

Literature Guide

Little Men by Louisa Mae Alcott

Chapter 1: Nat

1. Describe the scene Nat stepped into at Plumfield. Lots of boys enjoying their evening; a snack of bread, gingerbread, and milk; smells of baked apples; boys playing marbles, checkers, reading; 2 puppies and a kitten
2. Describe Nat. Homeless, grimy, wet feet, cough that he had had all winter, orphan (father died) fiddler, 12 years old, thin and pale
3. What did Jo allow the boys to do every Saturday night? Have a pillow fight. What were the rules? Lasted 15 minutes, 5 minutes of settling down or it didn't happen the next week; all other nights the boys had to promptly go to bed
4. What do you think were the most attractive parts of Plumfield to orphan boys? The love Mother & Father Bhaer provided; the extra comforts - flannel nightgowns; the fun the boys had: band, sliding down the banisters, pillow fights

Chapter 2: The Boys

1. What things stand out about the boys at the school? They all have some affliction; they all have flourished there.
2. What was most important to Father Bhaer to teach the boys? Self-knowledge, self-help and self-control
3. Why do Demi and Daisy live at the school? Meg and John wanted Demi to be around the boys. He is very smart and can get wrapped up in his own mind. Daisy lives there because of Demi (the twins didn't want to be separated).

Chapter 3: Sunday

1. Mr. and Mrs. Bhaer did a great many wise things in caring for the boys. Can you name some of them? Garden plots; Mrs. Bhaer's notes on each boys behavior; one-on-one talks with Mr. Bhaer; animals for each; Sunday long walks; Sunday story time
2. During Mr. Bhaer's story time, what was he trying to teach the children? To vocalize what they needed help with, then he would help them through the week to work on it. What did he use to teach this? Garden plots
3. What story did Demi tell Nat? The story of Jesus

Chapter 4

1. What was Nat's primary fault? He lied
2. How did Father B. cure him of this? When Nat told a lie, he had to hit Father B. with a rule. The love and respect he had for Father B. was so great that this hurt Nat tremendously
3. What do you think of Father B's punishment?

Chapter 5: Patty Pans

1. What game did Jo make up for Daisy? Kitchen
2. Name some of the mishaps that happened during Daisy's play? Burned pies, tough steak, spills, the dog ate the pancakes

3. Did Daisy enjoy the game? Yes

Chapter 6: A Firebrand

1. What were some of the awful things that Dan did? Taught the boys how to fight; bull fighting; drinking, smoking & gambling
2. Who is Dan? A wayward friend of Nat's who was kind to him on the streets.
3. What were some of Dan's good qualities? He was good with Teddy and the animals. When he wanted to, he learned quickly.
4. What was the final straw? He led Tommy to setting the house on fire.
5. Why was Jo so upset about sending him away? He was the only boy they had failed with
6. Do you think he will come back?

Chapter 7: Naughty Nan

1. Who is Naughty Nan? A little girl whose mother had died and was very spoiled by her father.
2. Name some of the reasons they called her Naughty Nan? She was daring; set a ship on fire and set it off down the brook; had Silas tattoo an anchor on her arm
3. Name some of her finer traits. Generous, very imaginative at play, determined
4. Why did they bring her to Plumfield? As a companion for Daisy and to make the boys into gentlemen

Chapter 8: Pranks and Plays

1. Who was the Naughty Kitty Mouse? A whim of Daisy and Demi's from their childhood that had the children do naughty things
2. What were some of the pastimes of the children? The Club, the Cozy Club, Mrs. Shakespeare Smith & Mrs. Giddy Gaddy, violin playing
3. How did Nat help Billy? By playing music. It seemed to open up Billy's mind

Chapter 9: Daisy's Ball

1. What things did the girls do that were a hint at how proper society should behave? Tea; Miss Smith played the piano (she demonstrated); good manners, "maid"
2. What mishap happened? Gentlemen laughing; a whole tray of patties disappeared; a pie flew off the table; the custard was watery
3. What was the boys' punishment for ruining the ball? Not to speak or play with the girls until Jo said they could. They were also ostracized by Jo.
4. How did the boys atone for their behavior at the ball? They planned a surprise party and gave the girls new kites.
5. Why did everyone have such a splendid time? Because all of the guests behaved themselves and tried to make everything go well. What lesson is there in this for us? We should strive not to complain or make things difficult when we are invited to a social gathering

Chapter 10: Home Again

1. What changed Dan's heart? He heard Jo talked to Fritz. Fritz said he would not send him away any more than he would send Rob away.

2. What did Jo propose as a reward for Dan? Earning drawers in a cabinet to keep his treasures in
3. How could he earn them? Working, studying, good resolutions; conquering faults
4. How had Dan changed by the end of the chapter? He let love and gratitude enter his heart
5. What prayer did Jo ask him to say every night? Help me to be good

Chapter 11: Uncle Teddy

1. What did Teddy propose for the boys? To change the carriage house into a museum with Dan as curator
2. What did Teddy want the boys to do with regards to the museum? They had to learn something about the treasures they had there.
3. How did Laurie improve the museum again? By setting up a library in it
4. Why was Teddy so generous to the school and the boys? Because he knew what it was like to be a motherless boy and how happy he was once Jo and her family took him in

Chapter 12: Huckleberries

1. How did Jo arrange for them all to go pick Huckleberries? She had Silas drive them in the wagon
2. What trouble did Nan and Rob get into? They got lost
3. Who found them? Dan
4. How was he rewarded? Jo leaned against his shoulder and bestowed upon him the honor of being her oldest son
5. What was Nan's punishment? Jo tied her to a bed on a long twine of string. Did the punishment work? Yes

Chapter 13: Goldilocks

1. What did the children do for the Princess? Anything her little heart desired
2. What things caused her distaste? Dirt, noise, warts
3. What improvements were made among the boys while she was there? Better manners, cleanliness, thinking of someone other than themselves

Chapter 14: Damon & Pythias

1. What happened that caused a moral earthquake at Plumfield? Tommy's money was missing
2. How did Mr. Bhaer deal with it? He asked each of them if they took it
3. Who did everyone think did it? Nat
4. Who was the only one to stand by him? Daisy
5. In the end who stole the money? Jack
6. How did the truth come out? Dan helped Jack out of a tree and Jack couldn't bear him taking the blame for it.
7. What lessons were learned by Nat? Being trusted without a doubt is more important than anything. By Tommy? Stand by your friends/business partners. By Dan? Honesty and honor are more precious than gold. By everyone? Faith in another makes life smooth and happy

Chapter 15: In the Willow

1. Why was Jo so patient with Nan? She reminded her of herself when Jo was little
2. What did Jo think they should encourage Nan to do? Become a doctor
3. What plan did Tommy have to do with his money? Give it all away. First buy a microscope for Dan
4. What plan did Nat have? Buy a butterfly net for Dan and then something for Bill
5. What did Jo think that Dan and Demi would do for each other? Dan would strengthen Dan's moral sense
6. What literary dress up did the author give the Willow Tree? Personification
7. What did Mr. Bhaer suggest Jack do? Apologize to Tommy, Dan and Nat; give all his possessions away; adopt "honesty is the best policy" for his motto

Chapter 16: Taming the Colt

1. What did Jo propose first for Dan to tame his restless nature? Express man; run errands in town a few times per week
2. What was the next thing that Mr. Bhaer proposed? Chopping wood
3. What did Dan find next? Taming Charlie, Laurie's horse
4. What metaphor did Jo use to express what she was doing for Dan? Taming the Colt

Chapter 17: Composition Day

1. Which was your favorite composition? Why?
2. What gift did the boys present to Dan? A microscope

Chapter 18: Crops

1. What lesson did Mr. Bhaer teach Rob? If he had worked each day for a bit, he would not need to hurry at the end?
2. What do you think was Father and Mother Bhaer's crop? Changes in the boys

Chapter 19: John Brooke

1. What things did John leave his family? No debts, enough money to keep them cared for, genuine goodness
2. How did Demi respond to his father's death? By doing as his father asked - taking care of his mother and sisters

Chapter 20: Round the Fire

1. What game did the children devise when they couldn't entertain themselves? Whoever entered the room had to tell a story
2. What do you think was the most important lesson of Silas's story? Be kind to all
3. What lesson did Aunt Jo's Wood Box story teach? Work hard and don't let others do for you all the time. You'll find satisfaction in this.
4. What lesson did Jo's "The Suspected Boy" teach? Honesty is the best policy
5. What lesson did Fritz's story teach? Kindness is always better than force

Chapter 21: Thanksgiving

1. What does Jo strive to give her pupils? Courage, industry, faith in God and their fellow creatures and themselves
2. What is the flower that grows in any soil? Love

Paper Ideas

1. Tell a story like the ones told in the chapter "Round the Fire". Pretend you are the next person to enter the room.
2. Tell a story about the next child to come to Plumfield. What help does your character need? What gifts does he/she bring to the school?
3. Take the last sentence of the book. Use examples from the book to support this.
4. What are the three most important things the Bhaer's do for the children at the school?