

## Vicki's Visit <sup>1</sup>

This is a story about a six-year-old girl who visits the farm of her aunt and uncle.

### Instructions

Get together with two or three of your friends. Then read the story and answer the questions that appear in the story.

Mark your answers on the answer sheet. Please don't write in the problem booklet. That way they can be used again.

After you have selected your answers to a question, discuss your choices with your friends, but please don't change your answers or mark more answers. Continue reading the story while answering and discussing the questions.

When you finish the story, ask the instructor for a copy of the answer key. Compare your answers to those in the key, but don't change your answers. Discuss the story and answers with your friends and the instructor. When you have finished, complete the questionnaire attached to this booklet. Give the booklet and the completed questionnaire to the instructor. Your answers, and those of many other people, will be used to improve the exercise. Thanks!

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<sup>1</sup> Developed by Carol J. Lehtola, Laura E. Andrews, and Henry P. Cole at a workshop on August 3-5, 1998, sponsored by the University of Florida, Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering and the University of Kentucky, Southeast Center for Agricultural Health and Injury Prevention. The work was supported by CDC/NIOSH Cooperative Agreements U07/CCU408035-06-1 and U06/CCU412900-02, -03. The views expressed in this document are those of the authors and not necessarily those of CDC/NIOSH or the US Government.

Vicki Anderson

Six-year-old Vicki lives with her family in the suburbs of a large metropolitan area. She has just completed kindergarten at the local elementary school. Her parents have arranged for Vicki to spend two weeks in July with her aunt, uncle and two cousins on their farm. Vicki has visited the farm with her parents before and is excited about returning.

Walt and Mary Jones

The Jones family owns and operates a 400-acre beef and grain farm. Both Walt and Mary work full-time on the farm. They have two children. Their son Kevin is ten, and their daughter Lindsey is eight. Kevin and Lindsey are excited about having their cousin come for a visit.

The Visit

On the first day of Vicki's visit, Walt and Mary have some work to do in a field. They tell the children they will be gone for only an hour or so, and tell them to play close to the house. The cousins promise to be careful and to watch out for each other.

Turn the page and begin.

Work a page at a time.

Don't jump ahead, but you can look back anytime.

Vicki is so excited by all the unfamiliar things around her that she wanders away from her cousins. Kevin and Lindsey are busy playing and don't notice Vicki is missing.

### Question A

Look at Figure 1 on the next page. Which of the following statements about Vicki's first day of her farm visit are true? (Mark each item T or F on the answer sheet.)

- T   F   1. Kevin and Lindsey probably don't realize how many things can be dangerous for Vicki.
- T   F   2. Vicki may think of the farmstead as an awesome playground.
- T   F   3. Walt and Mary think that Kevin and Lindsey are able to take care of Vicki.
- T   F   4. Walt and Mary don't care what happens to Vicki.
- T   F   5. Vicki probably thinks the tractors and other farm machinery are great places to play.

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[After you have marked your answer sheet, please continue with the story.]

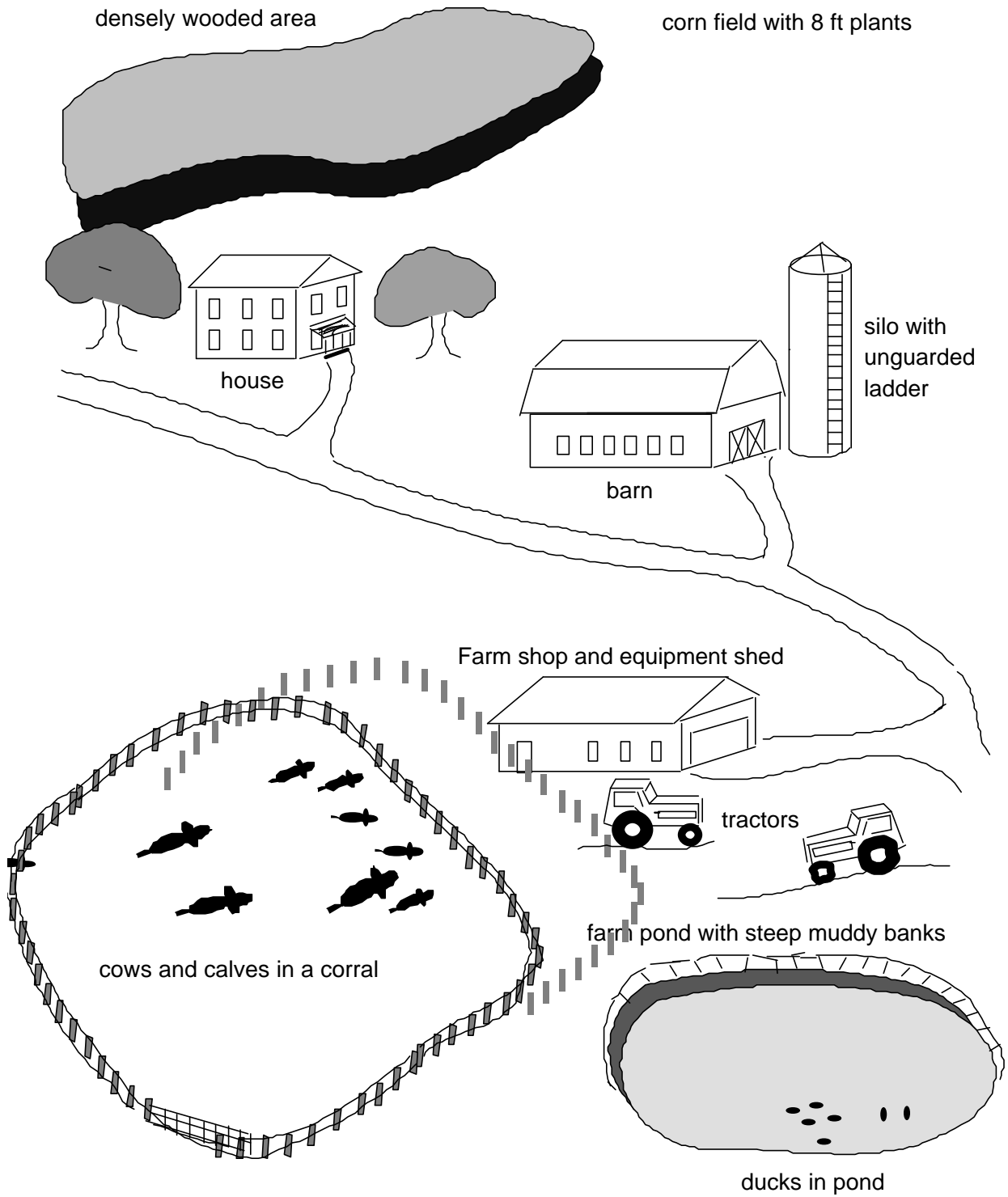


Figure 1: Diagram of the Jones' farmstead

Kevin and Lindsey begin to look for Vicki the moment they realize she is not with them. They run around calling her name. Vicki thinks they are playing a game and thinks it would be fun to hide from them. She climbs up in a tractor cab to hide.

Kevin climbs up the unguarded ladder on the silo because he thinks he can see Vicki from high up on the ladder.

Lindsey runs to the pond because she thinks Vicki may have gone there to watch the ducks.

### Question B

Look at Figure 1 again. What are some things that could hurt Vicki, Kevin, or Lindsey?

- T   F   6. Vicki could fall off the tractor.
- T   F   7. Even though the tractor is not running, Vicki could move the controls on the tractor and it could roll forward or backward and run over Lindsey.
- T   F   8. Vicki could wander into the farm shop and be injured.
- T   F   9. Vicki could go into the corral to pet a calf and be injured by a cow.
- T   F   10. Kevin could slip and fall from the ladder on the silo.
- T   F   11. Vicki could wander into the woods or the cornfield and get lost.
- T   F   12. Vicki or Lindsey could drown in the farm pond.

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[After you have marked your answer sheet, please continue with the story.]

Vicki sees a little calico kitten and jumps down from the tractor to catch it. The kitten runs into the shop and hides behind a spare rear tractor wheel that is leaning against the wall. Vicki squirms behind the tractor wheel to try to reach the kitten. Crash! Vicki screams. From the pond, Lindsey hears the crash and Vicki's screaming and runs to see what happened. Kevin hears the commotion and scrambles down the ladder. When her cousins reach Vicki she is crying, but unharmed aside from a few scrapes. The huge 1,100-lb. tractor tire and wheel fell over when Vicki tried to squeeze in behind it. Luckily, it fell away from Vicki and the kitten.

### Question C

Think about this story of a child visiting her cousins on the farm. What things could Walt and Mary have done to prevent the kids from getting into trouble and being hurt?

- T F 13. Provided adult supervision.
- T F 14. Prohibited other people's kids from coming to the farm.
- T F 15. Provided a safe, fenced-in play area on the farm.
- T F 16. Walked Vicki and their own two kids around the farmstead pointing out areas where they should be careful and areas where the children should not go.
- T F 17. Provided a mechanism to prevent access to the silo ladder.
- T F 18. Anchored the tractor tire and wheel and other large objects to the shop wall so they couldn't fall over.

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[After you have marked your answer sheet, please turn the page and continue.]

## A Farm Mother's Story

Think about what might have happened if Vicki had been seriously injured or killed. Then read the following statements by a woman who lost her 11-year-old son Keith after he fell into a gravity-flow grain wagon and was suffocated. Keith was unloading shelled corn during harvest.

Quotes from Marilyn Adams' book

*I experienced a profound loss, one that no parent can bear to imagine. I had to bury a child. Like others who have lost someone—or something—I could not conceive of ever again living without the pain and the sorrow. I could not imagine being fulfilled, laughing or loving. I could not believe that healing would ever come, or that hope would ever again be mine.*

*“Only 10 percent of the marriages survive the loss of a child,” the counselor told me. “Never lose sight of how important your family and marriage are. You need to stick together now. You need each other. You, Darrell, both your families. All of you have already lost too much. It takes work to keep everything together because grief and stress can play tricks with your mind.”*

Reprinted with permission from Marilyn Adams and Mary Kay Stanley, *Rhythm of the Seasons*, Marshalltown, IA: Sta-Kris, Inc., 1997, pp. v and 38. (© 1997 by Marilyn Adams.)

### Question D

Think about Marilyn Adams' statements and the story about Vicki. Read the newspaper clippings on the next page. Then discuss these questions.

1. What are the costs and consequences to the farm family and to others when a child is seriously injured or killed on a farm?
2. How risky do you think it is for farm children to have the “run of the farmstead?”
3. How risky do you think it is for non-farm children to visit a farm and wander around alone?
4. What can be done to prevent injuries and fatalities to children, whether residents or visitors, on farms? Who is responsible for doing so? Why?
5. What can be done to discourage the idea that a farm is a picturesque, idealistic setting where children can wander about freely without risk?

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[Please read the newspaper clippings on the next page.]

## Four Similar Cases

These stories are real cases that occurred in 1999. In each case, a child was playing and climbing on a heavy object that was being stored in or near a building. The child's movement and weight caused the object to fall and in each case the child was crushed, just as Vicki might have been in the exercise you just completed. These cases are reported in the University of Florida, Cooperative Extension Service issue titled "Childproofing Your Home and Farmstead." More information about this issue and related topics may be obtained from Carol J. Lehtola and Chris Eversole at the following EDIS website at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>

July 1999, Lake Wales, Florida

### **Boy Crushed to Death**

A 4-year-old boy was playing with the family dogs on a stack of telephone poles that were being used to build a fence. A telephone pole dislodged from the stack and pinned the child, killing him.

1999 Midwest USA

### **Bale Fork Tips**

A 7-year-old girl died from being pinned beneath a round bale fork in the yard of her family's farm. The hay fork, which is used to move large round hay bales, mounts on a front-end loader. It was detached from the tractor and was sitting in grass next to the driveway with its spikes pointing forward. Apparently the girl was playing on the spikes, and her weight was enough to tip over the 300-pound fork, which was top heavy and unsupported.

1999 Midwest USA

### **Shipping Crate Falls, Kills Boy**

A 6-year-old boy was killed while playing in a building at his home. His father had purchased a piece of equipment that was still in a wooden shipping crate.

The boy's older brother had backed a pick-up truck into the building, slid the crate off the tailgate of the pick-up, and then leaned the crate on edge against the wall. The 400-pound crate had horizontal wooden slats similar to a pallet, and the boy was apparently climbing on the side of the crate, which caused it to fall on him.

1999 Midwest USA

### **Trailer Pins Girl**

A 4-year-old girl was killed while playing on her family's farm. She was reported as missing around suppertime. After a two-hour search, she was found pinned under a utility trailer. The trailer had been leaning in an upright position against a building with its tongue extending six feet up the wall. The frame had horizontal sections that the child apparently climbed like a ladder. Her weight caused the trailer to fall over on top of her crushing her to death.



**Additional Newspaper Clippings about Similar Events**

November 13, 1996, Oklahoma

**Child Injured in Tractor Accident**

A five-year-old child is in intensive care this morning after being run over by a tractor driven by her nine-year-old brother late yesterday afternoon. "She just darted out in front of the tractor," said the girl's grandmother.

The girl's mother and other adults were in the house cooking dinner when the tractor's front tire rolled over the child's lower torso. The little girl was taken to Children's Hospital in Oklahoma City where she underwent several surgeries for internal injuries. The doctors said the child is recuperating but don't know how much longer she will remain in intensive care, or in the hospital.

May 15, 1997, Kentucky

**A Farm Family's Close Call**

Unnoticed by his parents, a 5-year-old Kentucky child climbed onto a tractor parked in the shade of a tree on a hill above a tobacco patch. His mom and dad and a younger brother and older sister were in the tobacco patch resetting a few plants by hand. The father saw his son on the tractor and yelled to him, "Get off the tractor and get back here." Twenty minutes later, after the boy had returned to the tobacco patch, the father spotted the tractor rolling backward down the hill toward him and his family. The father yelled to alert everyone. Fortunately the tractor turned and ran off to the side of the tobacco field and came to a stop in a gully. Apparently the boy had released the brake and shifted the tractor out of gear.

June 26, 1995, Pennsylvania

**Youth Dies in Farm Accident**

A 17-year-old boy fell to his death yesterday morning as he was helping his relatives dismantle a silo at their farm.

According to the police, the youth fell 55 feet after he lost his balance while standing on a ladder in the silo chute. He was pronounced dead at the scene at 8 a.m. by the State Medical Examiner about 45 minutes after he fell.

October 19, 1995, Minnesota

**Two-year-old Dies on Farm**

A toddler was killed Monday when she was accidentally run over by a haybine operated by her father. The County Corner pronounced the little girl dead at the scene from massive head injuries.

According to the County Sheriff's Department, the girl was sitting on the lawn watching her dad pull his tractor and haybine into the farmyard. When he backed the tractor up, unknown to her father, the child apparently ran behind the machine and was run over by the haybine.

June 19, 1997, Kentucky

**Boy, 1, Dies in Fall From Tractor**

Two brothers, one age 5 years and the other age 1 year, climbed on a parked tractor. The engine was not running. One of the boys knocked the tractor out of gear. It rolled down a hill and struck a plow. The 1-year-old was thrown from the tractor, struck his head against the plows, and died. The boys' mother was injured when she tried to stop the run-away tractor.

**End of the Exercise**

Ask for a copy of the answer key. Read and discuss the answers and other information on the answer key. Compare your answers to the key. When you have finished your discussion, please complete the questionnaire attached to your answer sheet. Then give your completed answer sheet and questionnaire to the person who is conducting the class session or meeting.