

# THE BOXCAR<sup>®</sup> CHILDREN



## Book One Lesson Plans

---

# Welcome to The Boxcar Children for the Classroom!



We are excited to offer these lesson plans about the first Boxcar Children book!

We love this classic series, as the books are fun, age-appropriate, and wholesome—and it is full of great teachable opportunities. More than just adventure or mystery books, the books are about hard work and leadership, anticipating and serving the needs of others, building relationships, and choosing redemption instead of condemnation whenever possible. This first book in the series features the Alden children, who are on an adventure and make admirable, empathetic choices along the way. These lesson plans will help you to use *The Boxcar Children* to teach literacy skills and concepts, and along the way children will also learn how to understand the motivations and feelings of others, how to understand the decisions that others make, and how having empathy for others can affect our own decisions and behavior.

We designed the plans to be extremely turnkey and easy to implement. We have done the research to save you the time! We offer variety in our approach to each lesson to reach all types of learners--those who love reading and those who aren't yet sure.

We want your students to get to know the Alden children and to enjoy their time spent with them! We hope your students can see some of themselves in the children, and that they can imagine themselves in the boxcar children's world.

## Common Core Alignment

The lesson plans are particularly appropriate for 2nd through 4th grade. You will find many Common Core literature standards addressed throughout the plans, particularly relating to these grade levels. We are sure you can adapt the plans to be most suitable for the reading level of your students. Regarding standards addressed, in particular, you will find a heavy focus on:

**2.2 and 3.2.** Recounting the story and determining a central lesson, message, or moral (and for 3.2, explain how it is conveyed through details in the text). Because the Alden children constantly make empathetic choices, we call heavy attention throughout the plans to the lessons a reader can learn.

**2.3, 3.3, 4.3.** Describe how characters respond to challenges (2.3), how that contributes to the sequence of events (3.3), and describing in depth characters and settings (4.3). The Alden children and the cast of characters in this book are rich with detail and worth getting to know. And the various settings can come to life for students—our plans offer the historical context that students will need to understand where and when the story takes place.

**2.5 and 3.5.** Describe the structure of the story and the sequence, how it builds. Because the plans are built chapter by chapter, it will be easy for students to understand and watch the story gradually build from beginning to end. In many lessons, we ask students to predict what will happen next based on what has happened.

**2.6 and 3.6.** Distinguish the difference in point of view of the characters (2.6), as well as their own point of view (3.6). We take a close look at characters and how they are perceived throughout the book. In discussion or journal time, we ask students to offer opinions about what they would do and how they would handle particular situations.

# The Lesson Plan Setup

We imagine the plans to work best as a 3-week unit, but this can be adjusted to a shorter time period by picking and choosing plans. Each lesson plan will likely take 30–45 minutes. The lesson plans include Large Projects that work best after Chapter 4 and after Chapter 8, and 15 lesson plans total: a lesson plan for each chapter, and a Before We Begin and Closing plan. Teachers can read a chapter each day with their class for 3 weeks or have children read on their own. As a reward, we encourage you to watch the Boxcar Children animated movie at the end of the unit.

Some lesson plan features you will see include:

## **By George, I've got it!:**

This is a short comprehension piece to be sure students understand and are following details from the chapter. These come in the form of question and answer, true/false, multiple choice, sequencing, and matchups.

## **A main activity:**

Every day students will complete one activity. Examples include character spotlights, mapping settings, food math, art and inventions, and even some historical context. The activities are designed to help students dive into and understand the story and character and author choices, to compare their world to the world that unfolds in the book, and to be fun and engaging.

## **Word detective:**

Students will learn a vocabulary word from the chapter, including the quote where it was used. Some included in Teacher's Guide only.

## **History clue:**

Students can take a look back at the time the book was written to learn more about what is happening in the story. Some included in Teacher's Guide only.

## **Let's work it out:**

Discussion questions for a large or small group or for a student journal about what happened, why certain choices were made, and what choices students would have made or how they would have reacted if they were in the same situation. Included in Teacher's Guide only.

## **I predict...:**

Students will make a guess about what will happen next.

(Note the “detective” theme. While this book isn't a mystery, the rest of the 144 books are! We hope your students grow to love the boxcar children and continue on with the rest of the books on their own. Throughout the series, the Alden children remain true to themselves, getting to know the people that they meet along the way, anticipating and serving the needs of others, building relationships, and developing empathy.)

*Enjoy your time with the Alden children in your classroom!*

# Before We Begin.

- **Word detective:** Boxcar: A boxcar is a completely enclosed freight car on a train.

- **I predict...:**

1. Take a look at the front cover.

What do you think the title means? What would make a child a “boxcar child”?

Where do you think this story takes place?

When do you think this story takes place? When do you think this story was written?

2. Take a look at the Table of Contents.

How many chapters are in this book?

What is one main character’s name?

- **History clue:** Who is Gertrude Chandler Warner?

Gertrude Chandler Warner lived from 1890-1979. She wrote the children’s version of The Boxcar Children in 1942. This is probably before or around the time your grandparents were born! They may have read this book as children.

As a child, Gertrude Chandler Warner loved to read, write, and play the cello. She wrote The Boxcar Children because throughout her life she had imagined how delightful it would be to live in a caboose or freight car. She wrote 18 Boxcar Children books.

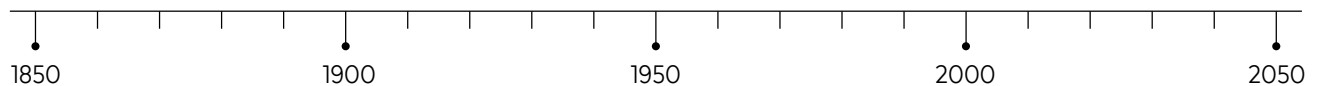
1. Complete this timeline by putting the letters in the following locations:

A. Year Gertrude Chandler was born.

C. Year you were born.

B. Year she wrote Boxcar Children.

D. This year.



# Chapter 1. The Four Hungry Children

- **Teacher Summary:** The Alden children's parents have died, and they are running away from their grandfather, who they think is a bad man. They enter the bakery and offer to trade work for a place to sleep for the night. Henry and Jessie overhear the baker say she would like to keep them and send Benny to a Children's Home, so they escape in the middle of the night.

- **By George, I've got it!** Use complete sentences to explain what happened in the chapter.

Why do the children enter the bakery?

Why do they decide to leave in the middle of the night?

- **History clue:** Children's Home. In the 1940s, an orphanage was often called a Children's Home. An orphanage was a place where children could live if they didn't have parents or if their parents couldn't afford to take care of them.

- **Word detective:** Cross. Angry and annoyed. Ill-humored. Snaps in anger easily. *"So she came to the front of the bakery and listened, looking very cross."*

- **Let's work it out.** Look on the bright side. Let's talk about the baker's wife. Benny says, *"She doesn't like us."* Jessie says, *"She is good to let us sleep here."* How could Benny tell the baker's wife didn't like them? Why did the baker's wife let them sleep there? Jessie sees the bright side of the baker's wife. Have you ever seen the bright side of someone who is cross?

- **Character spotlight: The Baker's Wife.**

The Baker's Wife does not like children, especially boys. She says the children can stay, but only after they offer to wash the dishes.

An adjective is a descriptive word. Circle the adjectives that you would use to describe The Baker's Wife.

Cross      Kind      Loving      Sweet      Angry      Caring      Selfish

Choose one adjective from above and write a sentence that explains why it is the best word to describe the Baker's Wife.

Jessie describes the baker's wife as good. What did the baker's wife do that was good?

Draw a picture of how you imagine the baker's wife.

# Chapter 2. Night Is Turned into Day.

- **Teacher Summary:** The children travel at night and sleep during the day. They sleep at a farm in hay. There, they hear the baker and his wife pass and say they are going to look for the kids in Greenfield. The children head toward Silver City, and the second night they sleep in the woods on pine needles.

- **By George, I've got it!**

Circle the names of the two older Alden children.

- A. Henry
- B. James
- C. Benny
- D. Jessie

Circle the names of the two younger Alden children.

- A. Jessie
- B. Violet
- C. Gertrude
- D. Benny

Why do the children decide to head toward Silver City instead of Greenfield?

- A. They think it sounds like a fun place.
- B. They want to get away from the baker and his wife.
- C. They want to follow the baker and his wife.
- D. Their favorite color is silver.

- **History clue: Water pump.** Before hoses and sink faucets were common, people would hand pump their water. A pump was connected to a well of water underground, and raising and lowering a lever would force water out of the hand pump.

- **Word detective: Brook.** A small, natural stream of fresh water. *"They jumped over a brook, and then they came to a haystack."*

- **Let's work it out: The easy route?**

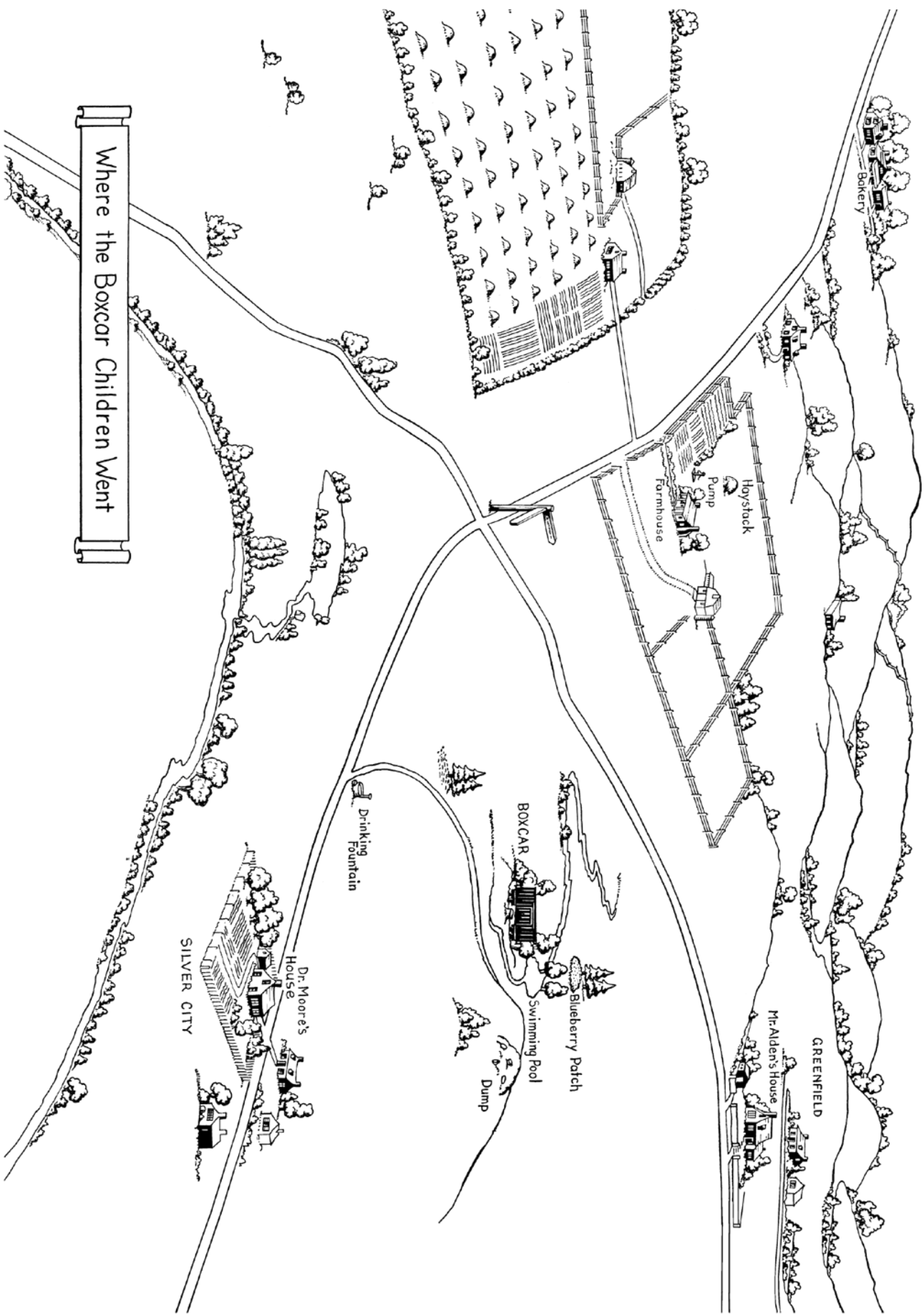
Benny is young. It would have been easy for the children to stay in the bakery and work and leave Benny behind to go to the Children's Home, as the baker's wife wanted. Why didn't they choose to leave him? What is harder about their journey because Benny is with them?

The children sleep in two different places. What are they?

Which do you think would be more comfortable and why?

Draw a map with pictures of the children's journey so far. Be sure to include these locations:

- Woods
- Bakery
- Road to Greenfield
- Road to Silver City
- Farmhouse with haystack and water pump
- Fountain



Where the Boxcar Children Went

# Chapter 3: A New Home in the Woods.

- **Teacher Summary:** It's storming, so Jessie searches in the woods and finds a boxcar for shelter. The children know the boxcar is abandoned because grass is growing all around it. Henry heads out to get milk and leave the rest of the children there. They decide to collect berries, and then hear a sound in the woods.

- **By George, I've got it!** Circle the statement that is true.

Why is Benny afraid to stay in the boxcar at first?

- A. He is afraid the train will come and take it away.
- B. He thinks it's too small for them.
- C. He wants to sleep outside in the rain.
- D. He has bad dreams about trains.

Why do the other children know the boxcar is abandoned?

- A. Because it is made out of wood.
- B. Because grass is growing all over the track.
- C. Because it smells clean and new.

- **Word detective: Ought to.** Should. "He ought to have milk," said Henry.

- **Let's work it out: A tight squeeze.**

A boxcar would be a pretty small space to live in with 4 people. Could you live in one room with 3 of your siblings? What would be the hardest part? Do the boxcar children seem bothered by the small space? Do you think they will get along? Why?

- **Character spotlight: Jessie.**

Jessie is the first to wake up as the storm is getting stronger. She doesn't panic and finds the boxcar.

**Word detective:** Decisive. Can decide important things easily.

This word describes Jessie. An adjective is a descriptive word. Circle the other adjectives that you would use to describe Jessie.

Calm      Smart      Goofy      Caring      Weak      Strong      Bossy      Clever

Choose one adjective from above and write a sentence that explains why it is the best word to describe Jessie.

Look at the words you circled above. Are you like Jessie? Pick one word and explain why it describes you.

Draw a picture of what you think Jessie looks like.

- **I predict...:** Use complete sentences to answer the questions below.

What do you think the noise is the children hear outside the boxcar after Henry leaves?

The next chapter is called "Henry has two surprises." What are the two surprises for Henry? Make a guess.



# Chapter 4: Henry Has Two Surprises

- **Teacher Summary:** The children find a dog who has a thorn in his foot. Jessie helps him to remove it. The children then collect blueberries, so they surprise Henry with a dog and blueberries when he returns. Benny decides to name the dog Watch. They split a meal of blueberries, milk, and cheese, wash up, and go to sleep.

Page 9

- **By George, I've got it!** Use complete sentences to explain what happened in the chapter.

How do the children help the dog?

What are the two surprises the younger children have for Henry?

- **History clue: Handkerchief.** People used to carry around a square of cloth. It could be used as a tool for wiping your hands, cleaning spills, or blowing your nose. It also could be used as fashion if they chose to show it in their pockets or hang it over their arms. Do you think Jessie carried hers for fashion or as a tool?

Page 9

- **Word detective: Fine.** The best kind. Excellent quality. “*Where did you get that fine dog,*” he cried.

- **Let's work it out: That's not fair?**

The children gather blueberries for their meal. What does Jessie see Benny do with most of the blueberries he picks? If that was your sibling and you were hungry also, how would you react? How does Jessie react?

## Food math:

Benny estimates that he sees 5 or 10 blueberries on the bush. Jessie laughs and says she guesses there are more. Draw a bush below and add blueberries. Have a partner estimate how many blueberries you have drawn. Count them up to see if their guess was right.

Watch has joined the Alden children, so they now have to divide some of their food differently. Draw a loaf of bread below. Draw slice marks to show how they cut it. Color in one portion to show how much bread each gets. Bonus: Write the fraction and percentage that each child gets.

Draw a rectangle of cheese below. Draw slice marks to show how they cut it. Color in one portion to show how much cheese each gets. Bonus: Write the fraction and percentage that each child gets.

The milk starts in four full containers. The children eat and each have some left at the end. Draw four jars below with lines to show the milk in each jar as half full at the end of the meal.

Henry then decides they need two containers for water. They could dump out two jars, but Henry has a better idea. Draw four jars to show how they keep all of the milk and still have two containers for water.

Page 10-11

# Chapter 5. The Explorers Find Treasure

- **Teacher Summary:** Henry goes off to work for the day, and the rest of the Alden children decide to go exploring for treasure. They find a dump, where they gather cups, silverware, and items to cook with, including a pink cup for Benny. They go home to the boxcar to wash the items in the brook, and then they build a shelf in the boxcar to store everything.

## • By George, I've got it!

Circle the items the children collect from the dump:

Extra clothes  
A pink cup  
A washing machine  
Wheels  
A kettle  
Combs and brushes  
A doll

Put numbers next to each to show the sequence of events.

\_\_\_ The children build a shelf.  
\_\_\_ The children find the dump.  
\_\_\_ The children wash dishes.  
\_\_\_ Henry leaves for work.  
\_\_\_ The children gather treasure.

- **Word detective: Kettle.** A large pot or metal container where you can boil liquids or cook foods. *“Jessie took out the big kettle and asked him about building a fire.”*
- **History clue: Dumps.** This book was written in 1942, and around that time cities handled garbage by piling it all in one spot called a dump. Since that time, landfills (where garbage is dumped and then covered with soil) and incinerators (which burn garbage) have become the more common. Also, since the 1970s, recycling and reducing waste have become more popular.
- **Let's work it out: One man's trash...**

The children spend their day looking for treasure. What do they find? Would you consider these things treasure? Why? Do you have anything that you treasure that someone else might call trash?

### Science:

Cooling milk by the waterfall. Jessie creates a refrigerator for the milk using the waterfall and a hole in a rock. Draw a picture of her refrigerator.

Why do you think this works? What makes this place cool?

What natural refrigerator or other appliance could you invent using resources from outside? Draw a picture and explain.

**Bonus:** Washing with hot water. The children wash the dishes in the brook with soap, but Jessie wants to use hot water to make them extra clean. Why does she think hot water is better than cold water for washing?

Use a computer to look up if hot water is better for killing germs, or if Jessie is wrong.

**Bonus:** Removing rust with sand. The children use sand to wipe away rust from the spoons. Use a computer to look up the answers to the questions below.

Why does metal rust? How can you remove rust from metal? Why does sand work to wipe away rust?

- **I predict....:** What do you think is in Henry's bundle? Use a complete sentence to answer.

# Chapter 6: A Queer Noise in the Night

• **Teacher Summary:** The children eat together while Henry describes his day. He found work at a doctor's house cutting the lawn. He was given cookies, which he brought home to share. He also purchased a tablecloth, bread, milk, meat, and a bone for Watch. He goes back to work, and Violet hems the tablecloth while Jessie and Benny build a broom. The children go to bed, and Watch, Henry, and Jessie hear a strange noise outside. They aren't sure what it is.

Page 14

• **By George, I've got it!**

What does Henry do with the first cookie the cook gives him?

- A. He gobbles it right up.
- B. He eats it slowly and savors it.
- C. He pretends to eat it but really puts it in his pocket.
- D. He says he doesn't want it.

Draw a line to match the child up with the action.

- |        |   |
|--------|---|
| Watch  | Makes a broom out of sticks.                      |
| Henry  | Hems the tablecloth.                              |
| Benny  | Brings home a tablecloth.                         |
| Violet | Is the first to hear a sound outside.             |
| Jessie | Gathers sticks that will be used to make a broom. |

• **Word detective: Hem.** To fold back and sew down the end of a cloth so that instead of a cut end of fabric it has a nice, even folded edge. Violet begged, "*Oh, let me hem it.*"

• **Let's work it out: Working hard.**

Henry leaves every day and spends an entire day working to earn some money to buy food and essentials for his siblings. Henry's siblings wait at home and don't go earn money. Does Henry complain about being the only one to work hard? Why do you think he's okay with it? What chores do you do to help out at home?

Page 15

• **Character spotlight: Henry.**

Henry is the oldest, and he works hard. Instead of eating the cookie, he saved it to bring home to his siblings. When he hears a scary noise outside, he grabs the broom.

**Word detective:** Resourceful. Is able to use skills and talents to solve problems in new situations.

This word describes Henry. An adjective is a descriptive word. Circle the other adjectives that you would use to describe Henry.

Kind      Caring      Boring      Scared      Brave      Polite      Rude

Choose one adjective from above and write a sentence that explains why it is the best word to describe Henry.

Look at the words you circled above. Are you like Henry? Pick one word and explain why it describes you.

Draw a picture of what you think Henry looks like.

Page 14

• **I predict...:** What made the noise that they heard outside at night? Use a complete sentence to answer.

# Chapter 7: A Big Meal from Little Onions

- **Teacher Summary:** Henry goes to work at the doctor's house and thins out vegetables. He asks to bring home the extras, which makes Mrs. Moore curious. The other children build a fireplace, which they use to make stew. Henry goes back to work and organizes the doctor's garage. He takes extra hammers and bent nails home. The children eat the stew, and Henry builds Benny a cart.

- **By George, I've got it!**

Circle the jobs Henry completes at the doctor's house that day.

- A. He mows the lawn.
- B. He organizes the garage.
- C. He makes cookies.
- D. He washes dishes.
- E. He thins the vegetables.

True or False?

- \_\_\_ Henry builds a cart.
- \_\_\_ Henry does not like onions.
- \_\_\_ Henry buys a ladle.
- \_\_\_ Henry brings home a hammer.
- \_\_\_ Henry complains about cleaning the garage.

- **Word detective: Eager.** Wanting something to happen quickly. "*Henry was so eager to begin work that he ran all the way to town.*"

- **Let's work it out: Strange sounds.**

Henry and Jessie still don't know what the sound was that Watch growled at the night before. What do you think it was? They decide not to tell the younger children about the noise. Why do you think they don't want to tell them? Do you think they should?

- **Inventions:**

The children make a lot of inventions in this chapter! They make a fireplace, a hanging kettle, a ladle, a cart, and more. Draw a picture of one of these inventions and label the various parts:

Draw your own invention. You have a cup, a stick, boards, wheels, rocks, and any other part or piece the Adler children had to make their inventions. Draw your own useful item using these parts. Label the parts. Write a sentence describing what it does or how it is helpful.

**Bonus activity:** Gather various items like plastic spoons, styrofoam cups, strings, pipe cleaners, buttons, and more. Make your own useful invention using the items.

# Chapter 8: A Swimming Pool at Last

- **Teacher Summary:** It's Henry's day off work. The children spend the day building a dam to create a pool in the brook. It's hard work, but they have fun. The boys swim, and then the children eat. They go on a walk and Watch chases a runaway hen. Benny sees that the hen has built a nest, so the children have eggs for supper.

Page 18

- **By George, I've got it!** Use complete sentences to answer the following questions.

What do the children build this chapter, and why do they want to build it?

What do the children find on their walk, and what do they eat for supper?

- **Word detective: Dam.** A barrier or wall built to block the flow of water. *"We'll build a dam here with logs and stones."*

- **History clue: Dinner bell.** Today cell phones let people send a text to talk to someone wherever they are. But cell phones just became popular in the 1990s, and smartphone technology that allows texting just became popular in the early 2000s. In the 1940s, all of this was still so far away! So on a farm, when people were working, in order to let them know it was time for dinner, the cook would ring a dinner bell. This loud bell let people know to stop working and come eat while the dinner was hot!

- **Let's work it out: Team players.**

The Alden children are excellent at teamwork. They build the pool together without problems. What does each person have to offer? What makes them a good team? Why is it important to be good at teamwork? What qualities do you have that make you a good team member?

Page 19

- **Before and After:**

The Alden children build a pool by blocking the water flow in the brook. Draw a picture of the brook and the waterfall. Then draw a picture of the pool, including as much detail as you can remember.

Page 18

- **I predict...:** At the end of the chapter, Jessie says they will have to eat bread and milk tomorrow. But the narrator says tomorrow they will get more than bread and milk. What do you think they will get?

# Chapter 9: Fun in the Cherry Orchard

- **Teacher Summary:** The children all help the Moores pick cherries. Everyone enjoys having them there, and they are invited to stay for dinner. The children explain that their parents are dead, and the Moores start to wonder who the Alden children are. Dr. Moore reads in the paper that night that James Henry Alden is offering a \$5,000 reward to find four lost children.

- **By George, I've got it!** Circle the sentence that is true.

The children walk to the doctor's house all together.

The children walk to the doctor's house two by two.

The men think Benny is a bother.

The men think Benny is funny.

The children stay for dinner.

The children decide not to stay for dinner.

Dr. Moore figures out that James Henry Alden is looking for the children.

Dr. Moore doesn't know who the children are by the end of the chapter.

- **Word detective: Dumplings.** A round mass of dough. It can be steamed and seasoned or it can be wrapped around fruit for a dessert. "*The cherries are cooked in the dumplings.*"

- **Let's work it out: Secrets and lies**

The children don't want their grandfather to find them, so they walk two by two. Then Mrs. Moore asks if their mother is waiting for them. Henry doesn't know what to say. How does Violet answer? She could have lied so Mrs. Moore didn't suspect that they were living on their own, but she didn't. Why do you think she told the truth? Was it good that she told the truth? Why or why not? Would you have told the truth?

- **Character spotlight: Benny.**

Benny is too young to climb the trees and pick cherries. But he makes the men laugh, and everyone in the orchard likes him. Mrs. Moore even loves him within a few minutes.

**Word detective:** Spunky. Lively and cheerful.

This word describes Benny. An adjective is a descriptive word. Circle the other adjectives that you would use to describe Benny.

Goofy

Boring

Sad

Whiney

Charming

Mean

Angry

Sweet

Choose one adjective from above and write a sentence that explains why it is the best word to describe Benny.

Look at the words you circled above. Are you like Benny? Pick one word and explain why it describes you.

Draw a picture of what you think Benny looks like.

# Chapter 10: Henry and the Free-for-All

• **Teacher Summary:** James Alden is rich and hosts Field Day for the town of Silver City, where people from the town race and win prizes. Dr. Moore brings Henry to watch the races. Henry joins the biggest race, the Free-for-all. He goes easy at first and then decides to see how fast he can run. He wins and says his name is Henry “James” so he doesn’t give his identity away. Dr. Moore secretly watches James Alden shake hands with Henry and give him a \$25 prize. The girls teach Benny to read.

• **By George, I’ve got it!**

What is Field Day?

- A. A day where famous athletes compete.
- B. A day where people in the town race.
- C. A day when everyone helps cut down corn and wheat.

What is the Free-for-all?

- A. A day when corn is free for everyone.
- B. A race where anyone can run and try to win \$25.
- C. A race that costs \$25 to enter.

Why does James Alden host field day?

- A. He loves to watch people run and jump and play.
- B. He loves to race and is very fast.
- C. He has a lot of corn to cut, and that is hard work.

• **Word detective: Remark.** To note, comment, or say. “These boys have been training all year,” remarked the man.

• **Let’s work it out: What’s in a name?**

Henry’s name is Henry James Alden. But when the man asks his name after he wins the race, what does he say? Why doesn’t he want to say his full name? Henry doesn’t know Mr. Alden is his grandpa. Mr. Alden doesn’t know Henry is his grandson. Do you think Dr. Moore knows? If he knows, why do you think he doesn’t tell Henry or Mr. Alden? Do you think he should tell them?

• **History clue:** In 1940, based on what things cost in the US then versus now, \$1 was worth the same amount as around \$17 dollars today. Today it costs around \$17 for two kids to go to the movies on a Saturday afternoon. In the 1940s, it would have cost closer to \$1.

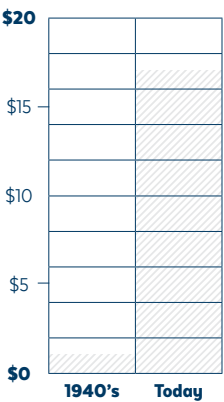
• **The Price Is Right**

We have seen a lot of dollar amounts throughout the book. Check out the History Clue above. We are going to graph what the dollar amounts would be at today’s value.

Henry often makes \$1 per day when he works for Dr. Moore. How much money would that be today?

Color in the graph to show the difference. 1 square equals \$2

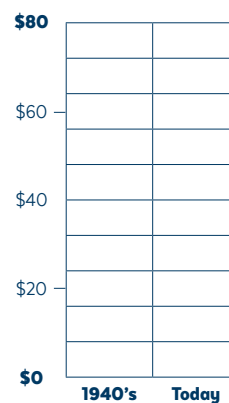
Would you work for \$17 in one day? Write a sentence explaining why or why not.



When the Alden children pick cherries for Dr. Moore, he gives them \$4. That would be the same as \$68 today.

Color in the graph to show the difference. 1 square equals \$8.

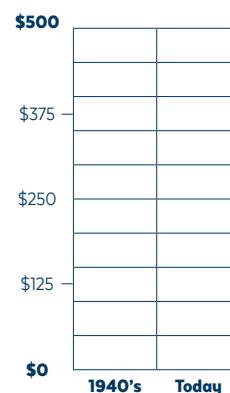
If you were the Alden children, what would you buy with the \$68? Write a sentence and say why.



When Henry wins the Free-for-All, he wins \$25. That would be the same as \$425 today.

Color in the graph to show the difference. 1 square equals \$50.

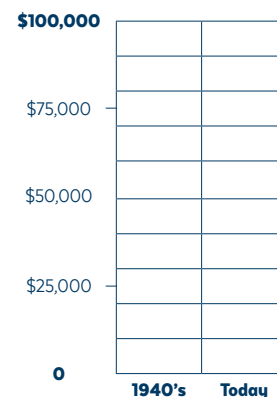
Henry says he would give the money to Jessie. Write a sentence that says who you would give the money to and why.



Dr. Moore read that there is a \$5,000 reward for finding the children. That would be the same as \$85,000 today.

Color in the graph to show the difference. 1 square equals \$10,000.

Would you turn the children in for \$85,000? Write a sentence explaining why or why not.



What do you notice about all of the graphs? This is because each problem was a ratio of 1:17, showing that \$1 was the same as \$17 today.



# Chapter 11: The Doctor Takes a Hand

- **Teacher Summary:** Jessie makes a teddy bear for Benny out of old stockings. Then she cuts Benny's hair. He decides to cut Watch's hair and cuts a "J" design, since he's Jessie's dog. Violet gets sick, and the kids aren't sure what to do because they don't want to get caught by going to the hospital. But then she gets so sick that Henry gets Dr. Moore, who runs straight to the boxcar. (He knows where they've been living.) He takes care of her overnight. James Alden comes to see the doctor and meets Benny. Once the children leave the room, Dr. Moore tells Mr. Alden that Benny and Henry, who won the race, are his grandchildren.

Page 26

- **By George, I've got it!** Put the events from the chapter in order.

\_\_ Mr. Alden meets Benny.                      \_\_ Dr. Moore tells Mr. Alden who his grandchildren are.  
\_\_ Benny cuts Watch's hair.                      \_\_ Jessie makes Benny a teddy bear out of stockings.  
\_\_ Violet gets sick.

What letter does Benny cut into Watch's hair, and why? Use complete sentences to answer.

- **Word detective: Admire.** To look at with wonder and approval. "Benny was very happy about them and made everyone admire them."

Page 26

- **History clue: Stockings.** In this chapter, Henry buys Benny new stockings. In the 1940s, boys wore stockings (which were long socks) with shorts. On top they wore a collared shirt and a suit jacket, and very often a tie (even on a casual day)!

- **Let's work it out: The big giveaway.**

When Violet gets sick, the kids don't want to have to take her to the hospital because they don't want anyone to know that they are living in the boxcar. Why do they decide to tell the doctor? What is more important to the children: getting caught, or Violet's safety? Would you have told the doctor?

- **Character spotlight: Dr. Moore.**

Dr. Moore runs to the boxcar to help Violet. He stays up all night by her bed because she is so sick. Benny says he thinks Dr. Moore wouldn't leave Violet's side, even for \$5,000.

**Word detective:** Dedicated. Focused all the way on one thing or task.

This word describes Dr. Moore when he is taking care of Violet. An adjective is a descriptive word. Circle the other adjectives that you would use to describe Dr. Moore.

Angry                      Kind                      Caring                      Cross                      Selfish                      Trustworthy                      Generous

Choose one adjective from above and write a sentence that explains why it is the best word to describe Dr. Moore.

Look at the words you circled above. Are you like Dr. Moore? Pick one word and explain why it describes you.

Draw a picture of what you think Dr. Moore looks like.

Page 27

Page 26

- **I predict....:** Will the children like Mr. Alden once they meet him? Why or why not?

# Chapter 12: James Henry and Henry James

- **Teacher Summary:** Dr. Moore refuses the reward money from Mr. Alden because he just wants the kids to be happy. The adults decide to let the kids get to know Mr. Alden before telling them he's their grandfather since they believe their grandfather is mean. Mr. Alden visits and the children grow to like him. Henry eventually remembers Mr. Alden from Field Day and asks Dr. Moore about him. They finally talk to him as their grandfather. Dr. Moore reveals that he has known the children were living in the boxcar because he followed Henry home one day. (He was the noise in the woods.) He wanted the kids to continue their fun, but he called Mr. Alden when Violet got sick. They give Mr. Alden a tour of the boxcar.

## • By George, I've got it!

Write either "Mr. Alden", "Dr. Moore", or "Henry" to complete the sentence.

- \_\_\_\_\_ will not take the reward money.
- \_\_\_\_\_ goes by "Mr. Henry."
- \_\_\_\_\_ at first can't figure out where he has seen Mr. Alden before.
- \_\_\_\_\_ meets all the children for the first time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ realizes that Mr. Alden is kind, not cross.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is the one who made the sound outside the boxcar at night.
- \_\_\_\_\_ sees the boxcar for the first time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ has known about the boxcar for a long time.

- **Word detective: *Delight*.** Happiness and joy. "He smiled with delight when he saw Jessie come into the room in her quiet way."

## • Let's work it out: *Dr. Moore knows.*

How long has Dr. Moore known that the children were living in the boxcar? Why did he continue to go back to the boxcar? Why did he decide not to tell anyone? How do you think adults would react if they found out you were living in a boxcar? Do you like that Dr. Moore didn't tell anyone? Why or why not?

## • Perception.

At the beginning of the book, the children are running away from Mr. Alden because they imagine him to be a certain way. Draw a picture of how the children imagine him to be before they have met him. Write 2-3 complete sentences below that explain what the children think he will be like.

In this chapter, the children meet Mr. Alden (or they realize that he is their grandfather if they already have met him). Draw a picture of what he is actually like. Write 2-3 complete sentences below that explain what the children think of him and what he is like.

- **I predict...:** At the end of the chapter, Mr. Alden sees the boxcar, and the children are told they are going to visit Mr. Alden's house. Do you think the kids will continue to live in the boxcar? Why do you think the next chapter is called "A New Home for the Boxcar"?

# Chapter 13: A New Home for the Boxcar

- **Teacher Summary:** The children visit Mr. Alden's house, and he has decorated rooms for all of them. A man comes to claim Watch, since he sold the dog to a woman and Watch had run away. The children visit the woman to see if she will let them keep Watch, and she agrees (and finds Benny charming). The children are happy living with Mr. Alden, but they are homesick for the boxcar. Mr. Alden surprises them by arranging to have the boxcar moved to his backyard. (And of course, they live happily ever after.)

- **By George, I've got it!**

Put the following events in order.

- \_\_ The children ask the woman if they can keep Watch.
- \_\_ Jessie fixes Watch's paw.
- \_\_ Watch gets the name "Watch"
- \_\_ Watch runs away.
- \_\_ The children find out where Watch came from.
- \_\_ Watch is sold to a woman.
- \_\_ Watch gets a thorn in his paw.

The children love Mr. Alden's house, but what is one thing that makes them sad? (Answer using a complete sentence.)

- **Word detective: Homesick.** When you are not at home and you miss it and are very sad about it. "Would you ever think that four children could be homesick in such a beautiful house?"

- **Let's work it out: A hard question to ask.**

In this chapter, we finally find out where Watch came from. How did he end up with the boxcar children? When the children find out he belongs to someone else, what do they do? They could have tried sneakier ways to keep the dog. Why do you think they decide to talk to the woman? Why does it work? Have you ever had to ask for something when the answer could be no?

In this chapter, we get to see the rooms that Mr. Alden designed for Jessie, Violet, and Benny. Draw one of the rooms using the details described in the chapter.

Henry's room is not described. Now draw what you think Henry's room looks like based on what you know about him. Write 2-3 sentences about what you included that you think he would like and why?

# My Book Review

Did you like *The Boxcar Children*? Why or why not? Answer using complete sentences.

Who was your favorite character? Why? Answer using complete sentences.

What was your favorite part of the book? Answer using complete sentences.

Do you want to spend more time with the Alden children? You can! There are 144 total *Boxcar Children* books in this series.

The rest of the *Boxcar Children* books are mysteries. You may have noticed that the Alden children are excellent detectives. When they first found the boxcar, Benny was nervous that it might drive away with them in it. But Henry knew that it wouldn't—he saw the long grass growing around the boxcar and used it as a clue to understand that the boxcar was abandoned.

In the rest of the series, Henry, Jessie, Violet, and Benny go on several adventures to solve mysteries. Several of the books take place in the 1940s like this book, and some of the newer ones take place in modern day.

Look for more *Boxcar Children* adventures at your library or bookstore!

# Large Projects

# Large Projects. Tiny House Nation.

These projects would probably be best between Chapters 4 and 5, but they are suitable any time in the unit.

## • Project 1: Life-sized boxcar.

### **Supplies:**

Measuring tape

Masking tape

In your classroom or in a space that is large enough, use measuring tape to measure a boxcar that is 40' long by 10' wide. Have the children lay the tape. Then have them go into the boxcar in groups of 4 to imagine the size of the space. If you have enough room (like in a gym), have groups of 4 each measure their own boxcar and then lay tape to show where they would put 4 beds, a table, and 4 chairs.

## • Project 2: Design your modern day boxcar.

### **Supplies for each student:**

11" x 17" piece of construction paper

Ruler

Pen

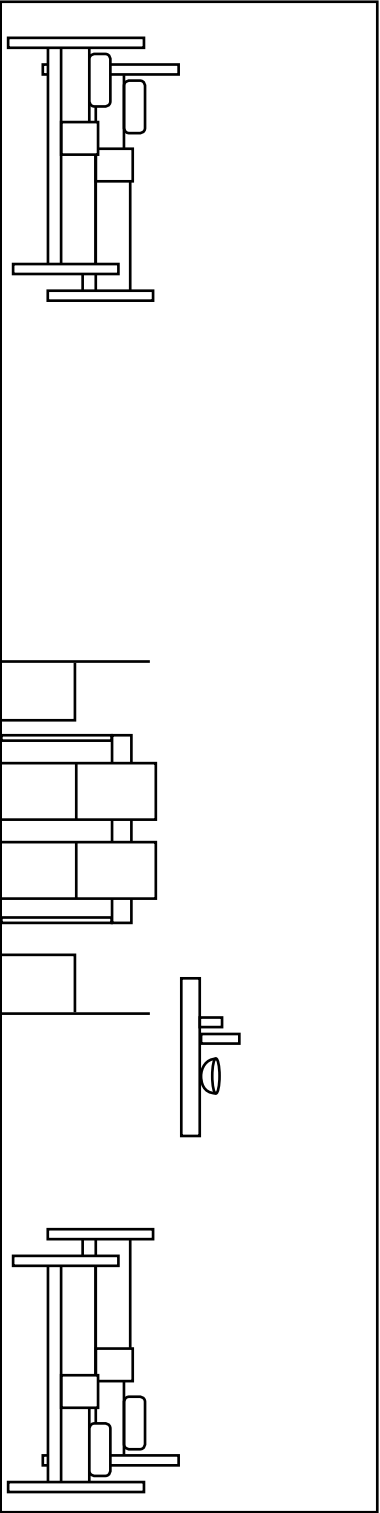
The boxcar in the book was probably 40 feet long, 10 feet wide, and 10 feet high. We are going to draw a boxcar from above and from the front so you can show how the boxcar was arranged. Then you can draw your own modern day boxcar to show how you would arrange a boxcar if you and three other people were going to live in it.

### *The Alden Children's Boxcar*

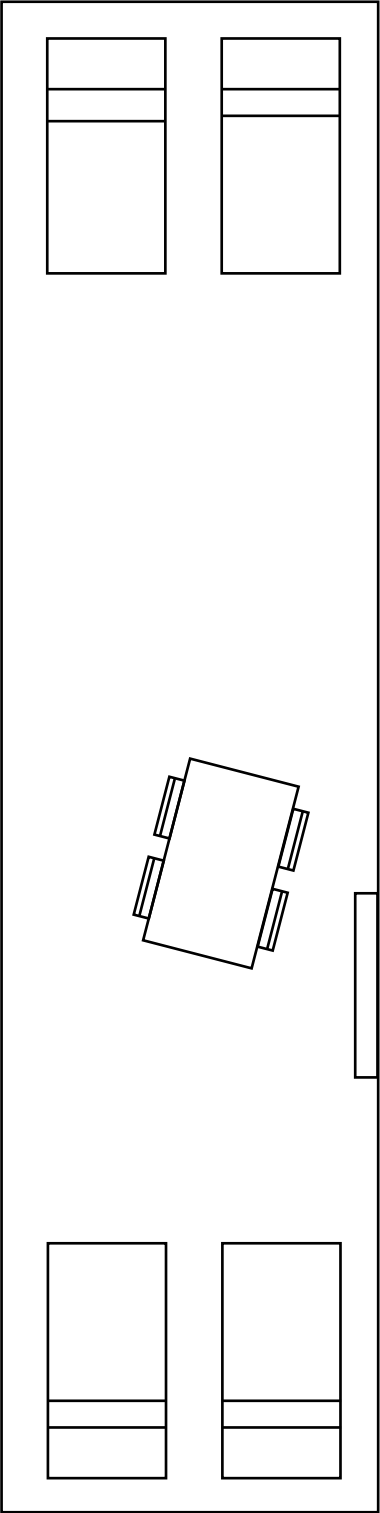
1. Use a ruler to draw a boxcar from above. Every 1 cm equals 1 ft. Make the boxcar 40 long by 10 wide.
2. Arrange the furniture the children planned in their boxcar. Include 4 beds, one table, 4 chairs, and a shelf for the dishes.
3. Now draw a boxcar from the front view. Every 1 cm equals 1 ft. Make the boxcar 40 long by 10 high. Imagine that the front wall is missing so you can see entirely into the boxcar. Draw the items that are inside of the boxcar from this view.

### *My Boxcar*

4. Now draw another boxcar from above. Every 1 cm equals 1 ft. Make the boxcar 40 long by 10 wide.
5. Imagine that the boxcar is wired with electricity and plumbing. This is your modern day boxcar. Show how you would arrange any furniture, technology, modern appliances, and decoration you would like in the space for four people to live in it.
6. Now draw your boxcar from the front view. Every 1 cm equals 1 ft. Make the boxcar 40 long by 10 high. Imagine that the front wall is missing so you can see entirely into the boxcar. Draw the items that are inside of the boxcar from this view.



A boxcar designed from the front would look like this.



A boxcar designed from birds eye would look like this.

# Large Project: Act it out!

Teacher note: This project allows students to act out and visualize some of the great things about the Alden children. We've included three scenes for variety. You can have multiple groups do the same scene, or you can encourage any group to act out their own scene by finding a part of the book they like and reading the characters' dialogue. You can either have small groups of 3-4 students act this out on their own, or you can have groups practice and perform in front of one another.

**Scene 1.** The Alden Children Build a Pool. We've focused on the pool building scene because we enjoy the way the kids work together and encourage one another.

**Scene 2.** The Alden Children Find the Boxcar. During this scene, the children first find the boxcar and decide together to stay in it. It highlights some of the best things about each child's personality and allows your students to understand the characters better.

**Scene 3.** The Explorers Find Treasure. When the 3 youngest children go exploring for treasure, it highlights their positive attitudes even while going through a dump. Because only 3 children are in this scene, this will also help you to build groups if you have any odd numbers.

## • **Scene 1: The Alden Children Build a Pool** (4 students)

We can really get a feel for the Alden children's teamwork if we act out the dialogue to see what each character says as they work at building the pool and making dinner. Read the words, and act out the words that are in parentheses. Think about how your character would feel based on what is happening, and make faces that your character would make as you hear the others talk. If you are in the crowd, clap and cheer every time one of the characters gives another a compliment.

Note: Violet didn't have lines in this section, so we have given her some of Henry's lines.

**Henry:** We'll make a dam across the brook.

**Benny:** Here is my cart. I'll cart some stones and logs in it.

**Henry:** Good for you. *(laugh)*

*(Look around at the "pool" on the ground.)*

**Henry:** It's big enough for a swimming pool, but I don't think it's deep enough. *(Use a stick to measure where the wet shows.)*

**Violet:** The swimming pool should be 3 times as deep. Then it will be deep enough to swim in and won't be too deep for Benny. We'll build the dam here with logs and stones.

**Jessie:** We won't want our stockings on while we are working in the brook, so this is a good time to wash them. *(Rinse them and hang them to dry.)*

*(Everyone starts to stack stones in a wall.)*

**Henry:** Splash the stones right into the water, but be careful to keep them in a line between these two trees.

*(Everyone looks delighted, which means happy.)*

**Violet:** The rock wall will help to hold the logs in place.

**Jessie:** Let's lay the first ones between these two trees. Then the trees will hold both ends of the logs.



**Henry:** Good work! That's just what we'll do.

*(Drag heavy logs across the stone wall you just built. Pretend to watch as it doesn't work and the water overflows above the log.)*

**Jessie:** Oh dear! The water runs around the ends every time! What shall we do?

**Henry:** We'll have to put lots of logs on, with brush between them. We'll put on so many that the water can't get through.

*(Henry and Jessie continue adding logs, Violet stuff between them with brush, and Benny fill in pebbles at the ends.)*

*(Plop down to the ground to watch the pool finally fill.)*

**Violet:** See how deep the pool is getting! See how still it is!

## • **Scene 2: The children find the boxcar.** (4 students)

The children all show who they are when they find the boxcar. Jessie is resourceful and a leader, as she finds it and encourages the children to go to it. Violet is positive and encouraging. Benny is so young and scared of the boxcar at first, and Henry works with him to gently help him to understand that he doesn't need to be afraid. When you act this out, play into those roles. Jessie and Henry should be confident. Violet should be happy and interested. Benny doesn't have lines for the first part, but he can start to look more and more worried as the other children get excited.

**Jessie:** Hurry, hurry! I have found a good place! Hurry as fast as you can!

*(The children follow Jessie.)*

**Henry:** It's beginning to rain!

**Jessie:** We'll soon be there. It's not far. When we get there, you must help me open the door. It is heavy.

*(Henry and Jessie step on a step that leads into the boxcar and work together to open the door.)*

**Henry:** There is nothing in here. Come Benny, we will help you up.

*(Jessie and Henry give Violet and Benny a hand climbing in.)*

**Violet:** What a good place this is! It is just like a warm little house with one room.

**Jessie:** Henry! Let's live here!

**Henry:** Live here?

**Jessie:** Yes! Why not? This boxcar is a fine little house. It is dry and warm in the rain.

**Violet:** We could wash in the brook.

**Jessie:** Please Henry!

*(Jessie walks around the space, imagining where each thing could go.)*

**Jessie:** We could have the nicest little home here, and we could find some dishes, and make four beds and a table, and maybe chairs!

**Benny:** No, I don't want to live here, Jessie.

**Jessie:** Oh, dear, why not, Benny?

**Benny:** I'm afraid the engine will come and take us away.

*(Older children laugh.)*

**Henry:** Oh, no, Benny. The engine will never take this car away. It is an old, old car, and grass and bushes are growing all over the track.

**Benny:** Then doesn't the engine use this track any more?

**Henry:** No, indeed. We'll stay here today, anyway.

**Benny:** Then can I have my dinner here?

**Henry:** Yes, you shall have dinner now.

### • **Scene 3: The Explorers Find Treasure** (3 students.)

During this scene, Benny, Violet, and Jessie explore for treasure. They are walking through a dump and finding chipped and broken things—and they are having so much fun while they do it! Be sure to play up their great attitudes as you pretend to go through the garbage, clean it, and put it on a shelf.

**Benny:** Look, Jessie! There's a treasure—a wheel!

**Jessie:** Oh, Benny! You saw the treasures first. What should we do without you!

**Violet:** Here's a white pitcher, Jessie! Here's a big white cup, too.

**Benny:** Can you use a teapot, Jessie?

**Jessie:** Yes, indeed! We can put water in it. I have found two cups and a bowl. Let's look for spoons, too!

*(The children keep looking.)*

**Jessie:** Here's a big kettle. Let's pile all the dishes in it. Then we can carry them back to the boxcar.

**Benny:** This will be my pink cup.

**Violet:** I hope it will hold milk.

**Violet:** It's a beautiful cup, Benny.

**Jessie:** Now we must wash them.

**Benny:** All right, we'll wash my pink cup.

*(Wash the dishes in a brook.)*

**Jessie:** There! How fine they look!

**Violet:** Oh, I know where to put them. Come and see what I found in the car last night.

*(She shows them a spot on the wall, and then all three children (pretend to) pick up a board and hang it at the spot to make a shelf. Then pretend to put all the dishes up on the shelf.)*

**Jessie:** There!

*(Violet adds a flower.)*

**Jessie:** There!

**Benny:** You said 'There' three times!

**Jessie:** So I did. And I'm going to say it again. There!

*(Everyone laughs.)*