

**FLUENCY**

**ACTIVITIES**

**and**

**PASSAGES**

# Repeated Reading

**Focus Area:** Fluency

**Timing:** 5-10 minutes

**Materials:**

- A copy of independent reading material for the student (50 – 200 words in length)
- Timer

**Procedure:**

1. Choose assisted or unassisted approach.
  - Assisted: The teacher (or coach) reads aloud with the student. Use the assisted approach when children are reading with few errors, but below 45 words per minute. The model gives children support and a sense of the proper phrasing and speed of fluent reading.
    - i. Predetermine a goal level for speed, particularly for very slow word-by-word readers and delayed students. Students move to a new passage once they reach the goal for wpm on the passage they have been practicing. 100-120 wpm is reasonable for most students, while 85wpm is better for older dysfluent students. Check out grade level norms.... but keep in mind those are for first time readings and we're looking at rates for repeated readings.
  - Unassisted: The student reads independently, but the teacher (or coach) supplies any unknown words. Use the unassisted approach as soon as a student reaches a rate of over 60 wpm on their first reading of a practice passage. This approach supplies more practice with less support.
2. Have the student read the selection orally while the teacher (or coach) times the reading and counts the number of words that are pronounced incorrectly. Record the reading time and the number of words pronounced incorrectly. You may use two different color pencils for recording time and errors, or you may use a circle to indicate points on the line for time and an X or a square to indicate points on the line for errors.
3. Between timings, ask the student to look over the selection, reread it, and practice words that caused difficulty in the initial reading. When the student is ready, have him or her reread the same passage. Once again, time the reading, and record the time and number of errors. Have the student repeatedly practice reading the selection as you chart progress after each trial until a predetermined goal is reached or until the student is able to read the passage fluently with few mistakes. Research on repeated reading suggests that fluency can be improved as long as students are provided with specific instructions and procedures are used to monitor their progress (Mastropieri et al., 1999). Word recognition on the passage should be at about 85% the first time through – otherwise the passage is too hard. Keep passages at the same level of difficulty until an acceptable rate of speed and accuracy is reached on the first or second reading. Then move to a harder passage. During one session, students minimally read the same passage at least two times. Research has shown that repeated reading is an effective way for students to develop reading fluency. When reading the same passage over and over, the number of word recognition errors decreases, reading speed increases, and oral reading expression improves. (Samuels, 2002).

# Paired Partner Reading

**Focus Area:** Fluency

**Timing:** 10-15 minutes

**Materials:**

- A copy of independent reading material for each student of about 50 words
- Paired Partner Reading form

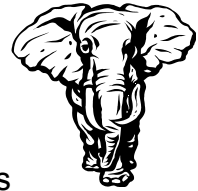
**Procedure:**

1. Pre-teach students the reading and partner feedback procedures, including:
  - How partners will move to a shared space
  - How partners will sit together?
  - Who will read first? (Stronger reader should read first)
  - What students will say when an error is made: ("Try again," or "That word is...")
  - Examples of praise at the end of each practice ("Good reading," or "Well done," etc.)
  - How to use the Paired Reading form
2. Partners silently read the passage
3. Reader 1 reads the passage 3 times in a row
  - Stopping each time to self-evaluate reading
  - Getting feedback on 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> reading from partner
4. Reader 2 reads the passage 3 times in a row
  - Stopping each time to self-evaluate reading
  - Getting feedback on 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> reading from partner

# I noticed that my partner. . . . .

After the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading    After the 3<sup>rd</sup> reading

Remembered more words



Read faster



Read smoother



Read with expression



# Phrasing

**Focus Area:** Fluency

**Timing:** 10 minutes

**Materials:**

- A copy of independent level reading material for each student (independent sentences to begin with – moving to connected text as the technique is mastered)
- Colored pencils or pens for scooping phrases

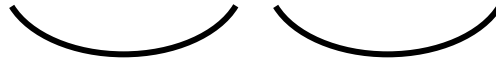
**Procedure:**

1. Present simple sentences on an overhead or chart paper and demonstrate scooping the sentence into phrases for smooth fluent reading. Point out that there is more than one correct way to break a sentence into phrases. Teach students to pay attention to mid sentence and ending punctuation.

- “Everything happened just the way Big Eddie said it would.”



- “There was no doubt Bluebell was a star.”



6. Provide students with copies of sentences initially (begin with simple sentences and move to more complex sentences as students become more efficient with phrasing) and then move on to paragraphs. Allow students time to read the sentences silently and to scoop the phrases with a colored pen.
  - There isn't one right or wrong way to scoop the phrases, but there are breakpoints that won't sound fluent. Use this opportunity to point out that prepositions begin phrases.
7. Read the scooped sentences chorally or in pairs 2-3 times each.
8. As students begin to recognize phrases in sentences more easily move away from the colored pen and begin having students read silently and scoop with their fingers or the eraser end of a pencil before reading and practicing smooth fluent reading.

**NOTE:** Do not use slashmarks to indicate phrases as these can be visually confusing to students and disrupt fluency.

## Battling the Storm

Anna huddled against the side of the engine, hiding her face in her arms. It was taking them forever to reach the firehouse.

Just then, the horses turned abruptly to the left. The next moment they were inside the stable, snorting and stamping their hooves. Several men ran forward to unhitch the engine. Everyone began brushing the icy snow off their clothes.

Suddenly, Grandpa became very serious. "The thermometer says five degrees above zero, and the temperature is still dropping. We must get home as fast as possible. Mrs. Sweeney, you and Miss Beaver had better come with us."

"Here, Miss," a fireman said. "Put these boots on. You can return them when the storm is over."

"Oh, thank you," Addie Beaver said.

Anna had forgotten about Addie's high-button shoes.

"Whatever you do, Anna, you are not to let go of my hand." Grandpa spoke firmly.

"Mr. Jensen, would you mind if I held your other hand?" asked Mrs. Sweeney.

"Not a bit," said Grandpa. "Anna, you take hold of Miss Beaver's hand. No one is to let go under any circumstances. Do you all understand?"

Anna had never heard Grandpa talk like that before. Was he frightened too?

They plunged into the deep snow, moving slowly along the south side of Fifteenth Street. The wind had piled the snow into huge drifts on the north side of the street.

When they reached Broadway, the wind was blowing up the avenue with the force of a hurricane. Telephone and telegraph wires were down. Thousands of them cut through the air like whips. If only they could reach the other side, Anna thought. Then they would be on their very own block.

No one spoke. They clung to one another as they blindly made their way across the avenue. Mrs. Sweeney lost her balance and fell forward in the snow. For a moment, Anna thought she was there to stay. But Grandpa tugged at her arm and helped her get to her feet.

## Chester the Cat

“Goodnight, Pete!” Mrs. Monroe said with great finality as she came back into the living room, and then more calmly, “Good night, Harold. Good night, Chester.”

Mr. and Mrs. Monroe went up the stairs together.

“You know, dear,” Mr. Monroe said, “that was very clever. Bunnicula. I could never have thought of a name like that.”

“Oh, I don’t know, Robert.” She smiled, as she put her arm through his. “I think Prince is a lovely name, too.”

The room was quiet. Chester was still sitting by the closed kitchen door in a state of shock. Slowly, he turned to me.

“I wish they had named him Fluffy,” was all he said.

I feel at this time there are a few things you should know about Chester. He is not your ordinary cat. (But then, I’m not your ordinary dog, since an ordinary dog wouldn’t be writing this book, would he?)

Chester came into the house several years ago as a birthday gift for Mr. Monroe, along with two volumes of G. K. Chesterton (hence the name, Chester) and a first edition of Dickens’ *A Tale of Two Cities*. As a result of this introduction to literature, and given the fact that Mr. Monroe is an English professor, Chester developed a taste for reading early in life. (I, on the other hand, have developed a taste for books. I found *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* particularly delicious.) From Chester’s kittenhood on, Mr. Monroe has used him as a sounding board for all his student lectures. If Chester doesn’t fall asleep when Mr. Monroe is talking, the lecture can be counted a success.

Every night when the family is sleeping, Chester goes to the bookshelf, selects his midnight reading and curls up on his favorite chair. He especially likes mystery stories and tales of horror and the supernatural. As a result, he has developed a very vivid imagination.

I’m telling you this, because I think it’s important for you to know something of Chester’s background before I relate to you the story of the events following the arrival of Bunnicula into our home. Let me begin with that first night.

## House for Sale

“You’ve done a really nice job decorating.” Mrs. Bradley is looking in a cupboard, which has shelves that twirl around.

“Thank you,” Mrs. Daniels says. “We really loved living here and hope that the next family loves it, too.”

I don’t want there to be a “next family” here.

I remember how we all sat around looking at wallpaper and stuff when the kitchen was being redone.

Mrs. Daniels said that since everyone in the house was going to see it every day, everyone could help decorate it. She also said that since I was practically a member of the family, I could help, too.

They didn’t pick the wallpaper that Justin and I wanted, baseball players.

Instead, there are flowers all over the wall.

Mrs. Bradley says, “If you don’t mind, I would like my husband to see this house soon.”

Soon. That sounds serious.

I can’t help myself. “I hope you don’t mind alligators in the toilet.”

Mrs. Bradley looks surprised and then she grins. “Alligators in the toilet. That’s quite a bonus.”

She and Mrs. Daniels look at each other and smile.

This is definitely not a good sign. The grown-ups leave the room.

Justin, Danny, and I continue playing cookie basketball. We pretend that everything’s the same. I try not to get too nervous. After all, a zillion people have seen the house and not bought it.

Maybe Mrs. Bradley’s husband will hate it. I hope I’m here when he looks at the house. I’ll be sure to mention giant termites.

Mrs. Daniel returns. “Amber, would you like to stay for dinner tonight? I’ll call your mother and see if she wants to join us. We’ll order pizza.”



## The Sled Race

Swish! Little Willy's sled flew by the schoolhouse on the outskirts of town, and then by the old deserted barn.

Swish! Swish! Swish! Other racers followed in hot pursuit.

"Go, Searchlight! Go!" little Willy sang out. The cold wind pressed against his face, causing his good eye to shut almost completely. The snow was well packed. It was going to be a fast race today. The fastest they had ever run.

The road was full of dangerous twists and turns, but little Willy did not have to slow down as the other racers did. With only one dog and a small sled, he was able to take the sharp turns at full speed without risk of sliding off the road or losing control.

Therefore, with each turn, little Willy pulled farther and farther ahead. Swish! The sled rounded a corner, sending snow flying. Little Willy was smiling. This was fun!

About three miles out of town, the road made a half circle around a frozen lake. Instead of following the turn, little Willy took a short cut right across the lake. This was tricky going, but Searchlight had done it many times before.

Little Willy had asked Mayor Smiley if he was permitted to go across the lake, not wanting to be disqualified. "As long as you leave town heading north and come back on the South Road," the mayor had said, "anything goes!"

None of the other racers attempted to cross the lake. Not even Stone Fox. The risk of falling through the ice was just too great.

Little Willy's lead increased.

Stone Fox was still running in last place. But he was picking up speed. At the end of five miles, little Willy was so far out in front that he couldn't see anybody behind him when he looked back.

He knew, however, that the return five miles, going back into town, would not be this easy. The trail along South Road was practically straight and very smooth, and Stone Fox was sure to close the gap.

## Being Carried Around

Mr. Lambchop had always liked to take the boys out with him on Sunday afternoons, to museums or roller-skating in the park, but it was difficult when they were crossing streets or moving about in crowds. Stanley and Arthur would often be jostled from his side and Mr. Lambchop worried about speeding taxis or that hurrying people might accidentally knock them down.

It was easier after Stanley got flat.

Mr. Lambchop discovered that he could roll Stanley up without hurting him at all. He would tie a piece of string around Stanley to keep him from unrolling and make a little loop in the string for himself. It was as simple as carrying a parcel, and he could hold on to Arthur with the other hand.

Stanley did not mind being carried because he had never much liked to walk. Arthur didn't like to walk either, but he had to. It made him mad.

One Sunday afternoon, in the street, they met an old college friend of Mr. Lambchop's, a man he had not seen for years.

"Well, George, I see you have bought some wallpaper," the man said. "Going to decorate your house, I suppose?"

"Wallpaper?" said Mr. Lambchop. "Oh, no. This is my son Stanley." He undid the string and Stanley unrolled. "How do you do?" Stanley said.

"Nice to meet you, young feller" the man said. He said to Mr. Lambchop, "George, that boy is flat."

"Smart, too," Mr. Lambchop said. "Stanley is third from the top in his class at school."

"Phooey!" said Arthur.

"This is my younger son, Arthur," Mr. Lambchop said. "And he will apologize for his rudeness."

Arthur could only blush and apologize.

Mr. Lambchop rolled Stanley up again and they set out for home. It rained quite hard while they were on the way. Stanley, of course, hardly got wet at all, just around the edges. But Arthur got soaked.

## Introductions

The man studied Ben carefully, eyeing his wavy brown hair (like his mother's), thin arms and legs, and soft brown eyes. Recently, Ben wished he had straight black hair like his dad, and those same sharp blue eyes with the thousand dark wrinkles around them from squinting in the sun. But the man at the table, looking at Ben, seemed to like what he saw.

Ben studied the man in turn. He was young and good-looking, sort of like Indiana Jones. He had on neat workman's pants and a blue denim shirt. Ben also noticed that his hands were not sliced up like a waterman's, or calloused from handling ropes.

"What's your name?" they both asked at the same moment, and laughed.

"Ben Warren."

"David Watchman. How do you do?"

"Well, what are you going to do today?"

"Collect plankton."

Ben was silent. Having spent his entire life on the Chesapeake, he thought he had learned about all the birds, all the fish, all the animals, even all the biting insects. But he had never heard of plankton.

"What?"

The man looked at him seriously. "You know my name? David Watchman. That's what I do, I watch the water. Not in the regular way. I take samples in different places. Then I take these to a lab and count the number of microscopic plants and animals in a droplet. This tells me a lot about the health of the water in a particular spot. Around the bay here, there's a team of people like me. We put all our information together, and then--"

"You mean you're a scientist?"

"Yes."

"My grandpa was named Marsh, Grandpa Marsh. And he lived on the marsh, all his life until he died.

"And Sally Ride was an astronaut."

## The Long Day

Peter thought this a most unsatisfactory answer. But he could see no good in asking further. If his father knew anything, clearly he wasn't going to tell.

Some of the men of Riswyk had already left town. Nanson, the sail maker, had gone and Michael Berg's father and many more. Mr. Anders, the schoolmaster, too. With him away, that day had been a holiday as would be the morrow and every other day. But what was the good of a holiday like that? No one wanted to play. They tried all the games they knew but no one seemed to enjoy any of them. Peter called a meeting of the Defense Club. The air-raid drill wasn't very exciting. For although they could blow a warning whistle, they had no one to give them the "All Clear" signal when to come out.

Helga and some of the girls thought it would be fun to play at being Red Cross nurses. But when they picked Bunny for the first air-raid victim, he kicked and screamed so they had to let him go, even though his legs were supposed to be shot away.

But the long day dragged through somehow and now it was night. But what a different night, different from any Peter had ever lived through. He didn't know but what he would rather have was a toothache.

After supper his father seemed to be waiting for some message. It never came. He kept taking his watch out to see the time although there were clocks everywhere you could look. His train did not go until midnight and the sleigh to take him to the station would not come for hours yet.

Peter peeped out of the window, careful that no light showed outside. There was nothing but darkness. There wasn't even a sound in this terrifying void.

## Smuggling the Gold

It was getting late. They had to get to the Holms' farm before the blackout. It was three miles up the road from the beach. They'd have to hurry.

It was twilight by the time the little band turned into the farmyard. Here, they were on familiar ground.

They'd pass the German sentries a second time. Again they saw the friendly captain who had turned aside his soldiers. He was returning with his troops and he greeted them.

"Did you have a good sled ride?" he asked in excellent Norwegian.

Peter was sorry he wasn't allowed to answer him.

At the farm kitchen, Michael pounded on the door.

"Who is it?" a frightened voice called out.

When Michael gave their names, there was a scuffle inside. They had to be recognized before the door would be opened.

"But come in, come in," the farmwife called. And Peter thought that for all the sadness of that terrible day, there was still a cheerfulness about the good brown face. That they had succeeded in carrying the gold past the Nazi sentries seemed to bring hope for Norway.

"You had no trouble?" Her husband came out of a dim corner. Their supper was even now being dished into great earthenware bowls. Peter thought he had never smelled anything so good. Nor had he seen anything for a long time as pleasant as the flickering dancing light from the fire and from the candles on the dresser and great long kitchen table.

"First they eat, Papa. Then they talk." Mrs. Holm and her servant bustled back and forth between the fire and the table. "Draw up now and eat, you brave children. You must be famished."

Great steaming dishes dotted the red and white checkered cloth – meat, potatoes, dumplings, cabbage. On the table were also many cold foods; dried herrings, pickled eggs, mackerel, and great round sheets of the hard rye bread.

## Justin Cleans His Room

When Justin returned with the broom, all the clothes from the closet were piled on his bed. Shoes, socks, balls, even games he had stored in back of his closet were strewn about the room.

Anthony doesn't know any more than I do about getting closets neat, Justin thought.

He got busy sweeping the closet floor, wondering how he would ever get all that stuff put away before Grandpa came.

It was well past lunchtime and they had only half of the things back in place. Exhausted and starving, Justin finally decided that his room looked no better than at first. And with the balls, socks, and extra clothes hangers strewn about outside the closet, maybe it looked even worse.

He jabbed his hands into his pockets and sighed. Why couldn't he get his room straight?

His mind flashed to Hadiya's room. Neat as a pin. Evelyn was not as fussy as Hadiya, but her room was far neater than Justin now thought his would ever be.

He looked at Anthony sitting on the lumpy bed, with his elbows on his knees, his hands cupping his face.

"Let's stop now and get some lunch."

Anthony quickly said, "I gotta go home now."

Justin suddenly knew that Anthony had to be feeling as exhausted, frustrated, and disappointed as he was. He remembered Anthony's words about women's work. Maybe this is work that only women and girls can do, he thought, and went to see Anthony out. "We'll play tomorrow, OK?" he said.

"I can't. We're going away for the weekend. My family."

Justin said goodbye and went to the kitchen to find something to eat. He found Hadiya in the kitchen. Whatever she was cooking smelled delicious.

## Ramona's Family

"Too bad about him." Mr. Quimby blew a cloud of smoke toward the ceiling.

"He goes next door and mews as if we never give him anything to eat," said Beezus.  
"It's embarrassing."

"He'll just have to learn to eat what we can afford," said Mr. Quimby. "Or we will get rid of him."

This statement shocked Ramona. Picky-picky had been a member of the family since before she was born.

"Well, I don't blame him," said Beezus, picking up the cat and pressing her cheek against his fur. "Puss-puddy stinks."

Mr. Quimby ground out his cigarette.

"Guess what?" said Mrs. Quimby, as if to change the subject. "Howie's grandmother drove out to visit her sister, who lives on a farm, and her sister sent in a lot of pumpkins for jack-o'-lanterns for the neighborhood children. Mrs. Kemp gave us a big one, and it's down in the basement now, waiting to be carved.

"Me! Me!" cried Ramona. "Let me get it!"

"Let's give it a real scary face," said Beezus, no longer difficult.

"I'll have to sharpen my knife," said Mr. Quimby.

"Run along and bring it up, Ramona," said Mrs. Quimby with a real smile.

Relief flooded through Ramona. Her family had returned to normal. She snapped on the basement light, thumped down the stairs, and there in the shadow of the furnace pipes, which reached out like ghostly arms, was a big, round pumpkin. Ramona grasped its scratchy stem, found the pumpkin too big to lift that way, bent over, hugged it in both arms, and raised it from the cement floor. The pumpkin was heavier than she had expected, and she must not let it drop and smash all over the concrete floor.

## Family Disagreements

“Young lady,” began Mr. Quimby. Young lady again! Now Beezus was really going to catch it. “You are getting altogether too big for your britches lately. Just be careful how you talk around this house.”

Still Beezus did not say she was sorry. She did not burst into tears. She simply stalked off to her room.

Ramona was the one who burst into tears. She didn't mind when she and Beezus quarreled. She even enjoyed a good fight now and then to clear the air, but she could not bear it when anyone else in the family quarreled, and those awful things Beezus said – were they true?

“Don't cry, Ramona.” Mrs. Quimby put her arm around her younger daughter. “We'll get another pumpkin.”

“B-but it won't be as big,” sobbed Ramona, who wasn't crying about the pumpkin at all. She was crying about important things like her father being cross so much now that he wasn't working and his lungs turning black and Beezus being so disagreeable when before she had always been so polite (to grown-ups) and anxious to do the right thing.

“Come on, let's all go to bed and things will look brighter in the morning,” said Mrs. Quimby.

“In a few minutes.” Mr. Quimby picked up a package of cigarettes he had left on the kitchen table, shook one out, lit it, and sat down, still looking angry.

Were his lungs turning black this very minute? Ramona wondered. How would anybody know, when his lungs were inside him? She let her mother guide her to her room and tuck her in bed.



## The Church Play

My ears are as good as theirs, Ramona told herself. The floor felt cold through the seat of her thin pajamas.

“Look at the little lambs!” cried an angel. “Aren’t they darling?”

“Ba-a, ba-a!” bleated Davy and Howie.

Ramona longed to be there with them, jumping and ba-a-ing and wagging her tail, too. Maybe the faded rabbits didn’t show as much as she had thought. She sat hunched and miserable. She had told her father she would not be a sheep, and she couldn’t back down now. She hoped God was too busy to notice her, and then she changed her mind. Please, God, prayed Ramona, in case He wasn’t too busy to listen to a miserable little sheep, I don’t really mean to be horrid. It just works out that way. She was frightened, she discovered, for when the program began, she would be left alone in the church basement. The lights might even be turned out, a scary thought, for the big stone church filled Ramona with awe, and she did not want to be left alone in the dark with her awe. Please, God, prayed Ramona, get me out of this mess.

Beezus, in a long blue robe with a white scarf over her head and carrying a baby’s blanket and a big flashlight, found her little sister. “Come out, Ramona,” she coaxed. “Nobody will notice your costume. You know Mother would have made you a whole sheep suit if she had time. Be a good sport. Please.”

Ramona shook her head and blinked to keep tears from falling. “I told Daddy I wouldn’t be in the program, and I won’t.”

“Well, OK, if that’s the way you feel,” said Beezus, forgetting to act like Mary. She left her little sister to her misery.

## Miranda's New Home

Miranda remembered how surprised she was last summer, the first time she saw the island. It was just a rock, miles and miles from shore. A huge gray rock, splashed by ocean waves. And perched on top were the lighthouse and a small stone cottage – their new home now that Father had become the keeper of the light.

As Father sailed the dory closer, Mother and Miranda could see that nothing grew on the rocky island. Not a tree. Not a bush. Not a flower.

Miranda could hardly believe it. She had packets of seeds in her skirt pocket, for bellflowers, sweet peas, and bouncing Bet. But where could she plant them?

Father lowered the sails and grabbed the oars. Then he rowed the boat in on the top of a wave. It scraped bottom. Miranda's pet chickens fluttered and squawked in their crate. Father leaped onto the rocks and brought the boat to safety. Then Mother and Miranda stepped on shore.

“We'll unload the rest later,” he said.

They avoided the pools and puddles by the water's edge and followed the rocky path to the top. A fresh sea breeze pulled at their clothes. Gulls called overhead, and puffins waddled about. The summer sun shined on the waves.

Miranda watched for bits of greenery along the path to the lighthouse, but there was nothing there, not even a blade of grass. When they left Grandma's farm that morning, pink roses had been in bloom. Would this barren island ever seem like home?

“Look,” said Father. “Here's an old coop for your chickens.” It was made of odds and ends. Not fancy, Miranda thought, but it would keep the hens safe.

They climbed the stone steps to the cottage and pulled open the heavy door. Miranda walked quickly through the kitchen and peeked in the parlor. Then she ran upstairs to see her bedroom. It looked sunny and cheerful. She took an old cushion from the chair by the bed and put it on the wide stone windowsill. This is where I'll read, she decided, where I can look up and see the waves. Then Miranda hurried downstairs. She could hardly wait to explore the lighthouse.

## Storm on the Island

The blizzard grew during the night. Miranda had no trouble waking up to check the lamps. Her cold was worse, and the booming waves and wind made it almost impossible to sleep.

By morning, huge waves began to wash onto the island. Miranda heard water slapping against the house. She looked out the kitchen window.

“My hens!” she cried. When the sea fell back for a moment, she raced out to the coop, with icy water swirling around her knees.

“Hurry!” Mother shouted.

Miranda caught all four chickens quickly and thrust them into her basket. Then she ran back to the house. Mother slammed the door behind Miranda just before the next wave broke.

Miranda dumped the squawking hens in a little storeroom behind the kitchen, then rushed back to the window. The chicken coop was tumbling in the waves. She pulled off her wet shoes and stockings and warmed her legs by the wood stove.

Giant breakers began to surge right across the island. And water was coming in beneath the kitchen door.

“Help me!” Mother called. They both knelt on the floor and jammed strips of cloth into the crack. Then they pushed heavy wooden boxes against it to hold the cloth in place.

All day long the blizzard howled around the cottage. Huge boulders were washed from one side of the lighthouse rock to the other, cracking and crashing as they went. The booming surf was deafening.

Miranda kept the lamps burning all day. And each time she climbed the lighthouse steps, her cold seemed worse. By evening, she felt weak and her fever was high.