

# STUDY GUIDE

## Longhorns and Outlaws

By Linda Aksomitis

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## INTRODUCTION

### ***PLOT SUMMARY***

*Longhorns and Outlaws* is the story of twelve-year-old Dutch immigrant, Lucas Vogel, who has just lost his family in the September 8, 1900 Galveston Hurricane. After the tragedy, Lucas is taken in by his best friend, Adrien Boudreau's family, until his older brother, Gil, can be located where he's working on a Texas cattle ranch.

When Gil shows up the following April, he sells off the family's rice farm and all their possessions, and drags Lucas to Montana with him to look for their only other relative in North America, Henry Borst. Lucas's one chance for freedom from his brother is to find Cousin Henry.

Lucas finds himself in a terrible position – new to the west, new to horses, new to pretty much everything to do with cowboys. Outlaws, however, are another story, because Lucas has been a Pinkerton-agent-in-training learning everything he can about outlaws, since he arrived in Nederland, Texas three years ago.

Gil and Lucas have little in common and don't get along very well either. Gil bosses Lucas around, forcing him to take a working position on a cattle drive. Lucas would rather go to school and become a Pinkerton Agent, but it looks impossible unless they can find Cousin Henry.

The frontier provides plenty of opportunity for Lucas to pursue his interest in outlaws, as he begins right in Billings, Montana when they get off the train, memorizing all the outlaw wanted posters. By the time they get further north, there's a new outlaw poster for a man named Dutch Henry – only problem is, he seems to look awfully familiar. Could Cousin Henry be Dutch Henry? Gil thinks he's imagining things, but then again, Gil doesn't believe Lucas when he runs onto the Sundance Kid and his gang planning another train robbery either.

Lucas's days are long, learning to ride his new Nez Perce horse, Ebenezer, while his nights are troubled with nightmares of the hurricane that made him an orphan. If he'd gone with his family, could he have convinced them to take shelter at the lighthouse instead of staying in the train and being drowned? Lucas can't shake his guilty feelings.

There's lots for Lucas to learn even without a classroom, as Roddy, one of the cattle punchers becomes his mentor. The ways of cowboys and nature help Lucas learn to accept what's happened and dream about his future again.

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE AUTHOR**

Linda Aksomitis

I grew up on a farm that eventually became a ranch. When I was very small my family raised sheep, then changed over to cattle, and when I was ten, to horse ranching.

After a few years owning a variety of breeds, my parents eventually settled on appaloosa horses or, as they're called in this novel, Nez Perce horses. The appaloosa was bred by the Nez Perce tribe in the United States to be some of the most intelligent, endurance horses in North America. So, of course, I had Lucas choose an appaloosa horse to ride in this story and named the horse, Ebenezer, after Chief Joseph's own mount.

I drew from many of my own experiences in writing *Longhorns and Outlaws*, particularly the horseback riding and character of Ebenezer. Like Lucas, I didn't start riding horses until I was around twelve, unlike my younger siblings who almost grew up on horseback. This let me make Lucas's experience that much more real for readers.

The research for this book took several years, and included many different kinds of things. I had an awesome six day journey through Montana, following the Yellowstone River from Billings to Culbertson, on the same route as the cattle drive in *Longhorns and Outlaws*. Various museums had artifacts that helped me get all the details just right for the area.

I also explored the Big Muddy area of Saskatchewan a number of times, taking tours and talking to tour guides and local ranchers. Their stories were fascinating, and provided me with insights that I hope have made *Longhorns and Outlaws* an exciting story.

Of course, creating historical fiction also means attention to the little details that bring the past to life. With so many digital and print editions of books written in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century available, there are many resources that let me do just that. I've provided links to various free ebooks on the [outlawbooks4kids.com](http://outlawbooks4kids.com) Web site so others may also discover them.

The outlaw tales in *Longhorns and Outlaws* are based on real facts and characters, including Cousin Henry who Lucas discovers truly is Dutch Henry from the wanted posters. I've also included a variety of old west sayings and slang to give readers the sound of the frontier – a glossary of terms is included at the end of the book, plus on [outlawbooks4kids.com](http://outlawbooks4kids.com)

## ORGANIZATION

This guide provides a variety of activities and ideas intended to help teachers extend the content of the novel, *Longhorns and Outlaws*, so readers may understand and appreciate the story. Literary qualities are considered, comprehension is examined, and connections to a variety of different subject areas and curricula are examined, while also making connections to students' real lives in modern times. Each teacher using the guide will be able to incorporate activities that will suit their own needs and those of their students.

## PREPARING TO READ

This section of each chapter resource has activities to encourage class discussion and personal reflection by readers. It is intended to help the students anticipate the coming chapter.

## AFTER THE READING

The guide provides this section's discussion questions to target important events and themes in the novel. Teachers and students are also encouraged to develop their own questions in relationship to their own community events and experiences.

## EXTENDING THE READING

Extending the reading activities are created to involve the students in what they've read and to help them relate the story to their own experiences. Oral, written, and illustrated responses are suggested.

## CONNECTIONS TO THE SASKATCHEWAN CURRICULUM GUIDES

The Language Arts curriculum (Language Arts: A Curriculum Guide for the Elementary Level, 2002) skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Viewing, and Representing are developed in this study. The approach fits a Social, Cultural, and Historical Context with topics such as relationships with others, interactions with others, community and cultural customs, events and issues, and our place in history.

This novel study could be integrated into the teaching of Social Studies (Social Studies: A Curriculum Guide for the Elementary Level, 1995) in the Grade Four Heritage Unit (Immigrants and Settlers) or the Grade Five Heritage Unit (Building a Nation: Immigration, Confederation, the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Treaties, and the Wars).

## CONNECTIONS TO OTHER CURRICULUM GUIDES

The Language Arts general curriculum skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Viewing, and Representing are developed in this study guide.

Alberta – Grade 5 Social Studies Curriculum – histories and stories of ways of life, and shaping the Canadian identity. Grade 6 – Social Studies curriculum, studying the historical perspective of local government, law enforcement, and citizenship. Grade 7 Social Studies, history following Confederation, the Canadian expansion.

Manitoba – Grade 6 Social Studies – Canada: A country of change (1867 to present).

British Columbia – Grade 5 Social Studies – Canada: From Colony to Country.

Ontario – Grade 8 Social Studies – The Development of Western Canada, Canada: A Changing Society.

United States – Grades 4 to 8 – State histories, the changing frontier at beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the Pinkerton Agency’s impact on the West.

#### GENERAL CURRICULUM LINKS

Science – *Longhorns and Outlaws* will be useful as supplementary reading for students studying hurricanes, the aftermath of disasters, and how survivors are affected. Lucas Vogel is orphaned by the Galveston Hurricane of 1900, and during the next year must learn to deal with his nightmares and the changes that occur in his life.

Career Guidance – *Longhorns and Outlaws* will be useful as supplementary reading for students considering how abilities and skills impact on their futures. Lucas Vogel and his brother Gil have different interests and abilities – Gil is dyslexic and has never learned to read, while Lucas loves books and wants to stay in school. During the story, Lucas discovers that there are many different ways to learn (apprenticeship, on the job training, and mentorship can all be identified in the story) and comes to appreciate his older brother’s abilities along with those of the other cowboys.

## **BEFORE YOU READ THE NOVEL**

The following activities will prepare students for the beginning of the novel and help them understand the relationship of the two brothers, as well as other themes developed through the story.

### **EMIGRATION**

The story begins as Lucas Vogel gets off the train in Billings, Montana in 1901, after having been orphaned in the September 8, 1900 Galveston Hurricane. For Lucas this is the second major change in his life, since his family emigrated from the Netherlands just three years ago to Nederland, Texas. His brother has sold what belongings the family did bring with them. Now, everything Lucas owns is packed in just one travel bag which he has to carry.

Tell you students to imagine that they have spent the past three years settling into a brand new community in a new country where they've been unable to take many things with them. They've learned a new language, made new friends, adjusted to totally different weather conditions, and become part of a new culture. For homework, have students consider their neighbourhoods, possessions, and activities they enjoy now and which ones they would miss the most (neighborhood parks, birthday parties with children they've known since kindergarten, a treehouse in the back yard, etc). Did everyone in their family indicate they'd miss the same things? As a class, students can share their lists, comparing like choices and discussing differences.

Now, have students to imagine their lives were disrupted again, so they had to leave the new home behind too and go off in search of a missing relative and new life that could lead them to another new country. What would it feel like to have no home at all? How would it feel to not know what could happen tomorrow – where they'd sleep, eat?

What two things would students take with them in a single bag they could carry to remind them of all they'd left behind?

### **IMAGINATION**

Lucas Vogel and his friend, Adrien, have enjoyed many days of pretending they're the characters in books, or Pinkerton men chasing the outlaws Lucas read about in newspapers. His brother, Gil, however, thinks play acting is a silly waste of time, as he's always learning to do new things. He apprenticed at younger than Lucas's age to be a cheesemaker, then after coming to Texas, worked on the canal and railway, before becoming a cowboy like he wanted.

Have students imagine they lived more than a hundred years ago as these characters did. Tell your students that in the story they're about to hear, two brothers have very different ideas of the world. One enjoys playing imaginary games, while the other thinks this

wastes time that could be spent working, which many children did instead of going to school at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Would they enjoy play acting and using their imaginations as Lucas does, or would they be more like Gil, and be interested in work related pursuits? Have students think of family members they have the most in common with, and those they have the least in common with. Which ones do they get along with best? How would they feel if they were forced to spend all their time with the one they had the least in common with?

## THE FRONTIER

This story takes place in 1901, beginning in Billings, Montana and ending up in the Big Muddy badlands of Saskatchewan, near Willow Bunch. It is the end of the era of cattle drives and free range, as already in 1902 farmers began to move in and break up the land on both sides of the border.

Ask your students to imagine hundreds of miles of land that didn't belong to anyone, so big ranchers could graze their cattle on it – there are no fences, few farm houses, and very few people except for the cowboys and outlaws. They have, like Lucas, just joined a cattle drive to move animals north for summer pasture. The dangers are mainly from weather and outlaws.

You could use categories to help students consider life at this point in time. What would they see, hear, smell, do?

Transportation	Daily Activities	Friends	Food	Countryside

To help students imagine the countryside and time period the story takes place in, you could use the following old movies, Web sites, and books. These are some suggestions:

Free Old West Movies – <http://www.outlawbooks4kids.com/library/free-western-movies.html>

The Yellowstone River in pictures – [http://www.bigskyfishing.com/River-Fishing/South-MT-Rivers/yellowstone-river/photo\\_gallery/YellowstoneRiverPhotographs/index.php](http://www.bigskyfishing.com/River-Fishing/South-MT-Rivers/yellowstone-river/photo_gallery/YellowstoneRiverPhotographs/index.php)

Bobbie Kalman's Old West series of nonfiction books, all listed and reviewed at this CM Magazine Web page: <http://umanitoba.ca/cm/vol6/no21/lifeintheoldwest.html>

Walking Tour of historic downtown Billings – <http://www.yhpb.org/VirtualTours/BillingsTour/Map%20Page.html>



## **CHAPTER ONE**

(Pages 1 – 9)

### **SUMMARY**

On a hot May afternoon, Lucas Vogel and his older brother, Gil, get off the train in Billings, Montana. Lucas is twelve, while Gil is sixteen – they were orphaned the previous September 8, 1900 when their parents and younger sister, Elke, were drowned during the Galveston Hurricane. The boys have come to Montana from Nederland, Texas, to look for Cousin Henry, their only relative in North America, who will hopefully take Lucas to live with him. Gil plans to take a cattle drive north towards Culbertson, which is where the last letter the family had from Cousin Henry came from. Previously, Gil has been working cattle in Texas, but Lucas knows nothing of cattle and his only interest in the west is the outlaws. He feels he's a Pinkerton-agent-in-training, and has been reading all the newspapers he could find about outlaws, and now, the most exciting thing in Billings is the wall of outlaw posters. The boys check into a hotel where a foreman of the J BAR J Ranch offers Gil a job with the herd and agrees to take Lucas on riding drag as well, at half pay. If they don't find Cousin Henry by Culbertson, they can cross the border into Canada to try to find him while the crew rounds up strays.

### **PREPARING TO READ**

- Remind the students to think about the themes that were introduced during their discussions and pre-reading activities. As we read this chapter we meet Lucas and his older brother, and get an idea of their relationship as well as Lucas's frustration with all the decisions Gil has made.

### **AFTER READING**

#### **Discuss**

- Lucas says his brother knows nothing at all about outlaws, even though they've just come to the frontier. Why do you think this is one of the first things you learn in the story? What does this information tell you about the two boys?
- Gil, you learn, doesn't see letters like everyone else does, so can't read. What condition might he have that children get help for today? In what ways do you think this has affected Gil's interests and choices?
- Lucas stumbles with the new leather boots, missing his clogs. What does this information show you about Lucas and Gil, beyond the fact that he's wearing the boots?
- Gil indicates that Lucas is always imagining things, but Lucas insists he doesn't do that any more. Can you find any evidence to support either boy's assertion?

## ***EXTENDING THE READING***

The following activities can be started after reading Chapter One and continued through the study. Students need only choose one or two options, then their learning activities can then be shared with the whole class at the end of the book.

- Begin to develop Character Charts
  1. A character chart helps students see the ways an author uses to bring characters to life and make them three-dimensional. Strong story characters are neither all good, nor all bad. In a good story, students should be able to identify changes in all of the main characters that have occurred as a result of the plot events.
  2. Have students create character charts for Lucas and Gil, as well as any adults they feel have an important role in the story.
  3. Students will be able to add to their character charts with each chapter, listing a characteristic and the evidence in the story that suggests it. At the end of the book students should be able to see both the changes to the characters and how they're developed during the story, so they can see that change is both a result of action and reflection by characters.
  
- Writing from the senses is important in making stories come to life. Have students work in groups to examine the following paragraphs and list the different senses that are used. How does this enrich their experience of the story?
  1. The first paragraph of the book on page 1. (touch/smell/sight)
  2. Last paragraph of the chapter on page 9. (touch/sight)
  
- Studying language. Have students examine the following literary language from the story and determine the type of language device. Working in groups, have students generate other ways of writing the same content. Have them pick their favorite device and explain why they like it.
  1. Page 5 – “he was like a thin twig that Gil seemed to think would be easily bent.” (simile)
  2. Page 5 – “thick and muscled, as immovable as a Texas live oak tree.” (simile)
  3. Page 6 – “Lucas felt as frustrated as an alligator snapping at a Clapper bird taking flight off the bayou.” (simile)
  4. Page 6 – “tiny glasses that held captive the few remaining strands of grey hair” (personification)
  5. What story and character does the following simile from page 9 refer to: “He felt like Alice sliding down the rabbit hole.”
  6. “where yellow-brick businesses ran in ruler-straight rows” (Page 4, parallelism and alliteration) The parallel construction of the hyphenated descriptions, yellow-brick and ruler-straight, emphasize the orderliness of the town, while the repetition of the “b” and “s” sounds that make this almost a tongue twister slow the scene down to make us look around.

Character Development Chart:

Fill in a chart for each character, adding to it after each chapter.

CHARACTER NAME:

Character trait	Positive or negative?	List clues that suggest this trait.	Page #

## **CHAPTER 2**

(Page 10 to 18)

### **SUMMARY**

Gil and Lucas take a room at the hotel, then set off to choose their horses from the J BAR J ranch stock. They have lunch, then walk through Billings to the livery stable. Lucas declares he doesn't want a horse at all, but relents when Gil reminds him that Pinkerton men have to be able to catch outlaws on horseback. Gil wants Lucas to take a bay horse that seems pretty lifeless, but Lucas chooses a Nez Perce pony—an appaloosa—named Ebenezer. Ebenezer was ridden by the owner's nephew, who left to go down East, but has been returned by two other cowboys after they were thrown off. Much to Gil's dismay, Ebenezer doesn't throw Lucas, so that's the horse he chooses.

### **PREPARING TO READ**

Lucas has never ridden a horse before, but now has to choose one to ride on the cattle drive. If you were Lucas, how would you go about choosing a horse from the stock you'll be shown at the Livery Stable? What questions would you ask? What things would you think were important?

### **AFTER READING**

- At the beginning of chapter 2 Lucas lists a variety of things that were predictable in his life before the hurricane. What kinds of things are predictable in your family's everyday life?
- What do you learn about Lucas from the arguments he gives his brother for not wanting to go on the cattle drive? Is there one thing that seems more important than the others?
- Lucas names his favourite food when they stop for lunch. Can you tell from the Dutch name and the description what it might be? If you had to pick just one favourite food, what would it be?
- Lucas is treated to ice cream on his pie, and he remembers the first time he tasted it at the Coronation in Nederland. What is a Coronation?
- This is Lucas's first visit to a Livery Stable—have you ever visited horse barns or stables or a livestock show, such as Agribition? If you have, did you feel the same as Lucas or differently? If you live on a farm or work with horses, you may be surprised at how Lucas feels. Can you name some things that people who are unfamiliar with where you live (whether it's in a city, town, or in the country) might find quite different on their first visit?
- At the end of this chapter, Gil indicates that Lucas is as balky or stubborn as a mule. Have you found this to be true so far in the story? Why or why not?

### **EXTENDING THE READING**

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## Writing From the Senses

- The first paragraph of Chapter 2, where Lucas remembers things from his life before the hurricane uses four senses—can you name them? Which of the senses seems the strongest in his memories? Which sense of your own makes you remember most vividly?

## Writing With Literary Language

- “The predictability of Lucas’s life had already been stolen once.” (page 10, Personification) Why is the use of the verb, stolen, which personifies the noun predictability, stronger than using words such as disappeared or been lost?
- “squelch-squelch of a shirt” (Page 10, Onomatopoeia). What does this sound show us Lucas’s mother was doing with the washboard?
- “whacking weeds” (Page 10, alliteration). Here the use of alliteration gives us the sound and sense of motion of a gardener working with a hoe, using a very limited number of words. Come up with another example of alliteration that condenses an action to two words, but is still vivid.
- “feeling the walls get closer and closer and closer until there was no air at all to breathe” (Page 10, metaphor and polysyndeton). Polysyndeton is the repetition of a word joined by a conjunction and creates the sense of multiplicity, that the walls are coming from everywhere, helping create the metaphor that the walls are closing in on Lucas and suffocating him, although it’s really the whole situation that’s his problem. Try to remember a situation of your own that made you feel this way.
- “Hurt and sorrow swirled in him, like the hurricane that had rolled off the Gulf of Mexico.” (Page 11, simile) In the limited point of view, which *Longhorns and Outlaws* is written in, literary language, such as this simile, gives you insights into the character by his memories and the comparisons he makes. Try to remember a time when you felt hurt and sad and write your own simile to reveal a little about your thoughts and experiences.
- “The two main streets, Montana and Minnesota, paralleled the rail line, like a backbone for the network of businesses in Billings.” (Page 14, simile) This simile not only creates a visual image for the reader, it implies the strength and importance of the streets to the community by the comparison to a backbone. There is also alliteration with the repetition of the “b” sound, which adds emphasis to this section of the city, to help us recognize its importance.
- “Lucas climbed up the fence railing and stared into Ebenezer’s eyes. Ebenezer stared back.” (Page 17, parallelism) Here parallelism, or the use of the same verb, stared, to describe both Lucas and Ebenezer’s actions, provide clarity and balance, showing the characters as equals, as well as creating a strong rhythm in the language.

## CHAPTER 3

(Pages 19 to 30)

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## SUMMARY

Lucas wakes in the hotel room dreaming of the hurricane and how his family drowned on the train when a storm surge blew in off the Bolivar Peninsula in Texas. He wakes Gil and they set off for their first day on the cattle drive with the J BAR J Ranch. Getting Ebenezer saddled isn't nearly as difficult as actually getting him to move and follow the other horses, but Lucas gets tips from two other cowboys: Joey and Roddy. The drive begins and Lucas finds that his horse, Ebenezer, is well trained and knows just what to do. Once everything is underway Gil admits to Lucas that he shouldn't have brought him along – the drive is much more dangerous than he imagined it would be, and warns Lucas to behave himself and stay out of the way. When Lucas stops at the chuckwagon to eat, he learns just how difficult horseback riding really is!

## AFTER READING:

- This chapter begins with Lucas waking from the same nightmare he's had since his family drowned the previous fall. Think about your own dreams. Have you ever had a nightmare that occurs again and again? What did you do to deal with it?
- Lucas needs to learn a new task – saddling Ebenezer. Some of it he finds easy and some of it difficult. In the end he decides it wasn't as hard as it looks. Think about the last new thing you learned how to do. Write a few paragraphs to describe the steps you took to learn it, including any other people who helped you. Was it as hard as you expected it would be?
- Some of the cowboys laugh behind Lucas when they see him struggling to get the bridle on Ebenezer, and Lucas worries that Roddy will laugh when he learns that Lucas has never ridden a horse before, even though he doesn't. Gil turns back and sees Lucas holding the saddle horn to keep from falling off and teases him. How do you think these things make Lucas feel about riding the horse and going on the cattle drive? How do you think it may affect his relationship with Gil?
- When the cattle drive begins, you read that "There were too many things for Lucas to do at once." Why do you think he feels this way? How does he figure out how to cope with the situation?
- The chapter ends with Lucas getting off Ebenezer and the following sentences: "The gelding whinnied and turned his head back to watch, as if he was expecting something interesting to happen. It did." What do you think might be going to happen when Lucas dismounts?

## EXTENDING THE READING

### **Dialogue of the old West**

In this chapter Lucas begins to interact with the other cow punchers who are on the trail. Denver is the nearest in age to Lucas and Gil, and is assigned to ride drag on the herd with them. Lucas begins to learn old West expressions in this chapter – you’ll find a glossary of terms on page 173, which also includes Dutch and French expressions.

- Denver says getting the herd started has been: “Like lickin’ butter off a knife.” What does this expression tell you about the cowboy way of life?
- Lucas has always referred to the animals as cattle or cows, however, Denver calls them “beeves.” Where do you think this old west slang term comes from?

### Writing With Literary Language

- “settle his stomach, which was rolling like it had on the stormy sea crossing to America.” (Page 20, simile and alliteration) This simile accomplishes its task of showing how fearful Lucas is by comparing the upcoming cattle drive to the dangers he’s already experienced of crossing the ocean to America. Since he’s just woken up from a nightmare with water, we know his fear is intense. The repetition of the letter “s” with *settle his stomach* and *stormy sea* creates rhythm in the language, plus stresses the connection of the two thoughts by repeating the construction. The use of the sibilant consonant, “s,” creates a hissing effect, a sound which helps show Lucas’s distaste of the situation.
- “Frustration filled him.” (Page 23, alliteration) The “f” consonant is an unvoiced sound that is instead a vibration of the vocal cords – this enhances the internalization of the scene, Lucas’s memories of Nederland, and the quivering of his hands. Lucas feels voiceless here as he is out of his element.
- “Working cowponies, darting left and right, stirred up the dust.  
Cattle feet, trampling, stirred up the dust.  
The west wind, whirling, stirred up the dust.” (page 27, parallel construction)  
Each of these sentences is a single paragraph, which splits them up and separates the action even as it’s all part of the same scene. The sentences, rather than being short and simple, are complex and use exactly the same structure, followed by the same phrase in all three – “stirred up the dust.” The structure here parallels the many unfamiliar scenes Lucas sees all once, while at the same time putting emphasis on the single duplicate result of each activity, the dust rising.
- “stomach was grumbling nearly as loud as the calves he’d turned with their mothers.” (page 30, assonance/consonance and simile). Assonance is the repetition of the same internal vowel sounds, while consonance is the repetition of internal consonant sounds. Assonance is “o” of stomach and the “u” of grumbling, with the “m” of both being the consonance. The “um” sound produced emphasizes the tone of the simile that follows. We see the scene and feel Lucas’s frustration at the cows and calves he has to keep turning back, plus know he’s as frustrated at being hungry himself.

## CHAPTER 4

(Pages 31 to 45)

### SUMMARY

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Lucas dismounts Ebenezer on wobbly legs, only to have Joey play a greenhorn joke on him before lunch. Sam, the trail boss talks to Lucas, bursting into laughter when he discovers the boys have come from a rice farm in Texas. Lucas is quick to point out Gil's real experience with ranching. When the day finally comes to an end and it's time to water the herd in the Yellowstone River, Lucas is unable to force himself to ride the horse into the water. While they wait for the herd to drink, Lucas tries to interest Denver in some of his outlaw stories, but Denver rides off to visit with Gil, leaving Lucas alone. Even though Lucas is exhausted, he finds it difficult to fall asleep his first night under the stars, as he thinks about the past. The ride continues and Roddy, one of the older cowboys, becomes Lucas's friend and mentor, teaching him about Montana.

#### AFTER READING:

- A common form of entertainment on the frontier was tricking newcomers or greenhorns into believing something that wasn't true. Here, Lucas experiences this for the first time when he gets off Ebenezer and is told he's ground tied, so he looks around for a stake. What would you have thought if you were told something was ground tied? Can you think of a situation in your life where using a real term might confuse a stranger? Share your ideas with your classmates.
- Can you find another example of one of the cowboys telling Lucas something that isn't true in this chapter? How does Lucas handle it the second time? Why do you think he figures this one out more quickly? [the cook's missing fingers]
- You read that Sam let out a roar of laughter when he heard that Lucas and Gil came from a rice farm in Texas. Why do you think Sam would find rice farming so funny?
- Why do you think that Lucas "wasn't ready to take a chance on the dirty, swirling water on horseback?" Instead, he lets Eb go down to the water to drink himself after the beeves are done.
- Lucas is horrified when he finds out that he must sleep on the ground, under the stars. Have you ever slept outdoors in a tent or under the stars? If you have, compare your experience to Lucas's. What sounds did you hear? What things were you able to make out in the darkness?
- The chapter ends with: *Mouth-organ music, like he'd [Lucas had] heard the first night on the trail, was not the only evening recreation.* Imagine the frontier setting and the cowboys who are with Lucas on the cattle drive. What kinds of evening entertainment do you think might take place?

#### **Extending the Reading Flashbacks in Writing**

This chapter is one that's at a low point in the story, where Lucas is learning lots about the frontier, as well as remembering the past.



Open Lore Fiction Writers' Magazine says: A flashback is a scene from the past that brings information into the present that is needed for the reader to understand the character and/or scene better. This writing technique is often used to convey information that can't really be relayed through other means due to constraints imposed by the story itself. Most of the time those constraints have to do with the length of the story but other times to tell the whole backstory is just not good option.

- The first long flashback is on pages 32 and 33. What information does it give the reader? Why do you think these specific details are important in the story? Do they help understand the character or the scene better?
- Page 42 has another flashback. How does it help you understand Gil and Lucas's relationship better?

### Writing With Literary Language

- “a few cows with calves, a few still to calve, and a few that seemed sore from the jostling of the early morning set-up.” (anaphora, page 35) Anaphora is the repetition of leading words at the beginning of successive phrases – *a few*. Anaphora adds emphasis to the point being made and here, also helps develop Lucas's mood, which is given as: “Lucas grew bored. So, apparently, did Eb.” The use of *a few* shows us that Lucas's job isn't hard, since he hasn't even bothered to count the number of beeves that he's had to chase, and gives us reason to understand why both he and Eb are bored.
- The sun travelled as slowly across the sky as Lucas and Eb did behind the beeves. (simile, page 36) By comparing the movement of the sun, which can only be measured hour by hour as being discernable, to how slow the beeves move, the reader understands the tedium of the cattle drive.
- “We spun our horses to face into the storm and smashed headlong through the solid wall of wind.” (metaphor and alliteration, page 37) The metaphor is considered the most important figure of speech in descriptive writing. Here the language portrays the feeling Denver had riding against the storm, as he and the horse smash into what feels to be a solid wall of wind. The alliteration of the “w” in wall and wind, both single syllable words, strengthen the image of the wind as a force.
- The music became part of the night sounds – crickets, bleating calves, the coyote's howl – (asyndeton, page 39). Asyndeton is the use of a list or series without a conjunction. Here, the asyndeton is in the middle of the sentence and set off with the dash. The asyndeton implies a multiplicity with the use of just a few descriptive words, while the lengthening word count of each phrase shows us the increasing loudness of each night sound.

## CHAPTER 5

(Pages 46 to 62)

### SUMMARY

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Lucas is the target of the cowboys' pranks when a rattle snake coils itself between the men around the supper campfire on the fifth night out. The next evening he's more careful about where he sits, but still finds himself drawn into the tall tales as a believer, so the men have fun at his expense again. As they pass the frontier town of Rosebud, the cowboys are given the opportunity for a night off. Gil has to stay back to watch the herd, so eventually Lucas decides to go with Denver and Sam to see if anyone knows of Cousin Henry. After an uncomfortable visit to the saloon with Sam, he meets Sue Ann at the local hotel and enjoys some home made pie and a visit. Sheepmen disrupt the evening and all the cowboys return to camp shortly after Lucas. The next day with the cattle Lucas sees riders in the hills and jumps to the conclusion that they're outlaws. He becomes so preoccupied that one of the cows and her calf gets left behind—when he does discover her, the calf is bleating in pain. Denver goes back and has to shoot it, since it has a broken leg. At the sound of the gunshot Eb rears and Lucas catches air instead of the saddlehorn.

#### AFTER READING

- The first scene in this chapter has a rattlesnake coiling itself and hissing in front of Lucas. How did he feel? How would you have felt? Would you have done what Lucas did or something different?
- Why do you think Lucas is drawn into the story of the Wouser so easily, even though he's already been tricked once by the cowboys around the campfire?
- Lucas weaves his own tale from Gulliver's land of the giants (Gulliver's Travels by Jonathan Swift, published in 1726) to share around the campfire. Create a story of your own that would amuse the cowboys. If you base it on a story you've read, make sure to make that note.
- Lucas wants to go into town to see if anyone knows anything about Cousin Henry, but he's afraid of the ride back to camp by himself. In the end he has Gil toss a coin to decide – what does his inability to decide show about him? Do you think Gil was truthful in the results of the coin toss? Why or why not?
- When Lucas meets Sue Ann, they discuss the sheep men and why there's a war between sheep and cattle men. Think about the situation she describes. What would it be like if there was still free range, so some land in your community didn't have owners? How would that make life different where you live? Do you think there'd be disagreements like those of the sheep and cattle men? What would they be? Who would be involved?

#### EXTENDING THE READING

##### **Dialogue of the old West**

- “Draw cuts” from page 49, is what we currently refer to as drawing straws to determine who will do something. What does the old west term make you think of, when compared to the newer term?

- “diggings” from page 53, is an old west term for home, which is further clarified by the expression “to hang your hat.”
- “hard pushed for money,” from page 56, indicates the artist didn’t have enough cash to pay his bills, so he used his painting to pay his bill at the hotel. Have you ever bartered something you own to get or trade for something you’d like?
- Winchester in its scabbard on the saddle, from page 52, uses the brand name, *Winchester*, to refer to the rifle where it’s attached to the saddle by a scabbard.

### Writing With Literary Language

- “Lucas caught the excitement and felt his spirits leap. The horses, fresh from the remuda, pranced in the twilight, danced in the night like they’d leapt through the looking glass into Alice’s wonderland.” (assonance, page 52) Two different internal vowel sounds are repeated in the second sentence: pranced and danced, along with twilight (two long “i” sounds) and night, to create the assonance. The assonance is used to show Lucas’s excitement, which is emphasized by the comparison to the horses having leapt into Alice’s wonderland.
- “Lucas’s disappointment filled him like the smell of stale whiskey filled the saloon. He took a few steps – he smelled thick, choking cigar smoke. He took another few steps – he smelled a stink he couldn’t quite identify.” (simile, page 54) The simile here compares disappointment to the smell of stale whisky filling the saloon, giving it more strength since input from the senses can be measured and quantified. By continuing the paragraph including more distasteful smells, the reader becomes overwhelmed the same way as Lucas.
- “Sam, I hope those boys of yours can pull in their horns.” (metaphor, page 54) Pull in their horns, here, has more meaning as a metaphor than is often found with this expression, which means to back off or steer away from a fight.
- “He thought again of *Moeder*, flour in her hair, the big tin bowl full of dough, the rolling pin stretching each lump to fit the round pans, the white grains of rice buried in the milky filling of Rijstevlaai, the rice pie Moeder had earned to make from another Nederlander.” (asyndeton, page 56) Lucas’s thoughts of his moeder cooking are a series uninterrupted by a conjunction, so create a scene that is seemingly endless in his mind using asyndeton.

## CHAPTER 6

(Pages 63 to 77)

### SUMMARY

Ebenezer rears and throws Lucas at the sound of the gunshot when Denver shoots the wounded calf. Lucas lands on a thorny rose, but his pride is hurt much worse, especially since Gil brings Eb back and tells him he should have chosen the bay horse. The rest of

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the trail to Culbertson is uneventful, and Lucas spends more time learning from Roddy. Lucas must put his faith in Eb's skills and strength, however, when it's time to swim the beeves across the Missouri River to summer camp north of Culbertson. Once they're done, Gil and Lucas head into Culbertson with Sam. The first thing on their list is to get some new clothes for Lucas, since he's growing out of his. Gil meets Eloise, a girl in the store, and spends the whole time Lucas is shopping, talking to her. We learn that the reason Lucas wasn't with his family when they drowned on the train trip to Galveston was because he'd begged his mother to let him stay in Nederland. He'd told her he hated shopping, when the real reason was that he'd rather stay with Adrien and read the newest Allan Pinkerton book. When they leave the store, Lucas checks the wanted posters and finds one for Dutch Henry, who looks very familiar. He suggests to Gil that Dutch Henry might be Cousin Henry, but Gil tells him to stop imagining things.

#### AFTER READING

- Consider the opening scene where Ebenezer has throw Lucas and it seems everything is going wrong. What do you think Lucas is the most upset about? What would you do to try and make things better if you were Lucas?
- “The water was as thick and muddy as Willie’s beef stew – the beef stew Lucas hadn’t been able to eat. He couldn’t do this either.” (page 68) Why wasn’t Lucas able to eat the beef stew? Why does Lucas feel he can’t swim the beeves across the Missouri River?
- Lucas realizes he’d been foolish to think he’d just run into Cousin Henry in Montana. Do you agree with him? Why?
- “Lucas got off his horse the way he’d watched Denver do it, throwing his right leg over the front of the saddle and kicking his left one out of the stirrup.” (page 72) What does this action of Lucas’s show you about how much he’s changed during the past month since he started on the cattle drive? Has he changed in other ways you can describe? If so, what evidence is there in this chapter to show the changes.
- When Lucas studies the new posters of wanted outlaws in Culbertson he becomes sure that Dutch Henry’s face looks familiar, like his Opa’s (grandfather’s) back in the Netherlands. Do you think Lucas is imagining things or do you think there’s a real resemblance? What would having Cousin Henry turn out to be Dutch Henry mean to Lucas and Gil?

## EXTENDING THE READING

### Creating Tense Scenes

- “The last three cows and calves slid over the edge. Sucked into the smelly muck, they bellowed, and began to make their way across. Denver turned and waved him in.” (page 69) Tense scenes are created in a variety of ways, one of the key ones being to use concise, active verbs in short sentences. Here there aren’t any to be, or helping, verbs, instead there are: slid, sucked, bellowed, turned, waved.
- Short paragraphs move action ahead quickly, creating more tension. Both of these sentences were a single paragraph: “Eb stumbled ahead.” “Lucas’s head whirled like the water.”
- Tense scenes focus on action, rather than on reflection, although past events can be included using specific techniques, such as this question: “Cold water splashed them – was this how his family had felt, waiting for the water to swallow them?” Notice here how the water is personified—it swallows his family—rather than drowning them, which heightens the sense of fear.

### Writing With Literary Language

- “Two thousand head of beeves bawled like children afraid to get their feet wet.” (simile, alliteration, page 68) This simile gives the cows the same emotion as children—and Lucas—might have, thus bringing them closer to the reader. The alliteration with the “b” sound of *beeves bawled* produces a plosive sound effect, like an explosion, so it enhances the simile and creates a stronger description using the senses.
- “Lucas glued his eyes to Sam.” (hyperbole, page 69) The hyperbole is a deliberate exaggeration, used here to emphasize how much faith Lucas has put in Sam, his trail boss, in addition to just using Sam as the focal point to keep himself from staring down into the swirling water.
- “The smell of linseed-oiled wooden floors smacked Lucas in the face.” (personification, page 72) In this sentence the smell is personified, giving it the ability to physically touch Lucas. Have students think of other smells and include them in a sentence personifying them.
- “The dark wooden counter area was empty – the foot-high silver cash register, with its rows of round keys, stood watch.” (personification, page 72) This is another example of personification, giving the cash register the ability to guard or stand watch over the store. What could the rows of round keys (alliteration) seem to represent? Have students give examples of real situations over which someone stands watch.
- “California, Brazos, White River, Nelson, Oregon, Cheyenne range saddles – all perched on racks under double rows of halters, bridles and bits.” (asyndeton, page 73) Here, the long list of saddle types joined by commas, rather than using a conjunction, implies that there’s no end to the types of saddles, while the second part of the sentence adds more of the tack that’s hanging above them.

## **CHAPTER 7**

(Pages 78 to 93)

### SUMMARY

Lucas and Gil stay with the J BAR J Ranch and head north into Canada to round up strays. Lucas learns that Roddy has ridden with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show while they're talking. In camp, the men discuss the North West Mounted Police, who enforce the law in Canada, and look for outlaws like the Pinkerton agents or marshalls. The first day of gathering strays Lucas is given some free time, and he and Eb wander off—only Eb bolts when they hear a gunshot and Lucas runs into the Sundance Kid planning another heist with some other outlaws. Fearful for his life, Lucas crouches in the grass, trying to figure out the details, although he doesn't overhear anything specific. Eb returns, but Lucas realizes he's lost. What will he do?

### AFTER READING

- Lucas shares the story of the outlaw, Wild Bill, with Roddy after he hears how Roddy was in the Wild West Show. What does this show you about Lucas and his interests?
- The first stray cow Lucas encounters surprises him when she charges right at him! Why is this animal different from the beeves they've been driving? How do you think this will change the way Lucas works with the cows?
- Denver gives Lucas the afternoon "off" from chasing beeves—Lucas's first real free time since he's started the cattle drive. Imagine you were Lucas. What would you do?
- Lucas says, "You can't discover something if you always go only where you know the way, can you?" What do you think he means? Think of some times when you went where you already knew the way, then compare them to times you went somewhere that was new to you or had activities that were unfamiliar to you. What did you discover?
- This chapter ends with a cliffhanger—how will Lucas find his way back to the ranch where he's supposed to meet Gil and the other cowboys? Does it make you want to keep reading? What do you think Lucas will do?

### EXTENDING THE READING

Read through the text and have students pick out examples of: old west dialogue, tense writing styles, flashbacks, writing from the senses, literary writing and figures of speech.

Check the supplementary section for research activities and integrating *Longhorns and Outlaws* with other subject area curricula.

## **CHAPTER 8**

(Pages 94 to 108)

### SUMMARY

Lucas avoids the tops of the hills with Ebenezer, even though he's lost and might see something, to make sure the outlaws don't find him. Eventually, he sights the ranch, and races in before dark. Lucas blurts out that he's seen outlaws, although nobody believes him after Gil insists he's just imagining things like he always does. After that, Lucas is left in camp to watch the cows that have been rounded up, rather than getting to ride through the badlands. Miss Genereaux brings two Mounties to camp with a telegram for Sam, and Lucas tells them about the outlaws—thankfully they believe him. When Lucas asks the Mounties about Cousin Henry it turns out that he's a well known horseman, who has even worked for them at the Wood Mountain Post. Miss Genereaux tells Lucas that Henry is working on the ranch, out with the cattle, but that he'll be back for branding day. It turns out that the branding is a large event with people driving from all over to make sure none of their beeves are claimed by someone else. Lucas and Gil both participate in the hot tiring work. A gun goes off, and Eb throws Lucas again—this time into a pile of fresh cow manure. He's furious!

### AFTER READING

- Lucas tells the cowboys that he's seen the Sundance Kid. At first they're all excited and believe him, but then when Gil tells them that he often makes things up they relax and show disbelief. Why do you think Sam and the other men, even Roddy, believe Gil instead of Lucas?
- Lucas feels like he's been "sentenced" to camp life after getting lost and encountering the outlaws. What do you think he means?
- The flashback on pages 97 to 99 show you more of what life was like for Lucas in Nederland. How does what you learn affect the story? How do you feel about the characters?
- Lucas is envious that Sam asks Gil if he's ever done in any roping, then arranges for Gil to work with Joey to learn more. Think back to how Lucas felt about getting a horse—how has Lucas changed?

### EXTENDING THE READING

Read through the text and have students pick out examples of: old west dialogue, tense writing styles, flashbacks, writing from the senses, literary writing and figures of speech.

Check the supplementary section for research activities and integrating *Longhorns and Outlaws* with other subject area curricula.

## **CHAPTER 9**

(Pages 109 to 124)

### SUMMARY

Lucas cleans the cow manure off after being “dusted” again by Ebenezer, and is relieved that nobody seems to be laughing at him. He’s determined that it will never happen again though! All of the local people gather for lunch and before they’re done sorting and branding, even the Mounties arrive at the ranch. It feels to Lucas like a celebration, not a work day. That evening, Lucas puts Eb in the corral with all the visitors’ horses to punish him, instead of letting him graze in the cool of the trees where they’re camped. Even though there’s dancing and fun going on, Lucas heads off to bed, disappointed that Cousin Henry hasn’t come in off the range after all, so they could meet. In the morning, Lucas discovers the horses have all been stolen. He raises the alarm, and the Mounties, along with Sam and his men, and Johnny, one of the best local trackers, ride off in pursuit. Gil volunteers to take a message to Willow Bunch and Lucas is left alone in camp, to do laundry like Willie. Miss Genereaux stops in the camp, lending Lucas her own horse, Ginger, to ride, since Lucas is so upset at having Eb stolen. Lucas tries to catch up to the Mounties and the other men, but is thrown when Ginger shies at a prairie dog hole. Ginger plays with him—keeping her distance so Lucas can’t catch her, while they wander further and further away from the trail.

### AFTER READING

- Lucas is embarrassed at falling off Ebenezer again when he rears at the sound of the gunshot. He decides to punish Eb by putting him with the other horses. What would you do?
- Many of the activities of sorting and branding day are described in this chapter. Think about them, along with the food that’s served to everyone, and compare the day to events that you’ve attended. What things are different? What things are the same?
- Lucas leaves with Miss Genereaux’s horse without letting anyone know where he’s gone, even though he knows she won’t likely see any of the cowboys to tell them. Why do you think he does this? What would you have done?

### EXTENDING THE READING

Read through the text and have students pick out examples of: old west dialogue, tense writing styles, flashbacks, writing from the senses, literary writing and figures of speech.

Check the supplementary section for research activities and integrating *Longhorns and Outlaws* with other subject area curricula.



## **CHAPTER 10**

(Pages 125 to 139)

### SUMMARY

Lucas tricks Ginger into getting close enough that he can grab her reins, but by then he knows they're a long ways from the trail they were following. He decides to head south, knowing that the outlaws will have run the horses over the border, so the Mounties can't follow them. He comes upon the pattern of a turtle made with rocks, and remembers a story that Roddy told him about Turtle on a quest to retrieve what was lost, and hopes that he is granted the wisdom to find what he's lost too. As it nears dark Lucas hears voices and realizes he's found an outlaw hideout. While he can't be sure, he hopes the horses in the corral are the ones that have been stolen, and that Eb is one of them. He hides a safe distance away, listening to the men and picking out some names: Bloody Knife, Pigeon-Toe, and Dutch Henry! Cousin Henry is supposed to be back at the Genereaux Ranch out with the herd, so surely Dutch Henry is a different man? Night falls and the moon rises, but the outlaws stay outside playing cards, until at last the lamp runs dry. They decide to go to bed, but leave a guard outside. Lucas waits and waits, but as it nears sunrise knows he has to make a move. Eb is one of the horses in the corral, so Lucas undoes the corral gate, climbs on Eb's back and urges him to escape. All of the horses follow him, both the stolen animals and those belonging to the outlaws. Lucas hears a whistle and one of the horses turns back, taking the outlaw horses with him. Soon, a horseman appears chasing him. What has he done?

### AFTER READING

Lucas isn't sure what to do when he finally catches Ginger. It's getting late and he knows he may not find the Mounties trail. So, he decides to do what a Pinkerton man would do and head south after the outlaws. Do you think Gil would approve of his decision? What does the decision show you about Lucas?

The story Lucas remembers about turtle is one Roddy has told him—it's a Native legend. How does thinking of the story help Lucas in his situation?

Lucas isn't sure what to think when he realizes one of the outlaws in camp is Dutch Henry. Cousin Henry is supposed to be back on the ranch with the cattle, so surely they're not the same man. Do you think Dutch Henry is Cousin Henry? Why or why not?

### EXTENDING THE READING

Read through the text and have students pick out examples of: old west dialogue, tense writing styles, flashbacks, writing from the senses, literary writing and figures of speech.

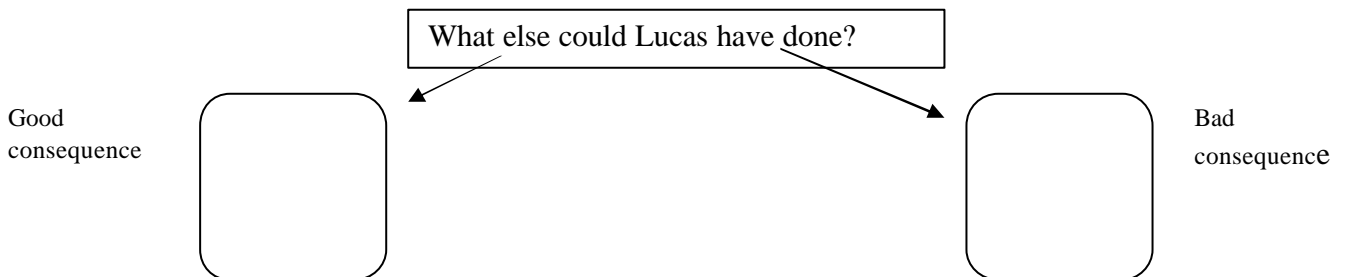
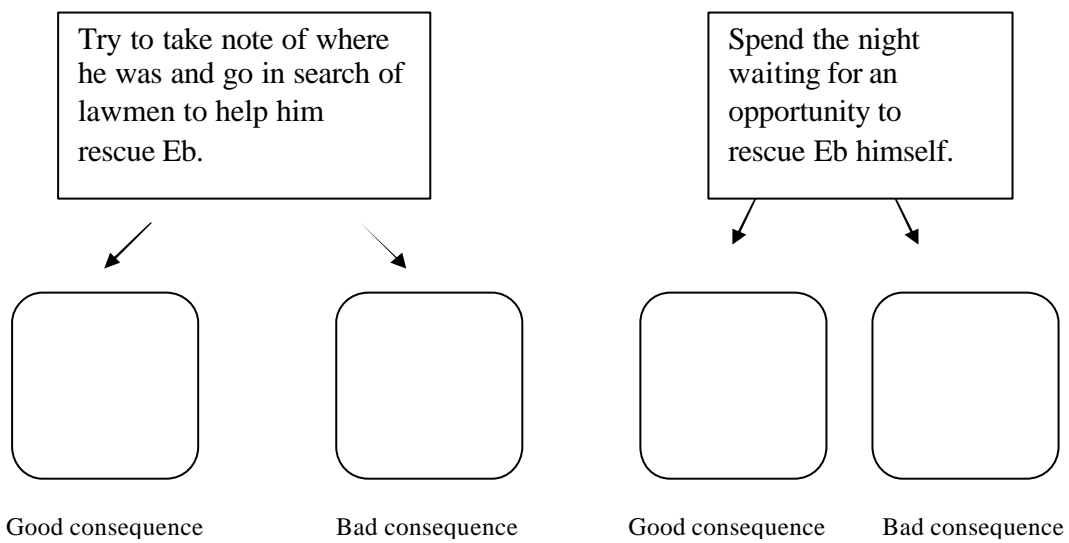
Check the supplementary section for research activities and integrating *Longhorns and Outlaws* with other subject area curricula.

## CONSEQUENCES

### What Would You Do?

Whenever we make decisions in life, there are consequences, or events that happen as a direct result of what we've done. In *Longhorns and Outlaws* Lucas makes a number of decisions, some of which have good consequences and some of which have very dangerous consequences.

Chapter 10 is one of the key places where Lucas's decision places him in grave danger. Complete this organizer by thinking about both the good and bad consequences that may result from the decision Lucas made—and the option he didn't take.



What would **you** have done and why?

## **CHAPTER 11**

(Pages 140 to 161)

### SUMMARY

Lucas gallops across the badlands, unsure of where he's going. All he knows is that the outlaw behind him is getting closer. Finally, he sees the Mounties camp ahead and realizes that Eb has likely run back along the same trail. Everyone in camp isn't happy to see Lucas with the herd, instead Sam is angry and the Mounties suggest that he has stolen all the horses. Lucas is confused. All he wanted to do was get Eb back! The sheriff and deputies arrive from the United States, and while they're not too happy with what he's done either, they don't try to arrest him. When everyone returns to camp with the horses, Lucas immediately heads to bed after a confrontation with Gil too. Later, Lucas discovers that Gil promised their father he'd do his duty by the family before he left—and that Gil feels guilty too about what's happened. Learning the reason why Willie has no fingers and he's the cook just confuses Lucas more as the evening goes on.

### AFTER READING:

- As the story comes to an end the secret motivations of the characters are gradually revealed. Why do you think Gil promised his father he'd do his duty to the family? How has Gil been trying to do that? Willie and Joey have been working together for more than 30 years. What does knowing their past history show you about each of them? About the way things were in the old west?
- Joey tells Lucas it takes more than a few months on the trail to turn greenhorns into cowboys. What do you think he means?
- Sam tells Lucas that a cowboy needs to be sure of two things: his friends and his horse. Why do you think these are so important in the old west? What kinds of things do you need to be sure of today?
- Miss Genereaux has sent some cowboys out to tell Cousin Henry to come in to the ranch to meet the boys before the cowboys head back to Culbertson with the beeves. Do you think he'll come back to the ranch house?
- Lucas feels that all is lost as the chapter ends (story climax). He'll never go to school. He'll never be a Pinkerton man. Instead, he'll work cattle with Gil for the rest of his life like Willie and Joey. What do you think is going to happen?

### EXTENDING THE READING

Read through the text and have students pick out examples of: old west dialogue, tense writing styles, flashbacks, writing from the senses, literary writing and figures of speech.

Check the supplementary section for research activities and integrating *Longhorns and Outlaws* with other subject area curricula.

## **CHAPTER 12**

(Pages 162 to 161)

### SUMMARY

The day is hot, unnaturally so even to Lucas and Eb. A storm starts to rise, riling the animals. Lucas remembers the hurricane, imagines his parents drowning in the rail car, and can't breathe—he can't go through another experience like that. Thunder makes Eb rear, but Lucas hangs on, sharing his horse's fear this time. The beeves stampede and Lucas forgets everything else as he tries to save the herd in what Roddy tells him is a flash flood. Wind, driving rain, and hail pound into Roddy and Lucas, along with the herd where they're taking what little shelter they can find in the trees. When it finally stops the valley walls wash down and a muddy river rises—the last born calf is caught in the mud. Lucas won't let another calf die, instead he inches closer to its longhorn mother and ultimately rescues it. Between them, Roddy and Lucas manage to keep all the cattle safe, so there's a celebration in camp when evening comes. Finally, Lucas is able to sleep without nightmares. The next day, everyone else returns to camp as preparations are being made to leave Canada. A new Mountie, Corporal Brown, arrives on the Genereaux Ranch with a warrant for Cousin Henry for horse theft in the United States. When Cousin Henry arrives, Lucas knows that he is indeed Dutch Henry. Lucas is forced to identify him, so he's arrested and leaves with the Mountie. Sam settles up the summer's pay with Lucas and Gil, giving Lucas full pay instead of half pay and a reward for rescuing the horses—Eb is truly Lucas's horse! Gil acknowledges Lucas is growing up and that he's done a good job all summer. Instead of making the decision on what they'll do next, he insists that Lucas get a say too. They toss a coin to decide.

### AFTER READING:

- Have the main characters, Lucas and Gil, changed through the story? Use some examples of what has happened in this last chapter to support your viewpoint.
- Do you think Lucas did the right thing in identifying Cousin Henry as Dutch Henry, even though it meant that he was turning his cousin in to the lawmen and losing his own opportunity to leave Gil to live with his cousin?
- Gil and Lucas have both felt guilty about their parents' deaths, although they both come to the realization that they had no control over any of the events leading to what happened. What events in the story helped them both come to their conclusions?
- How does Gil saying that Lucas has been a good Pinkerton man impact on their relationship? On how Lucas sees himself?
- What do you think the theme of this story was?

## THEMES, MOTIFS, & SYMBOLS

### Themes

Man versus Nature – Lucas begins the story having nightmares about the hurricane that took his family from him. In Texas, he's been a student, a bookworm who had no relationship with Nature, but after his brother, Gil, drags him to the frontier that's all about to change. Lucas acquires a mentor in Roddy, who teaches him about the beauty of nature and wildlife. Over time he comes to rely on his horse Eb, and put the animal above his own safety, demonstrating how much he loves him. However, his nightmares continue. Finally, in the last chapter, when Lucas faces the elements on his own and is able to save the calf from the flood, he is able to sleep peacefully, having recognized that nature is a force he can deal with.

Sibling relationships – Lucas and Gil don't have anything in common, in fact they barely know one another. Gil looks rather resentfully on Lucas as a spoiled child he must assume responsibility for, while Lucas sees his brother as overbearing and bossy, and not very smart since he can't read. Through events of the story Lucas demonstrates that he can take responsibility and isn't the dreamer his brother imagines, but is intelligent and resourceful. Lucas realizes that his brother is skilled and intelligent in different ways, even though he's never been able to read the books and newspapers that have been such an important part of Lucas's early life. At the story's end the brothers, while still different, have come to mutually respect one another through the events of the cattle drive and the outlaw run-ins.

The Use of Imagination – Lucas has always been a dreamer, using his imagination to bring the books and newspaper articles he's read to life by playacting with his friend, Adrien. Gil, his older brother, finds such things a waste of time. While Lucas insists he's no longer the child dreamer, we find many instances through the story that show his imagination is still very vivid. Unlike Gil though, we realize that Lucas has no problem separating reality from imagination. In fact, his imagination comes in very handy in coping with some of the dangerous situations he gets himself into!

Contrasts between Urban and Frontier Life – Flashbacks through the story contrast the life Lucas has been leading in both Nederland, Texas, and in the Netherlands, with life on the frontier. He finds it hard to fit in, although he grows to respect and admire the cowboys.

Right versus wrong – Outlaws, Lucas knows, are people who have broken laws and are therefore, evil. He's always dreamt of becoming a Pinkerton man and pursuing outlaws himself. However, as the story nears its end and Lucas comes to understand more about real life, the black and white world of right and wrong is replaced with the realization that sometimes good men do bad things.

### MOTIFS

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Dreams – Lucas’s guilt at not being present when the rest of his family died is shown through constant nightmares where he imagines the scene. Instead of going with them, he had told his mother he disliked shopping, so he could stay home and read with Adrien and playact imaginary outlaw encounters.

Older relative rescuer – Throughout the story Lucas dreams of finding Cousin Henry and being rescued from his current circumstances. While the idea of being rescued fills him, he does little to get along better with his brother or think of the future.

## **SYMBOLS**

Outlaw posters – throughout the story Lucas studies outlaw posters wherever he finds them, memorizing all the details of each. The posters are Lucas’s connection with the world of education and reading (his brother Gil can’t read them), and the world of Pinkerton Agents that he dreams of joining in the future.

Eb, the horse – Eb becomes Lucas’s best friend, a replacement for Adrien, his friend in Nederland. When Eb is stolen by outlaws, we see the lengths that Lucas will go to for friendship.

Being dusted or thrown by the horse – Each time Lucas is thrown from Eb’s back it’s more of an embarrassment and reminder that he’s just a greenhorn, especially when Gil keeps teasing him that he should have chosen the horse Gil selected for him, the bay.

# RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

## HURRICANES

This novel can be used in a unit on hurricanes in a variety of ways.

1. Have students begin their research on the 1900 Galveston Hurricane at this Web site from the Galveston Daily News. <http://www.1900storm.com/> The site contains historic photos, survivor stories, silent film clips of the aftermath. Use a recent hurricane for comparison, researching for similar types of information online (Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Rita, or one of the major hurricanes to hit Texas: <http://www.usatoday.com/weather/hurricane/history/whTEXAS.htm> )
  - a. Compare the types of news coverage.
  - b. Compare the types of disaster relief – focusing on differences due to era.
  - c. Compare the amount and type of advance warning areas received.
2. Using the Galveston Hurricane as a starting point, determine the death toll (approximate), monetary loss, and other after effects of a hurricane. Research other major hurricanes that have occurred over the years. Graph the information for comparison. Have students discuss what makes a hurricane the “worst” one in ever to happen North America? Loss of life? Class or wind velocity? Economic impact? Loss of property?
3. Use the data available from historical research to have students try to determine what class the Galveston Hurricane of 1900 would have been, if today’s Category system was applied to it. Begin research at:  
<http://www.aoml.noaa.gov/hrd/tcfaq/tcfaqHED.html>
4. Compare the number and category of hurricanes that have occurred in North America in the past decade to the number of hurricanes and descriptions of their ferocity that occurred from 1900 to 1910. Chart the results with graphs where possible. Have a discussion on whether or not modern weather is more violent than it was a century ago.
5. Lucas Vogel survived the Galveston Hurricane, while losing everyone else in his family but his brother. Compare his story of survival and relocation to a modern child’s story, either fictional, personal, or from news reports.

## OUTLAWS

Lucas Vogel is fascinated with the stories of outlaws, and plans some day to be a Pinkerton Agent catching them.

1. Research the history of the Pinkerton Agency in the United States, focusing on the era when they were hired to break the outlaw gangs. Discuss the effectiveness of the Pinkerton strategies. Why did they work, when so many other lawmen had failed to catch the outlaws?
2. Research the history of the Outlaw Trail that ran from Mexico to the Big Muddy in southwest Saskatchewan. What outlaws used it? Why was it so successful?
3. Choose any outlaw or Pinkerton agent named in *Longhorns and Outlaws* and do a research project to investigate them in more detail. Use a variety of resources if possible, including books, magazines, and the Internet.

## SETTLEMENT & THE FRONTIER

Most of Montana and southwest Saskatchewan were both still mostly open range and occupied by cowboys at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Research and examine the aspects that contributed to this. Consider such things as:

1. The nation's need for beef, which was the main product of these areas.
2. The lack of rail transport to all but the most central and important of areas.
3. The reputation of the area as a haven for outlaws, mainly due to the badlands terrain.
4. The importance of well-established outlaw trails that provided outlaws with an escape and shelter from lawmen.
5. The control of the outlaw gangs over local businesses and in some cases, authorities.

## COWBOYS

Cowboys made a large contribution to the nations of both the United States and Canada. Research the history of cowboys, beginning with books, movies, and links from: <http://www.outlawbooks4kids.com/library/>

Other useful links include: <http://www.truecowboy.com/>  
<http://doe.sd.gov/octa/ddn4learning/themeunits/Cowboys/history.htm>  
<http://www.thewildwest.org/>



## CONCLUDING ACTIVITIES

The following questions could be answered in group discussions or in written format. They can also be used in literature circles to reflect on the story.

### THINKING ABOUT THE CHARACTERS

- If students created character charts, look back over them and consider the changes noted for each character. Use these notes to create a profile of the characters. In the profile have students note how their own response to the characters changed as the story continued.
- Have students imagine they are Lucas, and write a letter home to Adrien at one of the points in the story. Suggestions: when he gets Eb, his first horse; when the calf breaks its leg and must be shot; when he sees the Sundance Kid; when he first sees the poster of Dutch Henry and thinks that the outlaw could be Cousin Henry.
- Ask students to think about the main characters in the story. Which one do feel think they are most like? Why? Which one are they least like? Why?
- Have students consider the role of minor characters in the story. How did people like Roddy, Sam, Joey, and Willie affect and change Lucas? What about some of the female characters—Sue Ann and Miss Genereaux? In what ways were they important to the story?
- Ask students if they've ever had experiences similar to any of the characters in this story. If so, have them share their stories.

### THINKING ABOUT THIS STORY

- What does this story teach you about life on a cattle drive in 1901?
- What does this story teach you about the frontier and the people who struggled to make a living on it?
- What does this story teach you about family life and the relationships between brothers?
- What does this story teach you about dealing with circumstances you have no control over, but that change your life?
- What does this story teach you about dealing with Nature's violence?
- What does this story teach you about adapting to new situations and making the best of them?
- How do Lucas's problems differ from your own?