



THEN THE RULES CHANGED

BOOK & MUSEUM TOUR GUIDE

FOR THE
MAJOR COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM
AND THE
SOD HOUSE MUSEUM

BASED ON THE BOOK BY CAROLYN ZEISSET

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MOVING TO AMERICA

MAJOR COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WAGON, P. 70

P. 70 “Ach, your big steamer trunk almost fills my little wagon too full,” Herr Martens chuckled.
“Well, it will make you a fine seat.”

THINK ABOUT:

Think about moving; have you ever had to pack up all your belongings and move to a new community? A new state? What do you think it was like for Isaac to move to a new country, where he did not know the language?



BIG STEAMER TRUNK, P. 18-19

P. 18-19 ‘Mother used her black Sunday dress to wrap the wall clock, with its single hand stopped at a little before ten, and Isaac carried it across the passageway from the house to the barn, where Lena tucked it into the steamer trunk.’

THINK ABOUT:

Think about the last time you went on a trip. How far did you go? Did you pack a lot? What items did you wish you had once you got there? Do you think Isaac was scared about the trip? What do you think it was like for Isaac to leave everything he knew?



TRAIN, P. 22

‘Father and Herr Martens hurried toward some big box-like wagons where men loaded steamer trunks. A rumbling noise shook the ground. A huge black machine rolled toward the crowd. Clouds of black smoke poured from the top, while puffs of steam spurted around the wheels.’

THINK ABOUT:

Have you ever been on a train? How far did you get to go? Were you scared? What do you think Isaac felt when he saw the train?



THE HOUSE IN AMERICA

SOD HOUSE MUSEUM

SOD HOUSE, P. 80

‘The sod house was indeed old and abandoned. Holes in the roof let in both sun and a sudden summer shower. Insects flew out of the grass in the walls where the mud plaster had fallen away.’

THINK ABOUT

Think about your own home. Is it warm in the winter and cool in the summer? What do you think it would be like to live in a house made of grass and dirt- sod? What problems might you have? What might be the good things about a sod house?



HANDMADE HOUSEHOLD ITEMS, P. 80

‘Father made brushes and a broom from dry reeds.’

THINK ABOUT

Pioneers like Isaac and his family often had to make their tools by hand. How would that be different than just being able to go out and buy tools? Would you take better care of something if you knew you could not replace it easily?



WORKING THE LAND

MAJOR COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WALKING PLOW, P. 112

‘Father took hold of the handles and set the plow’s single share firmly into the earth at the edge of the field. “Now we plow.” ‘

THINK ABOUT:

Farmers today have tractors to help them plow the fields, but it is still a hard and long job. Have you ever helped to dig a garden? Why do you think it would be harder to plow somewhere new?



HARVESTING THE CROP

MAJOR COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TURKEY RED WHEAT, P. 11, 113

P. 11 ‘“Help Lena sort out the best seeds for new crops,” said Tante Maria as she sewed coins into Mother’s petticoat.’

P. 113 ‘At last Isaac lifted the lid of the steamer trunk and Father pulled out the pottery crock of hard Turkey Red winter wheat seed.’

THINK ABOUT:

The next time you are out driving around, notice when the wheat ripens. What color is it? Does it look reddish? That’s Turkey Red Wheat- just like Isaac’s family planted!



HAND TOOLS, P. 76

‘When the men were home, they made wooden tools – a shovel, pitchfork, rake – and handles for the sickle, scythe, and knife blades Father brought in the steamer trunk.’

THINK ABOUT:

Some of the tools Isaac and his father used look familiar – a shovel, a rake – and some might not look so familiar – a pitchfork, a scythe. Do you remember what each tool was used for in Isaac’s story? How hard do you think it would be for a boy to use those tools?



HARVESTING THE CROP

MAJOR COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HAND TOOLS, P. 76

‘When the men were home, they made wooden tools – a shovel, pitchfork, rake – and handles for the sickle, scythe, and knife blades Father brought in the steamer trunk.’

THINK ABOUT

Do you know anyone who has ever made their own tools? What were those tools for? How would that affect your job to make your own tools? Do you think it would make the work easier, or harder?



CELEBRATION

MAJOR COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SAUSAGE STUFFER & COOKING IMPLEMENTS, P. 138

‘Women kneaded a tubful of ground meat. Father and other men stuffed sausage into casings...Isaac spotted Mother stirring with a great wooden paddle in a huge kettle that stood over a fire pit.’

THINK ABOUT:

Today most of us go to the grocery store to buy food to cook, but Isaac and his family, like many pioneers, had to grow or raise their food. They also had to make it all from scratch. Do you think this was healthier? Why or why not?



CULTURE POINTS

MAJOR COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

COUNTRY SCHOOL, P. 1

“Come see the school.” Jake grasped Isaac’s hand. When they were inside, the usually talkative Jake became silent, and Isaac surveyed the room. Instead of one long table from front to back, ten desks faced forward, five on each side of a center aisle.’

THINK ABOUT:

At Isaac’s school, all the grades were in the same room. Do you think this made it easier to learn, or do you think it made it harder to learn?

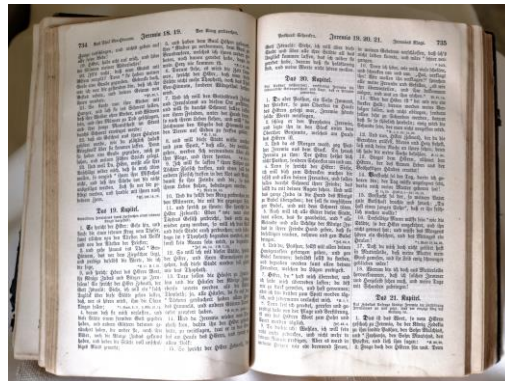


GERMAN BIBLE, P. 122

‘Isaac followed Jake to a middle desk on the left side of the room and put his slate, copybook, and German Bible on a shelf under the desktop.’

THINK ABOUT:

Isaac was embarrassed because he had to sit up front with the little kids and learn English. Have you ever tried to learn another language? How do you think you would feel if you walked into a classroom where you did not know what anyone else was saying?



CULTURE POINTS

MAJOR COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HANDMADE BROOM, P. 80

‘Father made brushes and a broom from dry reeds.’

THINK ABOUT:

Isaac and his family had to make many of the tools and things they used. Could you try to make a small broom like Isaac’s father did? How hard would that be to have to make every tool you used? Do you think you would take better care of it if you had to make a new one from scratch?



WOOD BURNING STOVE P. 81

‘As they worked, Mother scrubbed a strange little stove.’

THINK ABOUT:

The stove that Isaac’s family used is probably a lot different than the stove in your house. Do you think it might have been harder to use a stove like that?

What might make it harder to use?



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