DAILY Warm-Up 5

Name _____ Date _____

NARCISSA WHITMAN

Have you ever been wrongly accused of something? Narcissa Whitman lost her life because someone lied about her. Her life was a mixture of victories and tragedies. She did things no one else could.

Narcissa was born in New York on March 14, 1808. When she was young, she loved to read. The stories of Harriet Broadman, a missionary to India, were her favorites. A missionary is someone who does religious or charitable work. The stories told of good deeds and helping others. Narcissa dreamed of becoming a missionary herself.

Narcissa became a teacher; however, she never gave up her dream of being a missionary. She tried to find a placement, but unmarried women were not accepted at that time.

Narcissa married a man named Marcus Whitman. He was a doctor and a missionary. Her dream finally became real. The day after their wedding, they headed down the dusty trail. They moved west to help others. She would share her beliefs and tend to others' needs.

For 11 years, they lived in the Oregon territory. They had one daughter, Alice. When she was two years old, Alice fell into a river and drowned. She never had any more children of her own, but the Whitmans later adopted several other children.

Even though Narcissa had dreamed of being a missionary, she didn't know what was in store for her. Life was much more difficult than she had known. For many years she was the only woman living in the mission. She missed her family and mail was slow to bring news from them.

Narcissa found it hard to understand the ways of the Native Americans. They did not understand her. In 1847, a measles outbreak took the lives of many natives, but most of the Caucasians survived. The natives claimed that the Whitmans were poisoning them and that they wanted to steal all the land. This lie caused a revolt.

The mission was destroyed. The Whitmans and others were killed. A terrible lie killed a wonderful woman and those around her.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. What was Narcissa's dream as a child?
- a. to become an artist
- b. to become a painter
- c. to become a missionary
- d. to become a settler

2. Why was she unable to become a missionary at first?
- a. She was too young.
- b. Single women were not allowed to be missionaries then.
- c. She was too old.
- d. Her mother would not let her go.

3. How was Narcissa's dream of becoming a missionary different from the real thing?
- a. She found the job to be exciting.
- b. She got to travel much more than she originally thought.
- c. She found that she had to learn to cook and clean.
- d. She found the job to be hard and lonely.

4. What type of literature is the passage above?
- a. biography
- b. historical fiction
- c. adventure
- d. fairy tale

LIVEWORKSHEETS