

Hatchet

by Gary Paulsen

Teacher's Guide

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CLASSROOM FAVORITES

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Synopsis

Chapter 1

On a chartered single-engine *Cessna 406* from Hampton, New York, carrying drilling equipment northwest to the Canadian oil fields, 13-year-old Brian Robeson is glad to end the 2 1/2 hour car ride with his mother. The pilot invites him into the copilot's seat, but says nothing more as they fly 7,000 feet above wilderness.

Brian sorts out his anger against lawyers and judges and at his parents for divorcing. After putting his headset on Brian and letting him take the controls, the pilot suffers spasms and the massive chest pain of a fatal heart attack.

Chapter 2

Brian controls the plane as it dives. He tries to answer a voice replying to his distress call. For a half hour, he listens for another call. He plans to use up the fuel, aim for the ground, then pull up just before landing, as he had seen in movies. After three hours, the plane stalls. In terror, Brian vomits.

Chapter 3

The plane goes into a glide as Brian looks for a lake among the pines. As the plane plunges into the lake, the windshield breaks. Brian swims to the surface and loses consciousness on the grassy shore.

Chapter 4

Brian recalls a bike ride with friend Terry to Amber Mall. He recognizes his mother in a station wagon with a strange man. Conscious again, he pulls his legs from the water and shelters his aching head. At sunup, he awakens, feels for injuries, and sits up against a tree. Insects swarm over his body and into his nostrils until full sun

drives them away. He realizes that he would have been killed if the plane had struck the rocky ridge, then lapses into sleep.

Chapter 5

Awakening with a keen thirst and sunburn, he drinks lake water and again vomits. His headache eases; he looks for food. His pockets contain \$20.62, a fingernail clipper, broken watch, and hatchet. His shoes, socks, and underwear are wearable; the windbreaker is in tatters.

He recalls Perpich, his optimistic teacher, saying "You are your most valuable asset." Brian knows the plane moved off course, away from searchers. Fearful of night, hunger, and wild animals, he takes action.

Chapter 6

While building a lean-to, Brian cuts willows for braces, then makes a more permanent shelter next to a rock ledge. He locates bitter berries, which he swallows, pits and all, then puts four pounds of berries in a pouch made from pieces of his windbreaker. He weaves a driftwood door for the rocky overhang that roofs a space 15 by 8-10 feet.

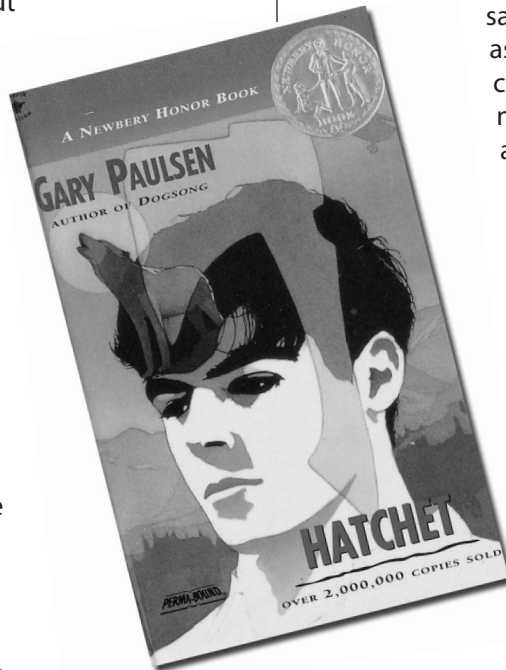
Chapter 7

In the dark, he suffers vomiting and diarrhea from the "gut cherries."

Returning to sleep, he recalls his mother kissing the stranger. The next morning, he cleans the sand, washes, and examines his swollen face mirrored in the lake. He sorts ripe cherries from green ones and eats a handful. After collecting wood, he picks raspberries and stops dead at the sight of a bear. Before a rain, he carries three pounds of raspberries to the shelter.

Chapter 8

During the night, a porcupine slaps Brian with its quilled tail; he throws his hatchet in the dark. He weeps with the pain of extracting the quills, but rejects self-pity. A dream of his father and friend Terry carries a message about fire. The next morning, he uses his hatchet on rock to make sparks.



Chapter 9

Brian uses a torn twenty-dollar bill and birch bark as tinder and blows the sparks into flame. Success makes him feel safe from another porcupine, but thoughts of home overwhelm his elation.

Chapter 10

Brian studies how to bank the flame and supply himself with more limbs. An advantage to the fire is its repulsion of mosquitoes. Out of food, but less terrified, he sleeps. The next morning, he eats six turtle eggs and chews the leathery shells. He almost forgets his hopes of rescue.

Chapter 11

After storing food and cleaning the area, Brian realizes that he is browner, thinner. Living in the wild alerts him to sights and sounds. At the top of the bluff, he builds a signal fire. By late afternoon, he determines to make a fish spear.

Chapter 12

The two-pronged willow spear does not work. As he ponders making a bow and arrow to kill a bird, a search plane nears. Before he can build a signal fire, it veers out of sight, leaving him moody and hopeless.

Chapter 13

On a hunt, Brian encounters a bear, her cubs, and four wolves. He thinks back 42 days earlier when he grew despondent, stopped eating, and tried to kill himself by cutting his arm. The next morning, he determines to keep the fire going and strings his bow with a shoelace. By aiming below the target, he gets a fish and roasts it on a willow limb. He uses the scraps for bait and catches and eats twenty more fish.

Chapter 14

That night, Brian throws sand at a skunk that is digging into his cache of eggs. The skunk sprays him, blinding him for two hours while it eats the eggs. For three days, he strengthens his shelter by interweaving small limbs among larger ones, then secures food on a high shelf, which he reaches by a pine ladder. He builds a fish trap out of rocks.

Chapter 15

Brian begins keeping a calendar of events. He kills a bird near the beaver house. Eating fowl becomes a memorable event he calls First Meat.

Chapter 16

Brian celebrates First Arrow Day and First Rabbit Day. He encounters a moose cow, which butts him into the water and pushes him under. A second attack harms his ribs. He crawls away, then retrieves his weapons. After 47 days in the wild, Brian awakens to a tornado, which destroys his shelter and spreads ash and sparks from the fire. His chest is again hurt. Only his hatchet remains, but he is stronger against adversity than when he landed. While studying the fish pond the next morning, he spies the tail of the plane.

Chapter 17

Before searching the wreckage, Brian refits his shelter. He recalls the survival pack in the tail of the plane. He gathers wood for a raft for reconnoitering the plane. By late afternoon, he completes an awkward craft he calls Brushpile One, but locates no openings in the tail section.

Chapter 18

Brian cuts a triangular hole before dropping the hatchet in the lake. He retrieves it, then dives toward the survival pack. The sight of the pilot's skull spooks him. He captures the nylon bag and returns to shore.

Chapter 19

At dawn, Brian studies fishing gear, a first-aid kit, lighter and matches, cookware, cap, and a .22 rifle. These devices change him from the tough survivor he has become. He activates an emergency transmitter, which seems broken, then eats freeze-dried beef and potatoes. A bushplane passes over him. The pilot tells him that searchers stopped looking for him two months before. Brian invites him to dinner.

Epilogue

At the end of 54 days, the fur buyer who piloted the floatplane rescues Brian. He is forever changed in attitude. He marvels at the availability of food and learns the names of the plants and animals he encountered. Media interest in his adventure and in the Canadian government's investigation ends. Brian returns to his former life. For a week, his parents seem about to reunite. Then his father returns to the oil fields and his mother to real estate. Brian keeps to himself the knowledge of her secret lover.

Timeline

- age 9** Brian breaks his ankle when he crashes his dirt bike into a parked car.
- age 11** Brian and Terry pretend to be lost in the woods near a city park and build a lean-to out of willows.
- age 12**
- Wednesday** Brian's mother goes to a weekly exercise class.
- Thursday** Brian observes his mother at Amber Mall in the arms of a stranger. She kisses him but does not know that Brian sees her. Brian realizes that she visits her lover on Thursdays.
- Thanksgiving** Brian's family is still together for the holiday.
- January** Brian's mother asks her husband to leave. He moves to Canada to work in the oil fields.
- age 13**
- Wednesday** Brian rides 2 1/2 hours from home with his mother, who has bought him a hatchet before seeing him off to visit his father in Canada. He boards a Cessna 405 to fly from Hampton, New York, to the Canadian northwest. The pilot dies of heart attack. Brian attempts to fly alone, then crashes in an L-shaped lake.
- Thursday** He studies the territory while recovering from pain and shock. He builds a wall next to a ledge for shelter.
- Friday** Brian battles a porcupine that is drawn to the berries.
- Saturday** He removes the quills from his skin. After trial and error, he builds a fire, but has no food to cook.
- Sunday** Brian recovers 17 turtle eggs, eats six, and saves the rest. Late in the afternoon, he tries to make a spear or bow and arrow to kill fish or birds. He fails to start a signal fire before a search plane veers out of sight. He tries to kill himself by cutting his arm.
- Monday** He catches a fish and cooks and eats it. The remains become bait. He catches twenty more fish. He throws sand at a skunk, which sprays and blinds him temporarily.
- Tuesday** Brian weaves a stronger shelter door and stores his food on a high shelf. He kills a bird and roasts before the fire.
- 13 days later** His eyes heal from the skunk spray.

- coming days** He makes useful arrows and kills a rabbit. He grows more comfortable with the wilderness.
- Day 45** The skunk smell wears off Brian's clothes, hair, and shelter.
- Day 47** A tornado destroys the shelter, but reveals the plane's tail section.
- Day 48** Brian builds *Brushpile One*, a raft to serve as a platform while he searches the plane.
- Day 49** He cuts a hole in the plane, dives repeatedly, and retrieves the plane's survival kit. He realizes how valuable his hatchet has been.
- Day 50** From the pack, Brian locates fishing gear, cookware, a rifle, and an emergency transmitter. He cooks freeze-dried food.
- Day 54** A bushplane lands; the pilot, a fur buyer mapping Cree trapping grounds, responds to the transmitter and rescues Brian. The media questions him about his adventure.
- next week** For a few days, Brian's parents seem near reunion.
- Later** Brian's father returns to the oil fields and his mother to real estate. Brian keeps the secret of his mother's embrace with the unidentified man.

Author Sketch



A man who has undergone unusual character-molding experiences, Gary Paulsen writes from honest reflection. Born May 17, 1939 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, he is the son of Eunice and Oscar Paulsen, a career military officer and alcoholic whose addiction caused Paulsen much grief during his growing-up years. After World War II, Paulsen's father moved to the Philippines, where his son came to know him better. The instability of addicted parents left Paulsen in need of shelter with relatives, some of whom entertained him with storytelling.

At age 15, the stress of poor school performance and low self-esteem pushed Paulsen to the brink of suicide. During cold weather, to warm himself and avoid the misery of school and home, he took shelter in the library, where a staff member handed him books to read. Gradually, like a hungry beggar, he filled in gaps in his education with science fiction, westerns, and classics. Paulsen reminisces, "When she handed me the card, she handed me the world."

After a year at Bemidji College in Duluth and three years in the army, Paulsen served as a field engineer for the aerospace department of Bendix and Lockheed. Settling in California, he worked as an editor and film extra. His first novel, *The Special War* (1966), was so realistic that the FBI investigated his knowledge of missiles. He settled in Taos, New Mexico, where a dependence on alcohol ended his first marriage. The failure cost him a son and daughter, who were adopted by their stepfather. In Evergreen, Colorado, he conquered alcoholism through Alcoholics Anonymous.

In his second marriage, Paulsen found more opportunities to cherish a close relationship with wife Ruth Wright, a painter and co-author of *Dogteam* (1993) and illustrator of *Father Water, Mother Woods* (1995), and their son James. When poverty brought on by a 1978 lawsuit for libel threatened his family, Paulsen returned to home territory to farm, ranch, and trap beaver for the state of Minnesota to supplement a lagging income from writing. While running a dog team, he thrilled to the bright star-filled skies and the rhythmic breathing of the team. With sponsorship from Lands' End clothiers, he made an unlikely attempt on the 1983 Iditarod, an annual Alaskan event covering 1,180 miles of rough, late-season ice and snow from Anchorage to Nome. Hopes for returning to the course the following year ended after Paulsen suffered a heart attack at Logan Airport in Boston.

Currently one of America's most prolific writers of young adult literature, Paulsen makes frequent guest appearances, school visits, and readings and divides his times between residences in Leonard, Minnesota, and Tularosa, New Mexico. His current passion is sailing and a proposed solo transpacific journey. He has written for over three decades. At times he grows discouraged with his work, but has accepted the fact that writing is his burden and that he must do it at his own pace, in his own style.

Critic's Corner

Over the rough years of writing short stories, magazine articles, stage and screenplays, westerns, how-to books, and novels, Gary Paulsen had to find the voice that best expresses self and an erratic work rhythm that accommodates bursts of energy that keep him reading voraciously, studying the classics of Jack London and Herman Melville, perusing current fiction by writers like Alice Walker and Cynthia Rylant, and working into the night. His most common themes—survival and coming-

of-age—have brought him adulation from the New York Public Library and from the American Library Association. He received Newbery Honors in 1986 and 1988 for *Dogsong* and *Hatchet*, in 1992 for *Clabbered Dirt, Sweet Grass*, and again in 1993 for *Eastern Sun, Winter Moon*. Other honors include the Dorothy Canfield Fisher award, William Allen White award, Midland Authors award, Western Writers of America Golden Spur award, Jeremiah Ludington award, Regina Medal, Parent's Choice award, Tennessee Volunteer State Book award, Notable Children's Trade Book in Social Studies, American Booksellers Pick of the List, Iowa Children's Choice award, Wisconsin Golden Archer award, NCTE Notable Book, *Parenting Magazine Reading-Magic Award*, ALA Notable Books for *Nightjohn* and *Woodsong*, IRA/CBC Children's Choice, *Booklist Editors' Choice*, and a Child Study Association of America's Children award.

Paulsen wrote the screenplay for the 1990 film version of *Hatchet*, entitled *A Cry in the Wild*. The screen story of the lost boy earned a good-to-very good rating from many reviewers, but only an "okay" from Paulsen. The author himself sums up his rapport with children, who send hundreds of letters daily, often from abused or neglected children. He claims, "We have been passive. We have been stupid. We have been lazy. We have done all the things we could do to destroy ourselves. If there is any hope at all for the human race, it has to come from young people. Not from adults."

Other Books by Gary Paulsen

Mr. Tucket (1968; 1994)
Winterkill (1976)
The Death Specialists (1976)
The Implosion Effect (1976)
C. B. Jockey (1977)
Tiltawhirl John (1977)
The Foxman (1978)
The Night the White Deer Died (1978)
Hope and a Hatchet (1978)
Meteorite-Track 291 (1979)
The Spitball Gang (1980)
The Sweeper (1980)
Compkill (1981)
Clutterkill (1982)
Popcorn Days and Buttermilk Nights (1983)
Dancing Carl (1983)
Tracker (1984)
Dogsong (1985)
Sentries (1986)

The Crossing (1987, 2006)
The Island (1988)
Murphy's Gold (1988)
Murphy's Herd (1989)
Night Rituals (1989)
The Winter Room (1989)
The Voyage of the Frog (1989)
The Boy Who Owned the School: A Comedy of Love (1990)
Kill Fee (1990)
Murphy's War (1990)
Canyons (1990)
Woodsong (1990)
The Cookcamp (1991)
The Monument (1991)
The River (1991)
A Christmas Sonata (1992)
Clabbered Dirt, Sweet Grass (1992)
The Haymeadow (1992)
Harris and Me (1993)
Nightjohn (1993)
Sisters/Hermanas (1993)
The Car (1994)
Father Water, Mother Woods (1994)
Legend of Red Horse Cavern (1994)
Rodomonte's Revenge (1994)
Winterdance: The Fine Madness of Running the Iditarod (1994)
Call Me Francis Tucket (1995)
Danger on Midnight River (1995)
The Rifle (1995)
The Tent: A Tale in One Sitting (1995)
Murphy's Ambush (1995)
The Tortilla Factory (1995)
Murphy's Trail (1996)
Worksong (1997)
Tucket's Ride (1997)
The Schernoff Discoveries (1997)
Soldier's Heart: A Novel of the Civil War (1998)
The Transall Sag (1998)
Alida's Song (1999)
Brian's Return (1999)
Canoe Days (1999)
Escape, Return, Breakout (2000)
Tucket's Home (2000)
The White Fox Chronicles (2000)
Sarny: A Life Remembered (2001)
Dancing Carl (2001)
Tucket's Gold (2001)
Canoe Days (2001)
Alida's Song (2001)
Captive (2001)
Puppies, Dogs, and Blue Northerners (2002)
Brian's Hunt (2003)

The Beet Fields (2002)
My Life in Dog Years (2003)
The Glass Café; or, The Stripper and the State: How My Mother Started a War with the System That Made Us Kind of Rich and a Little Bit Famous (2003)
Shelf Life: Stories by the Book (2003)
Caught by the Sea: My Life on Boats (2003)
White Fox Chronicles (2003)
Tucket's Home (2003)
Guts: The True Story Behind Hatchet and the Brian Books (2003)
Cookcamp (2003)
The Tent (1995)
The Quilt (2005)
The Winter Room (2005)
World of Adventure Omni (2006)
Molly McGinty Has a Really Good Day (2006)
The Amazing Life of Birds: The Twenty-Day Puberty Journal of Duane Homer Leach (2006)
The Time Hackers (2006)
The Legend of Bass Reeves (2006)

Paulsen has also written volumes of short stories, non-fiction, books for children, the Culpepper Adventures series, the World of Adventure series, one-act plays, and screenplays.

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General Objectives

1. To characterize the will to survive
2. To describe the forces that govern flight
3. To list priorities that keep a survivor alive
4. To acknowledge the importance of achievement, autonomy, and self-esteem
5. To outline unexpected dangers in the wild
6. To define self-sufficiency
7. To cite useful examples of memories, dreams, and reflections on past experience
8. To describe the importance of being watchful and prepared
9. To contrast mental and physical responses to trauma
10. To characterize a bildungsroman

Specific Objectives

1. To account for Brian's determination
2. To characterize the changes in Brian's attitude
3. To describe the trauma that accompanies the Robesons' divorce
4. To contrast Brian before and after the adventure
5. To note Brian's dependence on a hatchet
6. To analyze Brian's post-tornado activities
7. To account for the temporary loss of the hatchet
8. To recount "the Secret" and its effect on Brian
9. To debate the significance of media attention to Brian's self-esteem
10. To account for Brian's exultation at building a fire
11. To discuss how Brian frees himself from the fear of death
12. To list ways in which Brian copes with animals
13. To evaluate Brian's performance as copilot
14. To explain why "it was not bad and would never be bad for him"
15. To isolate and explain technical terms such as body fat and stabilizers

Literary Terms and Applications

For a better understanding of Gary Paulsen's style, present the following terms and applications to his novel:

Third Person Narrative: a story or a series of actions told from the vantage point of an objective observer. *Hatchet* examines the relationship between a boy and wilderness from an objective point of view. By displaying the skills and needs of the character, the author pro-

duces a believable hero with whom readers can identify and learn from. Because Brian remains proportional to his age, experience, and education, Paulsen manages to write a story that might apply to other contemporary young people.

Historical Milieu: the setting of fictional events in a real period of history. The elements of the survival plot operate in tandem to the story of the Robesons' divorce. Through parallel tensions, Paulsen indicates that Brian lives in an age of dissolving marriages and of courts, judges, and lawyers who must settle the future of young people suddenly cut off from a stable home. By plunging the boy into a survival quandary, the author shows that exposure to the wild helps Brian learn to think logically, assess his needs, and wisely allot his energies to the most serious threats of the moment. By the time he returns home, he is equal to the challenges of a broken family unit.

Symbol: a concrete object that stands for a complex or abstract idea or relationship. The hatchet stands for the basic tool needed for survival in the wild. By showing Brian coping with danger as his prehistoric ancestors would have, Paulsen assures the reader that the boy is a sturdy example of young manhood. By the time that Brian recovers the survival pack from the tail of the Cessna, such niceties as freeze-dried meals seem like luxuries of technology that he has previously managed without.

The Importance of Setting

The milieu of *Hatchet* is crucial to the story. The action opens in the air—far from the crumbling home that haunts Brian's private thoughts and threatens his self-esteem and hope for the future. During the tense three hours of the plane ride and fall to earth, he remains sensible, alert, and controlled. By bringing the plane to a safe landing on water, he spares himself mortal wounds that would have killed or drowned him outright or left him injured and vulnerable among predatory animals.

The next stage of Brian's story shows him surviving in the wild against potential and actual dangers. His alertness and ability to cope with physical and emotional threats suggest early on that he will not only survive, but reassure his troubled mind that he can also weather a divorce in his family. The small successes of building a fire, making weapons, and cooking his food become monumental keys to his

understanding of the wilderness milieu. His challenges grow more and more sophisticated, climaxing in the creation of a diving platform that allows him access to the submerged Cessna and its technologically advanced communication device. By the time a rescuer arrives, Brian is cozy and content in a handmade forest shelter.

As Paulsen shifts Brian back to civilization, the boy possesses new skills to apply to family turmoil, suspicion, and divorce. No longer a threatened child, he recognizes challenge for its positive and negative implications, both of which make him stronger. The world intrigues him to new curiosities about sources of food and the types of animals and plants that made up his temporary home in Canada. He cannot stave off the dissolution of a two-parent home, but he can exist in a familiar world bolstered by the experiences of facing death, feeding and protecting himself, and learning from trial and error.

Cross-Curricular Sources

Novels

- Avi, *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*
- William Bell, *Crabbe*
- Hal Borland, *When the Legends Die*
- Forrest Carter, *The Education of Little Tree*
- Robert Cormier, *I Am the Cheese*
- Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*
- Jean Craighead George, *Julie of the Wolves*, *My Side of the Mountain* and *The Talking Earth*
- William Golding, *The Lord of the Flies*
- Robert Heinlein, *Tunnel in the Sky*
- Ernest Hemingway, *The Old Man and the Sea*
- Will Hobbs, *Downriver*



Jack London, *The Call of the Wild* and *White Fang*
Harry Mazer, *Snowbound*
Scott O'Dell, *The Island of the Blue Dolphins* and *Streams to the River, River to the Sea*
Wilson Rawls, *Where the Red Fern Grows*
Conrad Richter, *The Light in the Forest*
S. L. Rottman, *Rough Waters*
Theodore Taylor, *The Cay* and *Timothy of the Cay*
James Vance Walker, *Walkabout*
Robb White, *Deathwatch*

Short Stories

Jack London, "To Build a Fire"

Nonfiction

Angier Bradford, *How to Stay Alive in the Woods*
Steven Callahan, *Adrift: Seventy Six Days Lost at Sea*
Robin Lee Graham, *Dove*
John Krakauer, *Into the Wild*
Theodora Kroeber, *Ishi: The Last of His Tribe*
Hugh McManners, *The Backpacker's Handbook* and *The Complete Wilderness Training Book*
Farley Mowat, *Never Cry Wolf*

Internet

"Quebec's Northern Crees,"
www.lib.uconn.edu/ArcticCircle/CulturalViability/Cree

Videos/DVD

And Now Miguel (Walt Disney, 1966)
A Cry in the Wild (MGM/UA, 1990)
My Side of the Mountain (Paramount, 1969)

Themes and Motifs

A study of the central issues and situations in Gary Paulsen's *Hatchet* should include these aspects:

Themes

- vulnerability
- loss
- anxiety
- responsibility
- logic
- self-reliance
- nature
- rescue
- reunion
- maturity
- acceptance

Motifs

- coping with divorced parents
- learning by trial and error
- mastering elements of survivalism
- achieving self-esteem
- accepting hardships as beneficial challenges

Meaning Study

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have a particular meaning in this novel. Explain each. Chapter and page numbers pinpoint the context in which the item appears.

1. It was a small plane, a Cessna 406—a bushplane—and the engine was so loud, so roaring and consuming and loud, that it ruined any chance for conversation. (Chap. 1, p. 1)
(Brian flies in a small, light plane designed to take off and land at small airports or in the level open places in the wild. Most such planes are light, single-engine, and propeller-driven. Another type of small plane is the floatplane that rescues Brian by landing in water on big floats instead of wheels.)
2. What he knew and had not told anybody, what he knew about his mother that had caused the divorce, what he knew, what he knew—the Secret. (Chap. 1, p. 3)
(The Secret that nags at Brian's peace of mind is an image of his mother in a station wagon and kissing an unidentified man. Brian sees her affair as the cause of the divorce. It becomes a secret because Brian conceals from her that he saw them together at the mall and does not tell his father about the other man. During the summer, Brian intended to explain the source of his mother's discontent, but he failed to act on his intentions.)
3. He was working in the oil fields of Canada, up on the tree line where the tundra started and the forests ended. (Chap. 1, p. 7)
(Bush is a general reference to a large wild area covered with trees and undergrowth, like the Canadian wilderness where Brian crashes. Tundra is a cold, dry region where trees can't survive. Low plants and animals thrive on tundra such as that of northern Canada where Mr. Robeson works.)
4. He knew there were procedures, that you could do mouth-to-mouth on victims of heart attacks and push their chests—C. P. R.—but he did not know how to do it and in any case could not do it with the pilot, who was sitting up in the seat and still strapped in with his seatbelt. (Chap. 2, p. 14)
(A first-aid procedure for a victim whose heart has stopped

beating, C. P. R. stands for cardiopulmonary resuscitation, a combination of artificial or mouth-to-mouth respiration and artificial blood circulation created by rhythmic pressing on the sternum or breastbone. C. P. R. may be performed by an individual or team trained to recognize need and apply the method shortly after a victim falls into crisis. Even if Brian had learned the method, he would have needed more space and time than he had and possibly an assistant to save the pilot.)

5. He knew airspeed was different from ground-speed but not by how much. (Chap. 2, p. 21)
(True airspeed is the speed of the plane in relation to the air. Indicated airspeed, as shown on the instrument panel, is true air speed moderated by temperature and air pressure. Groundspeed is the plane's speed in relation to the ground. If a plane is flying into a 20-mph headwind and has a true airspeed of 120 mph, the groundspeed will be 100 mph. Brian doesn't know what speed he's reading on the dial.)
6. A porcupine had stumbled into his shelter and when he had kicked it the thing had slapped him with its tail of quills. (Chap. 8, p. 81)
(Porcupines defend themselves by striking enemies with their tails, which are covered in quills that easily detach and embed in the attacker. Some quills have tiny backward pointing barbs like barbs on a fishing hook, which make the quills difficult to remove and which tear flesh as they come out. The quills stuck deep into Brian's calf seem to be the barbed type.)
7. There Were these things to do. (Chap. 11, p. 103)
(Brian staves off depression by deliberately setting himself tasks to complete. Each task in itself is useful, but the cumulative effect is what Brian has in mind as he keeps telling himself there are things to do. Physical and mental actions keep Brian from panicking or longing to be rescued.)
8. I am always hungry but I can do it now, I can get food and I know I can get food and it makes me more. I know what I can do. (Chap. 16, p. 148)
(Paulsen replicates the mechanical, childlike internal monologue that Brian recites. Knowing he can provide himself with food for survival makes him more whole and complete and less dependent on others. Thus, he is more confident, more able, a person expanded with additional ability and enhanced self-confidence.)
9. The tail looked much larger when he got next to it, with a major part of the vertical stabilizer showing and perhaps half of the elevators. (Chap. 17, p. 171)
(Brian studies parts of the horizontal tail assembly of the submerged Cessna 406. The stabilizer is like a small wing on the

tail—flat-bottomed and curved at the top. It keeps the tail from bobbing up and down and so stabilizes the plane horizontally. The elevator moves up and down to raise or lower the plane's nose. Brian pulls himself around the plain's tail on the elevator and stabilizer.)

10. The Pilot who had landed so suddenly in the lake was a fur buyer mapping Cree trapping camps for future buying runs—drawn by Brian when he unwittingly turned on the emergency transmitter and left it going. (Epilogue, p. 192)
(The Cree live in and near Canadian forests. Most occupy villages and enter woods to hunt and trap. They also work at mining and other occupations. About 45,000 Woods Cree live in Canada today, plus about 30,000 Plains Cree, who raise cattle and wheat on reservations. The pilot who finds Brian is mapping Cree trapping camps.)

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 from the novel.

Questions 1-5 (Literal Level)

1. Describe Brian's attempts to make fire.
(According to Paulsen's narrative, "Brian found it was a long way from sparks to fire." Frustrated, he experiments with different materials to use as tinder—grass, twigs, a shredded twenty-dollar bill. In rapt contemplation of the problem, he spends two hours creating a ball of birch bark fluff. Then he works out how many sparks are needed to ignite it. Finally, he remembers to add air, learning just how much breath to give his sparks as they devour the tinder. Once the fire starts, he rushes to feed it and gather fuel to keep it going.)
2. What happens after the first plane goes away without seeing the signal fire?
(The departure of the first rescue plane is Brian's first major setback. "When the plane had come and gone, it put him down, gutted him, and dropped him and left him with nothing." As though the plane were his only hope, he gives into despair that he will never be rescued. Without that hope, he feels he can't go on. In his view, "He was alone and there was nothing for him." Later, Paulsen reveals that Brian climbs the ridge and tries to commit suicide by cutting his arm with the hatchet. The experience proves cathartic. When morning comes, the lost boy is a new person.)

3. How does the hatchet help Brian survive?
(Until Brian learns that he is his most valuable asset, the hatchet is his only real aid. With the handy tool and weapon, he can cut wood for fire, the shelter, bedding, a signal fire, the ladder, and the raft, which becomes his diving platform at the submerged plane wreckage. He can dress fish and do other chores requiring a sharp edge. More vitally, the hatchet enables him to make fire. Ultimately, the hatchet proves inadequate as a suicide implement, but brings about his rescue by allowing him entrance to the Cessna's tail section and the emergency transmitter that summons the fur buyer.)

4. What prepares Brian for survival in the wild?
(Very little in Brian's city life is relevant to a wilderness survival experience. He was aware of C. P. R., but didn't know how to apply it. Among the murky details of potable liquids, "Nobody had ever told him if you could or could not drink lakes." In general, he lacks much useful data to help him feed himself, stay warm, and attract a rescuer.

On the other hand, Brian manages to pull together little bits and pieces of nearly forgotten information to guide him. First and most importantly, he remembers his English teacher, Mr. Perpich, advising the class to value themselves as their main assets. From science, Brian recalls that he needs oxygen to feed a fire and that water refracts light. By applying these physical principles, he acquires fire and fish to cook. Past television shows tell him to search for berries and that turtles lay eggs on land. His memory of Uncle Carter impels him to swallow raw eggs. And a day in the park with his friend Terry brings thoughts of building a lean-to for shelter.)

5. How does Brian learn from mistakes?
(The key to Brian's survival is his willingness and ability to learn from his mistakes, especially after his change. After vomiting, Brian learns not to drink too much water or eat too many gut cherries at one time. The mistake of throwing the hatchet at the porcupine yields vital information about generating sparks from the rock wall. The failed fish spear leads him to invent a bow and arrow. The mistake of the skunk encounter results in the food storage ledge, which in turn inspires the idea of the fish pen. And the fact that "small mistakes could turn into disasters" and even death contributes strongly to Brian's new ability to be patient, rational, and reflective.)

Questions 6-8 (Interpretive Level)

6. Describe Brian's character growth.
(At the beginning of his flight over the wild, Brian is self-absorbed, angry at his mother, indifferent to "Jim or Jake" the pilot, and obsessed with thoughts about the divorce. Following Mr. Perpich's advice to value himself, Brian begins to draw on his inner reserves and to gain some self-confidence. He banishes self-pity because "feeling sorry for yourself didn't work" and

becomes a part of his environment, where he truly sees and hears for the first time.

The crucial change comes after Brian's failed attempt to commit suicide. Afterward, "He was not the same and would never be again like he had been . . . He was new." The rejuvenated Brian is patient, competent, full of "tough hope" that he can take care of himself. He has become a mature and logical young man who plans carefully, stays alert, and learns from his mistakes.)

7. Explain the irony of the survival pack and its contents.

(By the time that Brian retrieves the pack, he no longer needs it and is even uneasy with some of its contents. Had he found the survival pack at the beginning of his wilderness experience, it would have seemed utterly essential to him. But he might not have learned to rely on logic. He would have missed the task of making fire, cooking without utensils, catching fish without hooks and lures and line, outwitting predators, and spearing foolbirds.

Through experience, Brian learns to make the environment work for him. He feels different with the rifle and lighter and he doesn't like the change. In a final irony, the emergency transmitter is the source of his communication with the outside world. When the fur buyer locates him long after the government has ceased its search for the plane, Brian can casually offer the man the hospitality of his seemingly superfluous survival pack.)

8. What does the subplot of the divorce add to the adventure story?

(Brian's quandaries at home parallel his survival needs in the wild. The memories of his mother's infidelity and the questions of lawyers and the judge place the boy in a complex modern situation that threatens his spirit rather than his physical well being. This burden of regret and repressed anger becomes an adjunct to his fear of death in the wild. The serendipity of his maturity in circumventing death in the outback enables him to return to a snarled family life and to apply new-found self-confidence and logic to the problem of his future in a divided family.)

Questions 9 and 10 (Critical Level)

9. How does the narrative shift in Chapter 13 alter the novel?

(Without warning, Gary Paulsen begins Chapter 13 after a significant time lapse. By alternating flashback with the night on the ridge, he emphasizes the catharsis of Brian's suicidal despair and the subsequent change in the boy's outlook and self-esteem. Starting with Chapter 13, Brian is wiser, more thoughtful, and settled. He remembers the past 42 days as he finds "new ways to be what he had become.")

10. Summarize survival rules based on Brian's experience.
(Brian learns two types of survival rules. The physical adjustment to living in the wild requires him to master methods of making and stoking fire, awareness of the internal effects of unfamiliar foods, preparedness for harsh weather and invasive animals, and guardianship of his hatchet, his only cutting tool. Emotionally, Brian acquires some survival rules that can apply anywhere. He learns that feeling sorry for himself is counter-productive and that the application of cool logic is more likely to help than random stabs at self-preservation. By contending only with elements that he can change, he ceases to struggle against his parents' actions and choices.)

Questions 11-14 (Creative Level)

11. Prioritize various examples of everyday lessons in safety, animal behavior, food procurement, weather, preparedness, and logic in terms of Brian's survival.
12. Create a scene in which Brian confronts divorce with maturity and resignation.
13. Read aloud from William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. Parallel the author's intent and style in describing survivalism with Paulsen's revelation of Brian's marooning in the Canadian wilderness.
14. Using the novel as a model, express the importance of an epilogue to an adventure story.

Across the Curriculum

Art

1. Create a bulletin board contrasting these settings: small airfield, cabin and tail section of a *Cessna 406*, Canadian northwest, Cree trapping grounds, bluff, rock shelf, L-shaped lake, tornado's path, hummocks, glacier, lean-to near a city park, under pond water, *Brushpile One*, Brian's home, parking lot of the Amber Mall, and a storage shelf.
2. Draw a frieze or cartoon explaining the events that precede and follow entry into the *Cessna's* tail section. Use illustrations to answer these questions: At what point does Brian expend the most energy? Why does he need a stable platform? What makes his platform difficult to maneuver?
3. Make a welcome sign from Terry to Brian, a chart comparing the flight into the L-shaped lake with

Brian's second flight to Canada, a travel brochure for naturalists, an illustrated guide to safety features on the *Cessna 406*, varied styles of fish traps, an advertisement for chartered plane service to Canada's oil fields, a list of questions for Mr. Robeson to ask the judge, a poster introducing fur buyers to the Cree, a topographical map of Canada's northwest, a headstone for the pilot, a mathematical chart converting miles to kilometers, or a newspaper headline describing Brian's safe return to Hampton.

4. Using drafting software, re-create top, back, and side views of the tail section of a *Cessna 406*. Name the parts that Brian identifies and point out the sections that he cuts with his hatchet. Show how far Brian must travel to reach the cockpit and the obstructions which lie in his path.

Cinema

1. Draw a storyboard for a movie version of *Hatchet*. Show the area over which the plane flies, the nearness of a Cree reservation, the Canadian oil fields, a rocky bluff, a ledge, an L-shaped lake, a beaver lodge, the path of a tornado, a plane under water, a patch of wild berries, and a small airfield in Hampton, New York.
2. View coming-of-age dilemmas in films such as *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* and *The Learning Tree*. Discuss how external forces help young people clarify values, beliefs, and self-evaluation.
3. Determine how a film director would describe setting, atmosphere, mood, tone, theme, and characters for the scenes in which Brian locates his lost hatchet, Mrs. Robeson says farewell at the airport, Mr. Perpich encourages his students to motivate themselves, Brian shares dinner with the fur buyer, Brian nurses sore ribs or treats burns on his eyes, or Terry and Brian build a lean-to near the city park.

Drama and Speech

1. Write several conversations that are only implied, such as Mrs. Robeson's discussions with the blond-haired man, the judge's comments on visitation rights, Mr. Robeson's invitation to Brian, Mrs. Robeson's instructions to the pilot, the trader's radio message that he has found Brian, Terry's comments during the building of the lean-to in the park, and Brian's questions of the lawyer.

2. Role-play the part of government and Cree search parties. How will your group select a direction to search? What devices will help you locate a downed plane? What clues will suggest the presence of a lone boy in the wilderness? How will you remain in touch with other searchers?

Education

1. Compose an informal essay on teaching self-reliance and orienteering. List activities illustrating patience, knowledge, and survival skills. Describe how Brian adapts to fishing and killing animals for food. Discuss the lessons he learns about skunks, insects, keeping a fire, guarding a cache of eggs, making a bow and arrows and fish spear, and making a stronghold.
2. Compose dialogue in which you play a media interviewer asking questions about Brian. What would you learn from Mr. Perpich, Terry, Uncle Carter, the fur trapper, a Cree, one of Brian's parents, or the blond-haired man. Decide whether you should comment on the effects of visitation rights or on survival in the Canadian northwest.
3. Organize a panel discussion of the value of newspapers, magazines, books, movies, and television to Brian's education about survival, first-aid, fire-making, airplane structure, flight, and civil court. Why does Brian make so little mention of textbooks or lessons? List classroom studies that would help your group survive in desolate country, for example, first aid.
4. Outline the investigatory methods of rescue teams. Propose a list of items that they should carry, such as matches in a waterproof container, high energy foods, flashing light with extra batteries, lightweight groundcloth, knife, cell phone, and first-aid kit.

History and Social Studies

1. Using Internet sources, make a time line indicating the adventures of successful survivors of the Canadian northwest, particularly the Cree, missionaries, miners, naturalists, sociologists, cartographers, and the mountaineers known as *coureurs de bois*. Comment on the formation of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. List sources where you find the most up-to-date information.

2. Explain briefly how researchers study early cultures. Why would an anthropologist study the evolution of tools and weapons? How does Brian recreate the behaviors of the Cro-Magnon era? What weapon is hardest for him to duplicate? What refinements on the spear increase its accuracy? Why does Brian's hatchet give him an edge on early fire builders and spear makers?
3. Characterize in a theme the use of the senses for self-protection. Cite examples of Brian's ability to smell, taste, hear, touch, or sense the presence of predatory animals and game. Discuss how the first snowfall would have altered Brian's ability to survive in the wild.
4. Create a bulletin board illustrating current census figures concerning the racial makeup of the Canadian northwest. Attach peripheral commentary on migratory animals and animals indigenous to lakes and woods of the tundra. Mark animals that are easily caught or trapped for food. Make a separate assessment of changes wrought by winter. Note the most available food for the snowy months. Speculate on the identity of the green nuts that Brian finds.
5. Study the history of the Cree. How have they lived in the tundra among dangerous animals and rugged rocky ledges? What adaptations do natives make to changing situations, for example, the swarm of insects in summer, the coming of white fur traders, and the availability of fresh fish for eating and drying? How far into the Canadian northwest does Cree territory extend?

Journalism

Compose a series of magazine features on a boy lost on an L-shaped lake in the Canadian northwest. Focus on aspects of his health and safety requiring immediate attention, agencies that inform his parents and help them prepare for his arrival, and such psychological needs as anxiety about reuniting with parents or answering questions about the pilot's heart attack and the skeleton lying underwater.

Language Arts

1. Explain orally why contrasting family expectations confuse Brian and cause him to think separate thoughts about his father and mother. Project how he will cope with his mother's continued interest in the blond-haired man or with his

father's remarriage. How will these events influence Brian's concept of marriage? of fidelity? of family life?

2. Discuss with a group the symbolism of the Amber Mall. With what behaviors do most people connect red, amber, and green? How do these behaviors influence Brian when he approaches the skeleton? when he returns home? when he visits his father in Canada? when he spies on his mom?
3. Draw a web representing the interconnectedness of characters and animals. Include the pilot (as a man and as a corpse), Terry, Mr. Perpich, Brian's parents, the media, the fur buyer, the Cree, moose cow, wolves, bear, birds, skunk, porcupine, rabbits, fish, snapping turtle, and mosquitoes.
4. Make flash cards or posters illustrating these terms: shelter, interlaced, seepage, self-pity, hot-hate, frustration, flammable, eddied, dormant, intensity, convulse, heft, smolder, mental journal, rectify, seared, camouflage, sarcasm, stabilize, ruefully, stymied, frenzied, swiveled, expand, substantial, wiry, and furor.
- 5 Read aloud from Jack London's *Call of the Wild* and *White Fang*. Why do both Paulsen and London emphasize action verbs in detailing how humans and animals survive in the wilderness? Locate segments from *Hatchet* where the use of action verbs intensifies.

Law

Compose an extended definition of visitation rights. Stress complex emotional issues that test a family's commitment to each member's emotional well being.

Music

1. Listen to recordings of instrumental or orchestral music to accompany an audio taping of *Hatchet*. Select sounds that reflect Brian's mood and the changes in nature. Emphasize the gradual strengthening of his body and spirit.
2. Apply Stevie Wonder's "Love's in Need of Love Today" to the situation at Brian's home.

Psychology

1. Make an oral report on the importance of belief in self. How do Perpich's words seem to Brian in

English class? Why do the words return to encourage and uplift him in the wilderness? Why is it important to "stay positive and stay on top of things"? Mention ways that Brian "gets motivated."

2. Organize a panel discussion of dreams. Why does Brian have difficulty understanding the messages recorded in his dreams? What parts of the brain express these murky messages? How does the brain access learned information to solve problems during sleep?

Religion

1. Contrast the type of funeral Brian conducts for the pilot with your own expectations for an appropriate memorial.

Science

1. Summarize the importance of these terms to flight: drone, slew, bank, horizon, altimeter, transmitter, CB radio, throttle, windmilling, glide, wallow, amphibious, and flight plan.
2. Contrast the behaviors of various animals: stupid birds, schools of fish, the diving kingfisher, swarms of mosquitoes, the industrious beaver and snapping turtle, the curious skunk, the wily porcupine, the combative moose cow, a wolf pack, and the berry-eating bear.

Student Involvement Activities

1. Compose a short speech in which you explain Brian's inner turmoil about surviving divorce. Why does divorce hurt in a different way from sore ribs, burning eyes, insect bites, quill wounds, bad dreams, loneliness, isolation, and hunger? Why does Brian relate divorce to shouting and lawyers? Why does the pilot's silence increase Brian's mental torment?
2. Explain to a small group the forces that impinge on Brian as he faces manhood. Discuss his response to the moose cow, reactions to media attention, memories of his mother's lover, the past Thanksgiving, bad dreams, killing a rabbit, sounds of a tornado, despair at the quills in his leg, anger at lawyers, recollections of television programs and movies about survival, and confusion about his family's future.

3. Lead a debate about the best way for separating parents to prepare their children for the change in their family. Comment on the role played by parents, lovers, relatives, employers, teachers, outsiders, friends and peers, lawyers, and judges.
4. Describe aloud the change that takes place in Brian as he matures. Note how he learns to study problems and to spare himself fatigue or injury by moving carefully into a dangerous situation, for example, the recovery of his hatchet from the lake bottom. Account for his toughness on return to Hampton, New York.
5. Create a list of images from the novel that appeal to the five senses, such as "When he stopped there was sudden silence, not just from him but the clicks and blurps and bird sounds of the forest as well."
6. Study the background elements of the story, particularly the nature of heart attacks, the job of a naturalist, how small planes fly and glide, the parts of the plane that land it safely, a description of tundra, the dangers of a tornado, the most obnoxious animals and insects in the Canadian northwest, the purpose of a self-cleaning drill bit, the location of Cree trapping grounds, the story of Bigfoot, and divisions of property and responsibility for children in divorce settlements.
7. Describe a minor character, such as Terry, the pilot, the blond-haired man at Amber Mall, the fur buyer, the Cree, lawyers, Mr. Perpich, Brian's Uncle Carter, or Brian's father or mother. Explain why minor characters remain so distant in a survival story. Discuss how Mr. Perpich's philosophy of self-motivation takes on major proportions in Brian's survival.
8. Describe in a short speech the dissolution of family unity. Explain why the hot-hate attacks Brian in dreams, in quiet moments, and during low points in his struggle. Discuss his response to shouting and coercion from lawyers. Define ombudsman. Explain how an impartial third party might assuage Brian's fears for his family and relieve the burden of "The Secret."
9. Explain in a theme how the author characterizes Brian's moments of self-doubt, prayer, fear, self-evaluation, meditation, distrust, grief, confusion,

determination, confession, defiance, curiosity, courage, drudgery, exultation, and insecurity.

10. Discuss your response toward survival literature. How does this novel change attitudes toward courage, self-sufficiency, and problem solving? What practical advice could you give Brian, for example, the Indians' use of lake mud as a remedy for insect bites and a repellent of swarms of mosquitoes? What benefit would Brian get from studying orienteering at Outward Bound?

Alternate Assessment

1. List examples of cooperation, fun, loss, coming to knowledge, tension, appreciation of nature, compassion, loneliness, regret, training, death, disappointment, and character in Brian Robeson's life.
2. List scenes that reflect Brian's learning from trial and error.
3. Compose a scene in which Brian confronts his mother with her behavior at the mall.
4. Make a character list and explain the relationship of each to Brian. Include the pilot, judge, fur buyer, Crees, lawyers, the media, Mr. Perpich, Carter, Terry, and his parents.

Vocabulary

Using the terms that follow, complete each sentence below. You will have answers left over.

abating	corrosive	hokey	rectify	tinder
abdomen	diminish	impaired	refracts	tundra
amphibious	eeled	initially	save	tinder
asset	furor	keening	seeping	virtually
chipper	granite	muck	slewed	wallow
contracted	gutted	punky	smoldered	wiry

1. Instead his eyes burned and tears came, the _____ tears that burned.
2. The plane _____ suddenly to the right.
3. And he would normally have said no that it looked too _____ to have a hatchet on your belt.
4. Worst was a _____ throb in his head.
5. The pain in his forehead seemed to be _____ somewhat.
6. Probably come in here with _____ planes.
7. He didn't want to _____ any chance he might have of being found.
8. The entire front of the overhang was covered _____ for a small opening at the right end.
9. Six or seven found fuel and grew, _____ and caused the bark to take on the red glow.
10. _____ he had thought of making a signal fire every day.
11. Of course—he had forgotten that water _____ light.
12. In the city if he made a mistake usually there was a way to _____ it.
13. The _____ spray that hit his face seared into his lungs and eyes, blinding him.
14. He thought that he might be permanently blind, or at least _____.
15. The horn boss on the moose drove him deeper and deeper into the bottom _____.
16. The rain had driven water into _____ all the wood he could find.
17. Perpich used to drum that into them—"You are your most valuable _____."
18. [He was] feeling almost _____ because his ribs were much better now.
19. He _____ in through the cables and formers.
20. The _____ died within a few months.
21. Spit came from the corners of his mouth and his legs _____ up, up into the sea, and his eyes rolled back in his head until there was only white.
22. When the plane had come and gone, it put him down, _____ him, and dropped him and left him with nothing.
23. He was working in the oil fields of Canada, up on the tree line where the _____ started and the forests ended.
24. As soon as the cold water hit his stomach he felt the hunger sharpen, as it had before, and he stood and held his _____ until the hunger cramps receded.
25. He later gained back six percent, but had virtually no body fat—his body had consumed all extra weight and he would remain lean and _____ for several years.

Comprehension Test A

Part I: Sentence Completion (30 points)

Supply a term to complete each of the following statements. Choose your answers from the list that follows. Place them in the blanks provided at left.

arrow	feathers	lodge	rock	The Secret
bit	gut cherries	L-shaped lake	spear	stabilizer
buyer	Hampton	New York	tail	.22
Cree	hatchet	prongs	themselves	visitation rights
egg	lean-to	raspberries	transmitter	windshield

1. The broken _____ allows Brian to swim to the surface of the L-shaped lake.
2. The _____ cause Brian to vomit and to have diarrhea.
3. Diving one more time, Brian locates the _____ at the bottom of the lake.
4. Mr. Perpich urges students to value _____.
5. The ride from _____ takes 2 1/2 hours.
6. Mr. Robeson invented a self-sharpening _____.
7. In the lake is a beaver _____.
8. Building the _____ near the park was just a game.
9. The quilled _____ causes Brian much pain and swelling.
10. The first taste of oily _____ makes Brian queasy.
11. Brian baits the _____ fish trap with scraps.
12. The fish spear has two separated _____.
13. The fur _____ trades with the Cree.
14. The _____ is stored in sections.
15. Bryan chooses to keep _____ from his father.

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. kisses Mrs. Robeson in Brian's dream. | A. Brian |
| _____ 2. is a mechanical engineer. | B. Mrs. Robeson |
| _____ 3. believes people are their own best resource. | C. Mr. Perpich |
| _____ 4. gives Brian sore ribs. | D. fur buyer |
| _____ 5. helps Brian build a lean-to. | E. moose cow |
| _____ 6. rubs the left arm and shoulder. | F. Terry |
| _____ 7. tries to get Brian to talk about his problems. | G. Cessna pilot |
| _____ 8. opens the antenna on the transmitter. | H. Cree |
| _____ 9. lands a floatplane. | I. blond-haired man |
| _____ 10. traps in the Canadian northwest. | J. Mr. Robeson |

Comprehension Test A (Page 2)

Part III: True/False (20 points)

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

- ___ 1. The tornado causes the tail section to rise above the lake's surface.
- ___ 2. For dessert, Brian serves peach whip.
- ___ 3. Living in the wild reminds Brian daily of the dangers of bears, wolves, moose, and porcupines, all of which threaten to harm him.
- ___ 4. Mr. Robeson considers returning to his wife and living once more in Hampton, but prefers the Canadian northwest.
- ___ 5. For most of the trip in the *Cessna*, the pilot allows Brian to fly.
- ___ 6. Uncle Carter's CB radio operates just like a headset on a single-engine plane.
- ___ 7. On his first meal of gut cherries, Brian eats green and ripe cherries along with the pits.
- ___ 8. Skunk spray rinses off Brian's body and clothes and causes little damage to his clothes.
- ___ 9. The Canadian government sends searchers to look for Brian.
- ___ 10. Brian forgets about the refraction of water when he first tries to spear fish.

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Explain why "Brian had gained immensely in his ability to observe what was happening and react to it."
2. Describe the search for a place to land the Cessna.
3. Discuss why searching the tail section requires so much energy.
4. Explain the role of the hatchet in the story.
5. Account for Brian's actions once he returns home.

Comprehension Test B

Part I: Matching (20 points)

Match the following quotations with their conclusions. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided at left.

- _____ 1. The basic idea had been good, the place for his shelter was right, but
 - _____ 2. He looked around, listened with his mouth open, and realized that in all his life
 - _____ 3. He had a lot to do, rebuild his shelter, get a new fire going, find some food or get ready to find some food, make weapons—and
 - _____ 4. He jerked and dragged wood around until the wall was once more in place—crudely, but
 - _____ 5. He pulled enough thick limbs in for a bed, green and spicy with the new broken sap smell, and by evening he was exhausted, hungry, and hurting, but
 - _____ 6. It took him an hour or so and all the time he worked
 - _____ 7. He also dragged in more wood—endless wood—and then
 - _____ 8. And that way was north where his father was, and that way east and that way south—and somewhere to the south and east
 - _____ 9. He made sure the hatchet was still at his belt and the raft still held together, then
 - _____ 10. To have any chance of success
- A. he had to work slowly because his ribs hurt.
 - B. he sat looking at the tail of the plane sticking up in the air, his hands working on the spear, his mind working on the problem of the plane.
 - C. he just hadn't gone far enough.
 - D. set out pushing the raft and kick-swimming toward the tail of the plane.
 - E. he had never heard silence before.
 - F. his mother would be.
 - G. he would have to be strong when he started.
 - H. he could improve it later.
 - I. relaxed and watched the sun set over the trees in back of the ridge.
 - J. he had something close to a place to live again, a place to be.

Part II: Short Answer (30 points)

Supply a word or phrase in answer to each of the following questions.

- _____ 1. Where does Brian build a lean-to?
- _____ 2. What weapon does Brian find in the nylon bag?
- _____ 3. Who summons the fur buyer?
- _____ 4. Whom does Brian recall drinking raw eggs?
- _____ 5. Where is Mrs. Robeson sitting when Terry and Brian arrive on their bikes at Amber Mall?
- _____ 6. Who believes that people must motivate themselves?
- _____ 7. Who gives Brian a headset to wear?
- _____ 8. From whom does the buyer get furs?
- _____ 9. What temporarily blinds Brian?
- _____ 10. What animal hurts Brian's ribs?
- _____ 11. What does Brian name his raft?
- _____ 12. What does the ladder reach?
- _____ 13. What part of the plane does Brian exit after the crash?
- _____ 14. Which fruit causes Brian illness?
- _____ 15. Who invites the floatplane pilot to a meal?

Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

Part III: Multiple Choice (30 points)

Underline a word or phrase from the list below to complete each of the following statements.

1. After the slap of the porcupine's tail, Brian (**hopes the tornado got the porcupine, weeps, hides the eggs on the shelf in a pouch, sits in the sun and cooks fish on a board**).
2. During the worst of the first days, Brian suffers (**broken ribs, sunburn, dreams of a judge and shouting lawyers, illness from too many raspberries**).
3. Brian believes that the (**floatplane was dislodged by the tornado, skull is falling from the skeleton, turtle eggs made him sick, transmitter is broken**).
4. The gut cherries (**lure bears and wolves, decay in the sand, make Brian's lips numb, draw fool-birds**).
5. Brian celebrates (**First Rabbit Day, his parents' divorce, the end of visitation rights, reunion with Terry**).
6. Brian pretends not to notice (**swarms of mosquitoes, the search plane's pass over his camp, the odor of gas, the bear eating turtle eggs**).
7. The man in front of Paisley's store (**opens a first-aid kit, sits in the station wagon with Brian's mother, yells at the boys building the lean-to, suffers a heart attack**).
8. Among the dials, Brian locates (**Transmitter 221, the cowling, a stabilizer, cables to the cargo hatch**).
9. Brian is surprised by (**the moose cow's gentleness, the weight of the raft, the first signs of winter, the Canadian government's decision to stop looking for him**).
10. In his fantasies drifts a tasty (**fantail, crayfish, hamburger, Thanksgiving with his grandparents**).
11. Brian deduces that the land was (**given to the Cree, a long way from the oil fields, nearer Hampton than the Canadian northwest, shaped by a glacier**).
12. "Jim or Jake or something" veered from the (**tail section, flight plan, copilot's seat, seatbelt latch**).
13. The twenty dollar bill (**becomes tinder, pays for a hatchet and belt clip, sinks to the bottom of the L-shaped lake, vanishes during the porcupine's attack**).
14. Brian owns a nail clipper, a T-shirt, and (**a shredded windbreaker, a hat, a headset, pictures of his parents**).
15. At the time of the crash, Brian (**tries to land on the rocky bluff, tells the voice that the plane is out of gas, feels hot-hate toward the blond-haired man, screams for his mother**).

Part IV: Essay (20 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Compare the behaviors of the moose cow, porcupine, and foolbirds.
2. Discuss the importance of the rock trap.
3. Explain why Brian might not have survived a winter alone.
4. Contrast Brian's first view of the *Cessna 406* with his return to the submerged fuselage.
5. Summarize the experiences that bring Brian the greatest satisfaction.

Answer Key

VOCABULARY

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. seeping | 14. impaired |
| 2. slewed | 15. muck |
| 3. hokey | 16. virtually |
| 4. keening | 17. asset |
| 5. abating | 18. chipper |
| 6. amphibious | 19. eeled |
| 7. diminish | 20. furor |
| 8. save | 21. contracted |
| 9. smoldered | 22. gutted |
| 10. initially | 23. tundra |
| 11. refracts | 24. abdomen |
| 12. rectify | 25. wiry |
| 13. corrosive | |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Sentence Completion (30 points)

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. windshield | 8. lean-to |
| 2. gut cherries | 9. tail |
| 3. hatchet | 10. egg |
| 4. themselves | 11. rock |
| 5. Hampton | 12. prongs |
| 6. bit | 13. buyer |
| 7. lodge | 14. .22 |
| | 15. The Secret |

Part II: Matching (20 points)

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

Part III: True/False (20 points)

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

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Matching (20 points)

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

Part II: Short Answer (30 points)

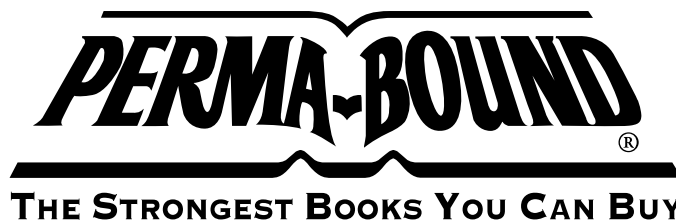
- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. near the park | 8. Cree |
| 2. .22 rifle | 9. skunk spray |
| 3. Brian | 10. moose cow |
| 4. Uncle Carter | 11. <i>Brushpile One</i> |
| 5. station wagon | 12. foodshelf |
| 6. Mr. Perpich | 13. windshield |
| 7. Cessna pilot | 14. gut cherries |
| | 15. Brian |

Part III: Multiple Choice (30 points)

1. weeps
2. sunburn
3. transmitter is broken
4. make Brian's lips numb
5. First Rabbit Day
6. the odor of gas
7. suffers a heart attack
8. Transmitter 221
9. the weight of the raft
10. hamburger
11. shaped by a glacier
12. flight plan
13. becomes tinder
14. a shredded windbreaker
15. screams for his mother

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.



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