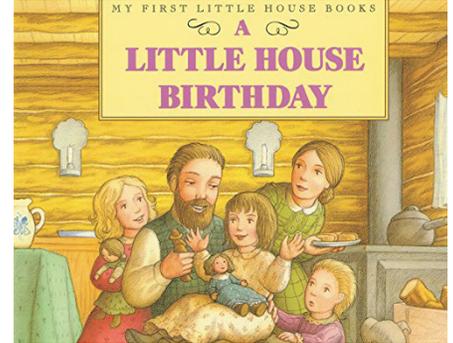




A Little House Birthday (adapted from the Little House Books) by Laura Ingalls Wilder

Book Synopsis: *A Little House Birthday* (adapted from the Little House Books) by Laura Ingalls Wilder is about Laura's fifth birthday and how her family celebrated. Although it was cold and snowy in the woods outside of their cabin, Laura and her family find fun ways to celebrate indoors with music, gifts and cake.



Connection to Iowa History

Laura Ingalls Wilder, writer of the Little House book series, lived in Burr Oaks, Iowa, with her family in 1876 to 1877. The family ran the town's Masters Hotel, which still stands today as the Laura Ingalls Wilder Park & Museum, a must-see destination for "Little House on the Prairie" fans. In fact, it is Laura's only childhood home that still stands at its original site.

- [Listen to an audio recording of the book](#)

Storytime Activity

After reading the story, create your own little birthday cake like Ma made for Laura. Instead of batter, this activity will use Model Magic clay so the cake can last all year. This small cake also can be used to help commemorate Iowa's upcoming birthday – it's 175th to be exact! Iowa became an official state on December 28, 1846.

Instructions

1. **Open.** Open the package of Crayola Model Magic, and pull out the moldable materials.
2. **Roll.** Roll the Model Magic into a ball between the palms of your hands.
3. **Separate.** Separate the Model Magic into one larger ball and one small ball. The larger ball will create your cake, and the smaller ball will be the decorations.
4. **Make the cake.** Take the larger ball of Model Magic, and slightly press down with your fingers to create a flattened circle. Then, press around the sides of the disk to create straight sides (up and down). This will serve as your cake.
5. **Decorate.** Use the smaller ball of clay to create decorations for your cake. Creating frosting and piping by rolling out small sections of Model Magic and attaching to the edges of the cake. This can also be done to create candles on top. Also, consider making a plate for the cake or maybe tiny flowers. The possibilities are endless.
6. **Color.** Markers work best for coloring the Model Magic. Once the cake is put together, use your markers to color the cake. Think about using different colors for the frosting and piping or even write a small message.

Materials

- Crayola model magic
- Markers

Instructions continued on next page

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Instructions continued

7. **Dry.** Set aside to let dry for 24 hours. After a day, everything will set and should not move.
8. **Share!** After you make your cake, share your work with the State Historical Museum of Iowa. Email a photo of your creation to museum.education@iowa.gov. We want to share your creation with others!
9. **Questions to Spark Learning**
 - Laura is very bored being inside the cabin all day during the winter. What do you do for fun inside your home during the cold months? How is it the same or different from Laura?
 - The gifts Laura receives are made by her family. What do you receive for birthday gifts? How is it different or similar to what Laura received?
 - Laura celebrates her birthday with music and small gifts. What do you do for your birthday to celebrate? How is it similar or different to Laura's experience?