. *Congratulations* is what someone says to express good wishes and praise to another person.
4. Many people said, “Congratulations!” when they found out that Marie’s mother was pregnant. They also said “Congratulations!” to Marie because she was going to be a big sister.
5. Has anyone ever said “Congratulations!” to you before? Why did that person say “Congratulations!” to you?
[Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students’ responses: “Someone said, ‘Congratulations!’ to me for . . .”]
6. What’s the word we’ve been talking about?

Use a *Sharing and Drawing* activity for follow-up. Directions: With your partner, make a list of when you would say,

“Congratulations!” to someone else.

[Suggestions: You say “Congratulations!” when someone gets married; has a baby; passes a test; wins a prize; graduates; wins a race.]

Optional Activity

Have students think of someone to whom they would like to say, “Congratulations!” Then have them design and write a congratulatory greeting card for that person.

Push and Pull Factors: Lars and Karin

10 minutes

- Review push and pull factors with students by asking the following questions:
- What are push factors? (reasons that cause people to leave their home country)
What are some examples of push factors? (hardships, lack of food, lack of freedom, no jobs)
- What are pull factors? (reasons that cause people to come to a new country)
What are some examples of pull factors? (better jobs, enough food to eat, better education, freedom)
- Help students find the pictures related to Lars and Karin on the image sheet. Read the following sentence: “It was very hard for Lars and Karin to own land and make a living in Sweden.”
Ask: “Is this a push factor or pull factor?” (It is a push factor because it was very hard to own land in Sweden.)
Then read the sentence: “Lars and Karin could own land and have their own farm in America.”
Ask: “Is this a push factor or pull factor?” (It is a pull factor because Lars and Karin had the opportunity to use their farming skills and own their own land.)
- Have students cut out the images related to Lars and Karin and paste them on to the correct charts.
- Review the information on the Push Factors Chart and the Pull Factors Chart.

***E Pluribus Unum* Puzzle**

(Piece #6—Instructional Master 6B-1)

20 minutes

- Ask students what the phrase *e pluribus unum* means. (“out of many, one”)
Ask students why *e pluribus unum* is a good motto for the United States. (Many different immigrants have come to the United States from different countries and made America one great country.)
- Have students recall important details from today’s read-aloud. You may prompt discussion with the following questions:
 - What country were Lars and Karin from? (Sweden)
 - What push and pull factors brought the Anderssons to the United States? (Push factor: They could not own farmland in Sweden, making it hard for them to earn a living. Pull factor: They would be able to own their own land for farming.)
 - What contributions did immigrants in the Midwest make to the United States? (They turned the land in the Midwest into very good and rich farmland.)
 - What did it mean to be a homesteader? (A homesteader is someone who settles on a homestead, or land on which the homesteader must build a house and farm for five years before the homesteader can buy the homestead.)
- Give students Instructional Master 6B-1. Tell students that they will be designing the sixth and final piece of the puzzle.
 - First, they should write a word or phrase about the main topic of the read-aloud in the box (e.g., Midwest, homestead, farmland, Swedish immigrants, Lars and Karin.)
 - Next, they should write one or two sentences about what they have learned, using the word or phrase in the box. They should write the sentence within the puzzle piece.
 - Then, students may either draw a picture about their sentences or shade in and design their puzzle piece.
 - Finally, students should share their writing with their partner, small group, or home-language peers.