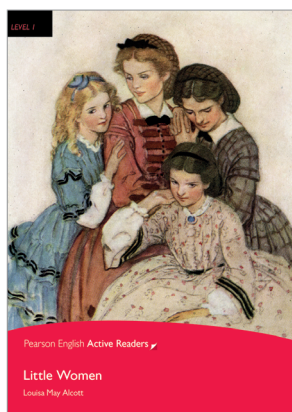


Little Women

Louisa May Alcott



Summary

Little Women is the story of the March family. The father is away in the war and the sisters are at home with their mother. They're unhappy because they can't buy Christmas presents. Mr. Laurence sends them a big meal. Meg and Jo go to a party and they meet Mr. Laurence's son, Laurie. They become good friends. The girls have different problems, but everybody helps. Father returns and the family celebrate Christmas again. Everybody's happy.

Chapter 1: The family gets a letter from Father.

Chapter 2: On Christmas Day, the family takes their food to the Hummels. Mr. Laurence sends the girls a big meal.

Chapter 3: Jo and Meg go to a party and she talks with Laurie.

Chapter 4: Jo invites Laurie home and everybody has a good time.

Chapter 5: Amy had a problem at school.

Chapter 6: Amy has an accident and Jo and Laurie help her.

Chapter 7: Jo writes good stories for the local newspaper.

Chapter 8: Father is sick and Jo sells her hair to help.

Chapter 9: Beth becomes very sick. Mother arrives home.

Chapter 10: Father arrives home. Beth is better; everybody's happy.

About the author

Louisa May Alcott was born in Pennsylvania in 1832. She began writing stories at a young age. At age 36, she published *Little Women*, an autobiographical novel. During the Civil War Alcott worked as a nurse. She died in 1888.

The original text

Little Women was published in 1868 and it was the first to give Alcott some reputation as a writer. In it, the author showed her own struggle to gain independence and give her family financial security.

Background and themes

Gender roles: A wife can run the house without the husband at home.

Generosity: The girls wanted to help by giving to people who had less than them.

Friendship: Friends can help in good and hard times.

Poverty: Life is difficult for the poor, who cannot afford many things that other people take for granted.

Discussion activities

Before reading

1 Discuss: Talk about the book cover. Guide students with these questions.

Is it fact or fiction? How many people can you see? Who are they? Who are the "little women"?

Chapter 1

After reading

2 Discuss: Talk about the Marches. Have students draw a family tree. Students include information as they read on.

Chapters 2–3

After reading

3 Discuss: Talk about the chapter titles. Have students think of possible alternative title for Chapters 2–3. They can rank the titles, from most to least appropriate.

Chapters 4–5

After reading

4 Discuss: Talk about houses. Have students compare the Laurences' and the Marches' houses.

Chapters 6–7

After reading

5 Role play: Students write the dialogue between Mr. Brookes and Jo.

Chapters 8–9

After reading

6 Guess: Have students predict what is going to happen.

Chapter 10

After reading

7 Check: Discuss the title again. Students go back to their predictions on the cover.

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After reading

Chapter 1

- 1 **Write a letter.**
You are one of the sisters. Write a reply letter to Father.
- 2 **Guess.**
Where was Mrs. March? Where did she arrive from?

Chapters 2–3

- 3 **Write a letter.**
Write the letter from Mrs. Gardiner.
- 4 **Make an invitation card.**
Make the invitation card for the party.
- 5 **Have a conversation.**
Imagine the dialogue between two people at the party and act it out.
- 6 **Talk about clothes.**
The March girls are going to a party in your city. What are they wearing? Describe them.
- 7 **Write a conversation.**
Write the complete conversation about the party between Amy, Meg, and Jo.

Chapters 4–5

- 8 **Draw the teacher.**
Draw Beth's teacher and describe her.
- 9 **You're Amy.**
Tell your sisters about the problem at school.
- 10 **Talk about school.**
What do students and teachers have to do? Complete the chart.

Teachers	Students

- 11 **Write a letter.**
You are Mrs. March. Write the letter to the school.

Chapters 6–7

- 12 **Write a story.**
Write Jo's story for the newspaper.
- 13 **Write a newspaper story.**
Draw today's newspaper and write one of the stories.
- 14 **Talk about getting angry.**
Why does Jo get angry very often?
- 15 **Tell the story from Amy's point of view.**
(She wanted to go skating.)

Chapters 8–9

- 16 **Have a conversation.**
What words are important in Chapters 8–9? Make a list. Compare lists.
- 17 **Write a letter.**
Write the reply letter to Mr. Hale.
- 18 **Write a story.**
You're sick. What do people do?

Chapter 10

- 19 **What happened first? Put the sentences in the right order, 1–6.**
 - a Amy went home.
 - b Mrs. March stayed with Beth.
 - c Aunt March visited the family.
 - d Laurie visited the Marches.
 - e Mrs. March arrived home.
 - f Aunt March walked out of the house.
- 20 **Talk about the ending.**
Is it happy or sad?
Change the ending. Make it a sad one.
Change the ending. Make it a happy one.
- 21 **Look for photographs to for each character.**
What actors and actresses can be the characters?
- 22 **Talk about your favorite characters.**
Why is he or she your favorite character?

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Chapter 1

1 Write the right name: Amy, Beth, Jo, Meg, Father, Mother.

- a was a beautiful girl.
- b was a tall girl.
- c was thirteen years old.
- d had blue eyes.
- e was in the war.
- f was not at home at that moment.

2 Match. Complete using the right number.

- a The girls did not ...
 - b Father did not ...
 - c Beth wanted ...
 - d The family read ...
- 1 have much money.
 - 2 the letter in the evening.
 - 3 to buy a present for her mother.
 - 4 write about the war.

Chapters 2–3

3 What's the right answer? Circle 1 or 2.

- a The girls got ... for Christmas.
 - 1 books
 - 2 food
- b Mother was not at home. She was ...
 - 1 at Aunt March's house.
 - 2 at Mrs. Hummel's house
- c In the evening, the girls ...
 - 1 acted for their friends.
 - 2 visited their friends.
- d The girls ...
 - 1 knew Mr. Laurence.
 - 2 got a present from Mr. Laurence.

4 Complete with the correct verb. There is one extra verb.

- asked danced talked went were wrote
- a Mrs. Gardiner a letter to Meg and Jo.
 - b Their dresses not new.
 - c Meg at the party.
 - d They home together.
 - e Amy them about the party.

Chapters 4–5

5 Are these right (✓) or wrong (X)?

- a Meg worked at a school.
- b Beth was a student at home.
- c Hanna was the girls' friend.
- d Mr. Brooke was Laurie's teacher.
- e Laurie's mother played the piano.

6 What happened first? Put the sentences in the right order, 1 to 5.

- a The teacher hit Amy.
- b Amy went home early.
- c Amy bought candy.
- d The teacher was very angry.
- e Amy didn't give candy to the girls at school.

Chapters 6–7

7 Underline the wrong word.

- a Jo was usually happy.
- b Amy burned Meg's book.
- c Laurie and Jo went swimming.
- d Laurie had an accident.

8 Circle the right word.

- a Jo got / bought / read two letters.
- b Meg got a letter and a hat / glove / box.
- c Jo wrote a story / letter / newspaper.
- d The girls read / listened to / wrote the story.

Chapters 8–9

9 Write the right name: Mother, Father, Jo, John, Laurie.

- a got a letter from S. Hale.
- b was sick.
- c helped Mrs. March to write a letter.
- d went to Washington with Mrs. March.
- e sold her hair.

10 Match. Write the correct number.

- a Beth ...
 - b Amy ...
 - c Mother ...
 - d One of Mrs. Hummel's children ...
 - e Jo ...
- 1 helped her sister.
 - 2 was dead.
 - 3 was very sick.
 - 4 went to Washington.
 - 5 went to her aunt's house.

Chapter 10

11 Are these right (✓) or wrong (X)?

- a John loved Meg.
- b Laurie helped Mr. March.
- c Father went home for Christmas.
- d Aunt March was very nice.
- e All the people were happy.

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Book key

- 1.1 Open answers (1 Four 2 No 3 No 4 Yes 5 No)
- 1.2 Open answers (1 at home 2 Christmas 3 presents 4 father)
- 2.1 1 The four sisters are Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy.
2 They have no money but they are a happy family.
3 They are waiting for their mother.
4 They are talking about Christmas presents.
5 Mrs. March brings a letter from their father.
6 Their father is writing from the war.
7 The girls are unhappy because they want their father.
8 Mr. March calls the girls his "little women."
- 2.2 a Jo – fifteen, loves reading, tall and thin
b Beth – plays the piano, thirteen, quiet
c Meg – beautiful, sixteen, big eyes
d Amy – wants Christmas presents, yellow hair, blue eyes
- 2.3 1 were 2 had 3 was 4 arrived 5 smiled
6 thought 7 said 8 played
- 2.4 Open answers (1 a book 2 bed 3 Mrs. March 4 food 5 a family friend 6 eat)
- 3.1 1 X 2 X 3 ✓ 4 X 5 ✓ 6 ✓ 7 X 8 X
- 3.2 1 Meg 2 Jo 3 Meg 4 Laurie 5 Jo
6 Laurie 7 Jo
- 3.3 1 under 2 from 3 on 4 to 5 in 6 with
7 at 8 about
- 3.4 Open answers
(1 Mr. Laurence and Laurie
2 Laurie
3 "Come and talk to me."
4 A picture of Mr. Laurence
5 Beth)
- 4.1 1 daughter, eyes
2 like, talk
3 piano, present
4 face, friendly
- 4.2 a 6 b 3 c 4 d 8 e 1 f 7 g 5 h 2
- 4.3 1 can
2 can't
3 Can, can
4 can't
5 can
- 4.4 Open answers (1 winter 2 river 3 thin 4 cold 5 calling)
- 5.1 1 Jo is angry because Amy burned her book.
2 Jo goes skating because she wants to be happy.
3 Jo doesn't look at Amy because she is angry with her.
4 Amy walks behind Jo because she wants to say sorry.
5 The ice goes CRACK because it is very thin.
6 Mrs. March is happy because Jo and Amy are friends again.
- 5.2 1 a glove
2 an old hat
3 the letter box
4 a book
5 skates
- 5.3 1 is going to burn
2 are going to stay
3 is going to read
4 am going to go
5 are going to be
6 Is, going to be
- 5.4 1 Jo's hair
2 Open answers (a letter b unhappy c Mr. March d short e unhappy)
- 6.1 1 D A 2 D B 3 E C 4 B D 5 D B
- 6.2 1 X – Beth goes to the Hummels' house.
2 X – The Hummel girl is dead from scarlet fever.
3 ✓
4 X – Jo sends Amy to Aunt March's house.
5 X – Laurie writes to Mrs. March.
6 X – Mr. March comes home.
- 6.3 1 Meg didn't go to the Hummels' house.
2 Beth didn't talk to her sisters.
3 Amy didn't want to go to Aunt March's house.
4 Mr. Laurence didn't come to the house.
5 Beth wasn't dead.
6 Mr. March didn't come home.
- 6.4 Open answers (1 Mr. March)
(2 a Beth b Meg c Aunt March d John Brooke)

Talk about it

- 1 a Open answers
b money; important, home; happy; too, friend
c Open answers
- 2 a Mr. Laurence is a friend of Mrs. March's father. He helps the March family very much. He gives Beth a piano.

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- b The Hummel family have no money. One of the children is dead. Beth gets scarlet fever in their house.
 - c Mr. Davis is Amy's teacher. Amy brings candy to school and Mr. Davis hits her.
 - d Laurie is Mr. Laurence's daughter's son. He is a good friend of the March family. He is often with the girls. He writes to Mrs. March about Beth.
 - e John Brooke is Laurie's teacher. He wants to marry Meg but he has no money.
 - f Mr. March is the girls' father. He is away in the war. He gets sick and Mrs. March visits him.
 - g Dr. Bangs is the family doctor. Beth gets sick and he visits her every day.
- + Open answers

Write about it

problems, family, scarlet fever
 stayed, dead
 sick, house, every
 daughters, quickly

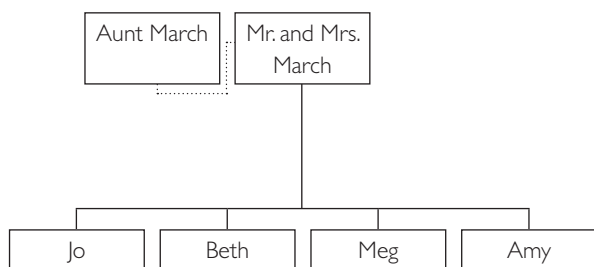
Project

- 1 a name b old c many, sisters d live e like
 f boyfriend g job
- 2 a My name is Jo March.
 b I am fifteen.
 c I have three sisters.
 d I live in a town in America.
 e I like writing stories and skating.
 f No, I don't have a boyfriend.
 g I want to be a famous writer.

3-4 Open answers

Discussion activities key

- 1 Open answers
- 2 Suggested answer
 (Students can add more information as they read on)



- 3 Open answers
- 4 Suggested answers: Laurences' house: big, photographs
 Marches' house: small, two bedrooms
- 5-7 Open answers

Activity worksheet key

- 1-9 Open answers
- 10 Suggested answers. The list is not exhaustive.

Teachers	Students
work	write
speak	read
teach	do exercises

- 11-15 Open answers
- 16 Suggested answers (the list is not exhaustive): sick, scarlet fever, letter, help, hair, smiled home
- 17-18 Open answers
- 19 a 3 b 2 c 4 d 5 e 1 f 6
- 20 Suggested answer: It's a happy ending, but we don't know about the future.
- 21-22 Open answers

Progress test key

- 1 a Meg b Jo c Beth d Amy e Father
 f Mother
- 2 a 1 b 4 c 3 d 2
- 3 a 1 b 2 c 1 d 2
- 4 a wrote b were c danced d went e asked
- 5 a X b ✓ c X d ✓ e ✓
- 6 a 4 b 5 c 1 d 3 e 2
- 7 a happy b Meg's c swimming d Laurie
- 8 a got b glove c story d listened to
- 9 a Mother b Father c Laurie d John e Jo
- 10 a 3 b 5 c 4 d 2 e 1
- 11 a ✓ b X c ✓ d X e ✓