

MOSDOS PRESS  
*Literature*

STUDENT ACTIVITY WORKBOOK

COMPANION TO

*Ruby*



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# acknowledgments

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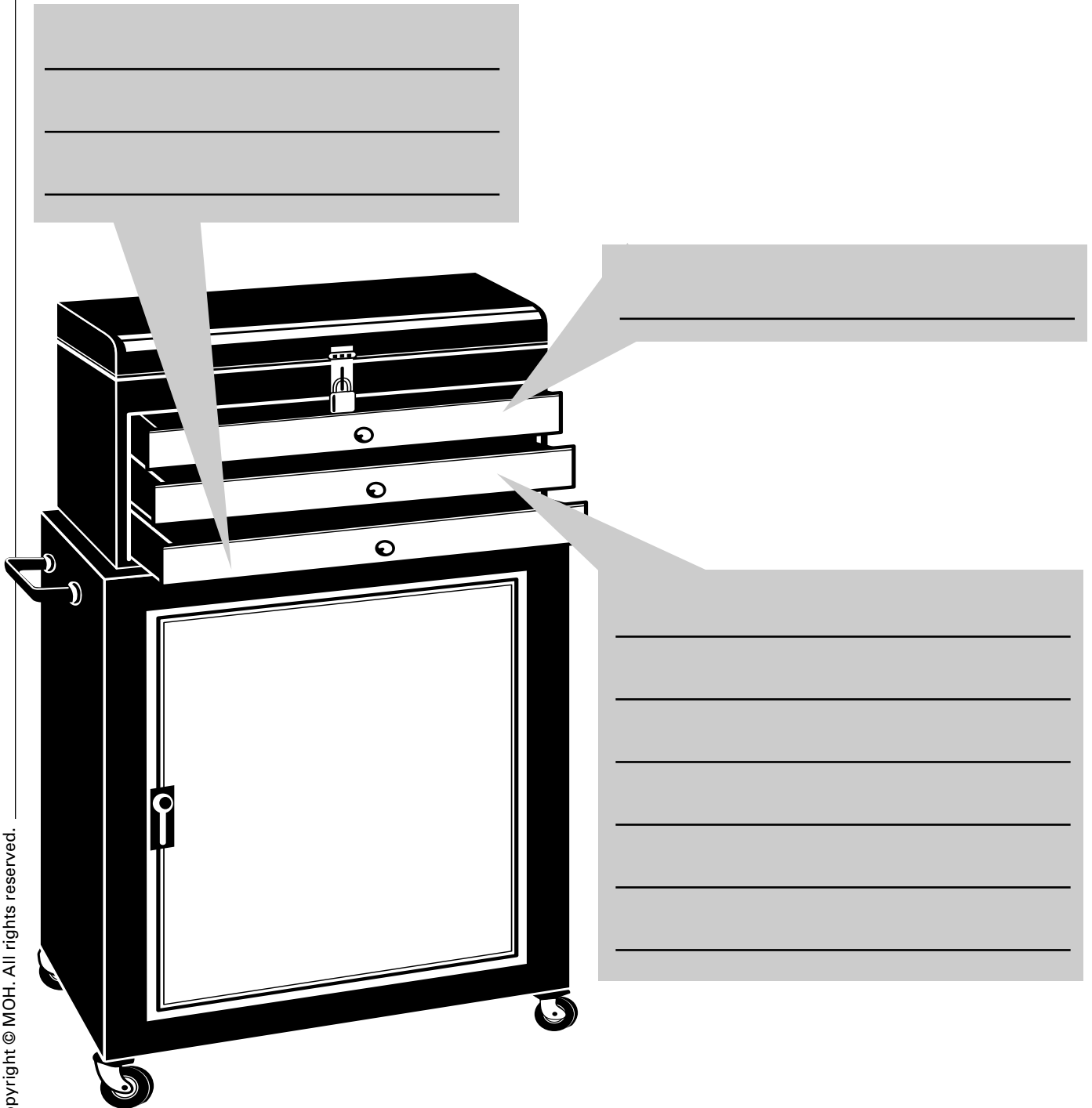


*agriculture*    *clutched*    *cultivate*    *drought*    *sow*  
*auctioneer*    *collateral*    *debt*    *gullies*    *withered*

1. Abe's parents owned an antique shop. He and his sister, Jean, would often make up stories about the buyers and sellers who came into the shop. If an old woman came into the shop, a bag \_\_\_\_\_ (*held onto tightly*) in her hand, Jean would say something like, "I bet she was born a princess, and is selling the last of her jewels because she has become so poor."
2. If a young man came in to sell something, Abe would say, "Oh! I'll bet he's gotten himself into \_\_\_\_\_ (*something that is owed*) by borrowing money to pay for that motorcycle parked outside."
3. Part of owning an antique shop involved going to auctions to buy antiques to sell in the store. Abe and Jean loved hearing the \_\_\_\_\_ (*the person who conducts the auction*) auction off the pieces for sale.
4. Often, there would be other auctions held right in the same place. One week, the auction included many tools and vehicles used in \_\_\_\_\_ (*farming*).
5. Some tools were to be used for harvesting; others were used to \_\_\_\_\_ (*help the plants grow*) the ground and ready it for planting.
6. All sorts of interesting characters turned out for the farm auctions. One week, a farmer brought a big, fat \_\_\_\_\_ (*an adult, female pig*) to auction off.
7. The other farmers laughed. "What kind of tool is that?" hollered one. "It ain't a tool," he hollered back. "It's \_\_\_\_\_ (*property promised as guarantee for a loan*) that I'm putting up if someone will give me the loan of their tractor."
8. "What happened to your tractor?" bellowed another farmer. "Well," said the farmer, "first we had no rain at all. We had a regular \_\_\_\_\_ (*a long period of dry weather*)."
9. "The crops dried up and \_\_\_\_\_ (*shriveled*). The ground was as hard as rocks."
10. "Then the rains came. They made all kinds of holes and \_\_\_\_\_ (*small valleys and ravines made by running water*) in the ground. My poor old antique tractor just can't handle that kind of job." My parents, hearing the word "antique," bought the old tractor to use as part of a display in front of their store, and a farmer loaned him a tractor. Everyone went home happy.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Words are tools that we use to express our thoughts. If we organize words into groups the way a worker organizes his tools, we will be able to find them when we need them. In *Leah's Pony*, you learned six words having to do with farming. Put them in the middle drawer of your tool chest. You learned three words connected to money. Put them in the bottom drawer of your tool chest. One last word remains. Put it in the top drawer of your tool chest.



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## In-Depth Thinking

1. What was the same and what was different for Leah's family before their land was struck by the drought and after their land became part of the "Dust Bowl"? List two things that remained the same and two things that changed.

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2. Many close bonds and friendships appear in this story. Write down examples of at least two of them.

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3. What do you think will happen now that the auction is over?

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## Drawing Conclusions

4. Why do you think Leah's parents first spoke in hushed voices but later shared their troubles with her?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

5. Mama was very resourceful and reused many items in order to save. Can you think of some ways you can reuse items in your daily life to avoid waste?

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6. Leah had an idea that turned out to be very helpful to adults. Think of a time when you provided adults with an idea or suggestion. How was the idea received? If you have never had an experience like this, you may make one up.

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### One Step Further

Parting with precious belongings is not easy for adults or children. Imagine that you had to auction off some of your own possessions to help your family. Write a paragraph that includes the answers to the following questions. What items would you choose and what price would you attach to them? Would you cooperate with the family auction and be proud to contribute or would you be angry and resentful?

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## Leah's Pony

### GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

Contrasting

*Leah's Pony* is about sacrifice. *Sacrifice* means giving up something that is very precious to you, for the sake of someone (or something) else. People make a sacrifice hoping it will make a bad situation better.

In *Leah's Pony*, many people make sacrifices. Fill out the chart below by telling what the person *could* have done if he or she were more selfish. Then, write down what each character actually did.

	What Each Could Have Done	What Each Did
Farmer One		
Farmer Two		
The Neighbors	<i>The neighbors could have bid on the tractor and animals and gotten a real bargain.</i>	<i>They remained silent.</i>
Mr. B.		
Leah		

Whose sacrifice do you think was the greatest? Why do you think so?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

*Leah's Pony* is a tale of hard times and soft hearts. The author helps us to feel the beauty of the countryside and the harshness of the weather by using images. An **image** is a "picture" that a writer "draws" with words. An image helps you to *imagine* what the author is describing.



Here is an example:

"That whole summer, Leah and her pony crossed through *cloud-capped cornfields*."

In the exercise below, answer the question in each picture frame with a phrase from the story. Then, choose one of the phrases and draw a picture of it in the last picture frame. On the line under the frame, write the phrase.

How did the pony's coat look after it was brushed?

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How tall did the corn grow?

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How hard did the wind blow, some days?

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How did the farm look when the grasshoppers came?

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Leah raced her horse past a deserted house. How did the house look?

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