

*This guide was prepared using the Harper Trophy edition ©1954. Other editions may differ.*

#### SYNOPSIS

**Chap. 1 A Boy and a Mountain** The story is set in 1865. Sixteen-year-old Rudi Matt's delicate appearance belies his physical and mental strength. Rudi has snuck out from his job as a dishwasher at the Beau Site Hotel to climb the Blue Glacier, one of the smaller mountains that surround his small Swiss village of Kurtal. Rudi stops at his father's shrine to pray. The Citadel stands unconquered, the last great summit of the Alps. Only one man has ever dared to approach the top, and that man died in his pursuit. He was Josef Matt, Rudi father. Rudi has never known his father because the accident took place shortly before Rudi's birth. As he climbs, Rudi hears a voice from deep in one of the crevasses in the glacier!

**Chap. 2 A Boy and a Man** Rudi bravely uses his clothes to rig up a rescue line to save the man's life. The man is the famous British mountain climber Captain John Winter, who is astonished at Rudi's bravery and strength. Rudi shares his extensive knowledge of the mountains and reveals his passion for climbing. He also admits that his mother, Ilse Matt, and Uncle Franz Lerner insist he go into the hotel business to avoid the danger of being a climber or a guide.

**Chap. 3 Two Hundred Dirty Dishes** Old Teo Zurbriggen, a famous mountain climber before an accident left him crippled and now the chef at the hotel, covers for Rudi. Later, Winter tells Franz how Rudi saved his life and invites Rudi to join him climbing the Wunderhorn the next day. His mother and uncle agree to let him go this one time.

**Chap. 4 Trial**— Rudi dreams of conquering the Citadel. He is thrilled to learn Winter has bought him the finest mountain climbing gear. Klaus Wesselhoft, a muscular 18-year-old guide, teases Rudi for being so small, calling him "Angel-face." The hikers gather at a small hut. Rudi is delighted to be serving as a porter on the hike.

**Chap. 5 And Error** As they hike, Franz reveals he hates the Citadel, because it was there his brother-in-law, Rudi's father, died. A mistake by Rudi endangers the other hikers.

**Chap. 6 Master and Pupil** Teo takes Rudi on climbing lessons, on the "practice" Felsberg peak. Rudi dreams of planting his father's red shirt on the Citadel's summit as a tribute to his father's attempt to scale the peak. Josef Matt died while staying with Sir Edward, who had broken a leg during a fall. He froze to death in a cave before the rescue party arrived.

**Chap. 7 A Prisoner Escapes** Rudi repairs his father's shirt and fights with Klaus. Captain Winter has gone to Brol.

Rudi sneaks off on another forbidden hike.

**Chap. 8 White Fury** At the hut, Rudi finds Winter and meets Emil Saxo, a massive guide from Brol. Winter agrees to take Rudi on as an apprentice porter as they reconnoiter the mountain. As they hike, they get caught in an avalanche.

**Chap. 9 The Challenge** Back home, Rudi's uncle and mother discover he is gone. Franz decides to go to the Citadel, where they think Rudi has gone.

**Chap. 10 Three to Make Ready** Rudi frees himself first. Then Saxo climbs out and they free Winter, who has a bad gash in his head. The next day, Winter and Saxo go to Brol for more supplies. They will ask Franz if Rudi can climb with them.

**Chap. 11 Alone** Rather than returning home, Rudi sets off on a solitary climb up the Citadel. He feels drawn on and continues his way up the mountain, alone.

**Chap. 12 A Boy and a Ghost** Rudi takes shelter in the cave where his father died. Rudi feels beset by demons, but his fear recedes when he sees the "demon" as his father protecting him.

**Chap. 13 Four to Go** Saxo mistakes the rescue party for an attempt by the Kurtal men to reach the Citadel first. Rudi appears and exclaims he has found the way to the Citadel summit. The rival guides quarrel but finally agree to join forces.

**Chap. 14 First of All Men** Four men set off; five remain in the hut. Establishing an uneasy truce, they climb all day toward the Citadel.

**Chap. 15 The Needle's Eye** Winter gets weaker, suffering from a wracking cough in the thin air. Each of the adult guides attempts to pass through a narrow tunnel but only Rudi can fit. From the other side, he hauls the men up to the next peak.

**Chap. 16 Darkness and Dawn** The final reach of the Citadel is now clear, but Winter is too ill to go on. Nonetheless, Saxo takes off. Rudi follows him.

**Chap. 17 The Day Back** At town, the climbers are being watched through a telescope. Teo and others set off on a rescue mission. Franz and Winter go after Saxo and Rudi as well. They find Rudi's abandoned pack and wonder what has happened.

**Chap. 18 The Heights** Rudi catches up with Saxo, who falls while defying Rudi. Saxo is trapped on a ledge because of his broken arm. Rudi rescues Saxo rather than climb to the summit. After a brutal climb down, they collapse by the Needle. Winter and Franz rescue them after they reach the summit.

**Chap. 19 The Conqueror** They continue the brutal

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descent, finally reaching Teo's welcoming arms. At the celebration, Winter denies the honor and says the Citadel is "Rudi's mountain." Winter has hung Josef's red shirt from the summit to fulfill Rudi's dream.

### TIME LINE

- 1682** The name "Matterhorn" is first used.
- 1786 Aug. 8** Michel-Gabriel Paccard and Jacques Balmat reach the top of Mont Blanc, the highest peak in the Alps.
- 1811** The ice field known as the Jungfrau is ascended.
- 1820** An avalanche kills most members of the Hamel expedition.
- 1843** Scottish scientist James D. Forbes publishes *Travels through the Alps of Savoy*, which sparks British interest in the Alps.
- 1854** Alfred Wills ascends the Wetterhorn; this marks the beginning of the "Golden Age" of mountaineering.
- 1857** The British Alpine Club is founded; Sigismund Porges successfully climbs the Monch.
- 1861** Edward Whymper fails in his first attempt to ascend the Matterhorn; Sir Leslie Steven climbs the Streckhorn.
- 1865 July 14** Edward Whymper and six others reach the top of the Matterhorn. During their descent, four members of the party fall to their deaths.  
**July 17** Jean-Antoine Carrel makes the second ascent of the Matterhorn, climbing the more difficult Italian Ridge.
- 1866** The British government decides against a ban on mountain climbing.

### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

James Ramsey Ullman was born November 24, 1907, in New York City. Ullman had a first-class education, receiving his B.A. degree from Princeton University in 1929. He immediately put his degree to good use as a newspaper reporter and feature writer. In 1933, Ullman's life took a different turn as he became a theatrical producer in New York City. During the Depression, he served as an executive with the Works Progress Administration (1933-37) and later the Federal Theater Project in New York and California (1938-39). As a theatrical producer, Ullman worked on twelve Broadway plays, including co-production of Sidney Kingsley's Pulitzer Prize winning *Men in White* in 1934.

During World War II, Ullman served with the American Field Service, Volunteer Ambulance Corps, 1942-43. Serving with the British Eighth Army in Africa, he was promoted to lieutenant and received the African Star. From the end of the war until his death in 1971, Ullman worked as a writer full-time. In addition to writing novels and travelogues, Ullman contributed stories and articles to a wide variety of national periodicals, including *Holiday*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Life*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *Saturday Review*.

Ullman lived the life he described in *Banner in the Sky*: a world traveler, adventurer, and mountaineer, Ullman climbed many of the world's most challenging mountains. These

include Mt. Olympus, Ixtacihuatl, the Jungfrau, the Matterhorn, the foothills of the Andes, the Tetons, and the Rockies. In 1963 he fulfilled a lifelong ambition by participating in the first American expedition to climb Mt. Everest.

### CRITIC'S CORNER

*Banner in the Sky* was the Newbery Honor Book for 1955 and an ALA Notable Children's Book of 1954. The *Booklist* critic had this praise: "Based upon the author's personal experiences, with details from the original ascent of the Matterhorn, the story has authenticity, atmosphere, and excitement." Today's readers are equally enthusiastic. A review on amazon.com stated that "*Banner in the Sky* is the most intriguing story I have ever read. ... *Banner in the Sky* is a gut-wrenching story about sheer will and determination."

### OTHER BOOKS BY JAMES RAMSEY ULLMAN

- The Age of Mountaineering* (1954)
- Americans on Everest: The Official Account of the Ascent Led by Norman Dyherenfurth* (1964)
- And Not to Yield* (1970)
- Caribbean Here and Now: The Complete Vacation Guide to Fifty-two Sunny Islands in the Caribbean Sea* (1968)
- The Day on Fire: A Novel Suggested by the Life of Arthur Rimbaud* (1958)
- Down the Colorado with Major Powell* (1960)
- Fia Fia* (1962)
- High Conquest* (1941)
- Island of the Blue Macaws* (1953)
- Kingdom of Adventure* (editor) (1947)
- Mad Shelley* (1930)
- The Other Side of the Mountain* (1938)
- River of the Sun* (1950)
- The Sands of Karakorum* (1953)
- Straight Up: The Life and Death of John Harlin* (1968)
- Tiger of the Snows* (editor) (1955)
- Where the Bong Tree Grows: The Log of One Man's Journey in the South Pacific* (1963)
- The White Tower* (1945)
- Windom's Way* (1952)

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Almanac of Famous People*, 6th ed. Gale Research, 1998.
- The Author's and Writer's Who's Who*. 6th edition. Darien, Conn: Hafner Publishing Co., 1971.
- Ward, Martha E. et al. *Authors of Books for Young People*. 3rd edition. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1990.
- Benet's Reader's Encyclopedia of American Literature*. Eds. George Perkins, Barbara Perkins, & Phillip Leininger. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991.
- Biography Index*. Vol.1, Vol. 2, Vol. 4, Vol. 7, Vol. 9, Vol. 10, Vol. 11., Vol. 14. New York: H.W. Wilson Co., 1949.
- Contemporary Authors*. Vol. 1-4, Detroit: Gale, 1967.
- Current Biography Yearbook*. 1945. New York: H.W. Wilson Co., 1945, 1971.
- Longman Companion to Twentieth Century Literature*. A.C. Ward. London: Longman Group, 1970.

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*The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*. Volume 56. New York: James T. White & Co., 1975.

*The New York Times Biographical Edition*. Vol. 2, Numbers 1-12. New York: Arno Press, 1971.

*The Reader's Encyclopedia*. Second edition. William Rose Benet. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1965.

*Something about the Author*. Volume 7. Detroit: Gale Research, 1975.

### GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the importance of having strong personal goals
2. To understand the conflict between duty and responsibility
3. To recognize the significance of setting
4. To assess each character's personality
5. To recognize the novel's theme
6. To appreciate the novel's suspense
7. To understand the inter-village competition described in the novel
8. To enjoy the story's action and adventure
9. To admire the main character's courage
10. To describe the novel's mood or atmosphere

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To explore Rudi's passion for mountain climbing
2. To identify with Rudi's free spirit and great courage
3. To probe the symbolism of Josef's red shirt
4. To understand why Rudi's mother and uncle forbid him to climb and try to force him to be a hotel worker
5. To understand what the Citadel means to the villagers
6. To probe the relationship between Rudi and Captain Winter
7. To see the effect of setting on a person's life
8. To understand the plot structure
9. To grasp the relationship between the guides and their "Herrs"
10. To explore the importance of mentors

### LITERARY TERMS AND APPLICATIONS

For a better understanding of James Ramsey Ullman's style, present the following terms and applications to the novel:

**setting** the time and place of the action. The setting is crucial to *Banner in the Sky*, because much of the novel revolves around life in the Alps and climbing the Citadel.

**figures of speech** words and expressions not meant to be taken literally. Figurative language uses words in fresh, new ways to appeal to the imagination. Figures of speech include *similes*, *metaphors*, *extended metaphors*, *hyperbole*, and *personification*. Ullman uses many similes, metaphors, and personification to create a poetic style. For example, Ullman uses personification in "the thin finger of cold..." (p. 20) and "the valley of Kurtal was wrapped in a cloak of gray mist" (73).

**description** a word picture of what something or someone is like. Description is made up of sensory details that

help readers form pictures in their minds. For example, on page 253, Ullman describes the mountain as: "Every major summit of the range stood up clear and glittering in the crystal light."

### CROSS-CURRICULAR SOURCES

#### Fiction

Ann Nolan Clark, *Secret of the Andes*

John Knowles, *A Separate Peace*

E. L. Konigsburg, *Throwing Shadows*

Elizabeth Foreman Lewis, *Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze*

Scott O'Dell, *The Black Pearl and Island of the Blue Dolphins*

Gary Paulsen, *The Winter Room*

#### Nonfiction

David F. Breashears, *High Exposure: An Enduring Passion for Everest and Unforgiving Places*

Greg Child, *In the Shadow of Denali: Life and Death on Alaska's Mt. McKinley*

Gregory Crouch, *Enduring Patagonia*

Jon Krakauer, *Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mount Everest Disaster*

Jamling Tenzing Norgay, *Touching My Father's Soul: A Sherpa's Journey to the Top of Everest*

R. J. Secor, *Aconcagua: A Climbing Guide*

Andrew Selters, *Glacier Travel & Crevasse Rescue*

#### Internet

"The Alpine Club," <[www.alpine-club.org.uk](http://www.alpine-club.org.uk)>

"The Alps," <[www.ub.es/medame/alpes.html](http://www.ub.es/medame/alpes.html)>

"In the Heart of the Alps" <[www.terrageria.com/mountain/mountain-area.alps.html](http://www.terrageria.com/mountain/mountain-area.alps.html)>

"Matterhorn," <[www.virtualology.com/virtualmuseumofnaturalhistory/hallofgeology/mountains/thematterhorn.org](http://www.virtualology.com/virtualmuseumofnaturalhistory/hallofgeology/mountains/thematterhorn.org)>

#### Videos/DVDs

*Alpine for You* (1951)

*Among Giants* (1998)

*The Challenge* (1938)

*The Crystal Brawl* (1957)

*Into Thin Air: Death on Everest* (1997)

*K2* (1991)

*The White Tower* (1950)

### THEMES AND MOTIFS

A study of the central issues and situations in James Ramsey Ullman's *Banner in the Sky* should include these aspects:

#### Themes

- courage and bravery
- confusion
- family tragedy
- fear
- friendship
- individuality
- maturity
- parental pressure
- physical danger
- self-realization

#### Motifs

- dealing with parental pressure about career choices

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- being courageous in the face of great physical danger
- accepting responsibility for your actions
- coping with the death of a parent
- benefiting from adult mentors
- sacrificing personal gain to help other people
- setting and achieving goals
- showing self-awareness and maturity
- showing respect for others
- paying tribute to great heroes

### MEANING STUDY

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have particular meaning in the novel. Explain the meaning of each. Chapter and page numbers indicate the context from which the item is taken.

1. There it stood. The Citadel. The last unconquered summit of the Alps. (Chap. 1, p. 19)  
*(All of the great mountains of the Alps have been climbed. The only mountain left unconquered is the great Citadel. The novel is based on fact; the Citadel represents the Matterhorn, the only peak in the Alps still unconquered in 1865, when the novel is set.)*
2. "You cannot put out a fire by wishing it out. You cannot bottle the wind." (Chap. 3, p. 41)  
*(Rudi's uncle and his mother do not want him to be a climber because it is a risky and ill-paying job. Instead, they want him to pursue a career in the hotel business. To that end, they have gotten him a job as a dishwasher with old Teo. However, Teo recognizes and respects Rudi's spirit, his courage and determination to be a mountain climber. Teo sees that the mountains are in Rudi's blood, as they were in his father's.)*
3. "Yes," Franz agreed, "he is not built for the mountains." (Chap. 3, p. 44)  
*(Ironically, Rudi is small and slender, with pale skin and an "angel-face." However, as subsequent events prove, his small stature and gentle bearing belie a fierce spirit and great physical strength and endurance.)*
4. "He was thinking, not of himself, but of another." (Chap. 6, p. 83)  
*(As Teo recounts, when Sir Edward was injured trying to scale the Citadel, Rudi's father Josef stayed with him overnight in a small cave while Teo went for help. While Josef was freezing to death, he had taken off his shirt to try to keep Sir Edward alive. Josef gave his life to protect another, the essence of the mountain guide's credo.)*
5. Everything was gone, except the white thundering fury of the Citadel that bore him on and on... (Chap. 8, p. 114)  
*(When Rudi is trapped in a life-threatening avalanche, readers understand the enormous difficulty in mountain climbing and the great courage and resourcefulness it takes to stay alive. This passage captures all the tension and danger of trying to climb any great peak, but especially one like the Citadel.)*
6. "I drink to Rudi Matt," he said, "—the only true mountaineer in Kurtal." (Chap. 9, p. 122)

*(When Rudi sets off to conquer the Citadel on his own, Teo salutes his audacity and spirit.)*

7. "To climb is in his blood, in his bones." (Chap. 13, p. 175)  
*(Teo stands up for Rudi, defying Franz to assert Rudi's birthright: being a mountain climber. Teo's defense is all the more powerful because he was so badly crippled on the climb that killed Rudi's father.)*
8. "In trying to live Rudi's life for him, instead of letting him live it on his own." (Chap. 17, p. 244)  
*(Rudi's mother realizes she had no right to force Rudi into the hotel business. Her motivation was honest—she did not want him to die on the mountains as her husband, his father, had done. Nonetheless, she now realizes she was afraid to face the truth: Rudi must live his own life and fulfill his own dreams, no matter how dangerous they are.)*
9. His father's son. (Chap. 18, p. 270)  
*(At the novel's climax, Rudi passes up the chance to be among the first—if not the first—to ascend the Citadel. Instead, he opts to save Saxo's life. In so doing, Rudi fulfills his father's legacy of self-sacrifice.)*
10. "Here is the conqueror of the Citadel." (Chap. 19, p. 280)  
*(In a highly emotional scene, Captain Winter gives Rudi credit for having been the first to scale the peak of the Citadel. This shows Winter's generous, gracious spirit.)*

### COMPREHENSION STUDY

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages in the book.

#### Questions 1-5 (Literal Level)

1. How is Rudi's appearance unusual for his place and goals?  
*(Rudi is small, slight, and sweet-faced. The other men of Kurtal are big, brawny, and harsh-featured. Rudi's appearance makes it unlikely he could be a successful mountain guide or mountain climber.)*
2. What career does Rudi's mother want him to pursue? Why?  
*(Ilse Matt wants her son to be in the hotel business so he will be safe from the dangers of mountain climbing. She does not want him to die in a climbing accident as her husband did.)*
3. Why does Rudi keep running away from the hotel kitchen?  
*(Rudi is unable to resist the lure of the glorious mountains. He is drawn to the wide open spaces and danger.)*
4. How did Rudi's father die?  
*(He froze to death while staying behind with the man he was guiding, Sir Edward, who had been injured by falling rocks.)*
5. Where in the novel does Rudi show great courage?  
*(Possible response: Among the most dramatic incidents occurs early on, when Rudi risks freezing by taking off all his clothes to rig up a line to save Captain Winter.)*

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### Questions 6-8 (Interpretative Level)

6. Why does Rudi decide to climb the mountain?  
(*He simply had to do it, compelled by the desire to be the first to conquer the mountain. He might also be bound by his father's heritage and the intense competition around him.*)
7. Why does Rudi rescue Saxo rather than climbing to the summit?  
(*As "his father's son," Rudi is moved to forsake personal glory to save someone else's life. Rudi feels a "clearness as deep and cold and pure as mountain sky" when he realizes that the spirit of self-sacrifice is his father's true legacy.*)
8. Why does Winter hang Josef's red shirt at Citadel's summit?  
(*Winter pays homage to Josef's valiant attempt to reach the summit. In so doing, he is also saluting all the brave climbers who died attempting to scale the Citadel.*)

### Questions 9 and 10 (Critical Level)

9. What do you think the climb to the Citadel symbolizes?  
(*Possible response: Heroic human endeavor, the unconquerable human spirit, the best in humanity.*)
10. Do you agree with Winter that the Citadel is really Rudi's mountain? Why or why not?  
(*Possible response: Yes, because Rudi would have been the first to reach it if he had not decided to save Saxo's life; No, because Winter was the first to reach the summit, not Rudi.*)

### Questions 11-12 (Creative Level)

11. Write a brief sequel to the story in which you describe Rudi's life as an adult.
12. Working with a small group of classmates, role-play a dialogue between Rudi and Saxo in which Rudi explains why he saved Saxo's life.

## ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

### Art/Music

1. Choose an especially descriptive passage, such as the one on page 19, and illustrate it.
2. Select a memorable quote from the novel and draw it on a plaque.
3. Draw a picture of Rudi, based on the description on page 13.
4. Make a model of the climber's hut.
5. Create a new cover for the novel. Explain how your cover art fits the novel's tone, theme, and characters.
6. Select a theme song for the novel. Be sure it expresses the novel's tone and meaning.

### History/Social Studies

1. Read Jon Krakauer's book, *Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mount Everest Disaster*. Explain why the expedition failed.
2. This novel is set more than a century ago. Report on life in Switzerland today. How is it the same and different?
3. Write a biography of the real-life conqueror of the Matter-

horn, Edward Whymper.

4. Locate Switzerland on a map. Mark all the great peaks in the Alps. Find out when each one was scaled and by whom.
5. Find out more about mountain climbing. Share your findings.

### Language Arts

1. Create a Swiss-English dictionary. Use the Swiss words in the novel to start your list.
2. Most of the people in town believe the Citadel is the home of demons. Write a legend based on this belief.
3. Write a character sketch of Teo.
4. Josef's red shirt becomes a symbol of bravery, endurance, and the guides' code. Describe another object that could have the same symbolism in the novel.
5. List ten qualities that a superb climbing guide must have.
6. Recast one chapter from Rudi's point of view.

### Mathematics/Science

1. Create a graph showing the relative heights of the seven tallest mountains in the world.
2. Much of mountain climbing depends on the principle of levers. Explain how a lever works.
3. Winter buys Rudi the finest gear. Using the Internet, find out how much this gear would cost today.
4. Explain the effect of high altitudes on the human body.

### Speech/Drama

1. With a partner, role-play a scene between Rudi and his uncle in which they explain their feelings for mountain climbing.
2. Winter tells Rudi: "Youth is the time for dreams, boy." Share one of your dreams for the future with a group of friends.
3. Working with a partner, improvise a dialogue in which Captain Winter explains why he knows that Rudi is a born climber.
4. Create two teams to debate whether Rudi should be forced to pursue a safe career in the hotel business or be allowed to become a mountain climber.

## STUDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. List ten things that you would take with you on a climb up a great mountain. Be ready to justify the inclusion of each item.
2. As Rudi, write an epitaph for Josef Matt. Deliver your funeral speech to the class.
3. Argue that Rudi should have left Saxo behind. Refer to the novel to support your arguments.
4. Select any six chapters and retitle them. Be prepared to defend your new titles.
5. Explain what the word "Citadel" means and why it is a fitting name for the last unconquered mountain in the Alps.
5. Analyze James Ramsey Ullman's writing style in this novel, focusing on word choice, sentences, and figurative language.

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### **ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT**

1. Prepare an interpretative dance that captures the symbolic meaning of the great Citadel.
2. Write the ballad of Rudi Matt, in which you celebrate his heroic life and valiant spirit.
3. Explain how the novel would be different if it was set in the present rather than a century ago.
4. *Banner in the Sky* is a Newbery Honor Book. Defend the award by explaining the book's greatness.

### **TEACHER'S NOTES**

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**VOCABULARY TEST**

Match each word to its meaning. Write the letter of your choice in the space provided.

- |                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| _____ 1. detour      | a. equipment          |
| _____ 2. agile       | b. climb upward       |
| _____ 3. skirted     | c. greeting           |
| _____ 4. rickety     | d. bleakness          |
| _____ 5. salutation  | e. crack, fissure     |
| _____ 6. amateur     | f. omen               |
| _____ 7. crevice     | g. dodge              |
| _____ 8. spires      | h. nimble             |
| _____ 9. marmot      | i. alternate route    |
| _____ 10. desolation | j. shaky              |
| _____ 11. ascend     | k. nonprofessional    |
| _____ 12. portent    | l. tight              |
| _____ 13. cleft      | m. split              |
| _____ 14. apprentice | n. pal                |
| _____ 15. proprietor | o. tall structures    |
| _____ 16. shirk      | p. went around        |
| _____ 17. crony      | q. owner              |
| _____ 18. gratitude  | r. small furry animal |
| _____ 19. gear       | s. thanks             |
| _____ 20. taut       | t. assistant, learner |

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### COMPREHENSION TEST A

#### Part I: Matching (20 points)

Complete each of the following descriptions with a name from the list that follows. Place the letter of your answer in the blank provided at left.

- |                   |                 |                 |                        |                     |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| A. Rudi Matt      | C. Franz Lerner | E. Toni Hassler | G. Captain John Winter | I. Josef Matt       |
| B. Teo Zurbriggen | D. Herr Saxo    | F. Ilse Matt    | H. Gretchen            | J. Klaus Wesselhoft |

- \_\_\_ 1. the boy who takes Rudi's place in the kitchen
- \_\_\_ 2. the finest guide in Kurtal; he died while protecting a climber he was guiding
- \_\_\_ 3. Rudi's uncle, also a climbing guide
- \_\_\_ 4. the British climber whose life Rudi saves
- \_\_\_ 5. the guide crippled in the climbing accident that led to the death of Rudi's father
- \_\_\_ 6. Rudi's mother; she does not want him to climb mountains
- \_\_\_ 7. a big, loudmouth, eighteen-year-old guide
- \_\_\_ 8. the young man whose nickname is "Angel-face"
- \_\_\_ 9. a waitress in the hotel where Rudi works
- \_\_\_ 10. the guide who deserts Winter to try to reach the Citadel first

#### Part II: Sentence Completion (20 points)

Circle the correct word or phrase to complete each of the following statements.

- 1. When the novel opens, Rudi has slipped away from his job as a (dishwasher, cook) at the Beau Site Hotel to climb the Blue Glacier.
- 2. Rudi lives in the village of (Brol, Kurtal).
- 3. The village is located in (Switzerland, Ireland).
- 4. At the beginning of the story, the (Wunderkind, Citadel) stands unconquered, the last great summit of the region.
- 5. Captain Winter buys Rudi the finest mountain (climbing gear, books).
- 6. Rudi dreams of planting his father's red (hat, shirt) on the Citadel's summit as a tribute to him.
- 7. Each of the guides attempts to pass through a narrow tunnel but only (Rudi, Winter) can fit.
- 8. The climbers find Rudi's (pack, body) and wonder what has happened to him.
- 9. Saxo is trapped on a ledge because of his broken (back, arm).
- 10. (Ilse, Winter) has hung Josef's red shirt from the summit to fulfill Rudi's dream.



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### Part III: True/False (20 points)

Mark the following statements either **T** for true or **F** if any part is false.

- \_\_\_ 1. The story is set in 1965.
- \_\_\_ 2. On his way to climb a small peak, Rudi stops at his father's shrine to pray.
- \_\_\_ 3. Rudi bravely uses his clothes to rig up a rescue line to save the life of his beloved Uncle Teo.
- \_\_\_ 4. On his first hike with adults, Rudi makes a serious mistake that endangers the other hikers.
- \_\_\_ 5. Teo takes Rudi for climbing lessons on the Felsberg peak.
- \_\_\_ 6. Rudi, Saxo, and Winter get caught on the mountain in a fierce blizzard.
- \_\_\_ 7. While hiking alone, Rudi meets his long-lost father in a cave. His father saves his life.
- \_\_\_ 8. Rudi believes that he has found a way to reach the summit of the Citadel.
- \_\_\_ 9. Rudi and Saxo rescue Winter and Franz after they reach the summit.
- \_\_\_ 10. Rudi leaves the celebration party to help Teo in the hotel kitchen.

### Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Explain how Rudi feels about mountain climbing.
2. Which character in *Banner in the Sky* do you find most admirable? Why?
3. Describe the novel's setting and discuss how it is central to the plot.
4. Analyze why Rudi decides to help Saxo.

## BANNER IN THE SKY

### COMPEREHENSION TEST B

#### Part I: Fill in the Blank (20 points)

Supply a term to complete each of the following statements. Place your answers in the blanks provided in the sentences.

1. The action takes place in the year \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Because of his appearance, Rudi Matt has been nicknamed \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Rudi's mother and uncle have gotten him a job as a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ in the village hotel.
4. The last unconquered mountain in the Swiss Alps is called the \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The only man who dared to approach the summit of the tallest mountain was \_\_\_\_\_ and he died in the attempt.
6. Rudi saves Captain Winter's life by using a(n) \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Teo gives Rudi \_\_\_\_\_ on a small peak. This will help Rudi learn to be a better climber.
8. Rudi dreams of planting his father's \_\_\_\_\_ on the mountain summit as a tribute to him.
9. Rudi, Saxo, and Winter are trapped in a terrible \_\_\_\_\_, and Winter suffers a gash to his head.
10. At the celebration after the summit has been reached, Winter says that the mountain should be called " \_\_\_\_\_ " in honor of Rudi's bravery.

#### Part II: Matching (20 points)

Complete each of the following descriptions with a name from the list that follows. Place the letter of your answer in the blank provided at left.

- |   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| _____ 1. the heroic sixteen-year-old climber              | A. Herr Kempel         |
| _____ 2. the crippled former climber                      | B. Sir Edward          |
| _____ 3. the burly eighteen-year-old apprentice guide     | C. Rudi Matt           |
| _____ 4. the self-serving guide from Brolu                | D. Captain John Winter |
| _____ 5. the compassionate British mountain climber       | E. Teo Zurbriggen      |
| _____ 6. Rudi's mother                                    | F. Ilse Matt           |
| _____ 7. the British climber who froze to death in a cave | G. Franz Lerner        |
| _____ 8. Rudi's father, also a guide                      | H. Klaus Wesselhoft    |
| _____ 9. the owner of the inn                             | I. Josef Matt          |
| _____ 10. Rudi's uncle                                    | J. Saxo                |

## **BANNER IN THE SKY**

### **Part III: Motivation (20 points)**

Complete each phrase below with a reason or justification.

1. Rudi sneaks out from his job as a dishwasher at the Beau Site Hotel because
2. Rudi stops at his father's shrine to pray because
3. John Winter buys Rudi climbing gear to
4. Rudi knows that he should not be climbing mountains because
5. Rudi gets to come along as an apprentice porter on a hike with Winter and Franz because
6. Franz reveals that he hates the Citadel because
7. Rudi dreams of planting his father's red shirt on the Citadel's summit because
8. The guides from Kurtal and the guides from Broli quarrel because
9. Saxo leaves Winter and Rudi on the mountain because
10. Rudi stays with Saxo because

### **Part IV: Essay (40 points)**

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Explain how Winter helps Rudi.
2. Analyze Teo's line to Franz at the end of Chapter 3: "You cannot put out a fire by wishing it out. You cannot bottle the wind."
3. Describe the Citadel and its importance to the characters in the novel.
4. Trace the novel's plot. Include the rising action, climax, and resolution.

**BANNER IN THE SKY****ANSWER KEY****VOCABULARY TEST**

- |      |       |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. i | 6. k  | 11. b | 16. g |
| 2. h | 7. e  | 12. f | 17. n |
| 3. p | 8. o  | 13. m | 18. s |
| 4. j | 9. r  | 14. t | 19. a |
| 5. c | 10. d | 15. q | 20. l |

**COMPREHENSION TEST A****Part I: Matching (20 points)**

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. E | 6. F  |
| 2. I | 7. J  |
| 3. C | 8. A  |
| 4. G | 9. H  |
| 5. B | 10. D |

**Part II: Sentence Completion (20 points)**

- |                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| 1. dishwasher    | 6. hat     |
| 2. Kurtal        | 7. Rudi    |
| 3. Switzerland   | 8. pack    |
| 4. Citadel       | 9. arm     |
| 5. climbing gear | 10. Winter |

**Part III: True/False (20 points)**

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. F  |
| 2. T | 7. F  |
| 3. F | 8. T  |
| 4. T | 9. F  |
| 5. T | 10. F |

**Part IV: Essay (40 points)**

Answers will vary.

**COMPREHENSION TEST B****Part I: Fill in the Blank (20 points)**

- |               |                               |
|---------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. 1865       | 6. rope made from his clothes |
| 2. Angel-face | 7. climbing lessons           |
| 3. dishwasher | 8. red shirt                  |
| 4. Citadel    | 9. avalanche                  |
| 5. Josef Matt | 10. Rudi's mountain           |

**Part II: Matching (20 points)**

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. C | 6. F  |
| 2. E | 7. B  |
| 3. H | 8. I  |
| 4. J | 9. A  |
| 5. D | 10. G |

**Part III: Motivation (20 points)**

1. he wants to climb mountains rather than work in a hotel
2. he likes to honor his father's courage and compassion
3. reward Rudi for rescuing him from the crevasse
4. his mother and uncle have forbidden him to climb
5. Winter convinces Rudi's mother and uncle to allow Rudi this trip
6. it is there that his brother-in-law, Rudi's father, died
7. he wants to pay tribute to his father's attempt to scale the peak
8. they are rivals and each side wants to reach the summit of the Citadel first
9. he wants to be the first man to set foot on the Citadel's summit
10. as his father's son, he places someone else's safety over his own glory

**Part IV: Essay (40 points)**

Answers will vary.



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