**BOOK TITLE:** *Sarah, Plain and Tall*  
**AUTHOR:** Patricia McLachlan  
**POINT OF VIEW:** First person

**SETTING:**  
**Historical Period:**  
American Pioneer days  
**Day/Month/Year:**  
Winter through summer  
**Place:**  
A prairie farm  
**Weather:**  
varying  
**Mood:**  
Poignant  
**Other:**

**CONFLICT**  
Stated as a question and category  
Man vs. Nature, Man vs. Man  
Will Anna get a mother? (Will Sarah stay?)

**Characters**  
**Protagonist:** Anna  
Misses her mother, tries to take care of Papa and Caleb, but wants a mother most of all.  
**Antagonist:** the Sea, representing Sarah’s old life  
**Others:**  
Papa: Wants a wife. He stopped singing when his wife died.  
Caleb: Never knew his mother. Wants Papa to sing and a mother who sings.  
Sarah: Has always lived by the sea. Easy going, likeable, warm. She draws, sings, and does carpentry and housekeeping. Sarah has to decide whether she can leave her old home for good and stay with the family.  
Neighbors Maggie and Matthew

**Theme**  
Family relationships  
Enduring loss

**Exposition:**  
Anna, Caleb and Papa live on the prairie. Their mother/wife died during Caleb’s birth. Anna misses her mother. They need a mother/wife. Papa sends an ad to a newspaper back East and they receive a reply that Sarah will come for a visit. She is from Maine and is “plain and tall.”

**Conflict, Rising Action:**  
Sarah arrives. Everyone begins to love her, but will she stay? She teaches them new things, like singing. They teach her new things, too. Sarah misses the sea. They make a “dune” of a haystack. They work together to prepare for a storm. Papa puts his arm around Sarah. He teaches Sarah to drive the wagon.

**Climax:**  
Sarah drives to town by herself. Anna and Caleb are worried she has gone to buy a ticket back to Maine. They wait anxiously all day for her return. Finally they see a puff of dust and a yellow bonnet.

**Denouement:**  
Sarah has returned with colored pencils for drawing the sea, and also candles, flower seeds and a book of songs. She says she will always miss her home, but she would miss them more.

**Conclusion:**  
Sarah and Papa will marry, and Anna and Jacob will have a mother.