

HOME

How & Why you should be using

SCHOOL

Old Time Radio Programs

RADIO

in YOUR Homeschool!

SHOWS

BONUS! FIVE CLASSIC AUDIO PROGRAMS
& LISTENING GUIDES INCLUDED!



HOME SCHOOL RADIO SHOWS: How & Why You Should Be Using Old Time Radio Programs in YOUR Homeschool

by Jim Erskine

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BONUS DOWNLOADS INCLUDED!

You will find download link to FIVE full length MP3 old time radio programs PLUS our exclusive "Listening & Discussion Guides" for those programs at the end of this ebook! The programs included are:

- "The Long Winter" by Laura Ingalls Wilder
- "Treasure Island" by Robert Louis Stevenson
- "The Snow Queen" by Hans Christian Andersen
- "The Mysterious Pirate Pit" (A True "Living History for the Ears" Story)
- "The Blizzard of 1888" (A True "Living History for the Ears" Story)

WHAT'S IN THIS GUIDE?

In this very concise, practical “hands on” guide, I first share a bit about our own experiences with old time radio programs in our home and homeschooling, and what effect they had on our own kids. That way you'll know a little bit about where I am coming from.

Next, I'll share my thoughts on why these classic programs can be a great resource for YOUR homeschool – not only for their educational value, but also because they have can have a profound influence in developing your children's life skills as well.

I'll then share some tested and proven strategies and tips to help you make the most of these programs in your home. And – probably even MORE important - I'll share some very specific tips on what NOT to do with these programs so you don't turn your kids off to auditory learning.

After that, I have further suggestions on how to get the most educational value from these programs. As part of this section, I give you a great list of general discussion questions that can be used or adapted to almost any program that you listen to for homeschool purposes. You can use these as a starting point to spark discussion with your kids after listening to any specific program.

Finally, as a special Bonus, I have included a link at the end of this ebook from which you may download FIVE classic old time radio programs in MP3 format (see the list of titles above). In addition to these audios, I've included a copy of our exclusive, customized “Listening & Discussion Guide” (in PDF format only) for each of these programs. You'll be able to download these to your computer and give them a listen right away.

Okay. That's an overview of what this is about. It should be enough to tell you if this guide is for you or not. If you're ready to find out more, and learn how to effectively use these classic audio programs in your home and homeschool, let's get started!

- Jim Erskine

<http://www.homeschoolfreebieoftheday.com>

How we got started & what happened with our kids

I grew up a couple decades too late to experience the original "Golden Age of Radio", but sometime in my teenage years I discovered a stash of cassette tapes of old time radio at our local library. After listening to a few of these, I was hooked.... and quickly became a passionate listener and collector of those classic audio programs. I devoured all the most popular comedy and adventure shows, like The Shadow, The Great Gildersleeve, Amos & Andy and The Lone Ranger.

It was a sheer delight to lay on my bed in the dark and listen to these long lost artifacts of the past and visualize them clearly inside my own head. I could (and did) listen to them for hours at a time. The characters and stories in those tapes became just as vivid in my imagination as anything I'd see on TV or at the movies. Still are.

I can relate to the kid who was asked in a 1950s consumer survey about his entertainment preferences: "I like radio programs better than TV, " he said, " because the pictures are better." Soooo true!

I loved those programs not only for the sheer fun and entertainment they provided, but also for the sense of Americana and history those programs had. Just realizing that these were the same shows my own parents and grandparents had enjoyed decades before was a thrill.

But it wasn't until years later, when Susan and I had three children of our own, that I realized what a wonderful tool those programs could be for homeschooling too.

The best listeners I know

Our three children have all grown up and out on their own now. But from the time they were pre-schoolers, they grew up regularly listening to story tapes and old time radio programs -- right up to the time they left home.

In their younger years, we let them listen to a short children's show or story every night at bedtime. Aside from the fact that it kept bedtime fidgeting at a minimum, this had one most pleasant side-effect: They developed into the best listeners I have the pleasure to know. Our kids became auditory learners. You could tell them something, you could read them something, they listened. And they retained it. I mean just about anything, down to the smallest detail. It really was amazing. And I credit it to nightly exposure to these tapes which

have trained them to focus and pay attention to the stories that are being told.

GOING BEYOND “ENTERTAINING”

Our three little ones devoured my “kid friendly” radio program tapes quickly. I knew that many of the OTR programs that I enjoyed – westerns, scary stories, etc. - weren't exactly the sort of fare I wanted my kiddos to be listening to at bedtime. And it would be nice to find stories that would both entertain AND have some educational value to them.

So I ventured beyond the popular “entertainment” programs, and uncovered many less-known (at least to modern day listeners) radio programs that were both fun to listen to AND quite educational. We added true stories from history and dramatizations of famous short stories and books to the mix, and the kids loved those too. These streamlined, half hour audio dramatizations were a wonderful way to introduce history and classic literature to our kids.

No, these programs didn't replace reading or listening to the originals. How could they? But they did give them a familiarity with and a good “taste” of these classics and history, and made them much more accessible to their young ears. They made something history that might seem lifeless and far away in a text book “come to life” as living, breathing history. We added these to our other homeschool resources, fitting them in whenever we would be studying a related subject, or just for listening on their own. They became an integral part of our curriculum and our household throughout our homeschooling years.

As time went by and our kids grew up, we put together our website <http://www.homeschoolradioshows.com> to share many of the best programs we had found with other homeschooling families. To make the programs even more valuable for homeschool purposes, we put together several additional resource including our exclusive “Listening & Discussion Guides” for many of our favorite programs, giving a concise overview of the story, some background on the author, ideas for further research, and discussion questions parents could use to spark some conversation about the story after listening.

"You've got to tell stories to bring the past to life."

Back in my college days when I was a history major, I made a profound (at least to me) discovery: You don't really learn history by studying dates, places and events. You have to get involved — get a feel for what life was like at that time, understand the emotions and passions that motivated people to act as they did... and you have to tell really good stories. (I just wish my grade school and high school teachers had known that!)

Stories are what brings history to life. In fact, history is really nothing but a series of stories -- a vast panorama of living, breathing real-life stories, intertwined and tied together by the bonds of time.

In our family, we have found that spoken stories -- reading books aloud, storytelling, audio books and old time radio programs -- are the very best way to learn history AND are a prime

way to introduce great literature to our kids. If you'll give these classic programs a try, I suspect you will agree.

The tips and suggestions in this ebook hold true for any type of storytelling, reading aloud, audiobook or story tape. When these are both historically accurate and entertaining, they become very powerful teaching tools for your children.

The Mind: A terrible thing to “Spoon Feed”

Before we get going here, I'd like to share something that I'm sure you already at least suspect: Television is not really very healthy for your brain.

Why? Because TV is passive entertainment.

There is a HUGE difference between passive and ACTIVE forms of entertainment.

Television is passive entertainment: No imagination or active thought is required when viewing. When someone is passively entertained, the higher reasoning faculties of the brain shift into idle while the senses and emotions are stimulated (or overstimulated).

Check it out: You can see this for yourself simply by watching your children (or your spouse!) watch TV. Note their facial expressions. Most of the time, you'll find there IS no expression -- just a glazed over stare. That is because your mind is passively receiving the program being viewed – you are not actively considering what it means, not critically considering the implications of what is taking place, not engaging your imagination. We simply “take it in”.

Television has the uncanny ability to spoon feed every conceivable image (good and evil) into an open and idle mind. In fact, the more our minds are filled with the "manufactured imagery" we see in videos, the less we use our own imagination... and our ability to form clear thoughts and mental images likewise decreases.

On the other hand, audio entertainment – whether it be listening to a book being read aloud... storytelling... old time radio programs... story tapes and the like -- REQUIRE active participation from the listener.

Listeners are obliged to focus in and concentrate on what is going on as the story unfolds. Your own imagination is stretched and developed as you "fill in the blanks" in the theater of your mind. Listening skills are sharpened.

A Culture of Lazy Listening

We are a culture of “lazy listeners” with poorly developed listening skills. You see examples of this every day in your (or your children's) interactions with other people. Some ways “poor listening” manifests itself include:

- Pretending to listen so you have a turn to talk soon.
- Breaking in to offer your own ideas
- Daydreaming or skipping the parts that seem boring
- Finishing sentences for the person talking to you
- Thinking about how much you like or dislike the person speaking
- No clear idea about what has been said, but you believe you can figure it all out later

All of us are guilty from time to time of not listening. We may hear words, but not grasp the meaning. We allow our minds to wander, we "tune out". We will often even do this when we actually want to hear something, such as instructions from a teacher, or a friend sharing a problem.

One reason for this is because we are able to think and process our thoughts 4 or 5 times faster than the normal speaking rate, so it is easy to let your mind wander ahead of the speaker instead of focusing on what is being said. In fact, the faster you are able to process information, the greater the potential for poor listening. A good listener learns to pace his listening.

"Listening Well" is a skill you can learn. All it takes is practice. And the more you train yourself to pay attention to what you hear, the better your ability to truly listen and learn... both in your studies and in your personal relationships.

One of the best ways to improve your listening skills is simply by learning to listen to audio stories. Audio books are wonderful for this, but can be much too long for younger listeners. The average old time radio program, however - with lengths ranging from 15 minutes to an hour – is a perfect length for young listeners to focus in and sharpen their listening skills.

Some Ideas for Reluctant Listeners

Listening to audio-only programs may be a new experience for some of you. In our fast paced, very visually oriented culture, most of us are not trained to listen well. We are primarily visual learners, not auditory learners. You may find that your child needs to be taught how to LISTEN.

If listening to audio stories is a new experience for your children, be aware that it may take a bit of time and patience to "train" their ears to truly listen and "wake up" their imaginations.

Radio programs (as well as audio books, listening to storytellers, etc.) require active participation from the listener, who is obliged to concentrate on what is going on as the story unfolds. The result of this over time is greatly enhanced listening skills and a much better developed imagination, but this can take a bit of time and practice.

Here are a few pointers to keep in mind when starting to listen to classic old time radio programs:

Choose programs that you believe will be of high interest to your students.

If you can find a program that coincides with an existing interest or passion for your kids, start with that.

Less is better than “too much”.

You want to leave your kids wanting more instead of being sick and tired of these shows. Don't “force feed” them -- you may turn them off completely. Small doses of shows — 15 minutes to 1/2 hour at most at a time is plenty to start out if you have reluctant listeners.

Break up longer shows if needed.

Try to stop at a “cliffhanger” moment to keep your listeners' interest high. A show or two per week may be better than a daily dose. You can also “serialize” longer, multi-part stories over several days.

Create an environment that is conducive to listening to the stories.

This starts with your own attitude toward these shows. You set the atmosphere for listening. Fussing at the kids to be still and listen puts a damper on the whole learning process. Don't make them seem like another lesson that you have to get through. Instead, treat these shows as a special “treat” for the kids, a reward time, more as entertainment than a lesson.

Let hands stay busy if they want to move

Never, NEVER try to force your kids just sit still and do nothing while they listen to the programs. This might work with some young people on occasion, but for the most part your kids will need some quiet activity to keep their hands occupied while they are listening. You might have them draw or color a picture of the characters in the story, or draw a scene from the story while they are listening. Other quiet activities such as Legos, clay, needlework, etc. might also work well. We often will fix some popcorn to munch while listening. And sometimes we listen to shows while doing kitchen chores & cleanup. Our rule of thumb is, if they are quiet -- then they are listening.

When they DON'T listen...

Since listening is an active exercise instead of passive entertainment, there is likely to be times when your kids are preoccupied with other things and just can't settle down to listen to the story. If your kids display obvious signs they are not listening to the program, just turn it off and announce that it will continue at some other time or day. Don't fuss, don't complain. Just take it away every time this happens, and before long they will learn to “focus in” if they want to experience the stories.

Should you “preview” the stories?

When you can! It is usually a good idea to listen to at least a portion of the story to familiarize yourself with the subject. You want to know what the story is about and how it fits in with your current studies. Also, you want to be able to intelligently discuss it afterward.

Headphones vs. Speakers

If you are listening to stories as a group, then you obviously need to play these stories over your computer or CD player speakers. However, for individual listening, sometimes headphones can help screen out distractions and help your student get more out of the story. Headphones can work well at bedtime and on road trips. Everyone is different. Some kids prefer to listen to these stories with headphones on their own... and others enjoy making it a family affair. Put together the listening plan that best “fits” your children and their learning styles.

Use your travel time wisely.

Road trips and long drives to town are usually great times to get in some good listening. Travel time can be pretty tedious and boring and your kids will be especially receptive to listening to these programs. This also is a great place to talk about the shows after you listen to them. Though we usually don't listen to shows back-to-back at home, you can do that on a road trip, and the kids will love it. If you don't have a portable mp3 player, you may want to copy some shows to Audio CD or cassette and keep them handy in the glove compartment.

Chore time listening

Another great time for listening to these programs is when your kids are supposed to be engaged in some household chore, such as cleaning or cooking in the kitchen. The program can be used as a positive incentive to keep plugging away: As long as the work is getting done, the story is allowed to continue. If you slack off, the story gets turned off. The distraction and entertainment the audio program provides will often help make the time and drudgery of the work go by all the faster.

Bedtime listening

The other “prime time” we have found for listening to these shows is at bedtime. They are a great way to get your kids to “wind down” and settle in for the night. We usually keep it to one show at bedtime. In the mornings, we always ask about the show they listened to the night before, and this makes for some interesting breakfast discussions.

Getting More Educational Value Out of Old Time Radio Programs

How you use and listen to old time radio programs in your homeschooling is entirely up to you, but you may find some of these suggestions helpful in making these programs a much richer learning experience. Of course, you don't have to follow all of these suggestions for every show. Sometimes just listening for the pleasure of listening is enough. However, when a program focuses on a topic that you want your kids to learn more about, you can easily build an appropriate "lesson plan" around the show to reinforce their learning.

Everyone is different. Some kids prefer to listen to these stories with headphones on their own... and others enjoy making it a family affair. Put together the listening plan that best "fits" your children and their learning styles.

You may "assign" a daily or weekly story for your student to listen to on their own and write about, or you can listen to the programs and discuss them together.

If you wish to discuss the individual programs as you listen to them on this collection, you will need to do a little advance preparation.

The best way to ensure that your child understands each story and has a grasp of its significance is for you to ask good, leading questions after the program has been played. Good questions help your child think about what he has just heard, and help them consider the meaning of the historic events and people that were a part of it.

To do this effectively, you must listen to the stories yourself — either beforehand, or with your children. This will familiarize you with the story and enable you to ask good questions, as well as help you fit the stories in context with your ongoing history and biographical studies.

What Programs do you choose?

It really depends on your purpose for listening.

If you are wanting to listen just for fun and to develop your children's listening skills and imagination, you can try any of the popular programs available. Kids love old time radio situation comedies, adventure stories, westerns, and even scary stories (if they're not too young and it's not too dark). You can find many, many good entertainment oriented old time radio programs for free download at www.archive.org.

If you are using OTR programs as part of your homeschooling, you can often match a specific program to a subject you are already studying in history or literature. That's a great way to make your study "come alive" for your students.

You can also find programs that follow your child's specific interest. For instance, if they are interested in the American Revolution or the Civil War or frontiersmen, you can let them listen to several different stories on these topics. The more interested in the subject they are, the

more they'll get out of the stories.

Most OTR programs were originally meant for family listening and are still suitable for that. However, only a small percentage of those programs are suitable for homeschooling purposes. Most radio programs (like most TV programs today) were produced for pure entertainment, and only a relatively small percentage of programs are valuable from an educational standpoint. Then again, some “educational” programs can be as dull and boring as watching paint dry.

Ideally, you want programs with both educational content AND entertainment value to hold the attention of young listeners. With some careful search you can uncover many “gems” that are PERFECT for enhancing your homeschooling curriculum. (We've spent years doing just that: Locating, pre-screening and compiling the very best programs suitable for homeschool family use.)

Place the story you are listening to in context with your other studies.

For example, if you are listening to a story about Abraham Lincoln's childhood, you could: 1) use a timeline to show what else was happening in the world while Lincoln was growing up, 2) use a map to find where he lived during this time, 3) discuss other subjects you have previously studied that were concurrent with Lincoln's boyhood. If you are listening to a dramatization of a “living book”, you could also offer some brief background information about the author and his times.

One of the best, easiest research tools to do this is to do a simple Google search on the author, title, or event that is the subject of your program. The net is chock full of teaching aids and lesson plans that will help you add detail and depth to practically any historic or literature subject. It should be a cinch to find timelines, maps, author bios and other historic information as needed.

Talk over the stories after listening

The best way to ensure that your child understands each story and has a grasp of its significance is for you to ask good, leading questions after the program has been played. Good questions help your child think about what he has just heard, and help them consider the meaning of the historic events and people that were a part of it.

You can really reinforce what your children are learning from these programs if you'll simply take a few minutes to discuss and review a program after listening to it. You don't have to spend a lot of time with this — just 5 or 10 minutes will do it. In fact, you can make this sort of a “quiz game” and even award a little prize to the winner if you want. Keep it light and fun. See if they can name the main characters in the story, or tell you the historical setting and importance of what happened in the story. Use the Sample Discussion Questions included further on in this ebook and simply adapt the questions to each specific story. You might also refer to programs you have listened to in the past when the opportunity arises while studying other topics.

Use the Pause Button

Don't be afraid to "pause" programs to interject a comment or observation about what is going on, or to ask your kids a question. Done selectively, this helps reinforce what they are hearing.

Discuss the differences

If you are listening to a story that you have already studied, you'll probably discover some differences in the way the story is told on these radio programs. Usually this was for dramatic reasons or because of time constraints, but occasionally you may run across jarringly different dramatizations of a favorite book or historic incident. Discuss the differences with your kids and ask why they think the changes were made. How did the story you just heard differ from the story in a text book or other recounting? This will spur them to critically evaluate not only these stories, but other media that they view.

Try building a story "unit study"

When planning which stories to listen to, consider putting together a "unit study" of several stories that are related — by subject, time period, author, etc. By building your listening for a time around a specific period or subject your students will get a better feel for author's work and the historic period you are focusing on.

Follow up on stories that really capture your kids' interest

Occasionally, you'll run across a program that really gets your kids excited and interested in that book or subject. Don't let it pass you by — this can be the jumping off point for some big time learning for your kids! Let them dig up more information on that topic or author at the library or on the net. Ask them to put together a report or presentation on the story. You might even locate the original book that the story is based on and start reading that. Let them listen to the story again a week later if they like. Feed their interest in that subject and watch them soak it up like a sponge.

Use "favorite" shows as a reward

If your child discovers a favorite series or type of program, you might try using these as a "reward" for completing their schoolwork and chores for the day. This gives them a little incentive to get everything else done and may reduce any grumbling over less "fun" assignments during the school day. These don't have to be "educational" programs. The point here is some relaxing listening just for the fun of it. They may not learn any history or literature from such programs, but they will still be improving their listening skills. (Just don't tell them that!)

Historical Setting

If the program you are listening to is in context with any of your other history or literature studies, explain when and where it fits in the timeframe you have been studying.

Identify where and approximately when the story would have taken place. See if you can locate the country or region on the map.

If you know anything about the social conditions, manners, or politics of the time, you might mention these... especially if these appear in the story itself.

Author Information

If your students are already familiar with the author, ask them what they know about his/her background or other works. Also ask them what KIND of stories the author is famous for (humor, love stories, ghost stories, etc.)

If they are not familiar with the author, give your students a little background on the author, what other works he is famous for, etc. A simple Google search on the author's name should quickly result in all the biographical data you need.

You can use the programs as a jumping off point for reading the original short story when appropriate. You may also wish to look up some other stories by the same author if a particular tale appeals to your student. The work of many of these authors can be readily found online or – even better - as free kindle editions on Amazon.

Sample Discussion Questions

Following is a selection of questions that can be used or adapted to almost any program that you listen to for homeschool purposes. You should freely to adapt or change these to each individual episode.

For older students, these stories can be a great “jumping off” point for further reading or study about a subject.

FOR HISTORICAL STORIES:

Who was this story about? (recall the names of all important characters in the story)

When did this story take place? How long ago was that?

What other events were taking place in the world at the same time? (If you use a timeline to plot and visualize when historic occurred, use it to locate the time in history that this story took place.)

What kind of location did the story take place in? City? Country? Wilderness? North? South? Continent? Country? Etc.

What happened in the story? (Give a brief summary.)

What did this story tell you about life as it was back at this time?

How was it different back then?

How was it the same as it is today?

After hearing this story, what new thing did you learn about (the main characters/ historic event/ our culture)?

How would you describe the main character? What does this story tell you about the type of person he/she was?

Why are the events that took place in this story important to remember?

Did anything change because of these events? Were lives improved? What if these events had NOT taken place?

Did (the main characters) face any opposition in what they wanted to accomplish? Why?

How would you have felt if you were (the main character in the story)?

What would you have done if you were faced with a situation like this?

What did you think was the most interesting thing about this story?

FOR “LIVING BOOK” STORIES:

Who was the author of this story?

What do you know about him / her?

Who were the main characters in this story?

When did this story take place?

How long ago was that?

What kind of location did the story take place in? City? Country? Wilderness? North? South? Continent? Country? Etc.

What happened in the story? (Give a brief summary.)

What did this story tell you about life as it was back at this time?

How was it different back then?

How was it the same as it is today?

After hearing this story, what new thing did you learn about (the main characters/ historic event/ our culture)?

How would you describe the main character? What does this story tell you about the type of person he/she was?

What message do you think the author was trying to convey through his/her story?

Did (the main characters) face any opposition in what they wanted to accomplish? Why?

How would you have felt if you were (the main character in the story)?

What would you have done if you were faced with a situation like this?

What did you think was the most interesting thing about this story?

BONUS: Program Downloads with Listening Guides!

One of the best ways to increase the value of these programs for your homeschool is to discuss them with your kids after listening.

You can do this by using the general discussion questions we provide in this ebook, or you can check out the exclusive “Listening Guides” we have written for many of the programs we feel would be of special interest to homeschoolers. These short, concise overviews give you some background on each story, information about the author, ideas for further research, and several discussion questions you can use to spark some conversation about the story after listening. They are a WONDERFUL tool to increase the usefulness of these programs for families wishing to use them in their homeschooling.

As a bonus resource for you, we've included FIVE downloadable MP3 Audio Programs and Listening Guides for you with this Kindle ebook.

Note: The MP3 audio download link for each story can be found at the beginning of each of the following Listening Guides. Copy and paste the link into your browser and you can then go to the link and download both the MP3 audios and (if you wish) a PDF format version of the Listening Guides included here. If you are using a Kindle Fire, you can go to the download page and download them directly to your device. If you are using a regular Kindle, you will need to type the link into your computer browser and download them there. Once you have them on your computer, you can then load them on to any MP3 compatible device you have.

These audios & notes should give you plenty of material to get starting exploring the potential

of using these classic audios in your homeschool. Enjoy!

THE MYSTERIOUS PIRATE PIT

A Homeschool Radio Shows Listening Guide

DOWNLOAD THE MP3 AUDIO OF THIS STORY along with a PDF of this Listening Guide at:

<http://www.homeschoolradioshows.com/kindlestories>

SUMMARY

Like hidden treasure stories? Ever have a desire to dig for hidden loot? Then you'll want to visit Oak Island, for supposedly, hidden beneath the soil of that island is buried treasure. As for what it is, who buried it, and whether it will ever be found, the answer has yet to be discovered.

Almost 200 years ago, three boys found an odd tree and a shallow round pit on deserted Oak Island in Nova Scotia and realized that they may have actually stumbled across buried pirate treasure. But when they started to dig... they were amazed and mystified at what they found. This is an amazing story about one of the most mysterious and fascinating puzzles ever devised.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Where is Oak Island, Nova Scotia? Locate it on the map.

What marked the location of the pit? Why was it so remarkable?

What did people see in 1720 that made them suspect that pirates were involved? What other theories were made about the origin of the pit?

What all did the boys find in the pit? How far down did they go before giving up?

After the boys abandoned the project, what other efforts were made to uncover the secret?

Whoever dug the pit did so without modern tools. How do you think they did it? Do you think someone with engineering skills would be required to design such a pit? Why or why not?

Measure a 95 foot distance. Do you think you could dig a hole that deep? What was found at that depth?

What do you think could have been put in the pirate pit? Do you think it could still be there? Why or why not?

DIGGING DEEPER

If you want to find more resources on the Oak Island Money Pit, visit Oak Island Treasure (<http://www.oakislandtreasure.co.uk>)

They have photos, videos, news, theories, interviews, an active forum and much more. Oak Island Treasure regularly receives enquiries from school teachers and students and is more than happy to help with lesson plans and projects.

THE GREAT WHITE HURRICANE OF 1888

A HomeschoolRadioShows Listening Guide

DOWNLOAD THE MP3 AUDIO OF THIS STORY along with a PDF of this Listening Guide at:

<http://www.homeschoolradioshows.com/kindlestories>

SUMMARY

March 12, 1888 - The day the largest city in the world was buried. What started out as a normal spring rain, turned into a downfall of drifting, piling snow. We hear Mr. Knickerbocker exclaim to his wife his dismay of being delayed from going on their outing. As Mr. Knickerbocker read the weather forecast to his wife, he seemed very assured that their town was just in for some rain. Suddenly, the snow started falling from the sky. The next day, snow was still falling. Telegraph wires have broke under the heavy strain of ice.

Deeper and deeper the snow piled until the roads become impassable to wagons. Trains no longer ran, boats were lost out at sea and New York was cut off from the rest of the world. Tuesday the blizzard still raged. People risked their lives just to step outside the doors of their homes. Wednesday dawned and the snow stopped. Once again, citizens came out of their homes as the sun began melting away snow. New York came back to life again. In the blizzard that lasted some 36 hours, 400 lives were lost and property damage cost millions of dollars. The storm of 1888, paralyzed not only New York City, but other large cities like Washington DC, Baltimore, Pittsburgh and Philadelphia.

On December 26, 1947, only 41 years after the blizzard of 1888, another snow storm rolled

into the same areas and was much more severe. This time, though, only 27 lives were lost in the 99 million tons of snow that were dumped. With the help of modern machines and conveniences, many lives were saved.

Factoids and interesting tidbits....

New York City is the most populated cities in the United States. Now, with over 8.2 million residents, it has earned it's nickname of "the city that never sleeps". In 1664, the name "New York" was given by conquering British in honor of the English Duke of York and Albany. Residents of the city are known as New Yorkers.

In March 1888, the heavy snowfall, hurricane-like winds and dropping temperatures unexpectedly surprised and paralyzed the East Coast from the Chesapeake to Maine for 3 days. New York city is said to have suffered the most during the 'Great White Hurricane,' as it was called. With telephone and telegraph lines dead, food and coal became scarce, a three-block trip via horse-drawn transportation soon cost fifty dollars. The blizzard had long-reaching impact in New York, within the years that followed, an underground wiring system for phones and telegrams was enforced and construction of its subway system commenced.

For more research and information on the blizzard of 1888....

<http://www.infoplease.com/spot/blizzard1.html> http://www.stamfordhistory.org/ph_0301.htm

<http://www.lifesavingmuseum.org/information/storm88.html>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

What would you of done if you and your family were trapped in the Great White Storm of 1888? How would you have felt?

If your family would of ran out of food, would you of gone out into the storm?

How many lives were lost during the blizzard of 1947 compared to 1888?

What are ways that technology and modern machines have helped us during events like blizzards?

THE SNOW QUEEN

by Hans Christian Andersen
A Homeschool Radio Shows Listening Guide

DOWNLOAD THE MP3 AUDIO OF THIS STORY along with a PDF of this Listening Guide at:

<http://www.homeschoolradioshows.com/kindlestories>

SUMMARY

The Snow Queen was a fairy tale first published in 1845, and centers on the struggle between good and evil as experienced by a little boy and girl, Kai and Gerda.

The story is one of Andersen's longest. It is regularly included in selected tales and collections of his work and is frequently reprinted in illustrated storybook editions for children.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hans Christian Andersen (April 2, 1805 – August 4, 1875) was a Danish author and poet. Although a prolific writer of plays, travelogues, novels, and poems, Andersen is best remembered for his fairy tales, a literary genre he so mastered that his works have been immortalized in children's world literature. Andersen's popularity was not limited to children, as his fairy tales—called eventyrs, or "fantastic tales"—express universal themes that transcend age and nationality.

During his lifetime he was acclaimed for having delighted children worldwide, and was feted by royalty. Andersen's fairy tales, which have been translated into more than 125 languages, have become culturally embedded in the West's collective consciousness, readily accessible to children, but presenting lessons of virtue and resilience in the face of adversity for mature readers as well.

The full-length text version of "The Snow Queen" is available for free download onto your Kindle. Just search for it and look for the free version.

For more information about Hans Christian Andersen, check these links:

http://www.andersen.sdu.dk/index_e.html

<http://www.endicott-studio.com/jMA03Summer/hans.html>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What effect does the Snow Queen's mirror have on those who look into it?

How did Kai get under the spell of the mirror?

Where does Gerda have to travel to find her friend Kai?

What dangers does Gerda face in her journey?

How does Gerda find out where the Snow Queen lives and how does she get there?

What word is Kai unable to spell in the Snow Queen's palace? Why is he unable to do it?

Grandma said "Only love can save him". What is love? Does Gerda love Kai? How can you tell? How did Edward & Queen Millicent demonstrate love to Gerda? How does love finally

save Kai from the Snow Queen?

THE LONG WINTER

based on the story by Laura Ingalls Wilder
A HomeschoolRadioShows Listening Guide

DOWNLOAD THE MP3 AUDIO OF THIS STORY along with a PDF of this Listening Guide at:

<http://www.homeschoolradioshows.com/kindlestories>

The Long Winter is a Newbery Honor novel by Laura Ingalls Wilder, first published in 1940. The story is set in South Dakota during the severe winter of 1880-1881, when Laura turned fourteen. It is the sixth book in the Little House series. This week's program is a half hour dramatization of the story which originally appeared on the Hallmark Playhouse on March 15, 1951 and stars Edward Arnold as Pa.

The story begins in Dakota territory on a hot August day in 1880. Laura and her father ("Pa") are working hard to bring in enough hay to feed the livestock over the winter. When they come across a muskrat's house, Pa tells Laura that he knows the winter is going to be hard because muskrats always build a house with thick walls before a hard winter, and this year, they have built the thickest walls that he has ever seen. In mid-October, the Ingalls wake one morning to find an unusually early blizzard howling around their frail claim shanty. Impressed, Pa decides to move the family into nearby De Smet for the winter. The story of how the family and the town face the incredibly harsh conditions of that winter follows.

About the Author

Laura Ingalls Wilder was an American author who wrote the Little House series of children's books based on her childhood in a pioneer family. She was born on February 7, 1867 and died February 10, 1957 at age 90.

Laura Elizabeth Ingalls was born near the village of Pepin, Wisconsin, in what was then known as the "Big Woods" of Wisconsin. Her actual birth site is commemorated by a period log cabin, the Little House Wayside. She was born to parents Charles Phillip Ingalls and Caroline Lake (Quiner) Ingalls. Charles' paternal grandmother was Margaret Delano, of the famed Delano family, and was a descendant of Mayflower passenger Richard Warren. Laura was the second of their five children: Mary Amelia, who later in her life became blind; Caroline Celestia, whom they called Carrie; Charles Frederic, who died at nine months old, and Grace Pearl.

When Laura was still very young, her father took a homestead in what was then known as Indian Territory. After less than two years living near Independence, Kansas, the family returned to the Big Woods. Before long, her father's restless spirit led them on various moves to Walnut Grove, Minnesota, South Troy, Minnesota, and Burr Oak, Iowa. The family eventually established a homestead claim near De Smet, Dakota Territory, where in the spring of 1879 Charles Ingalls accepted a railroad job. After staying the winter of 1879–1880 in the Surveyor's house, the Ingalls family watched the town of De Smet rise up from the prairie in 1880. The following winter, 1880–1881, became known as one of the most severe winters on record in the Dakotas, which Laura later described in the book dramatized in this week's program, *The Long Winter*.

Interesting Links:

The Laura Ingalls Wilder Museum has lots of interesting photos, articles & activities about the author of the “Little House” books. <http://www.lauraingallswilderhome.com/>

De Smet in the National Archives – tracing the history of the Ingalls & Wilders through “The Long Winter” <http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2003/winter/little-town-in-nara-1.html>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Even though it was mid-summer, the muskrats seemed to know it would be a harsh winter. Pa pointed out that men are quite different than animals, however. What do you think of Pa's observations?

Pa saw trouble ahead and made preparations for it. Do you ever think ahead about situations or deadlines you know are coming up, and take actions accordingly? What does the Bible call a person who sees trouble ahead but does nothing about it?

What temperature is it outside your house now? How do you think you would feel if it was 40 below as in the story?

The grocer, Loftus, sought to make a profit from the wheat that Pa and Alonzo hauled into town. What do you think of his actions? What were his priorities?

Even in the midst of adversity, the Ingalls family was thankful for what they did have, and came up with several resourceful alternative ways to make do. Do you grumble and complain when things don't go your way, or are you content in adverse situations? Can you think of a scripture verse that gives us advice in situations like this?

TREASURE ISLAND

by Robert Louis Stevenson
A HomeschoolRadioShows Listening Guide

DOWNLOAD THE MP3 AUDIO OF THIS STORY along with a PDF of this Listening Guide at:

<http://www.homeschoolradioshows.com/kindlestories>

Treasure Island is the story of a young man, blood-thirsty pirates and pirates gold. Jim Hawkins, the main character is the son of an inn keeper. The inn's name is the Admiral Benbow. An old seaman, Captain Billy Bones, shows up at the inn, stays a while and then passes away. Just before passing away he gives Jim a packet with a black spot and what appears to be a treasure map.

Young Jim Hawkins recruits two local business men, Squire Trelawney and Dr. Livesey and they go on a sea voyage looking for the island on the map.

Unbeknownst to them, they hire some of the pirates from the crew that buried the treasure. These pirates originally sailed with old Captain Flint. He was the "most blood thirsty buccaneer that ever sailed".

An interesting character is Long John Silver, the ships cook. Jim overhears a mutiny being planned aboard ship. The mutiny and fighting carries over to the island. On the island, Jim Hawkins encounters Ben Gunn, a pirate from Flints crew who was cruelly marooned three years earlier.

THE AUTHOR

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-94) was a Scottish novelist, essayist, and poet, who contributed several classics to the world of children's literature, including Treasure Island, A Child's Garden of Verses (poetry), The Black Arrow, Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde, and many more popular novels.

Here are some good biographical sketches of his life and works:

http://www.biblio.com/authors/618/Robert_Louis_Stevenson_Biography.html

<http://dinamico.unibg.it/rls/biogmenu.htm>

http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/arts/writingscotland/writers/robert_louis_stevenson/works.shtml

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treasure_Island

<http://www.gradesaver.com/classicnotes/titles/treasure/section5.html>

REVIEW & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What was the ship's name that Jim Hawkins sailed on?

What is a buccaneer?

Is the Admiral Benbow Inn named after a real person?

Please describe how Jim grew in maturity during the story. In your opinion who was the hero of the story?

It seemed like Long John Silver could be the hero, why were the doctor and the squire taken in by him?

Pirates were known to be untrustworthy, did the stories Jim Hawkins hear from Captain Billy Bones make pirates seem exciting?

Who was the real Blackbeard the Pirate?

Were there any female pirates? If so, name one.

Can you name some real life pirates that were mentioned in the book Treasure Island?

VOCABULARY WORDS

Do you know the meaning of these words used in the story? If not, look them up and try to spell them!

bearings

berth

diabolical

Magistrate

cutlass

bleeding

Buccaneers

guinea

apoplexy

Cutter

cannonade

subaltern

Frigate

keelhauling

astern

Capstan

galley

quartermaster

Careening

grog

fen

Apparition

gunwale

maroon

Answers to Discussion Questions:

1. The Hispanola 2. A buccaneer is a pirate. It comes from the French word “boucan”. 3. Yes the Admiral John Benbow 4. This answer can vary. 5. Jim Hawkins, in my opinion, but that can vary. 6. Long John Silver was a very personable and cunning person. He acted friendly and trustworthy when it served his purposes. 7. Yes, he thought they were exciting and he didn’t realize the danger. 8. Blackbeard’s real name was Edward Teach. 9. Yes. Anne Bonny was one. 10. Howell Davis, Bart Roberts are two of them, can you find any more?

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<http://www.homeschoolfreebieoftheday.com>

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Jim Erskine

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