

Dear Upcoming Second Grade Family,

I'm so excited to start an adventure with my new students this upcoming 2022-2023 school year!! We have so many exciting things to learn. We will learn about being good citizens, our democracy and voting, American symbols, Native American Indians, our world map and its features, several famous Americans, natural resources and how to conserve them, some economics concepts and innovations.

Do you like numbers and math challenges? We will have lots of opportunities to use our higher level thinking in math this year. We will continue addition and subtraction but add on to the place value while doing it. We will learn more about telling time, fractions, measurement and geometry. We will dabble in multiplication at the end of the year!!

In reading we will read from our Into Reading book each week. We will have leveled reading groups to improve our reading ability and reading levels. We will have spelling groups based on spelling levels using Words Their Way spelling. I will determine the spelling and reading levels after our first PALS test.

We will become physicists, geologists, and naturalists this year in science. We will end the year by dissecting an owl pellet to see what the owl ate!!

Also, attached is my supply list. The supplies should be very easy to find. I will order the not so easy items to find.

St Anne School has several organized reading opportunities this summer. I sent home a packet of flyers a week ago explaining these. If you would like more information about these let me know.

Finally, I have included the summer reading packet. You can order the book *Pioneer Cat* online or find it in the local bookstore or library. Have fun exploring and learning about the Oregon Trail this summer. The summer reading assignment will be due the first Friday of school. Also, practice your addition and subtraction facts this summer!! Make time for reading every single day even if it's just reading the back of a cereal box or the signs on the road. If you need more suggestions for avoiding the summer slide, just email me!  
sblaser@stanneschoolbristol.org

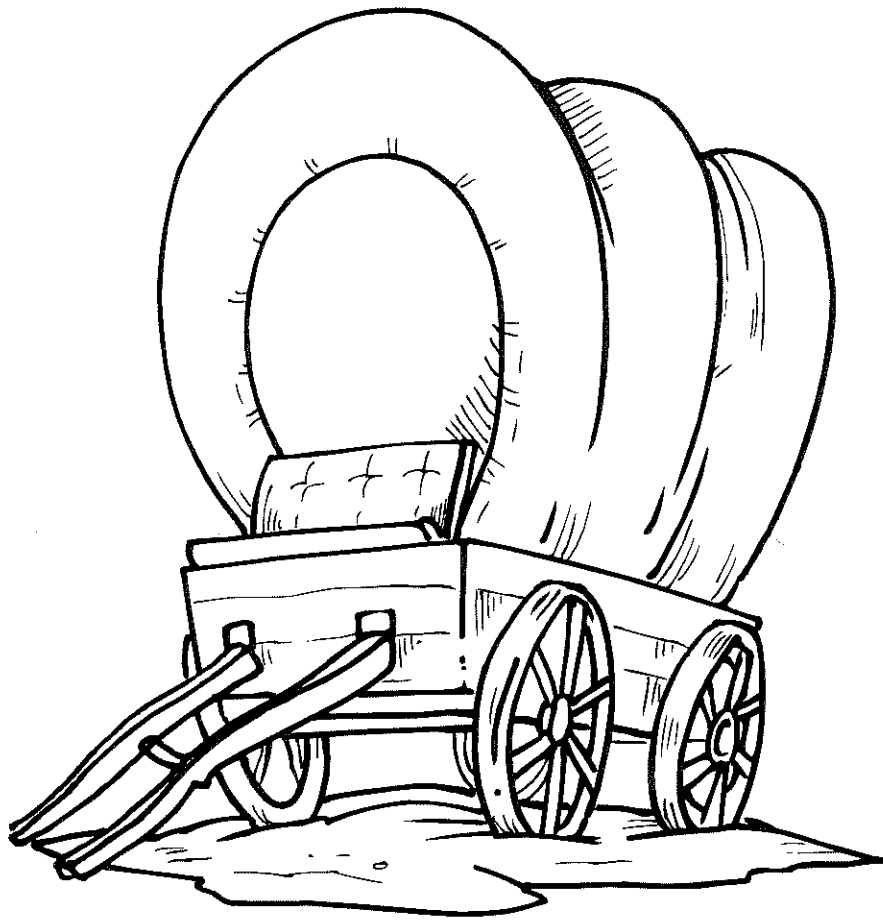
Have a fun and exciting summer!! I will see you soon!!

Love,

Mrs. Blaser

# PIONEER CAT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Written by William H. Hooks  
Illustrated by Charles Robinson

# Get Ready to Read

## Genre:

Pioneer Cat is historical fiction. Historical fiction is based on events or people from history. Some of the events and places may be real, but the plot and characters are fictional (created by the author).

## Key Vocabulary:

pioneer: \_\_\_\_\_

covered wagon: \_\_\_\_\_

## Setting:

Kate Purdy and her family are pioneers. They have traveled from Jackson, Mississippi to Saint Joseph, Missouri. Here they plan to join a wagon train headed west for Oregon.

On the map below, place a "1" on Mississippi, a "2" on Missouri, and a "3" on Oregon. Connect each destination with a dotted line to show the Purdy family's journey westward.



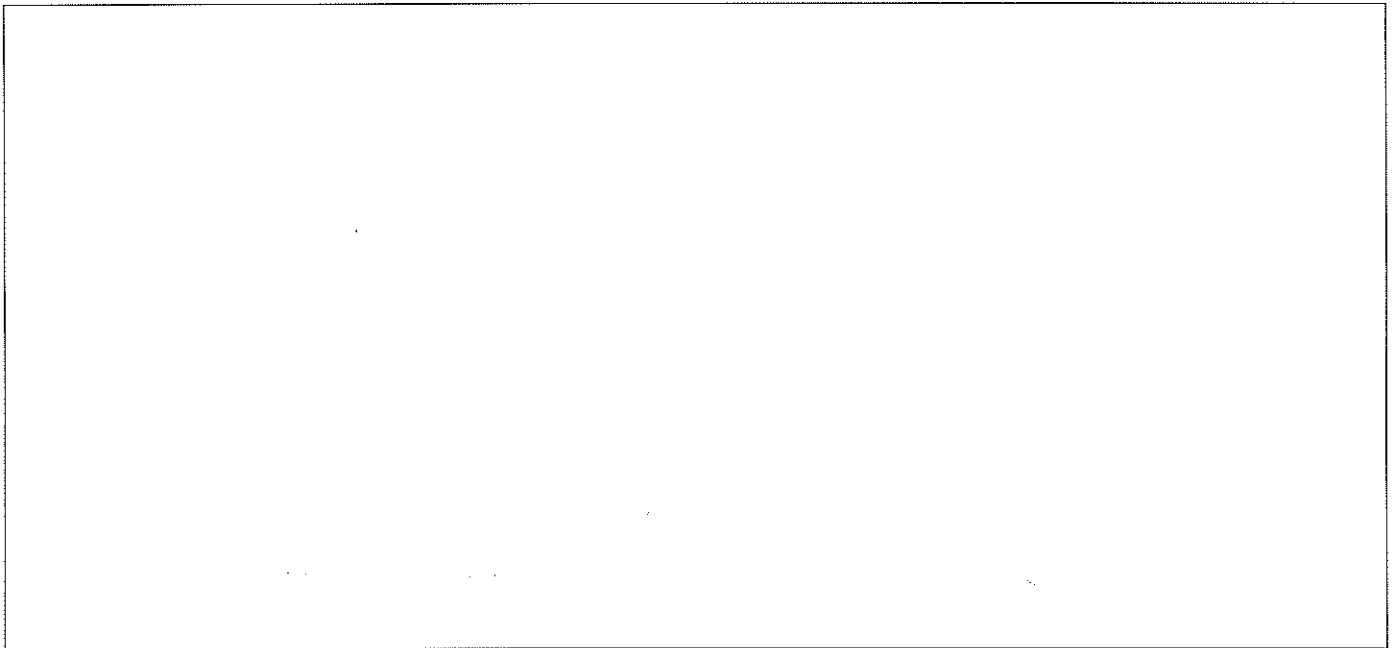
# Chapter One - Snuggs

## **Characters:**

Who is the main character in the book? \_\_\_\_\_

Who is telling the story? \_\_\_\_\_

Draw a picture of the Purdy family: Ma and Pa, Duffy, Kate, and baby Benjy.



1. What kind of transportation did the Purdy family use to travel westward?

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2. What surprise visitor did Kate have while staying in St. Joseph?

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## Chapter Two – Secrets

1. Have you ever gone on a trip away from home? What kind of things did your family do to prepare to go on your trip?

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2. What items did Pa buy in preparation for their journey to Oregon?

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3. Ma said, "We'll need enough food to last us through six months." Why do you think pioneers needed to take so much food on the trail?

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4. Explain Kate's plan to sneak Snuggs onto the wagon.

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## Chapter Three - Wagons, Ho!

1. What job did Pa assign Duffy to do every day on the trail?

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2. What job did Pa assign Kate to do every day on the trail?

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3. What was everyone shouting as the wagons got into formation?

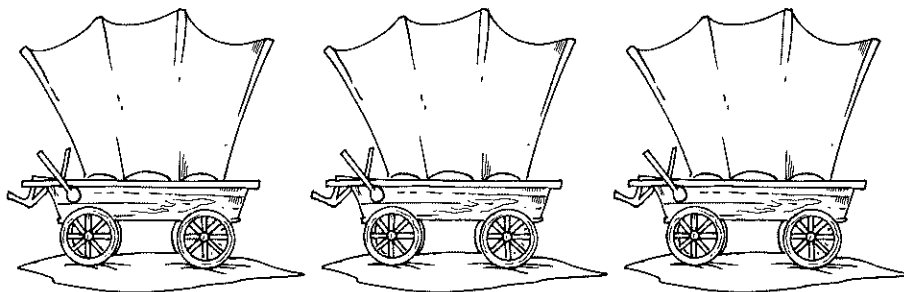
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4. If you were part of a wagon train starting to leave for Oregon, how would you feel as the wagons begin the long journey?

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## Chapter Four - Night on the Prairie

1. The first day on the trail, Kate made a new friend, Rosie Murphy. In the chart below, describe this new character. On the left, provide a physical description of Rosie. On the right, describe Rosie's inner character traits.

<b>Physical Description</b> Rosie's Outward Appearance	<b>Character Description</b> Rosie's Personality Traits

2. What did the pioneer families do when the sun began to go down?

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3. Have you ever been camping? \_\_\_\_\_ Imagine camping every night for months! That's what nights were like for pioneers on the trail.

4. What favor did Kate ask Rosie to do for her?

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## Chapter Five - Buffalo

1. What are "buffalo chips" and what were they used for?

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2. Each wagon train had **scouts** who rode on horses ahead of the wagons to look out for danger. What were the scouts shouting when they came riding back toward the wagons?

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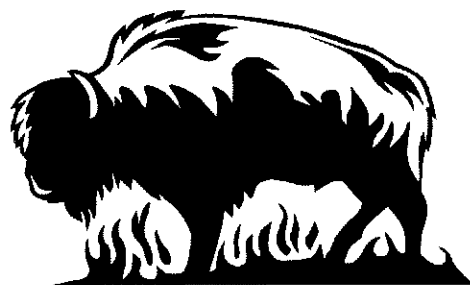
3. What did Pa and the other men do in order to break up the buffalo stampede and save the circle of wagons?

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## Chapter Six - Out of the Box

1. Kate was terribly upset after the buffalo stampede. What was troubling her the most?

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2. What did the Purdy family eat for dinner that evening?

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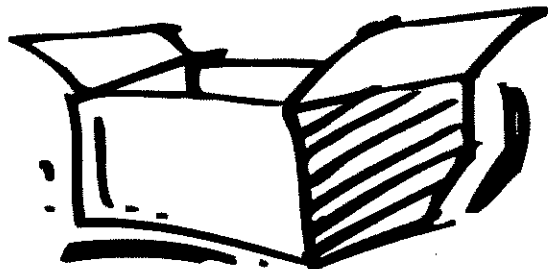
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3. Kate decided it was finally time to tell the truth about Snuggs. How did Ma and Pa respond when Kate told them that she brought Snuggs all the way from St. Joseph in her box?

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## Chapter Seven - Indians

1. Why were Indians tracking, or following, the wagon train? What did they want?

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2. Captain Jonah and the chief talked and made signs with their hands. Why do you think they had to use hand signals to communicate?

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3. Explain why Captain Jonah was yelling at Ned Bassett from wagon 42.

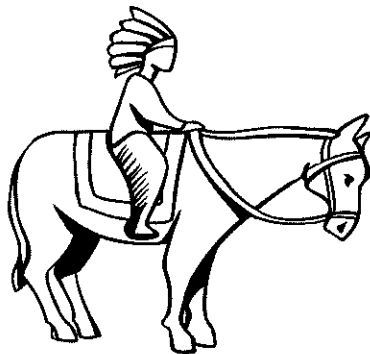
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4. Why do you think it was important for pioneers to have a leader like Captain Jonah on the trail?

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## Chapter Eight - River Crossing

1. On this difficult leg of the journey, Kate and Rosie came across a pile of goods that were dumped by a previous wagon train. Why do you think some travelers had to abandon their belongings on the trail?

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2. How did Pa get the wagon across the river?

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3. How did the rest of the Purdy family cross the river?

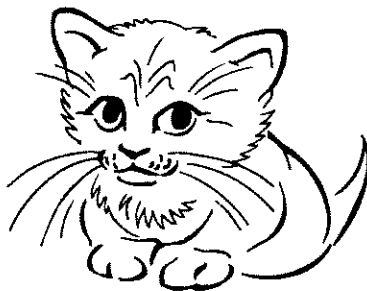
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4. When Kate was getting her sore arm looked at in the wagon, she made an exciting discovery. What did she find?

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## Chapter Nine - Oregon

1. Settlers traveling the Oregon Trail had to cross the Rocky Mountains before they could get to Oregon. Why did so many of the wagons have trouble with their wheels on the mountain trail?

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2. Why do you think the Purdy family needed the moon to guide them back to the wagon train after they fell out of line to fix a wheel?

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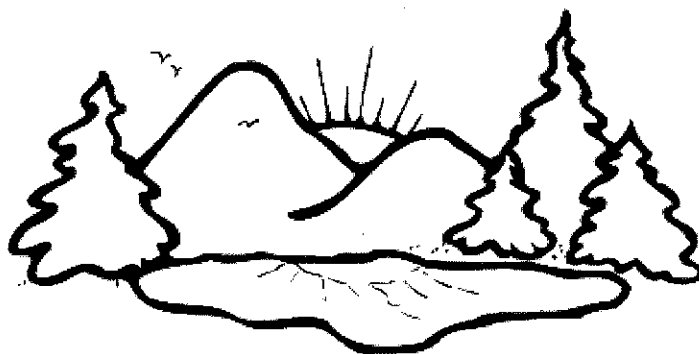
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3. What did Pa say when he looked down over Oregon from the crest of the mountain?

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## Conclusion

1. What were the most difficult moments Kate experienced on the trail?

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2. What were the happiest moments Kate experienced on the trail?

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3. What have you learned about Pioneers from reading Pioneer Cat?

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4. Would you like to have been a pioneer traveling in a covered wagon on the Oregon Trail? Why or why not?

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