

Activities for *Charlotte's Web* (1952) by E. B. White The Works

Before You Start

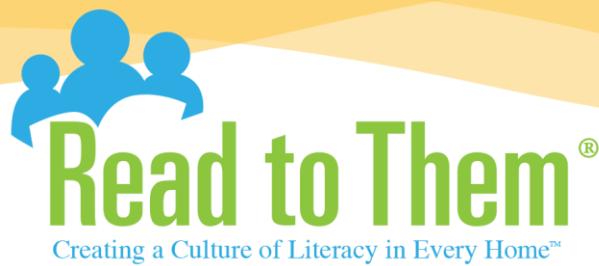
1. **Teasers** – During the days leading up to the kickoff, use these teasers to build curiosity.
 - During the daily announcements, announce ribbon awards for fictitious fair entries: “And the blue ribbon for the largest rutabaga goes to...” (You can even make up some fake winners’ names to add to the mystery.)
 - Have teachers dress up as farmers throughout the week leading up to your event.
 - Decorate the school by hanging random adjectives cut out from advertisements in areas that cobwebs would likely form. Be sure to be more Charlotte and less Templeton in selecting your words!
2. **Book Trailer** – When you’re ready to do your title reveal, show your students the book trailer that the publisher created back in 2012 for the book’s 60th anniversary! Here’s the link: <http://bit.ly/btrailercw>.
3. **Invite Your Community Business** – If you are working with a community business (like a local bank) invite them to set up a mini farmer’s market in your school parking lot. They could give out small cups of sliced veggies to students during drop off or during lunch.

Throughout the Book

4. **Read to Them** provides digital resources for this book. To access Kahoot quizzes, see the *Kahoots* pdf document or go to the **Book Resource Page** for *Charlotte's Web*. (If you do not have a copy of the *Kahoots* pdf document or need the login and password for your Client Portal, contact the person running your **Read to Them** program.)
5. **Goods Versus Services** (Financial Literacy) – Throughout *Charlotte's Web* there are lots of examples of goods as well as services. For example, the multitude of items needed to run a farm are considered “goods,” while Charlotte’s marketing efforts to save Wilbur from the slaughterhouse would be considered “services.” Talk to students about the difference between goods and services, and have them keep track throughout the book when they find examples of both. Refer back to these lists for a discussion on goods and services when you’re ready.

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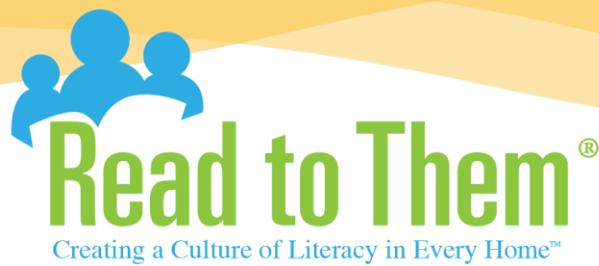
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6. **T-shirt Wisdom** (Language Arts) – *Charlotte's Web* is one of the most quoted children's books of all time. As you read through the text together, scour the pages to find some great quotes and call attention to them. Create cards, posters, or banners with them—or even put them on t-shirts! (See the *Quotes* file on the **Book Resource Page** for *Charlotte's Web* for some quotes to get you started.)
7. **Wilbur's Value** (Financial Literacy) – Invite students to track the progress of Wilbur's perceived value—from a farmer's perspective—throughout *Charlotte's Web*. See suggestions by chapter below for this activity.
8. **E. B. White's Descriptions** (Language Arts) – E. B. White's descriptive prose is worth savoring. As you go through the book, look for sensory descriptions and keep track of them on a bulletin board or on your white board. Set aside some time to read back over them and talk about why they are so illuminating. Then challenge your students to keep these descriptions in mind when doing their own writing.
9. **Roundabout Retelling** (Drama) – Select an important scene for recall. Assign a small group the challenge of explaining the scene. To retell a particular scene or chapter, have students take turns contributing only a few words at a time. This forces students to listen to what is being said and further the retelling with a few pertinent words. This could involve the entire class (or small group), moving around the classroom from person to person, each adding one sentence, one word, or a few words at a time.
10. **Favorite Part Pantomime** (Drama) – Have small groups of students act out (no words) an important scene from the story. Students in the audience must figure out which scene is being portrayed.
11. **Chapter Chat** (Language Arts) – Ask students to put an asterisk beside their favorite part each night as they read together with their families, and let them share that part the next day with a partner in class. Have them explain why they picked their parts.
12. **Illustrate It** (Art) – Author E. B. White uses rich, descriptive language throughout the book, yet only a few of the scenes are illustrated. Have students draw out key scenes from the book. At the end, they will have a set of bonus illustrations to go with the novel.

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Chapter I – Before Breakfast (pp. 1-7)

13. **Cool New Words** (Language Arts) – Author E. B. White is a master of language, and he uses some words that are likely being introduced to your students for the first time. Let them jot these down as they come across them, then talk about them together in class. One cool new word that they might not immediately notice is “arable.” It’s not just Fern’s last name—it’s also an appropriate adjective in the farming world. Take the words that the students find and create a classroom dictionary. Then try to use these new words in class throughout the year. See *Vocabulary* on the **Book Resource Page** for *Charlotte’s Web* for a vocabulary list and some ideas for fun ways to explore new words.

\$ 14. **Wilbur’s Value** (Financial Literacy) – “*Well, one of the pigs is a runt. It’s very small and weak, and it will never amount to anything.*” (p. 1) Mr. Arable plans to kill the little pig. From the farmer’s perspective, invite your class to discuss Wilbur’s value at this point in the book.

15. **Look Out for One Another** (School Community) – Fern looks out for Wilbur. Later in the story, Charlotte does the same. Have your students pair up with someone to check in on and look out for. Challenge them to check in with their person weekly. It doesn’t even have to be someone in their classroom—perhaps even buddy them up with someone in a lower grade to give them an early mentorship opportunity.

Chapter II – Wilbur (pp. 8-12)

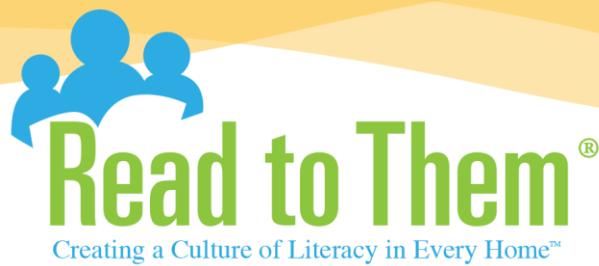
16. **Pig Palace** (STEM, Art) – Wilbur continually outgrows his home and gets upgraded to something more accommodating for his size. Ask your students to design a fitting home for Wilbur. He would need to have easy access to come and go on his own, so that he can enjoy the manure pile and the barn. And he would need straw (or some other material) to help keep him warm at night.

\$ 17. **The Cost of Pig Care** (Financial Literacy, Math) – For Fern, taking care of Wilbur is fun! But a baby-anything also comes with costs. This presents a wonderful opportunity to introduce the concept of “needs vs. wants”.

- First, students should spend some time thinking about (or researching) what a pig would *need* to survive. You could frame this by saying, “What would Mr. Arable buy for Wilbur?” (slops; milk bottles; bedding; etc.)
- Now, ask students, “What would Fern buy for Wilbur?”. Students should make a list of items that Fern would *want* to have for Wilbur. (Remind them of Fern pushing Wilbur around in a stroller if they need an example.)

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- Break your class up into groups. They could combine their lists, and research the average cost of each item on it. They should then add up the total cost of their “needs” list and their “wants” list. Have each group share their totals for the lists separately and combined. As a class, what’s the average total for their pig wish lists?
- It’s time to give them each a “pig allowance”. Take that average total, and subtract a certain amount of money (you’ll obviously want this allowance to be higher than the “needs” list totals). Challenge your students to deliberate in their groups and submit their final combined list of “needs” and “wants”, as if they were headed to the store to care for Wilbur themselves!

Finish this activity with a discussion about how we balance our “needs” and our “wants” when it comes to spending—and different ways that the Arables must face those decisions on the farm.

18. **Wilbur’s Value** (Financial Literacy) – *“You have had your fun raising a baby pig, but Wilbur is not a baby any longer and he has got to be sold.”* (p. 12) Now that Wilbur is healthy, he must be sold. Discuss his value as a healthy spring pig. (Any idea what a pig is worth...?)

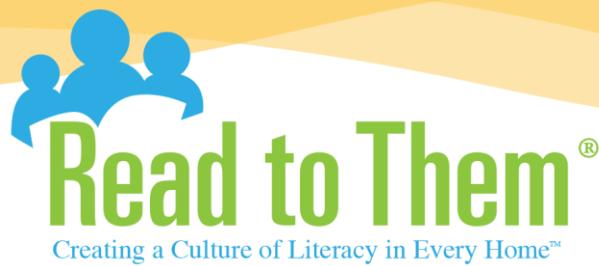
Chapter III – Escape (pp. 13-24)

19. **Zuckerman’s Farm I** (Language Arts, Art, Science) – Children will be drawn to the farm animals, so let them do what comes naturally. Take out books and learn about farm animals. Draw them. Create 3-D farm scenarios in school. Study them. Follow the lead of your students as they want to spend more time with the menagerie at Zuckerman’s Farm.

20. **Zuckerman’s Farm II** (Language Arts, Social Studies) – Many children, especially those who are in urban or suburban areas, are far removed from farm life. They may be interested to learn about how farms actually work both then and now. E. B. White leaves clues in the book, such as the list of farm implements in Chapter 3. Ask students what each of these items is for. (Axe grease? Pitchforks? Grindstones?) Let them research them and report back what they learn. You can also invite a local farmer to come and speak with your class about modern farming.

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21. **The Cost of Farm Life** (Financial Literacy) – The Zuckermans clearly host a wide variety of animals on their family-run farm. They must have specific uses, gains, and losses from each kind of animal, as well as any produce they grow on the property. What do you think running a farm is like?

For this activity, split the class into groups, and assign each a farm. Here's some to get you started:

- *a flower farm in Virginia*
- *a pig farm in North Carolina*
- *a cattle farm in Idaho*
- *a vegetable farm in California*
- *a chicken farm in Georgia*

Once they have their assigned farms, challenge students with some questions:

- *What makes your farm profitable (what are the uses of your product/animal)?*
- *What are some risks with your type of farm?*
- *What is the average cost of running your farm (with the location in mind)?*
- *How much money might you make in the next calendar year?*

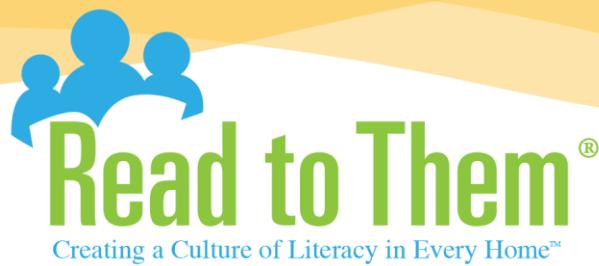
Each group should name their farms, and add in a few fun details about their brand, or what makes their farm special. (If your class seems engaged, let them put together a presentation about their farm, as if they were pleading their case to potential investors.)

Either way, round out the activity by allowing students to debate the best option out of the farm scenarios. Then, refocus the discussion back to Zuckerman's farm. What must a day in Mr. Zuckerman's life be like?

22. **The Goose's Challenge** (Language Arts) – The goose dares Wilbur to escape his comfortable home in the barn. She offers a resounding message of *carpe diem* ("seize the day"): "Root up everything! Eat grass! Look for corn! Look for oats! Run all over! Skip and dance, jump and prance!" (pp. 17-18) Encourage your students to find a way to celebrate Wilbur's sense of freedom and escape (however short-lived). Ask them to write a description of what they would do if they gained newfound freedom at school. Then brainstorm together a way to embrace that "Root up everything" spirit within the confines of school safety rules. Maybe some extra recess. Maybe a water balloon fight on a hot day. Maybe some free time to play board games. Choose a day during your reading program to channel Wilbur's freedom.

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23. **Wilbur Tag** (P.E.) – Designate half the class to be Wilburs and the other half to be Lurvys. The Wilburs could wear a picture of a pig clothes-pinned to their shirts. Then send the Lurvys loose to catch the Wilburs. If a Lurvy catches a Wilbur, they switch roles and rejoin the game.

Chapter IV – Loneliness (pp. 25-31)

24. **Wilbur's Itinerary** (Language Arts, STEM) – On Zuckerman's Farm, Wilbur finds himself getting lonely and bored—especially on rainy days that interrupted his usual routine. Using E. B. White's detailed description of Zuckerman's Farm and your students' vivid imaginations, come up with a fun-filled plan for how Wilbur can spend his rainy day and not be so bored.

\$ 25. **Your Rainy-Day Itinerary (and Budget)** (STEM, Financial Literacy) – Wilbur gets bored sometimes, just like we do. Your students could make a plan for a rainy Saturday of their own. How would they spend the day? To add to the challenge, have them plan the day with no devices—no screens of any kind. Meld financial literacy and creativity with this fun activity!

Have students write down an amount of money—with zero context. Tell them it could be as little as \$1 or as large as a billion bucks. Stress that the number they write down won't affect them at all, and bigger numbers may or *may not* be better.

Now, have each student pass their papers to the student to their left. The number that each student receives is their rainy-day budget!

Give students 5-10 minutes to research and write down their rainy-day plans, given their rainy-day budgets. (This should include average costs of each activity or item that they're purchasing that day.) Did everyone find ways to use their entire allowance? And remember—their rainy-day is screen-free, much like Wilbur's!

26. **Farm Babies I** (Science) – A baby goose is a gosling, but what do you call the offspring of other farm animals? Have your students make a list of animals that are typically found on farms, then see if they know what the babies of those animal species are known as. If there are any that they don't know, have them research the answer. For an added challenge, get them to also find out what a group of each animal species is known as (examples: a *gaggle* of geese or a *parliament* of owls).

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Chapter V – Charlotte (pp. 32-41)

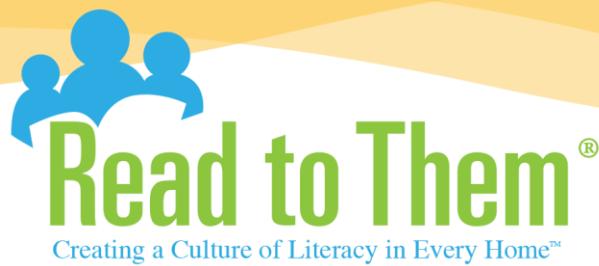
27. **Farm Babies II (STEM)** – The goose informs Wilbur that it takes approximately 30 days for a goose to hatch. Using the same list of animal babies from the previous activity, learn about the gestation periods of each and how they’re all born. Which animals come from eggs? Which animals are typically born in litters like Wilbur? At what age is each animal considered to be an “adult”? This can also be done as a group activity with each group being assigned an assortment of farm animals that they have to learn about in order to later present their findings to the entire class.
28. **Salutations** (Language Arts, Classroom Community) – Charlotte greets Wilbur with “Salutations,” a most unusual greeting. As a class, brainstorm a list of greetings. It could be “Hello” in different languages, or other ways of greeting a person. You could even make up a class handshake. Then try out these different greetings over the course of your reading program. Make one day Salutation Day, and another could be Buenos Dias Day and another could be Howdy Day.
29. **Spiders and Flies** (Read Aloud) – The story of spiders eating flies is an old one. Read Tony DiTerlizzi’s picture book interpretation of the famous Mary Howitt poem *The Spider and the Fly*. The illustrations look like scenes from a silent movie!
30. **Make a Bestiary** (STEM) – A bestiary is a book about beasts. They’re usually about mythical beasts, but they can also be about ordinary animals. Younger students can create one about the farm animals from the book. Older students can create one about the various bugs that Charlotte mentions as part of her diet. They’ll likely already know about flies, grasshoppers, and moths, but what about midges, daddy longlegs, and centipedes? As you and your students continue to encounter animals throughout this book, look them up and add new entries with facts about each to your classroom bestiary.

Chapter VI – Summer Days (pp. 42-47)

31. **Summer** (Language Arts) – How do your students spend their summer? What did they do last summer? What is their favorite summer memory? Ask your students to write about a fun summer memory, or a way they would like to spend a summer day. Share the results with the class. Be sure to participate and share one of your favorite summer memories, too!

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32. **Animal Sounds** (STEM) – This chapter opens with the calls of various birds—the white-throated sparrow calling, “Oh, Peabody, Peabody, Peabody,” the phoebe saying, “Phoebe, phoe-bee,” and the swallows scolding, “Cheeky, cheeky!” Using animals listed in your students’ bestiary from the previous activity and a little help from the Internet, learn about the sounds each animal typically makes. For the birds in the book, check out the Cornell Lab of Ornithology for an extensive catalog of calls at www.allaboutbirds.org.

Chapter VII – Bad News (pp. 48-51)

33. **Synonyms** (Language Arts) – The cows *hated* the flies. “*The horses detested them. The sheep loathed them.*” (p. 48) How many ways can you say the same thing? Using words your students have found in the book for the **Cool New Words** activity, see how many synonyms your students can come up with for each word. (See *Vocabulary on the Book Resource Page* for *Charlotte’s Web* for a vocabulary list and some ideas for fun ways to play with few words.)

 34. **Wilbur’s Value** (Financial Literacy) – “*You know why they’re fattening you up, don’t you?*” (p. 49) If you were Mr. Zuckerman, how has Wilbur’s value changed at this point in the story?

35. **Spider Love** (STEM) – Spiders aren’t the most loved creatures. But are they really all that bad? At the beginning of this chapter, Wilbur starts to take notice of how important Charlotte is to the farm. Ask your students to look at the positive aspects of spiders. Why are they important? How do they positively impact not only the animals’ lives on Zuckerman’s Farm, but also all of our lives? Let them do some research and then report their findings to the entire class. You can kick off this activity with a classroom read-aloud. Younger students may enjoy something like Bethany Barton’s *I’m Trying to Love Spiders* or the 1967 classic *Be Nice to Spiders* by Margaret Bloy Graham. Older students could both laugh and learn with a book like Elise Gravel’s *The Spider*.

Chapter VIII – A Talk at Home (pp. 52-54)

36. **Animated Animal Stories** (Language Arts) – Mrs. Arable is concerned about Fern’s vivid imagination. Is this a bad thing, or is Fern merely observant? See if your students can channel their inner Fern and create a story. Ask them to observe animals or other students through the classroom window or at home. Or, turn down the volume and watch a video of animals interacting on YouTube (be sure to carefully preselect your video), and ask your students to write a story about what the animals might be saying if we could understand them.

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Chapter IX – Wilbur’s Boast (pp. 55-65)

37. **The Anatomy of a Spider** (STEM) – Charlotte tells Wilbur the seven parts of a spider’s leg. Use that information as a springboard to learn more about spider bodies. Start with the leg. Then learn and diagram the whole spider following E. B. White’s lead. Learn more about living as a spider in the beautifully illustrated *Jumper* by Jessica Lanan.

38. **The Anatomy of a Web** (Classroom Community) – Play the classic icebreaker spider web game. You will need a ball of yarn. Have your class sit in a circle, facing in. You start with the yarn and pick the topic for the game. It could be favorite animal, something you are afraid of, best summer day, a quality you admire in a friend—something that has to do with *Charlotte’s Web*. Then, you give your answer to the category, hold the end of the yarn, and toss the ball to someone across the circle from you. Play continues, with each player holding onto the yarn and then tossing it to someone new, until you have included everyone and made a giant spider web. To make clean up easier, play the game in reverse. Have everyone stand up, still holding on to the yarn. The person with the ball of yarn starts a second round of the game. But instead of tossing the ball, that person winds up the yarn as they walk to the who has the next hand hold. Continue until the yarn is all wound back up.

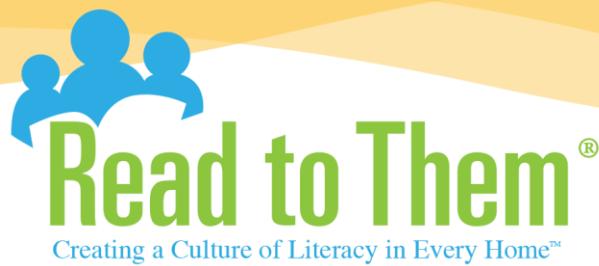
39. **String Games** (Fun!) – Inspired by Wilbur’s failed web-spinning, let your students play some string games like Cat’s Cradle, make friendship bracelets, or do some macrame. There are plenty of instructions online, and you may have some string masters in your class.

40. **Save, Spend, Give** (Financial Literacy) – Some of us are natural savers, like Templeton. Others are good at giving or really enjoy spending. This is a good chance to introduce the concept of “Save, Spend, Give.” Talk to students about why each is an important part of money management and why. Then, try this activity:
Give students envelopes to label and \$100 in play money. Then, give them different scenarios and encourage them to decide if the money will go into their “Save, Spend, or Give” envelopes. Have students compare sheets and see which amounts they put into which categories. Here are some examples:

- You are going to have a neighborhood lemonade stand and you need to spend \$9 to get it up and running. Which category?
- Your mom’s birthday is coming up and you want to buy her flowers for \$10. Which category?
- Your dog needs a new collar and it costs \$6. Which category?

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- Your best friend wants to go to the movies with you tonight but doesn't have any money left from his allowance last week. It's going to cost \$11 for you to buy tickets for both of you. Which category?
- You want to go to soccer camp this summer and your mom said you need to pay half the total fee, which is \$49. Which category?
- You want to put \$10 into your savings account. Which category?
- You see a girl at the grocery store who is asking for \$5 donations for the local animal shelter? Which category?

41. Your Nose Knows (Science) – Wilbur is a smelly pig, as the lamb is quick to point out. Use this scene to investigate the sense of smell. Our noses are really good at telling us the difference between smells. Let's put your nose to the test. Take old film canisters or other small containers and put a different smell in each one. Some suggestions: cinnamon sticks; garlic powder; onion powder; vinegar; vanilla extract; peppermint; rubbing alcohol; cocoa; lemon essence; perfume. You can use cotton balls to soak up the liquids to keep them from spilling. If your containers are transparent, wrap them in construction paper or masking tape. Number each container. Have students take a sniff of each container and see if they can identify the smell. For younger students, it may be helpful to have pictures of the items as reference.

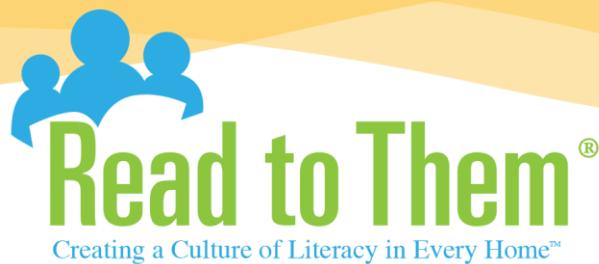
Chapter X – An Explosion (pp. 66-76)

42. One Person's Trash (Language Arts) – Templeton likes to collect things that may be of use in the future. Invite students to bring in part of a collection they might have to show the class. Some questions students might ask about each collection: Why do you have this collection? How did it start? Why is important to you? How many items are in your collection?

43. Trash to Treasure (STEM(Art) – Templeton finds many items lying around that are considered waste by others but have value to him. Challenge your students to use found objects to create something new and wonderful. Raid the recycling to find items that could be repurposed into a new invention, creation, or art. Challenge your students to find some alternative uses for everyday objects.

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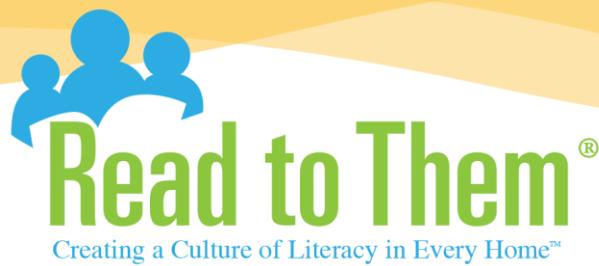
- \$ 44. **Templeton the Saver** (Financial Literacy, Language Arts) – “*It Pays to Save Things.*” (p. 74) Templeton is proud of himself for having saved the rotten goose egg that ultimately saves Charlotte’s life. For many of us, saving can be a challenge. Talk with students about the importance of saving money and why this is a key to long-term financial health. Share some picture books on the subject, such as *A Chair for My Mother* by Vera B. Williams and *Alexander, Who Used to Be Rich Last Sunday* by Judith Viorst.
- \$ 45. **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle** (Financial Literacy) – One goose’s rotten egg is another rat’s treasure. Have students think about things their family does to reduce, reuse, and recycle...three ways to cut down on costs while also promoting environmental sustainability. Brainstorm ways your class could also adopt this popular mantra and help save some classroom costs and care for the planet at the same time.

Chapter XI – The Miracle (pp. 77-85)

- \$ 46. **Wilbur’s Value** (Financial Literacy) – “*Our pig is completely out of the ordinary.*” (p. 80) Mr. Zuckerman takes Charlotte’s web as a sign. How valuable does this make the unordinary pig?
- \$ 47. **Charlotte, the Marketing Maven** (Financial Literacy) – When Charlotte comes up with the idea of weaving words into her web to save Wilbur’s life, she proves to be quite the marketing genius! Discuss with your class why she chose the phrase “some pig”. What sort of influence could this extraordinary web have on our beloved pig? See activity 56 below for a more in-depth approach to this topic.
- 48. **Weave Your Own Webs** (Language Arts/Art) – Who hasn’t read *Charlotte’s Web* and imagined what words Charlotte would write for them? Have your students draw or create their own webs and put the proud, descriptive words of their choice in the webs. Display the word webs in school. You could also let students choose words for one another. Be a bit careful, but this might even kindle the generous spirit within *Charlotte’s Web*. Another twist would be to have the students come up with other words they would have given Charlotte to put in her web to help her save Wilbur. Or what words could be added to webs to describe other characters—Fern, Templeton, Charlotte herself?

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49. **“People came from miles around...”** (Language Arts, Art, Financial Literacy) – People come from miles around to see Wilbur. Because of Charlotte’s marketing, Wilbur has drawn quite a crowd. Engage your students with an activity to help them better understand the value of marketing, as well as what to do with the buzz generated from it!

Challenge your students first with a debate. Might Mr. Zuckerman have charged money for entry to see Wilbur? If so, how much should he have charged? (We don’t have to consider inflation for this activity in order to keep it approachable, let’s just consider if Wilbur existed in the present.) What could be added to the experience? Are there other ways to make money if tourists arrive? (Sell snacks, keepsakes, or drinks?) Does anyone have any ideas for what else might draw tourists’ attention on the Zuckerman farm?

Now, Invite students to imagine an event in your town that would cause folks to come from far and wide. They can write or draw the scene. How would they market/advertise for it? Would they rely solely on good-old-fashioned word of mouth or promote it in other ways?

Chapter XII – A Meeting (pp. 86-91)

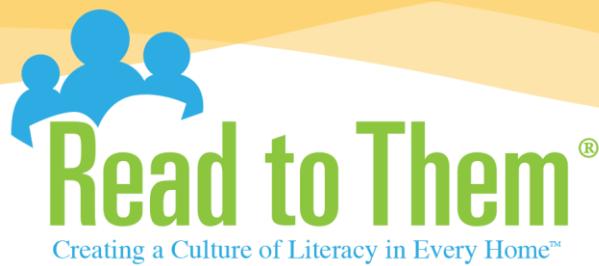
50. **Goosey Gab** (School Community) – The goose has a unique way of speaking. Sometimes she says something twice or even three times over, and sometimes she repeats the ending of a word. As she explains to Charlotte, “*It’s my idio-idio-idiosyncrasy.*” (p. 86) Have a “Goosey Gab Day” where you and your students try to emulate the goose’s speech. The morning announcements could include daily *weather-eather* that is *warm-warm-warm*. Burgers on whole wheat *buns-buns-buns* can be served up in the *cafeteria-eria* for lunch. Students can *jump-jump-jump* for *Physical Education-ation*. Make it *silly-illy* and *fun-fun-fun*, and see if your students can come up with some creative ways get in on the action, too.

51. **Old Magazine Art** (Art) – Ask for donations of old magazines, catalogs, newspapers, and advertising circulars. Put them out with paper, scissors, and glue sticks and invite students to make a collage.

52. **Terrific, Sensational...** (Language Arts) – You can take this opportunity to play with synonyms again! See **Synonyms** from chapter 7 if you need a refresher.

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Chapter XIII – Good Progress (pp. 92-104)

53. **Weaving** (Art) – There are lots of ways to explore weaving with children. You can do the traditional paper weaving or ask for loans of pot-holder or small laptop looms. Or, you can take the activity outside to a chain-link fence. You will need lengths of ribbon or yarn, strips of scrap fabric, even flowers and small branches. Let students work together to make a woven mural out of mixed media and beautify your fence. You can hang a small chalkboard and include a message about your TERRIFIC artists.

54. **Spelling Together** (Classroom Community) – Charlotte performs acrobatics to make her web into words. Challenge groups of students to figure out how to make letters with their bodies. It is easy—one student lies down, and another lies perpendicular to the first. Students can try to spell out words with their bodies. You can make this project last by taking pictures of each letter attempt. Make a set of letter cards out of the pictures and students can practice spelling with the cards.

55.  Templeton's Marketing Research (Financial Literacy, Language Arts) – Sure, Charlotte's web is what draws all the attention, but a “radiant” web could not be created without Templeton's contribution. This presents a wonderful opportunity to discuss the importance of research when planning marketing strategies.

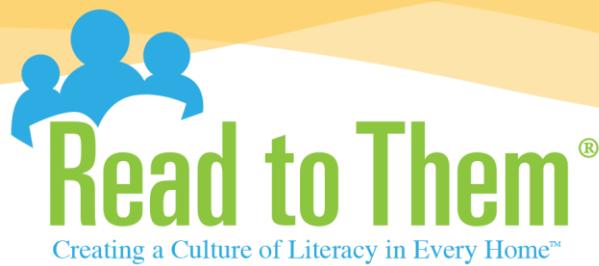
Students could form pairs (one acting as Templeton, and one acting as Charlotte). The Charlottes could be given a prompt (sell a burger, a shoe, a song, a celebrity). The tricky part is—they should communicate to the Templetons what sort of product they are marketing, without saying exactly what it is. If it's for a burger, they could say, “It's a filling meal that most people enjoy and is eaten a lot in the USA”. If it's for a tennis shoe, “It's what people wear on their feet when they go for a run, or for a casual trip to the store”.

The Templetons should then pull some words from magazines, newspapers, or printed articles that they think could relate to the intended message or brand. They should pull at least five, but the more the better! (We don't want another “crunchy” for Wilbur scenario, here.)

The Charlottes should then whittle the options down to the word that they think best represents their intended brand or message. Allow the pairs to share and see who makes an effective marketing team, just like Templeton and Charlotte!

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56. **Charlotte, the Marketing Maven II** (Financial Literacy) – Let's continue our conversation about Charlotte's marketing genius! Marketing is a powerful part of almost every business, and it's a worthwhile concept for students to understand so they can be informed consumers when it comes to the items that are being marketed to them. Here are a few fun ways to teach marketing to students, using Charlotte as a marketing pro:

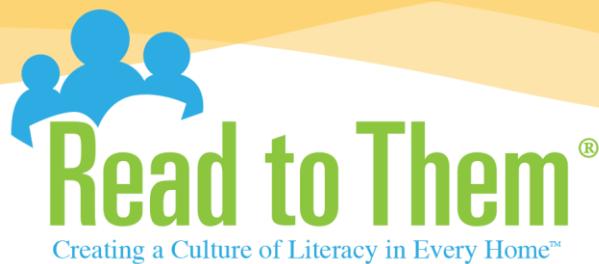
- **Catchy Slogans:** Charlotte chose certain words for her web that she knew would spark interest and attention. Have students think about the impact that slogans like "SOME PIG," "TERRIFIC," "RADIANT," and "HUMBLE" had on those who saw them. Then ask students to think about some of the slogans they see or hear for toys, food, or video games they're interested in. Have certain slogans made them more interested in something than they were before they heard or saw it?
- **Building Wilbur's Brand:** Before Charlotte's words, Wilbur was just a regular pig. But with each web she designed, Charlotte built a brand for him, making him into a *famous* pig! Encourage students to think about some of their favorite products and how the branding around them has made them more interested in it.
- **Creating Excitement and Interest:** Charlotte's webs begin to create a huge buzz, making people travel from far away just to see this amazing pig. Have students think about a recent video game or movie release. Did the pre-hype around that item get more people to start talking about it?

57. **Wilbur's Gymnastics** (P.E.) – Put out the gymnastics mats and invite your students to learn some RADIANT moves of their own.

58. **Charlotte's Lullaby** (Music) – At the close of this chapter, Charlotte sings a beautiful lullaby to calm Wilbur's anxieties about his future. But what does the song actually sound like? Invite students to create their own melodies for Charlotte's lullaby. They could add some dance moves, too! Or, ask your music teacher to create a melody and teach it to the whole school.

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Chapter XIV – Dr. Dorian (pp. 105-112)

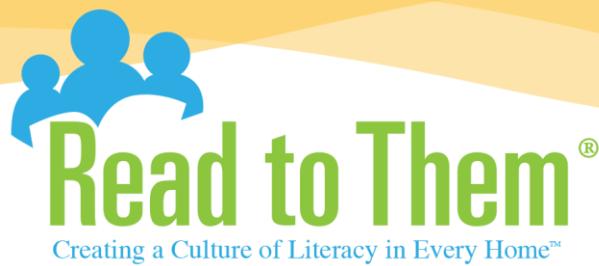
59. **Fish Stories** (Language Arts) – A fish story is a tale that is completely made up or highly exaggerated with fantastical elements. Mrs. Arable thinks that the story about Charlotte's cousin that Fern relays to her family is indeed a fish story—not because it's a story about a fish, but because she thinks it's completely made up. Share some fish stories or tall tales with your students drawing from folklore from around the world or perhaps even real life events at your school that you can embellish. Ask them if they think these events really occurred or if they can find a nugget of truth hidden within the fantasy. Afterward, give them the opportunity to write their own fish stories loaded with hyperbole and whimsy.
60. **Crochet and Knit** (Art) – Mrs. Arable compares crocheting and knitting to spinning a web. See if someone in your school community will come and teach the simplest versions of these needle arts.
61. **“Children pay better attention than grownups.”** (Language Arts) – Your students probably agree with this statement from Dr. Dorian. Brainstorm a list of things that children pay more attention to than adults do. Then invite students to write or draw about one of them with all the details that young eyes see.

Chapter XV – The Crickets (pp. 113-117)

62. **Cricket Song** (Language Arts, Art) – This chapter opens with the crickets warning of the end of summer, and the imagery is beautiful. Ask students to imagine another creature carrying the same message of the change of season. What would it look and sound like? They can write or draw their idea.
63. **Venn Diagram** (Language Arts) – E. B. White begins to compare the outgoing season of summer with the incoming season of fall. What are the differences? What's the same? Create a Venn diagram that compares and contrasts the two. You can also do this for other points of comparison like Charlotte and Templeton or Avery and Fern. As you read on, there are also more possibilities like the fairgrounds and Zuckerman's Farm. This is always a fun activity that can be done at any point during your reading event.

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Chapter XVI – Off to the Fair (pp. 118-129)

64. **Field Trip** (STEM, Art) – Were you lucky enough to align your reading event with the timing of your local fair? If so, organize an outing! Using *Charlotte’s Web* as a guide, enable students to explore everything at the fair that Fern and Avery—and Wilbur and Templeton—do. Make a checklist and give every student a handy copy. Missed the fair? What about a farm? Visit a local farm to observe the animals and how the farm operates. After the field trip, have students use clay, craft sticks, and other materials to create a model of the farm or the fair and the sights they saw there. If a trip isn’t in the cards, you can also try a virtual field trip! Lots of farms have options for virtual field trips. Here’s a link to a YouTube video tour of Farm Sanctuary in Watkins Glen, New York: <http://bit.ly/virtufarm>.

\$ 65. **Financing the Fair** (Financial Literacy) – Fern needs money to enjoy the fair! Have students discuss ways in which they could earn some spending money of their own. Are there some chores they could help with around the house? How about mowing the grass or washing a neighbor’s car? A lemonade stand?

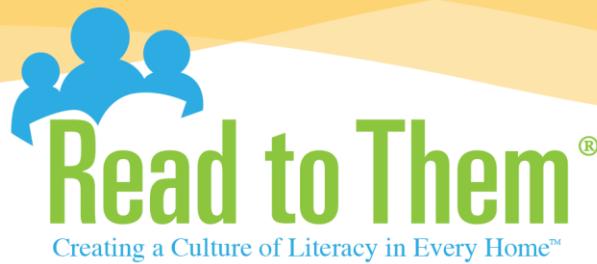
66. **A Rat’s Eye View** (Language Arts, Art) – The old sheep tells Templeton why the fair is a “rat’s paradise.” What about your school? What would Templeton see if he came to your classroom, playground, or—better yet—your cafeteria! Invite students to think like Templeton and write or draw what he would see at your school.

Chapter XVII – Uncle (pp. 130-137)

\$ 67. **Coins** (Financial Literacy, Math) – Mr. Arable gives Fern “two quarters and two dimes” and he gives Avery “five dimes and four nickels.” (p. 131) Have students figure out how much money each child received. (Physical coins could really help with this!) Then challenge them to come up with other ways to make the 70¢. Younger students can use coins for patterning and making coin rubbings, too.

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68. **Fair Funds** (Financial Literacy, Math) – Invite students to enter a time-machine...and come out as Fern and Avery at the fair. They've just been given 70¢ each and have to decide how to spend it. Using the price list below, challenge students to decide exactly how they'd use their 70¢ at the fair.

| | | | |
|---------------------------|------------|-----------------------|------------|
| <i>Spin-a-Wheel Game</i> | 15¢ | <i>Cheeseburger</i> | 20¢ |
| <i>Jet Bumper Cars</i> | 20¢ | <i>Merry-Go-Round</i> | 20¢ |
| <i>Balloon Bunch</i> | 10¢ | <i>Petting Zoo</i> | 25¢ |
| <i>Frozen Custard</i> | 10¢ | <i>Ferris Wheel</i> | 30¢ |
| <i>Raspberry Soda Pop</i> | 5¢ | <i>Hot Dog</i> | 15¢ |

69. **Map It Out** (Social Studies, Art, STEM) – Have your students recreate the setting of the County Fair. Use E. B. White's vivid descriptions to place the various locations, from the Ferris wheel to sheep pens to the race track. You can split your classroom into two groups and have one map the fair and one map the farm on large sheets of butcher paper. These maps would be a great way to adorn the walls of our classroom or the hallways of your school.

70. **Inflation** (STEM, Social Studies, Financial Literacy) – The 70 cents that Mr. Arable gives Fern and Avery probably doesn't sound like much to students today, but we know that things were much less expensive in 1952, when *Charlotte's Web* was published. Plug this information into the Inflation Calculator on the Bureau of Labor Statistics website to see how much that would be worth today:

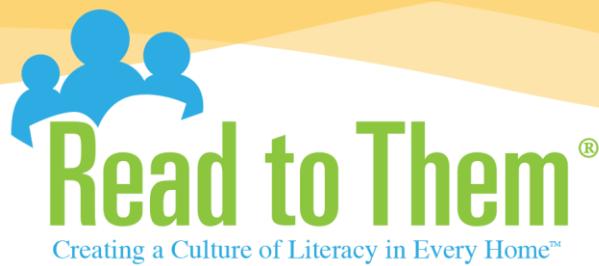
https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm.

Would that be enough money for your students to enjoy the fair? If not, how much more do they think they would need? Challenge your students to look up the prices of other things available for purchase in 1952 and then calculate their value in today's prices. You can use the 1952 Sears Catalog for this activity: <http://bit.ly/52Sears>.

71. **The Price Is Right** (Game, Financial Literacy) – Again using the 1952 Sears catalog, come up with a classroom version of *The Price Is Right*. Show pictures of items without their old price tag, and see which of your students can guess the closest price without going over. You can use the 1952 Sears Catalog for this activity: <http://bit.ly/52Sears>.

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Chapter XVIII – The Cool of the Evening (pp. 138-143)

72. **Field Day of the Past** (School Community) – This could be both a fun classroom activity and preparation for a culminating all-school activity. Research the different attractions at the fair. You may not be able to replicate all of them, but with some creativity from your students, you may be able to come up with some alternatives that could still be fun. You can also make up some new elements of your own. Task each classroom in your school to come up with some type of activity either replicating a fair attraction in the book or drawing inspiration from similar events. Some examples of ideas that can be assigned to classrooms are decorating the midway, curating a relevant song list, or recreating the beano booth.

73. **“When the first light comes into the sky...”** (Language Arts, Art) – Charlotte gives a lovely description of the early morning to come. Invite students to pick their favorite time of day and write or draw a description.

Chapter XIX – The Egg Sac (pp. 144-154)

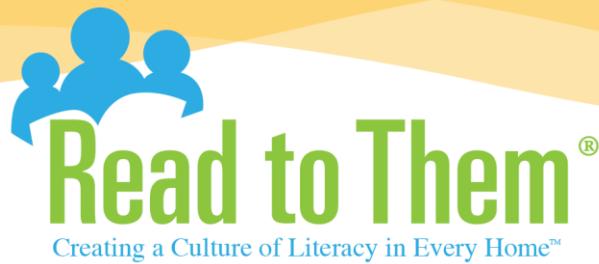
74. **Award Ribbons** (Art, Language Arts) – The blue tag on Uncle’s pen indicates that he was awarded first prize. Have students draw a name of a classmate and create a unique ribbon award for that person. Assign partners if you are concerned about the awards being kind. Some ideas include Most Likely to Lend You a Pencil, Best Laugh at Bad Jokes, or Most Delicious Looking Packed Lunch.

\$ 75. **Five Hundred and Fourteen** (Financial Literacy) – Charlotte tells Wilbur that the egg sac she created overnight holds 514 eggs. That’s a big number! Here’s a great opportunity for students to work with coins and come up with different ways to get to 514 cents (or \$5.14.) Practice this with pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters. How many different ways can your class find ways to make money equivalent to 514?

\$ 76. **Wants vs. Needs** (Financial Literacy, Nutrition) – Poor Templeton! He ate so much at the fair that he gave himself a good ol’ tummy ache! Use Templeton’s excessive eating as another way to talk to students about the difference between “wants versus needs.” Give them a list (or show them photos) of different food items and see if they can determine which of these things are necessary (a need) and which are a luxury (a want) by most people’s standards. Here are some options: broccoli; chicken; lollipops; chips; eggs; cupcakes (you get the idea).

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Chapter XX – The Hour of Triumph (pp. 155-162)

77. **Flip the Scene** (Language Arts) – This scene is shown from afar with many characters present. Ask your students to choose a character that is present during Wilbur’s “hour of triumph” and rewrite the scene from their point of view. Some characters to choose from are Homer Zuckerman, Mrs. Arable, Fern, Henry Fussy, Charlotte, Templeton, and, of course, Wilbur himself.

\$ 78. **40 Cents Today** (Financial Literacy) – Fern’s mom gives her 40 cents to go ride the Ferris wheel with Henry Fussy. According to the website, DollarTimes, 40 cents in 1952 (the year that *Charlotte’s Web* was written) would be worth \$4.76 today. Spend some time talking about inflation and why it happens. Choose some familiar items (candy bar, cell phone, school supplies, video game) and have students look up the price of different items today versus 5, 10 or even 25 years ago.

\$ 79. **Wilbur’s Value** (Financial Literacy) – “*On behalf of the governors of the Fair, I have the honor of awarding a special prize of twenty-five dollars to Mr. Zuckerman, together with a handsome bronze medal suitably engraved, in token of our appreciation of the part played by this pig—this radiant, this terrific, this humble pig—in attracting so many visitors to our great County Fair.*” (p. 158) Mr. Zuckerman owns a prize-winning pig! What is Wilbur’s value to him now? How might he capitalize on that value?

\$ 80. **Currency** (Math) – Mr. Zuckerman receives two ten-dollar bills and a five-dollar bill as his prize money. Challenge students to come up with other ways to make \$25.

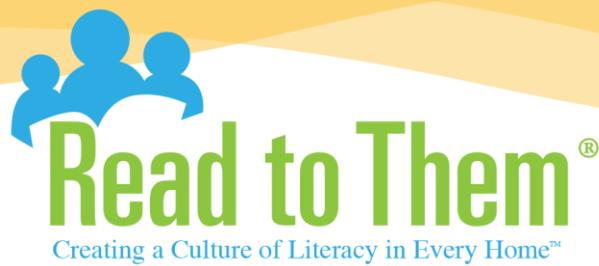
Chapter XXI – The Last Day (pp. 163-171)

81. **Charlotte’s Speech on Friendship** (School Community) – On Page 164, Charlotte gives a speech to Wilbur explaining why she helps him: “*You have been my friend. That in itself is a tremendous thing. ... By helping you, perhaps I was trying to lift up my life a trifle. Heaven knows anyone’s life can stand a little of that.*”

Facilitate a classroom or school exploration of kindness. Invite each student to “be like Charlotte.” Quietly, and without expectation or recognition, do something nice for someone else. (After they’ve performed an act of kindness, invite them to think about how it made them feel—and how it made the other person feel.) You could start a “Charlotte Box” in which students, teachers, and staff can anonymously submit examples of kindnesses performed by them or for them. Occasional shining examples can be shared each morning during announcements or on a front hall bulletin board. Who knows? In your school, performing an act of kindness could become known as “pulling a Charlotte!”

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82. **What Makes a Good Friend?** (Classroom Community) – *Charlotte's Web* is a story of friendship. As a class, brainstorm a list of characteristics that make a good friend. Keep going, including as many ideas as possible until the list starts getting redundant. Next, make a second list of things kids get teased about. Again, keep going—this list sometimes takes a while to develop as kids are self-conscious about revealing what they might get teased about. Invite students to look at the two lists carefully. Is there any overlap? Usually not. Usually the things on the teasing list are superficial stuff that really doesn't say anything about the kind of person someone is. Have a discussion about looking beyond superficial traits and focusing on what actually makes a person a good friend.

83. **A Sad Good-bye** (Art, Language Arts) – Charlotte's death is an iconic scene in children's literature. It is a scene that resonates with readers—children and adults. (See, for example, Kate DiCamillo's foreword.) Give students some time to investigate how that scene makes them feel. They can express those feelings in words or in art.

Chapter XXII – A Warm Wind (pp. 172-184)

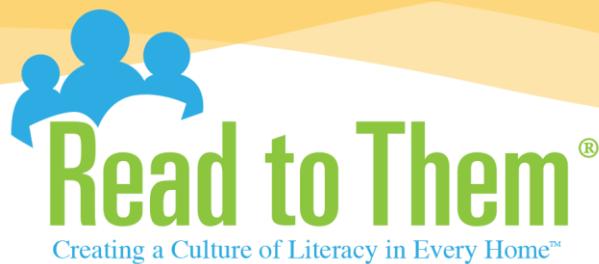
84. **Medal of Honor** (Art, Language Arts) – Wilbur is proud of his medal of honor he won at the state fair. Invite students to make medals for the rest of the cast of characters—Fern, Charlotte, Templeton, etc. What would they win medals for? Older students can write a Commendation Decree explaining the medal award.

85. **Four Seasons** (Art) – With this chapter, we finish a trip through all four seasons with E. B. White. Have students fold a piece of drawing paper into quarters and illustrate a scene from each season in each quadrant.

86. **Parachuting Spiderlings** (STEM) – First, have students fashion spiderlings out of pipe cleaners, making sure they have eight legs. To make small spiderlings, take two pipe cleaners and cut them in half. Fold each of the four half-pieces in half, making eight legs. Use another $\frac{1}{2}$ piece of pipe cleaner to twist around the legs and serve as the body. To make parachutes for the spiderlings, have students cut a circle out of one side of a plastic grocery bag. (Each bag will make two parachutes). Give each student four pieces of yarn, about 12 inches long, to attach the parachute to the spiderling. Then take your parachuting spiderlings outside and let them float on the breeze. If you have a climbing structure on your playground, try dropping them from a high spot to give them more time to float.

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End of Book

87. A Profitable Pig (Financial Literacy) – If you haven’t participated in the discussions about Wilbur’s value throughout the book, here’s your last chance! Wilbur won a special prize at the fair for having attracted so many more visitors who came to see this one-of-a-kind pig. Encourage your students to brainstorm another chapter where the Zuckermans find a way to use Wilbur’s unique celebrity and fame to bring future profits to their farm.

Here are a few ideas to get started:

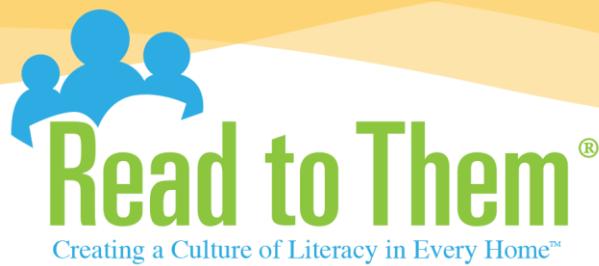
- Sell tickets to see Wilbur
- Sell tickets to have a photo taken with Wilbur
- Sell fresh donuts and lemonade to folks waiting to see Wilbur and the web
- Host hayrides around the farm
- Sell t-shirts with “SOME PIG” on them
- Sell eggs and/or produce from the farm
- Set up a petting zoo with Wilbur and some of the other animals
- Sell spider-shaped cookies

After students brainstorm ideas for the farm, have them decide which of these are “goods” and which are “services.” Then, either as a class, as groups, or as individuals, ask students to determine the following:

- *Income:* How much will they charge for each good/service?
- *Expenses:* What are some additional costs that the farm will incur with all the visitors? (More food for worn-out Wilbur and the other animals? Signage for parking/food areas/restrooms? Additional expenses for cleaning supplies and labor? Materials to make t-shirts/bracelets/etc.?)
- *Profits:* After all the income and the expenses has been determined, what is left will be profit. Encourage students to work some various math problems to determine how much profit 10 guests a day would generate. How about 20? 100? Older students can create financial reports that show their income, their expenses, and their bottom line after a day of visitors to Zuckerman’s Farm.

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88. **The Story of E. B. White** (Language Arts) – Melissa Sweet has written a biography of E. B. White titled *Some Writer! The Story of E. B. White*. It is filled with original notes and letters, lovely illustrations, and artifacts. After you finish *Charlotte's Web*, share the chapter about the book (Chapter 9) to learn more about the process that led to the novel. The whole biography is fascinating. Leave it out for your students to explore.

89. **An End-of-the-Book Celebration** (School Community) – Bring your students and families together to celebrate your schoolwide reading program. Here are some ideas:

- **Project Gallery** – Display all the great work your students have done during the reading event.
- **Trivia Bowl** – Use the full list of trivia questions and crown a Trivia Champ.
- **Trivia through the School** – You could also put trivia questions on web-shaped papers and post them around the school. Encourage families to see how many they can find and answer.
- **Carnival Games** – Engage your school community in some DIY carnival games such as: Ring Toss, Ball Toss, a Duck Pond, or a Jar Guessing game. (Or anything else you come up with.)
- **(Your School Name's) Web** – Have an empty bulletin board and provide little web-shaped papers for students and families. Each web should have a space for the name of the student, teacher, or faculty member who the writer is describing and space for a description. Allow the school to collaborate on a “web of kindness.”
- **Templeton's Stash** – Encourage families to bring in recycling or items that they are donating. Have students create art from the found materials! Maybe they'll piece together collages or build miniature statues. Either way, they will turn trash into treasure, just like Templeton.
- **Farm Obstacle Course** – Create a multi-faceted obstacle course for students to complete as if they were on the farm with Wilbur. Some sections could be: escape the pen, climb the web, push the wheelbarrow, and push the trough.
- **Scavenger Hunt** – Hide book-themed items around the school for families to find. Some ideas include Fern's baby doll, a stuffed pig, a fake spider, a web, and a blue ribbon. Families can snap a photo or check it off a list as they find each one.
- **Art Studio** – Provide some art supplies and allow families to make farm animal-inspired book marks or tote bags to use when they go to the library.
- **Chalk the Walk** – Provide some sidewalk chalk and invite families to draw and write about the book and reading on your front walk.

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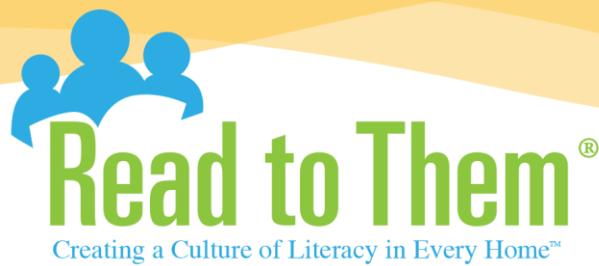


- **Story Time Zone** – Set up a read aloud area with comfy pillows, stuffed farm animals, and baskets of animal-themed books. Encourage families to hang out and read together.
- **Field Trip** – Organize a field trip to a local fair, farm, or petting zoo!
- **Wilbur's Trough Potluck** – Welcome families to bring in a variety of snacks and treats to share. Just like the slop in Wilbur's trough, allow students and families to enjoy all kinds of food together. Or, see **A Veritable Smorgasbord** below for some other refreshment ideas.
- **Photo Booth** – Supply some book-related props like pig ears, a web or farm backdrop, a goose egg, some spiders, and a bronze prize. Allow families to snap photos and really be a part of *Charlotte's Web*!
- **Invite Your Public Library** – Have a children's librarian from your local public library come to sign up families for library cards. If it is close to summer, they can bring information about summer reading programs, too.
- **Invite Your Local Farm** – Allow the students to hear what it is really like to live and work on a farm from a local farmer! Maybe the farm can bring in an animal, or set up a produce stand to host your own farmer's market for the afternoon.
- **Invite Your Banker** – If your school was involved with a local bank, here's a great way to have them come and see all the fun their sponsorship supported. Encourage the bank to set up a booth where they can talk about what they can offer families as a community bank in your area.
- **Door Prizes** – Have drawings to win other books by E. B. White.

90. **A Veritable Smorgasbord** (School Community) – Many schools find that one delightful and fun way to celebrate the end of their reading event is to hold a feast. Acquire the food in the book, then serve it, share it, and eat it together. To do this for *Charlotte's Web*, Wilbur's various slops might be one way to go. The other is to follow Templeton's lead—especially at the County Fair—and make a list of everything he eats. Acquire it, present it, and let students sample it. The goose provides a listing of fair foods in Chapter 16, and a few pages later, when Templeton scrounges for the newspaper with "humble" in it, he eats a deviled ham sandwich, a piece of Swiss cheese, part of a hard-boiled egg, and the core of an apple. And then there's the other food mentioned from Zuckerman's farm and the Arables' house—coffee, bacon, doughnuts, potato skins, radishes, corn, asparagus, Corn Flakes, popovers, marmalade, blueberry pie, raspberries, etc. Make a list of foods from the book, and serve some up at a closing banquet.

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91. **New Cover Art** (Art) – Now that your students have finished the book, invite them to reimagine the cover art. If they were hired to make the cover for the next edition, what would they choose? To give them a sense of how much covers can change from edition to edition, do a Google image search for “The Wonderful Wizard of Oz book.”
92. **Movie Time** (Art and Drama) – Lots of great books get made into movies, sometimes with mixed success. Have students take on the job of the producer in charge of making *Charlotte’s Web* into a new movie. They can design the movie poster to entice people to come see the movie without giving away too much of the plot. What actors would they cast in the major roles? What parts of the book will they shorten or cut so the movie won’t be too long? They could even write a script for a trailer, cast their friends, and film it.
93. **Playlist** (Art) – Have students design a CD and cover that could be the soundtrack for *Charlotte’s Web*. In the CD booklet, they should include the reasons they chose each song and how each relates to the story’s characters, plot, theme, or conflicts. They should indicate which songs would be used for which particular scenes in the novel.
94. **1952 vs. Today** (Writing) – This timeless classic was written in 1952, and it reflects the time when it was written. Have your students investigate what was different about life in 1952 versus life today. They could write a sketch updating the story’s setting to the 21st century. What would change?
95. **Make a Board Game** (STEM) – Now that your students know the ins and outs of the plot, have them make a board game that follows the story line.

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