

The First Four Years

By Laura Ingalls Wilder

Q and A Discussion Guide

The Second Year		
1	What was Almanzo always saying?	"Everything evens up in the end. The rich man has his ice in the summer and the poor man gets his in the winter."
2	Almanzo thought the saying was hopeful. Did Laura feel the same way?	No, Laura saw the saying more literally and less hopefully. She especially was thinking about how the hail ruined crops in the summer, and hail is ice.
3	Why was hay the only crop this year?	Because of the hailstorm
4	Did Laura mind helping with the hay and working with Manly?	No, she felt better outdoors anyway, and she would have to stay inside much of the time after the baby was born.
5	What were some of the second year expenses?	Coal, taxes, interest on notes for machinery, seed
6	How much money did Manly make from the hay?	\$120
7	Why did they know the second winter wouldn't be as hard and cold as the first?	The geese showed them by not being in such a hurry to fly south.
8	What did Laura do to stay outdoors in the winter?	She and Manly went on sleigh rides. She and Old Shep went sledding together.
9	When and where was baby Rose born?	In December, at home, before Christmas
10	How close was the nearest neighbor?	A mile

11	What was their Christmas like?	They stayed home, alone, and bought a new clock for all three of them.
12	Describe baby Rose's first outing.	It was 15 below zero and people didn't think babies should be out in weather like that.
13	What did Mr. Boast want to trade for baby Rose?	A horse. Almanzo and Laura said no.
14	In the second year, when did the worst storm of the winter happen? Were they expecting it?	April 12, and they had no idea it would happen.
15	Why did people die in the storm? Why didn't they have weather forecasting?	People were unprepared for a storm in April and they had no way of knowing when storms would happen. They wouldn't be prepared for a spring storm.
16	Why did Old Shep leave?	Old Shep was jealous of baby Rose.
17	What was the Saint Bernard's special job?	He seemed to think his special job was to watch over baby Rose.
18	What did Laura do instead of ride horses after the baby was born?	She could drive Barnum with a road cart and a box to keep Rose safe.
19	Did they make much money the second year?	No, the season had been too dry. The price of wheat was low.
20	What did they do with their money?	Pay all the interest and some of the smaller loans.