

Little Joe

by
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Companion Guide
From



Introduction

Little Joe can serve as an introduction to the livestock industry, told from the perspective of a 3rd grade boy showing his first bull calf. Join Eli Stenger and his family and neighbors as they spend 9 months preparing a cow, some rabbits and a couple pigs named after candy for their adventure at the county fair!

In this companion guide you will find “*Power Words*” and “*Vo-Cow-Bulary*”. These are words from each chapter that may be unfamiliar to students. Students could define these, use them in sentences or work to use them in writing. “*Power Words*” are more traditional vocabulary words, where as “*Vo-Cow-Bulary*” are words associated with agriculture. Not all chapters have unusual vocabulary words, so in some cases there is not a vocabulary section included. There are “*Questions*” to use as discussion starters or as reading checks and writing prompts called “*Write Away*” to encourage students to write more about a specific topic. An “*Extension Activity*” has been added to some chapters with links to other Agriculture in the Classroom activities. Some questions, writing prompts and art activities build on previous examples. Teacher might consider having students using special notebooks or folders to store all materials for this book for easy reference.

Chapter 1 A Special Delivery

Power Words

Nervous
Rustling
Nostril
Stanchion
Sired
Tradition
Rafters
Cooed
Nudged
Navel
Infected

Vo-Cow-Bulary

Hen
Holstein
Heifers
Angus
Bull
Loin
Rump
Birthing Pen
Feed Bin
Kernels
Muzzle
Carhartt

Questions

1. Why was Eli helping in the Barn?
2. How does Grandpa describe the barn?
3. Eli describes the heart beat as a fluttering butterfly.
How would you describe an animal heartbeat?
4. Describe Hannah. How is she different than Eli?
5. What does Hannah want to name the bull calf?
6. Why does Eli chose 'Little Joe' as a name?
7. What does it mean that everyone would want to get a piece of Little Joe?
8. What does it mean that Eli is starting a new tradition?

Write Away

- * Eli helped pull a calf! Wow—write about how he felt about this event.
How would you feel?
- *The Stenger Family has their own traditions. What traditions does your family have?

Extension Activity

Map out Eli's family tree. Include everyone you have met in the book so far. Hold on to this and add to it throughout the book. Make a family tree for your family. Check out www.grandparents-day.com/html/family_tree-nv.html.

Chapter 2 Tattoo Day

Power Words

Corral
Weaned
Moist
Piercing
Gentling
Disinfectant

Vo-Cow-Bulary

Market Steer
Pitchfork
Alfalfa
Halter
Crossbred
Milk House

Questions

1. Why is the farm named 'Windswept Farms'?
2. Why is the ax important to Eli on the farm?
3. Why does Spider name fit him?
4. What can you compare tagging to?
5. Who is E-1?
6. Eli's parents work on the farm, but they also have other jobs. What are their other jobs?
7. What is the difference between animals and people according to Pa?

Write Away

1. Describe the differences Eli notices about various types of cobwebs.
Write about what you think of cobwebs.
2. What do you think about naming a calf instead of giving it a letter and a number combination?

Extension Activity

Check out Beautiful Bovine at www.agintheclassroom.org

Chapter 3 Sweet and Sour

Power Words

Camouflage
Hyperventilating

Vo-Cow-Bulary

Scours
Akita
Bull
Steer
Needle Teeth
Wallow

Questions

1. Describe Keller, his hands and his teeth.
2. How does Keller name his hogs?

3. Why does Keller clip the teeth of his hogs?

Write Away

1. Keller seems to tell some tall tales. What do you think about his bee hunting and eating story?

Extension Activity

Learn more about Illinois Pork at www.ilpork.com

Chapter 4 Don't Let Go

Power Words

Raspy
Thrashed
Blotchy

Vo-Cow-Bulary

Brisket
Dairy
Dewclaws
Muck Boots
Silo
Muzzle
Progeny
Marbling

Questions

1. Describe how the Stenger barn was built.
2. Pa doesn't want Eli to name Little Joe, but what did Eli find out about Pa's first cow?
3. Why does a cow have four stomachs?
4. Who is Eli's father?
5. How does Eli describe Little Joe's ears?
6. Explain Trick or Treat for Little Joe.

Write Away

1. Explain what Grandpa means when he says you can give a cow a name?
2. Explain if you think Eli should have taken Eli out by himself.

Extension Activity

Want to know more about Barns? Check out www.thebarnjournal.org.

Chapter 5 Mending

Power Words

Nickering
Kindle
Callus

Vo-Cow-Bulary

Free Range
Appaloosa
Mini-Lops

1. Why did Eli get stitches?
2. Who is Tess?
3. Why did Eli and Pa have to fix the fence?

Write Away

1. Pa wants Eli to show Little Joe who is boss. Why does Eli wonder if Pa has calloused up for good?
2. Explain how unicorns are like cows and dogs.

Extension Activity

Check out various rabbit breeds at www.arba.net/Breeds.htm and horse breeds at www.horsebreedslist.com.

Chapter 6 Sorry

Power Words

Quickening

Vo-Cow-Bulary

Currycomb

Questions

1. What is Eli sorry about?
2. How does Little Joe belong to Spider?

Write Away

1. Who is Ned Kinderhoff and how is he in competition with Pa?

Extension Activity

Want to grow a giant pumpkin? Check out this website www.merebrow.com/home/mbgp/how_to_grow.html. Illinois Ag in the Classroom's Pumpkin Ag Mag could be helpful too.

Chapter 7 Big Night

Questions

1. Where does Eli go every Wednesday night?
2. Why does Grandpa love tomatoes?
3. Describe how Eli walks across the apple orchard.
4. Describe the conflict between Grandpa and Dad.

Write Away

1. Describe what happens on Big Night.
2. Why did Grandpa allow Eli to join in the Big Night, when Ma and Pa wouldn't let him?

Extension Activity

Spotted Salamander migration is an event that happens on the east coast of the US. Learn more about this at http://www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connection/wildlife/index.php?subject=Reptiles%20and%20Amphibians&id=58.

There are various You Tube videos on the spotted salamander migration as well.

Chapter 8 Missing Mama

Power Words

Warbled
Brittle
Gnarled
Bawling
Yowled

Vo-Cow-Bulary

Hay Mow

Questions

1. How does the author describe the color of clover?
2. How does Pa want Little Joe to look at the time of the fair?
3. Why does Pa call Little Joe E-1?
4. How do Pa and Eli trick Little Joe?
5. Why does Little Joe spend the night bawling?
6. Pa finds Eli with Little Joe, what does he make him do for an hour before school that day?

Write Away

1. Describe how Eli helps Little Joe? Would you be willing to help out in the rain in the same way? Write your thoughts.

Chapter 9 First Cut

Power Words

Coaxing
Prodding
Amber
Frantic
Impressive

Vo-Cow-Bulary

Show Stick
Silage
Rations

Questions

1. What did Eli discover about Pa and his first animal?
2. How did Pa raise money to help with his first animal?

3. In Chapter 5 (page 52) Ma ask Pa about selling eggs. Pa says they don't sell eggs. Why is this ironic?
4. What is Pa's secret to making his pumpkin grow?

Write Away

1. It seems like Pa wants to win, what does Eli want?

Chapter 10 Trading Eggs

Power Words

Condiment
Metallic
Interfere

Vo-Cow-Bulary

Hens
Roper
Blower

Questions

1. What is Ma's job?
2. How long has Ma been selling eggs?

Write Away

1. Describe what Ma means when she says "pumpkins don't hurt".

Chapter 11 Cow Tipping

Power Words

Spiky
Encouraged
Katydid
Stammered

Vo-Cow-Bulary

Lupine
Lobelia

Questions

1. Why is Pa worried about Eli checking fields?
2. Describe Keller's new look.
3. What is cow-tipping?
4. How does Eli feel about cow tipping?
5. What happens when Keller sees the snake?

Write Away

1. Describe how the chapter ends and the fun time the family has on July 4.

Extension Activity

Various forms of Lupine and Lobelia grow in Illinois as perennials. Check out urbanext.illinois.edu/hortihints/0104b.html to see what grows in Illinois, then enter that name into an image search to see what it looks like.

Chapter 12 In the Show Ring

Power Words

Instinct
Girth

Vo-Cow-Bulary

Show Box

Questions

1. Eli wishes he had a hat on. Why isn't he practicing with a hat?
2. What should Eli do if he sees trouble?
3. Why did Grandpa give Eli the show box early?
4. What was inside the show box?

Write Away

1. Write about a special gift you received for a special birthday or early birthday present.

Extension Activity

Eli's show box has many items to help keep Little Joe properly groomed. Visit www.sullivansupply.com to see grooming videos and to see a variety of grooming supplies.

Chapter 13 Poison Weeds

Power Words

Wobbly
Crouched

Vo-Cow-Bulary

Crossbred

Questions

1. What did Pa find?
2. What could happen if a cow eats the weeds?
3. Why will Eli get money even if he doesn't go to the fair?
4. What happened to Shamrock?

Write Away

1. Eli discovered why Pa was so hard. Write why you think Pa is so upset. How could Eli help him?

Chapter 14 No Trespassing

Power Words

Trespassing
Waddled
Frolicking
Skittish
Mimicked
Disqualified
Whitewashed

Vo-Cow-Bulary

Foal
Dachshund
Yearling

Questions

1. How does Eli describe the colt's mane?
2. How does Tess describe what beef farmers do?
3. What does Eli say about eating horses?
4. Where is Eli going to hang his blue ribbon?
5. Why doesn't Eli want to go into the barn?

Write Away

1. Write what you think happened after Eli heard the rumble from the barn.

Chapter 15 Broken Bones

Power Words

Frisky

Vo-Cow-Bulary

Willow

Questions

1. What happened to Keller's arm?
2. Will a broken arm stop Keller from showing at the fair?
3. Why does the family need straws for spaghetti?
4. Why is Eli so quiet?
5. Why isn't this a regular evening?

Write Away

1. Why can't Eli sleep? Write what you think is going through his mind.

Chapter 16 All Jittery

Power Words

Show
Kindling
Dozing

Vo-Cow-Bulary

Bedding
Grooming Chute
Simmental

Questions

1. Why can't Little Joe have breakfast?
2. Why don't you think Eli had breakfast?
3. How easy was it for Grandpa and Pa to load Little Joe?
4. How does Grandpa describe what the birds will do?
5. How much does Little Joe weigh?
6. List 3 items that weigh about the same as Little Joe.
7. Where is Little Joe's stall located?
8. What surprise did Hannah bring for Little Joe?
9. How did Spider react at the fair?
10. How is showing cattle different than showing pigs according to Keller?
11. What does Keller predict will happen at the show?
12. What did Eli tell the judge he fed Little Joe to make him so big?
13. What prize did Eli and Little Joe win?
14. What happened to Keller and his pigs?
15. What does Pa get for Hannah?

Write Away

1. Grandpa offers Pa a hand when he falls, but Pa brushes it aside.
Describe what you think is wrong.
2. Write about what you think is going through Eli's mind in the show ring as the judge is talking to him.
3. At the end of the chapter Eli talks to Pa about Shamrock. Write what you think Pa is thinking about.

Chapter 17 Sold

Power Words

Blister

Vo-Cow-Bulary

Carcass

Questions

1. What will Eli leave with Little Joe after he is sold?
2. What does Eli wish Little Joe would do to help him not be sold?
3. What is Eli thinking about as Little Joe is sold?
4. What does Eli think a real farmer would be thinking about?

Write Away

1. At the end of the book there is a surprise ending. Why did Grandpa buy Little Joe? Write in detail what you think will happen to Little Joe and Eli in the next couple of months.