

Name _____

Read the passage below.

Dust Bowl—North Texas, 1934

1. Emily Adams crept to the corner of the house. The paint here was almost gone, ripped off by the dust storms. She paused and listened for the gentle “cluck, cluck” of the chickens. Seven were already in the crate, but the eighth chicken was difficult to catch. Nine-year-old Emily leaned around the corner and saw the hen on the wheelbarrow. She stretched out her hand, but the bird suddenly jumped away. However, just as Emily was ready to give up, her brother jumped off the back step and scooped up the hen.

2. “Come on, January, in the box with your sisters,” five-year-old Teddy said as he carried the chicken to the front yard. Emily watched him walking, dust swelling around him as his bare feet sank into the ground. Mama and Papa were waiting.

3. For three years Papa had planted crops that failed. The rain did not come, and the wind roared across the plains, taking away the rich soil. Families packed up and moved away.

4. Emily followed slowly, first looking at the miles of bare prairie they were leaving behind, and then turning her head to glance at the house. The curtains were drawn. The windows had been closed for months, but the wind pushed the dust in around the edges. Now they were leaving the dust in Texas and going west, where Papa would start a new job.

