

Trading Mystery

Elementary: Grades 3–4

Reading-Comprehension Questions

1. Why did Uncle Boots come to Chicago when he was a young boy? Why did he return to Chicago as an old man?

2. Name three items in Uncle Boots’s safe.

3. Describe the fur trade. Why were Fort Dearborn and the American Fur Company important?

4. What was the “trading mystery”?

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Critical-Thinking Questions

1. How did Lily and Joseph feel about Uncle Boots at the beginning of the story and why? How did they feel about him at the end and why?

2. What else might Lily and Joseph want to find out about Uncle Boots?

3. What was life like in early Chicago for Uncle Boots? What was life like in 1890s Chicago for Lily and Joseph? What is life like for you in modern-day Chicago?

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4. If you lived during the fur trade would you rather have been a trapper or a trader? Why?

5. Describe a story you have heard from a parent or older adult about when they were a child. Why is it important to share stories from one generation to the next?
