



Beautiful Music

Story by Kay Hively

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Beautiful Music
Chapter One by Russ and Kay Hively

Eight-year-old Violet Howard walked up the hillside behind her home. From the crest of the hill, she would be able to see and hear anything coming down the path to her house long before it got there. Besides, Violet loved standing on the big boulder overlooking her house. From that vantage point she could look out across the rolling hills that surrounded her farm.

On clear days if she looked south, Violet thought she could see all the way to the ocean. Her mama told her it was only a trick of her eyes, but she was not convinced. Violet did know that if she looked east she was looking at the hills in New Hampshire.

It was late September 1814, and summer was quickly coming to an end on the Howard Farm of Windham County, Vermont. The leaves on the trees were beginning to change into their fall colors and the days were getting cooler and shorter.

Violet's long dark hair hung below her wool bonnet and

swirled in the wind as she looked down into the valley at the path. She looked up from the path and turned her small round face toward Bellows Falls, the closest town. The hills blocked her view of the small town that sat on the west side of the Connecticut River. Violet always looked for the town, hoping she could actually see it. She loved Bellows Falls and wished she could see it from up here.

Violet's father and her 12-year-old brother, Thomas, would be coming home along the path with a small herd of sheep. The Howard's raised sheep for wool, milk, and meat. They also planted a big garden for vegetables, mostly to feed the family, but they would sell or trade some of their produce for things they needed. They had a few other animals on the farm, including pigs, chickens, ducks, geese and horses, but most of the farm was used for raising sheep. The family sold most of the sheep's wool in the spring, but also kept some to spin into yarn for weaving cloth.

Violet was very excited about the new sheep. Papa had purchased a breed of sheep she had never heard of, in fact the breed was new to Vermont.

As Violet stood on the boulder looking down at the path, she thought she could hear something. She listened really hard and heard the same sound again.

Suddenly, a huge smile spread across Violet's face showing the gap between her two front teeth. The sound was Molly barking. Molly was the Howard family's sheep dog.

Violet jumped off the boulder and began running down the hill. She wanted to be home when the new sheep got there. She had to hurry to get there on time.

Learn More

- Bellows Falls, Vermont, is beside the Connecticut River. Find this river on a map. How many U.S. states does the river run through, or beside? What ocean does it flow into?
- Violet wore a bonnet on her head. Make a list of five kinds of hats people wear and beside each hat explain why each one is worn. Find pictures in the newspaper of people wearing these hats.
- What do you think this story will be about? Write down your predictions. Add more details to your predictions as you read each chapter in your newspaper.

NEXT WEEK: Chapter 2 - Here they come!

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Chapter 1

Name _____

1. Violet was waiting anxiously for a new arrival of sheep. Why were these sheep special? What set them apart?

2. One of the many uses for the Howard's sheep was milk. Use the newspaper to find words or pictures of products that contain milk. Cut and paste them below and/or on the back.

3. Living on a farm is a lot of work. What kind of chores do you think Violet had? Why were these chores necessary?

4. Compare and contrast those chores with the chores you have.

5. This story takes place in the fall. Use the newspaper to find adjectives that could be used to describe fall. List them below.

Chapter 2

Name _____

1. Give two examples of onomatopoeia in this chapter.
2. Why was Mr. Howard proud to have the new flock of Merino sheep? Use details from the text to support your answer.

3. Molly was a very useful animal on the farm. Use the newspaper to find examples of animals and their purposes. Complete the chart below.

Animal	Purpose

4. Authors use descriptive words to create a mood for the reader. What is the mood of this chapter? List words below that the author uses to create this mood.

5. What do you think Violet's mother meant when she said, "Now it's your turn"?

Chapter 3

Name _____

1. Imagine you are a guest at the Howard’s dinner table as Violet’s brother and father share the details of their journey. Write their dialogue below as you imagine it.

2. What do you think Mr. Howard whispered to Mrs. Howard that caused her to worry?

3. Methods of cooking sure have changed since 1814! Use the newspaper to find examples of foods and preparation methods today.

Food	How it is Prepared

4. Yarn was important to the Howard family and they took great strides to create it. Use the newspaper to find examples of products containing yarn. List those below.

5. Make a list of items in your house that contain yarn.

Chapter 4

Name _____

1. Why was a trip to town so exciting for Violet?

2. What kind of supplies would the Howards need for winter on a farm? Compare and contrast those with supplies your family needs for the winter.

3. The war had a great impact on Violet’s family. Find an article about war in the newspaper. Summarize it below. Remember to include who, what, where, when, why, and how.

4. Families have more choices for shopping than they did in the 1800s. Look through your newspaper for places to shop. How many can you find? List them below.

5. Shopping meant a long trip to town for Violet and her family. Now, there are many different ways to shop. Describe the many different ways people can shop today. Compare your results with your classmates.

Chapter 5

Name _____

1. Bellows Falls is an exciting place for Violet to visit. What place do you like to visit? Why?

2. If Violet was coming to visit your family, where would you take her to visit? Why?

3. The bridge played an important role for the Bellows Falls community. Today, transportation is constantly improving. Use the newspaper to find a picture or an article about the improvement of transportation. Summarize it below.

4. For the Howards, supplies came packaged in bags or barrels. Packaging plays a vital role in how our products are bought and sold today. Use the newspaper to study the advertisements. What can you observe about the products and packaging? Some of the packaging is necessary; some is simply used for marketing. List an example of each below.

Necessary Packaging	
Packaging Used for Marketing	

5. Research the different types of packaging. Write a letter to the editor stating what you have learned and your opinion of how to change packaging to help consumers and the environment.

6. What do you think is under the tarp? Write your prediction on the back of this page.

Chapter 6

Name _____

- 1. Why did Violet’s family feel another spinning wheel was necessary? How did Violet feel about the spinning wheel?

- 2. How does Violet feel about her Uncle Donald? How do you know? Use details from the text to support your answer.

- 3. The activity in the city was a stark contrast to Violet’s farm life. Use the newspaper to find examples of activities in urban and rural areas.

Urban Activities	Rural Activities

- 4. What changes were happening in the war? How will this affect Violet’s family?

- 5. How has war affected your family?

Chapter 7

Name _____

1. Violet had been worried since she saw her parents worrying. How does she feel after hearing the news update?

2. Why do you think the recent events in the war would speed peace talks?

3. Use the newspaper to find examples of conflict. What is the conflict? How is it resolved?

4. Conflict is a big part of our lives. Many newspapers feature advice columns for readers to seek advice about conflict in their lives. Have a partner read a letter from a newspaper advice column to you. Without reading the advice that was given, write your own response. Compare your response with the one that was printed.

5. Imagine you are Violet writing to an advice columnist. What would your letter say?

6. What was the purpose of Francis Scott Key's poem?

Chapter 8

Name _____

- 1. The Star Spangled Banner is our country's national anthem. What is the purpose of a national anthem? Why is it important to have one? Why do you think this particular song was selected?

- 2. How does the Star Spangled Banner compare to your school's song/anthem?

- 3. The Star Spangled Banner contains many vivid adjectives. List examples below.

- 4. What adjectives can you find in this chapter of the story?

- 5. Use the newspaper to find a picture or illustration. In one minute, list as many adjectives as you can to describe the picture.

Extension Activities

1. After reading the story, create an advertisement to encourage others to read the story.
2. Create a book jacket for the story. Consider an illustration for the front cover and a description of the story (with reviews) on the back cover.
3. Create a timeline of major events in the story. Use color and illustrations to make it complete.
4. Draw a map of Bellows Farm.
5. Pretend you are one of the characters in the story. Write a journal entry from your point of view.
6. Choose words from the story as new vocabulary words. Create a crossword puzzle with them.
7. Study the different sections of a newspaper. As a class, create a newspaper for Violet's community, assigning each group a section of the newspaper to complete. Remember to include advertisements.
8. Pretend you are a talk show host and interview one or more of the characters from the story.
9. Many newspapers contain horoscopes. Create a horoscope for each character of the story.
10. Study different types of sheep, their purposes, and their habitat.
11. The war significantly impacted Violet's family. What can you do to support our troops and veterans? Brainstorm ideas and choose one or more to complete as a class.
12. Complete research about Francis Scott Key and create a news story. Choose a student to play the role of Mr. Key, choose students to be reporters who ask him questions, and choose journalists to write the story based on the interview questions. Don't forget editors and page designers for your newspaper story.