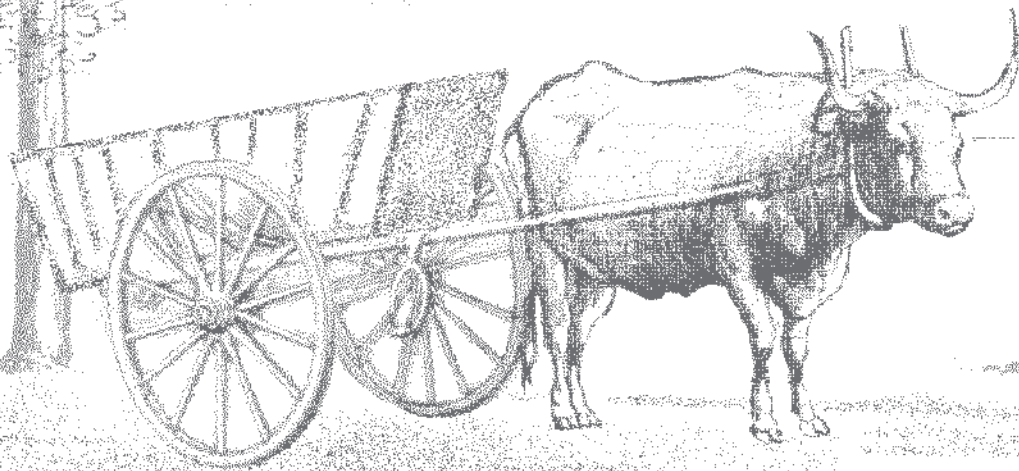


Ox-Cart Man

Study Guide

by **Rebecca Gilleland**

For the book by
Donald Hall and Barbara Cooney



CD Version

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Ox-Cart Man Study Guide
A Progeny Press Study Guide
by Rebecca Gilleland
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Table of Contents

Note to Instructor	4
Synopsis	5
About the Author	6
About the Illustrator	7
Background Information	8
Before-you-read Activities	9
As-you-read Activities	11
Vocabulary	13
Looking at the Story	15
Dig Deeper	19
Planning Ahead	21
Word Search Puzzle.....	22
After-you-read Activities	24
Additional Resources	26
Answer Key	27

Synopsis

Ox-Cart Man is a simple and rhythmic story of a man who fills his ox-cart with all the goods his family has produced over the last year and takes them to market. After selling everything, he buys a few items and walks home. The book follows the year's cycle of work, through the seasons. Through hard work and cooperation, the family, as a unit, provides for itself.

Ox-Cart Man Study Guide

6. What do you have that was made far away in another country? List at least three things. _____

7. Why do you think the farmer bought gifts for everyone and mints for the family to share, but no gift for himself? _____

8. What did everyone do with their new gifts? _____

9. Read Colossians 3:23: “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men . . .” Did the ox-cart man and his family do their work with all their hearts? Why or why not? _____

Ox-Cart Man Study Guide

10. Read Proverbs 6:6–8: “Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest.” A sluggard is someone who is lazy. The ant is the opposite. Describe what the ant is like. _____

In what ways is the farmer like the ant? _____

11. Predict what would happen to the family if they did not work during the winter? _____

What if they did not work during the rest of the year? _____

Dig Deeper

1. To everything there is a right time. Read Ecclesiastes 3:1–8, 3:12–13 written by King Solomon.

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.

After reading these verses, why do you think it is important to do things when the time is right? _____

Ox-Cart Man Study Guide

2. Some guidelines to use when deciding if it is the right time to do something can include:

- Did I discuss it with my mother or father, and did they agree and approve?
- Do I have all the ingredients to mix and bake this?
- Have I worked to earn enough money to buy a particular item?

List at least four other guidelines you can use to help you decide if it is the right time for something.

Ox-Cart Man Study Guide

Answer Key

Before-you-read Activities

1. Discussions will vary.
2. Answers will vary.
3. Spring, March 21st, March, April, May; Summer, June 21st, June, July, August; Autumn, September 21st, September, October, November; Winter, December 21st, December, January, February
4. Answers will vary but should mention that the harvest is in the fall.

As-you-read Activities

1. The students' answers should match within reason.
January: carve a new yoke, saw planks, split shingles, embroider, carve brooms, make linen, make candles.
February: carve a new yoke, saw planks, split shingles, embroider, carve brooms, make linen, make candles.
March: tap sugar maples, boil sap down.
April: sheared sheep, spun yarn, weave and knit.
May: plant garden, gather feathers, collect honey.
June: gather feathers, collect honey, tend garden.
July: gather feathers, collect honey, tend garden.
August: harvest garden.
September: harvest garden, pick apples.
October: go to market.
November: stitch new harness, daughter sews, son whittles.
December: carve a new yoke, saw planks, split shingles, embroider, carve brooms, make linen, make candles.
2. Answers will vary.

Vocabulary

Synonyms:

1. sheared: cut, clipped, snipped, shaved, cropped; 2. shawl: wrap, scarf, cloak, mantle, veil, cape, muffler; 3. linen: cloth, fabric; 4. carved: cut, whittled, chiseled; 5. coins: money, funds, cash; 6. squawked: squeaked, honked, quacked.

Definitions: Answers will vary on their definitions. Dictionary definitions are given.

1. loom: a frame or machine for interlacing thread to form a cloth
2. tapped: to pierce so as to let out or draw off a fluid (maple trees)
3. kettle: a metallic vessel for boiling liquids
4. harbor: a part of a body of water protected and deep enough to furnish anchorage
5. planks: a heavy, thick board

Looking at the Story

1. Father: wool, candles, oxcart, ox, apples, cabbages, shingles, potatoes, turnips, maple sugar
Mother: candles, a shawl, linen, apples, cabbages, potatoes, turnips, maple sugar
Son: candles, birch brooms, goose feathers, apples, cabbages, potatoes, turnips, maple sugar
Daughter: candles, mittens, goose feathers, apples, cabbages, potatoes, turnips, maple sugar
2. 120 miles. Answers will vary, roughly 2–3 hours.
3. Answers will vary.
4. Answers will vary.
5. England.