# Reading Notes

waist the upper part of a garment, extending from the shoulders to the waistline

moccasins soft leather slippers

primer an elementary textbook for teaching children to read

jeering mocking; taunting

Voca	bul	ar	y

1.	a little boy <b>trudged</b> to school		
	Five big boys were <b>scuffling</b> in the deep snow by the path.		
3.			
4.	Mr. Corse <b>rapped</b> on his desk with his ruler		
	No whispering was permitted in school, and no <b>fidgeting</b> .		
	Comprehension Questions		
1.	Give the names and ages of the four Wilder children.		
2.	Briefly describe Eliza Jane.		
3.	Why does Almanzo have to be the one to carry the dinner-pail to school?		
4.	Who is the teacher and why is he staying with the Wilder family at their home?		
5.	Find where Mr. Corse is described and list three characteristics that describe him.		
6.	In what way are students punished for not knowing their lessons?		

### Quotations

No whispering was permitted in school, and no fidgeting. Everyone must be perfectly still and keep his eyes fixed on his lesson. Almanzo and Miles held up their primers and tried not to swing their legs. Their legs grew so tired that they ached, dangling from the edge of the seat.

But Mr. Corse never beat a little boy's hand with his ruler. When Almanzo could not spell a word, Mr. Corse said: "Stay in at recess and learn it."

### **Discussion Questions**

- 1. \*Find the title page of the book, then turn the page to see publishing information. In what year did Laura Ingalls Wilder write *Farmer Boy*? Based on this knowledge and the first paragraph of the chapter, figure out the year in which the story is set. Where does the story take place?
- 2. Locate New York state on a U.S. map. What would the weather be like in that part of the country?
- 3. Why does Mr. Corse give the Hardscrabble boys another chance after they are tardy?
- 4. Explain the seating arrangement in the classroom. What do you think is the purpose of this arrangement?

\*Discussion questions that have a \* are NECESSARY to discuss with students, as they may appear on a test and are generally important in understanding the full flavor of the story.

#### **Enrichment**

<b>Focus Passage:</b> Copy the second paragraph beginning on page 1 ("Down a long road nine years old"). Spelling, punctuation, and capitalization should be perfect.

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the part of a roof that extends out past the wall eave a decorative border or edging of hanging threads attached to a band fringe haymow the part of a barn where hay or straw is stored hoopskirt a long full skirt belled out with a series of connected circular supports Vocabulary 1. The wise, sedate work-horses placidly munched hay. But the colts ran about excited, on their **gangling** legs 3. a plate of **quivering** headcheese 4. Almanzo ate the sweet, **mellow** baked beans. 5. He **demolished** a tall heap of pale mashed turnips Comprehension Questions 1. What chores does Almanzo do after school? How are they different from the chores his sisters do? 3. Describe Mother. 4. Who gets served a plate of food first? Who gets served last? Why? 5. Why can't Almanzo speak at the table?