



Discussion
Questions
and
Vocabulary

for **OLD MOTHER
WEST WIND**

By Thornton W. Burgess



How to Use this Guide

Thornton W. Burgess wrote a collection of wonderful children's stories that teach valuable moral lessons as well as introduce a wide array of animal characters found in North America. We compiled questions to ask at the end of each chapter to engage children in reading comprehension and prompt discussion.

We have also included a vocabulary list to help with unfamiliar words and encourage kids to build dictionary/research-finding skills and increase their knowledge of the English language. The lists vary in size from chapter to chapter, as some chapters include more colorful words!

In addition to the question guide, we have created a website that provides a wonderful selection of activities, lesson ideas, and teaching resource suggestions that will give your children or students a better understanding and appreciation for the classic literature of Thornton W. Burgess. Please visit our website:

www.burgessbooklessons.com

Thank you and we hope you enjoy getting to know some of our very favorite animal stories and characters.

Sincerely,

Dinah Dobrowski

Melissa Fetzer

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Discussion Questions

Chapter 1

- Why is Old Mother West Wind in a hurry?
- What is “mischief”?
- How would the Merry Little Breezes help Johnny Chuck?
- Why did Tommy Brown want to steal Mrs. Redwing’s eggs?
- How did the Merry Little Breezes help Mrs. Redwing?



Chapter 2

- How is Grandfather Frog described at the beginning of the chapter?
- Why wouldn’t we recognize Grandfather Frog’s grandchildren?
- What is a “pollywog”?
- What does “every day the King grew more vain” mean?
- How did the Frog King lose his long tail?



Chapter 3

- Why would Johnny Chuck sometimes wander too far from home?
- Why did Johnny Chuck ignore Old Mother West Wind and the Merry Little Breezes?
- What mistake did Johnny Chuck make?
- How do you think he felt when he woke up?
- How did Reddy Fox scare Johnny Chuck?
- How did Johnny Chuck find his way home?
- Have you ever been lost? How did you feel?
- How does/would it feel if someone made fun or played tricks on you?

Chapter 4

- Before the Skunk family wore a white stripe, how did they behave?
- What is a grouse?
- How did the other animals treat Mrs. Grouse?
- What happened to her eggs?
- How did Peter stop to help Mrs. Grouse?
- Why did everyone gather at the Great Pine?
- Describe what happened there.
- Why was Jimmy Skunk given a striped coat?



Chapter 5

- Why was Old Mother West Wind tired?
- Why did she go home without the Wilful Little Breeze?
- Once she had gone, how did the Wilful Little Breeze feel?
- What did the Wilful Little Breeze overhear?
- How did she help?



Chapter 6

- Why was Johnny Chuck not allowed to play with Reddy Fox?
- What was different about the way Billy Mink went fishing?
- What was Reddy Fox's dream?
- Why did Reddy Fox feel ashamed walking home?
- How can disobedience lead to trouble?

Chapter 7

- What was Jimmy Skunk looking for?
- Was Jimmy Skunk being careful while looking for beetles? How wasn't he?
- What tricks does Peter Rabbit play on Jimmy Skunk?
- How was Jimmy Skunk rewarded for his determination?
- What kinds of things have you had to work hard for?



Chapter 8

- Why did Billy Mink feel so good?
- What game did Billy Mink and his friends play?
- What are some of your favorite water games?



Chapter 9

- What joke does Happy Jack Squirrel play on Johnny Chuck?
- How are Peter Rabbit and Johnny Chuck different?
- What trick does Peter Rabbit play on Johnny Chuck?
- Why does Reddy Fox chase Peter Rabbit?
- What seems to happen when Peter Rabbit plays tricks on others?

Chapter 10

- What does "idle" mean?
- How can being idle lead to mischief?
- What made Old Mother West Wind suspicious of Sammy Jay?
- What was Sammy Jay doing?
- How did Happy Jack feel when he discovered the nuts were gone?
- Why do you think Sammy Jay offered to help Happy Jack search for the nuts?
- How did Old Mother West Wind find the stolen nuts?
- Do you think Happy Jack would have shared his nuts if Sammy Jay would have asked?
- How does lying and stealing hurt others?



Chapter 11

- Why were some of the animals bored at Jerry Muskrat's party?
- How did this make Jerry Muskrat feel?
- What did the swimming animals do to make the party fun for the others?
- Has there ever been a time when you felt left out? How did it feel?
- What are ways we can include others in our play?



Chapter 12

- Why are Bobby Coon, Jimmy Skunk, and Reddy Fox out at night?
- What joke did Bobby Coon and Reddy Fox plan to make on Johnny Chuck?
- How does Jimmy Skunk help Johnny Chuck?
- What does Jimmy Skunk proceed to do?

Chapter 13

- Why did each animal think “the Best Thing in the World” was something different?
- Why did Johnny Chuck stay behind?
- How did the animals feel after their long search for the Best Thing in the World?
- What is contentment?
- How can constant want make you feel angry or “cross”?



Chapter 14

- What is Little Joe Otter’s idea?
- What happened to Peter Rabbit?
- How did the other friends help?
- What kinds of fun things do you do with your friends?
- How do you help each other?



Chapter 15

- What was the problem with Tommy Trout?
- Why did Tommy Trout disobey?
- What happened to Tommy?
- How do you think the story would have ended if Tommy had obeyed?

Chapter 16

- What were Peter Rabbit, Reddy Fox, and Billy Mink all good at doing?
- What was Grandfather Frog's decision?
- Why does Spotty the Turtle enter the race?
- What does "those who run fastest do not always reach a place first" mean?
- What does Spotty do when the race starts?
- Why does Billy Mink slow down? How about Peter Rabbit and Reddy Fox?
- What does Spotty do once reaching the pond?
- How did Spotty win the race?
- What was your favorite part of this book?



Vocabulary List

<u>Chapter 1</u>	<u>Chapter 2</u>	<u>Chapter 3</u>	<u>Chapter 4</u>
croon	pollywog	intent	independent
idle	gobble	stole	prowl
mischievous	vain	scamper	grouse
content	bow-legged	shrill	buff
waistcoat			demure
bulrush			attentive
distress			culprit
sharp			stern
			henceforth
			descendant

<u>Chapter 5</u>	<u>Chapter 6</u>	<u>Chapter 7</u>	<u>Chapter 8</u>
cross	spatter	frolic	cattail
wilful	waterproof	bark	tadpole
mind	kingfisher	swell	plunge
rogue	ashamed	hollow	success
plot	switch		

<u>Chapter 9</u>	<u>Chapter 10</u>	<u>Chapter 11</u>	<u>Chapter 12</u>
mossy	trimming	delight	chuckle
stub	fellow	merry	tumble
grunt	errand		
dodge	committee		
snug			

<u>Chapter 13</u>	<u>Chapter 14</u>	<u>Chapter 15</u>	<u>Chapter 16</u>
slender	sputter	plump	boast
contentment		speck	swift
			dispute
			dismay