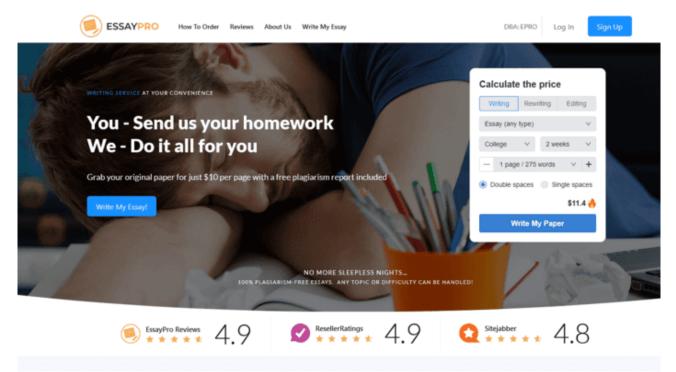
Patricia MacLachlan's Sarah, Plain and Tall



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By telling you the story, Sarah, Plain and Tall, Patricia MacLachlan portrays the importance of family and allows you to see that by through a little bit of hope and wishing your happiness can be fulfilled. She shows you how personal sacrifices occur when forming a successful family. Overall, this book provides insight on how powerful and meaningful family life can be.

In <u>Sarah</u>, Plain and Tall the concept of family is the base on which the book is written. The meaning of the word "family" becomes the center of the Witting's world. You learn at the beginning of the story that Anna and Caleb's mother had died after giving birth to Caleb. So when they both learned that <u>Papa</u> placed an advertisement in the <u>newspaper</u> for a wife and received a response they were very excited. "No one spoke when Papa finished the letter. He kept looking at it in his hands, reading it over to himself. Finally, I turned my head a bit to sneak a look at Caleb. He was smiling. I smiled, too" (10). Anna and Caleb had no reservations about meeting this lady they only knew by the name of Sarah. They both yearned to have a mother back in their life again.

After Sarah arrives, Anna is very apprehensive that Sarah will not like being in this new place. "I shook my head, turning the white stone over and over in my hand. I wished everything was as perfect as the stone. I wished that Papa and Caleb and I were perfect for Sarah" (21). The Wittings soon try to make their home Sarah's home as well. "I slept, dreaming a perfect dream. The fields had turned to a sea that gleamed like the sun on glass. And Sarah was happy" (37).

They soon start to question Sarah's happiness. Sarah often talks about how she longs for the sea, her brother, and her three old aunts. Sarah speaks to Maggie (who had also responded to a newspaper ad) and tells her about her sorrows. Maggie says, "There are always things to miss. No matter where you are" (40). Maggie then shows Sarah how she can relate to her new life by growing her own garden and gaining her independence back by learning to drive the wagon. After learning how to drive the wagon, Sarah decides to take a trip by herself.

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