

Incident at Hawk's Hill

by Allan W. Eckert

Classroom Favorites

Teacher's Guide by Gary Ruegsegger



A Perma-Bound Production

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

- To respond to a variety of readings
- To communicate through oral language (discussion)
- To employ a variety of forms in writing (descriptive, narrative, expository)
- To comprehend through reading (sequence, cause and effect, compare and contrast, details, main idea, context clues, character traits, predicting outcomes, author's purpose, author's style, author's opinion)
- To expand vocabulary (context clues, signal words, definitions, similes, metaphors)
- To identify characteristics of literature (plot, setting, theme, characters, conflicts, climax)
- To recognize elements of style in literature (flashback, foreshadowing, point of view)

NOTE TO THE TEACHER

This guide is designed specifically to incorporate listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking skills into the study of literature.

Each chapter of the novel is introduced by a synopsis and several prereading activities. The vocabulary sections are usually limited to four or five new terms. These words are always listed in the context of the phrase, clause, or sentence in which they appear in the text of the book. The meanings of most of these words can be discovered through the use of context clues. If in some cases the context does not help reveal meaning, a dictionary may be used. However, the use of context clues should always be the first strategy employed. In each Before Reading section, there is also a predicting activity. These activities may take the form of class discussion or writing. The significance of the predicting activities is to allow students the opportunity to apply their prior knowledge of the subject matter even before reading begins.

The next section, labeled During Reading, frequently can be implemented after the student begins reading but before he actually completes the chapter. These activities are an extension of the earlier predicting activities and help students to become better strategic readers. Finally, the After Reading section provides more discussion questions and writing activities which expand concepts encountered in the chapter.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Allan Eckert was born in 1931. He is a multitalented freelance writer who has excelled as a novelist, a nonfiction writer,

a short story writer, a playwright, a journalist and a scriptwriter. He is often called one of America's finest nature writers and natural historians. In his youth, Eckert explored the countryside relying on his ability to hunt and fish in order to survive in the wilderness. Before 1955, he supported himself working as a postman, fireman, dishwasher, detective and a cook. He is still one of the chief scriptwriters for the television series "Wild Kingdom." His fiction and nonfiction both reflect the power of nature and the dignity of animals. His writing has earned him five Pulitzer Prize nominations and numerous other awards including Newbery recognition.

CRITIC'S CORNER

The reviews on the career of Allan Eckert are mixed. Many critics hail his historical fiction, especially his "Winning of America" series, as a solid bridge between scholarly history and historical fiction. Although Eckert's writings have been compared favorably to those of Francis Parkman, he has suffered the wrath of the critics for his informal style, his use of stream of consciousness, and his "hidden dialogue." In *Incident at Hawk's Hill*, his most critically acclaimed work, Eckert combines his interest in frontier life and his love of nature to form an almost magical novel. Yet this novel has also been criticized for containing excessive violence.

CHAPTER ONE (pp. 1-23)

Synopsis: Benjamin MacDonald follows a mouse in the barn imitating the small rodent's movements and actions. William MacDonald, the boy's father, calls for him to come out of the barn. Ben runs to his mother, Esther MacDonald. George Burton, "a very large man with a massive chest and huge hands," rides up to the house. He has a huge, yellow gray dog named Lobo with him. While Burton is talking to the MacDonalds, Lobo charges at Ben. Ben shows no sign of fear and the dog stops in his tracks. After Burton picks him up, Ben runs to hide in the barn. When Burton leaves, the MacDonalds discuss the unusual nature of their son. Ben begins to follow a chicken in the barnyard.

Before Reading:

Vocabulary

1. *Incredibly*, the boy was doing the same thing, *emulating* each movement of the mouse." (p. 1)
2. "Immediately, and with *incredibly* accurate *mimicry*, the same sound from Ben . . ." (p. 2)

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3. "... now there was a kind of *unkempt* ruggedness to his *countenance* that one might well have expected of the frontier type that this fur trader was." (p. 5)
4. "*Undoubtedly* part of the dislike MacDonald felt for this man was due to *hearsay*." (p. 6)
5. "The *stench* of the big man sickened Ben . . ." (p. 10)

Predicting

1. The cover of the novel pictures a young boy petting an animal. What kind of animal is the boy petting? (*A badger*) Does that kind of animal generally let humans touch it? How old does the boy appear? What is the boy's relationship with the animal?
2. What do you think the incident at Hawk's Hill will be?
3. Describe the picture on page 3. What is the boy doing? Why is he doing it? (*He is imitating the actions of the mouse*.)

During Reading:

On page 5, George Burton arrives at the MacDonald farm. The narrator says, "... his eyes never really met those of the person to whom he was talking. It gave the disconcerting impression of shiftiness, insincerity." What does *shiftiness* imply? What do you think Ben's reaction to Burton will be? Do you think Burton might become the hero of the novel? Why? Why not? Do you think he might become the villain in the story? Why? Why not?

After Reading:

1. Ben's father says, "I wouldn't mind seeing him get rid of some of the badger." What is a badger? (*A large member of the weasel family*.) When the word *badger* is used as a verb, what does it mean? (*To nag, to pester, to tease*.) What are the connotations of the word? Are they negative or positive? Does the verb form accurately reflect the animal's nature? (*Answers will vary*.)
2. What is *foreshadowing*? (*Giving an advanced indication or warning of*.) Could Ben's father's words give a "warning" as to what George might do later in this novel? (*Answers will vary*.)
3. *Irony* is a way of implying that the words said mean just the opposite. Sometimes it can also be a fact or a result that seems the opposite of what one might expect. Would Ben's father's words be ironic if he changes his feelings about badgers later in the book? (*Answers will vary*.)
4. What makes Will think Ben is abnormal? What does *abnormal* mean? (*Ben is shy, quiet, and prefers to spend his time imitating the actions and mannerisms of animals rather than interacting with other members of the family*.) (*Abnormal means not normal or average, unusual, strange, irregular*.)
5. Look up badger in the encyclopedia and write a one-paragraph report on the animal. (*Answers will vary*.)

CHAPTER TWO (pp. 24-37)

Synopsis: A four-year-old female badger searches out the countryside to find an adequate location to dig her nesting

chamber. Selecting a sight two miles north of Hawk's Hill, she digs a fifteen-foot tunnel which opens into the den chamber, a "domed, circular room about four feet in diameter and three feet high." She then excavates a forty-foot escape tunnel and layers the den chamber with dried grass and moss. She curls up in the den and goes to sleep.

Before Reading:

Vocabulary

1. "The thick dark tail, only four or five inches long, *lashed* back and forth with her *exertions* as she dug." (p. 29)
2. "Until then, this very *topography* would help protect them." (p. 29)
3. "The energy she expended in this *excavating* was enormous and it seemed her strength would give out . . ." (p. 30)
4. "... the site had not been as *prudently* chosen." (p. 35)
5. "... few wild animals — regardless of *species* — ever live out their full life-spans; a violent death almost always *intervenes*." (p. 37)

Predicting

The badger isn't mentioned in Chapter One. When do you think we'll first meet the badger? Do you think Ben has already met the badger? Are they friends?

During Reading:

1. On page 26, the narrator describes the badger in detail. List 10 adjectives that the narrator uses in his description. (*Short, dense, huge, powerful, long, weasel-like, carnivorous, muscled, fierce, largest*.)
2. On page 28, we learn that the badger had a "notch" on her right ear. How do you think she acquired this scar? (*Answers will vary, but the narrator tells us later in this chapter [p. 34] that a lynx tore "... away a chunk of its [the ear's] edge*."

After Reading:

1. What is *instinct*? (*A natural impulse that causes animals to act in characteristic ways*.) Explain.
2. The badger sees a hawk before she starts building her den. Why does she decide on this particular spot? On page xii, the MacDonalds see a hawk before they decide to settle the land. Why did they decide to build their home on that particular spot? Is there a parallel between the MacDonalds and the badger? Explain. (*Answers will vary, but the teacher should note that when the MacDonalds saw the spot of their future home, "... they had known without a doubt that this was it, that this was the very spot they would sink their roots with permanence*."

CHAPTER THREE (pp. 38-56)

Synopsis: George Burton spreads the story of Ben's ability to imitate animals. People from around the countryside come to the MacDonalds' farm just to get a glimpse of Ben. Standing inside the church door the MacDonalds hear their neighbors cruelly describe their son's affinity with animals. After

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lunch, Ben explores the prairie. He watches a sparrow hawk kill and devour a meadow jumping mouse. Soon he discovers four baby mice in a nest. After almost stumbling into the badger, he feeds the mice to her.

Before Reading:

Vocabulary

1. "In a country and a time where *diversions* were few, a boy who could act and talk like animals was something to see . . ." (p. 38)
2. "The *obese* Mary Deedly giggled nervously." (p. 39)
3. "But the *affinity* he shared with them was a truly remarkable thing, as was his *uncanny* ability to *mimic* so closely their movements and sounds." (p. 41)
4. ". . . he *encountered* a young beaver *migrating* across the prairie . . ." (p. 43)
5. "The badger blinked and she seemed not to be staring with such *malevolence* as at first." (p. 51)

Predicting

On page 37, the narrator comments that "few wild animals — regardless of species — ever live out their full life-spans; a violent death almost always intervenes." Will the badger ever reach her full span of fourteen years? Will she suffer a violent death? Explain your answer.

During Reading:

On page 46, we meet a hawk for the third time. This time the hawk brings a violent death to a meadow jumping mouse. Ben discovers the mouse's nest which holds four babies. What will happen to the baby mice? Is nature cruel and unkind or just indifferent? How many children are in the MacDonald family? (*Four — John, Beth, Coral, and Ben.*) Could the fate of the baby mice *foreshadow* the fate of the MacDonald children?

CHAPTER FOUR (pp. 57-70)

Synopsis: The large female badger continues her hunting. On the way to the prairie dog town, she eats eleven sharp-tailed grouse eggs and a cricket. The prairie dogs see her coming and retreat down in their burrows. The female badger starts her own excavating and within minutes captures a large male prairie dog in its own nest. She kills him and carries his body back to her nest. That same night her mate is caught in one of Burton's sardine-baited traps. For two days the male badger struggles to escape. His struggle ends when Burton clubs him to death.

Before Reading:

Vocabulary

1. ". . . within two weeks their eyes would open and they would then be ready for *weaning*." (p. 58)
2. ". . . she would begin bringing them actual *prey* . . ." (p. 58)

Predicting

Chapter Three ends with this sentence — "The door that was briefly opened had closed again." What door is the narrator talking about? Will the door ever be opened again?

During Reading:

1. On page 60, the narrator describes the fate of the grouse eggs. This is yet another example of violent death in the wilderness. Will the badger's pups survive? Will the badger survive? (*Answers will vary.*)
2. On page 67, when Burton sees the male badger in the trap why does he say, ". . . looks like I got me som shavin' brushes"? (*Badger fur makes excellent shaving brushes.*) Do you find it interesting that Burton had a beard? (*Having a beard, he doesn't need a shaving brush.*)

After Reading:

1. Is Burton a cruel, heartless man? Explain the reasons for your answer. (*Answers will vary.*)
2. Write a paragraph description of George Burton. (*Answers will vary.*)

CHAPTER FIVE (pp. 71-83)

Synopsis: When Burton arrives at Hawk's Hill, he shows the family the large badger corpse. The MacDonalds reluctantly invite him to dinner. Ben does not go to the evening meal, instead he stays in the barnyard studying the dead animal. Will Macdonald begin to skin the badger, but Ben strikes his father's arm knocking the knife to the ground. "Almost as a reflex action," Will slaps his son. Ben runs away to the barn. Will then tries to apologize to the boy, but Ben is again non-communicative.

Before Reading:

Vocabulary

1. ". . . Esther shot William an *exasperated* look . . ." (p. 71)
2. "Burton grunted, *oblivious* of the fact that he and his comments had been thus far pretty much ignored." (p. 73)
3. "He sounded as if he was tired of Burton's *loquaciousness*, overdone *joviality* and somehow insincere friendliness." (p. 78)
4. "The anger was gone now, replaced by a *contriteness* which only deepened . . ." (p. 81)

Predicting

At the end of the last chapter, Burton says, "C'mon horse. You 'n me's gonna go visitin'." Who are they going to visit?

During Reading:

On page 72, Burton tells the MacDonalds that although Lobo is ". . . 'fraid of 'em [badgers] . . . he purely respects 'em." What does Burton mean by "respects 'em"? (*Lobo respects the strength and power of a badger in a fight.*) Lobo has already had one fight with a badger, do you think he will have another? Will Lobo win or will the badger win? Will Lobo survive or will the badger survive? Is there a possibility that both will survive?

After Reading:

1. On page 79, Burton misunderstands Will's comment of "No sense at all in doing something like that." What does Will mean by his comment? (*He thinks he shouldn't have*

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slapped Ben.) What does Burton think Will meant? (*The boy shouldn't have struck his father's arm.*) Could this misunderstanding foreshadow another misunderstanding between the men?

2. How are Burton and Lobo alike? (*Answers will vary.*)

CHAPTER SIX (pp. 84-93)

Synopsis: After four consecutive nights in the den with her pups, the badger exits her den to hunt for food. She picks up the scent of Burton's sardine-baited trap. The trap slams shut on the two outer toes of her right front foot. After struggling for almost three days she gnaws off her toes to free herself from the trap. Rushing to her den, she finds two of her pups dead. The third dies by the morning.

Before Reading:

Vocabulary

1. "... she dropped to all fours and began her flowing *gait* toward the southwest." (p. 85)
2. "... the pain was *excruciating* for the badger." (p. 87)
3. "Thus began a period of incomparable *agony* and *anguish*." (p. 87)
4. "She began to *gnaw* at her own flesh, nipping it away particle by particle, whining and grunting with her efforts." (p. 89)

Predicting

1. Chapters 1, 3 and 5 focus chiefly on the MacDonald family. Chapters 2 and 4 deal chiefly with the badger family. What will be the focus of Chapter 6?
2. Remember the trap Burton set in Chapter 4? Will that trap play a major part in the action of this chapter? Will the badger spring the trap? Could Ben get caught in the trap?

During Reading:

1. On page 85, the badger sniffed a "... compelling odor." What is that scent? (*Sardines.*) What advice would you give the badger? Why didn't she follow the scent to the trap the first time? (*She already had food [the prairie dog] for her pups.*)
2. On page 87, the badger's paw gets caught in Burton's trap. Will Burton return and club her to death like he did her mate? Will she escape? If she escapes, will she eventually meet Burton again? (*Answers will vary.*)

After Reading:

How does the badger escape from the trap? (*She chews her two toes off and then escapes.*) How well will she be able to function in the wild with her injury? (*Answers will vary.*)

CHAPTER SEVEN (pp. 94-104)

Synopsis: Ben wanders off on the prairie. He spies a prairie chicken faking a broken wing in a vain effort to keep him from her nest. Ben is not fooled. A violent rainstorm whips up and he runs to an outcropping of rocks for shelter. After Ben

stumbles in a badger hole, he pushes himself into the hole in a vain attempt to stay dry. The badger returns.

Before Reading:

Vocabulary

1. "Ben realized that he had been guilty of a deep *transgression*." (p. 95)
2. "... he crouched and began following the bird, clucking as it clucked and *emulating* every action it made ..." (pp. 96 & 97)
3. "But an hour later he was still walking, though not swiftly and with a *niggling* uncertainty sprouting in his mind." (p. 99)
4. "The *acid* smell of *ozone* was in the air ..." (p. 102)

Predicting

The narrator concludes the last chapter by saying, "... she would survive." Is the narrator just talking about surviving her current wounds? Will she survive in this chapter? Will she survive all of her challenges in the novel?

During Reading:

Describe the picture on page 101. Could the picture foreshadow as well as describe the action of the novel? How does the picture reinforce the narrator's description of Ben? Be looking for an adjective in this chapter that best describes Ben in this picture. (*On page 102, the narrator says, "He [Ben] had never before felt so small, so all alone, so afraid."*)

After Reading:

What would you do if you were in Ben's situation? Do you think you could survive alone on the prairie? Will Ben remain alone? Remembering the picture on the cover of the book, what do you think Ben's relationship with the badger will be? Why?

CHAPTER EIGHT (pp. 105-122)

Synopsis: In the morning, Ben climbs out of the badger hole and surveys his situation. When he sees George Burton on the horizon, he scurries back into the burrow. Later Ben widens the tunnel with a sharp rock until he reaches the den chamber. The badger returns with a prairie chicken which she shares with Ben.

Before Reading:

Vocabulary

1. "He sat on the ground beside rock and hole and for the first time this morning considered his *predicament*." (p. 109)
2. "There he lay with the *pulsing* of his own heart so loud in his ears that he thought the trapper or his dog must hear it." (p. 111)
3. "There was only a sort of returned curiosity about this *diminutive* human being in the burrow." (p. 113)

Predicting

What will happen when Ben wakes up?

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During Reading:

1. On page 113, Ben is described as a "*diminutive* human being." What does the word *diminutive* mean? (*Of very small size, tiny*) How does this description reinforce the picture on page 101? (*See discussion of the picture in Chapter 7.*)
2. Describe the picture on page 117. What is Ben doing? (*He's crawling out of the badger's hole.*) Is he becoming more and more badger-like each day?

After Reading:

On page 121, the narrator says, "A *gnawing* loneliness was gripping him [Ben] again . . ." On page 89, the narrator says, "She [the badger] began to *gnaw* on her own flesh." Define the word *gnaw*. (*To bite or eat away little by little.*) Explain how loneliness can *gnaw* at the person. (*Answers will vary.*)

CHAPTER NINE (pp. 123-133)

Synopsis: The MacDonalds organize a search party for Ben, but unfortunately they find no trace of the boy. Will MacDonald vows, "We'll find him. We won't quit until we do."

Before Reading:

Vocabulary

1. "The *rigors* of the search began to tell on them." (p. 129)
2. "A few of the crowd were mildly *irked* that this Scotsman should be so *ungrateful* after all their efforts." (p. 132)

Predicting

At the end of Chapter 8, Ben calls for his mother, his older brother, and his father. Why does he call for his mother first? Why does he call for his father last? Will his father find him? Will he find him in time? (*Answers will vary.*)

During Reading:

On page 129, Burton says, "I reckon the boy took out either straight up or straight down, cause sure t' God he ain't no-where's 'round on the ground here 'bouts." How close to the truth are his words? (*Ben is in the badger den "in the ground."*)

After Reading:

At the end of the chapter, Will says "Ben's not dead, Esther." How does he know that Ben is not dead? Could it be instinct? Is he just trying to comfort his wife? Do you think she believes him? (*Answers will vary.*)

CHAPTER TEN (pp. 134-150)

Synopsis: After Ben falls asleep in the den, the badger returns and snuggles up to him and falls asleep. Over the next few days, the badger brings Ben an assortment of food including prairie hen's eggs, mice, and ducks. While she is teaching Ben to hunt, they encounter Burton's dog Lobo. Lobo nearly kills the badger, but Ben distracts the dog by biting his Achilles tendon. The badger then dives at the dog ripping out his throat.

Before Reading:

Vocabulary

1. "She came close to him and made a *guttural* chattering sound . . ." (p. 135)
2. "He was no longer so particular about what he could eat and *devoured* with equal *alacrity* any prey she brought him . . ." (p. 142)
3. ". . . especially in the *solitude* of the den when she was not with him, thoughts of his home and family would flood him . . ." (p. 142)
4. ". . . the dog forgot for a *fatal* instant the big female badger." (p. 147)
5. ". . . he tried desperately to *wrest* himself away." (p. 147)

During Reading:

Describe the picture on page 147. What is Ben doing? (*Ben is biting Lobo's leg.*) Is he still becoming more and more badger-like each day?

After Reading:

How does the aphorism "Birds of a feather flock together" describe Ben's relationship with the badger? (*Answers will vary.*)

CHAPTER ELEVEN (pp. 151-162)

Synopsis: Two months after Ben's disappearance, Will and John MacDonald still search the prairie for him. So far they have not as yet found a single sign of Ben, but on this day John finds his right shoe and then his left shoe. When a grouse bursts from its cover in the buffalo grass, John notices another shape scurrying for the cover of a rockpile. John almost stumbles in a big hole and for some reason the hole has aroused his curiosity.

While hiding in the tall grass behind the hole, John sees a human head pop out. It's Ben. When cornered Ben viciously attacks his older brother in the same fashion a badger might. John overpowers his younger brother, snatches him up, and hurries to his horse Dilly. The snarl of a large badger frightens the horse, but John maintains control. On horseback, John quickly outdistances the badger and finds his father. Will weeps out of thankfulness and joy when he sees his youngest son.

Before Reading:

Vocabulary

1. "Knowing only too well the *frailty* and *timidity* of her last-born, Esther had convinced herself that Ben would be found within a half mile of the house . . ." (p. 152)
2. "Had that one face been *ascertained* heavy efforts could have been *concentrated* in that direction." (p. 153)
3. ". . . the riverbanks themselves — had been *assiduously scoured* without success . . ." (pp. 153 & 154)
4. "John *peripherally* saw movement far ahead . . ." (p. 157)
5. ". . . she had regained her *equilibrium* and charged anew . . ." (p. 160)

Predicting

At the end of Chapter Ten, why did the narrator say, "Benjamin MacDonald was apt to become just as dead as the majority of people . . . thought him to be"? Could the narrator mean Benjamin MacDonald the human being was dying while Benjamin the badger was taking over? Could Ben's health be failing?

During Reading:

On page 157, John looks at his whip, but he moves away without it. Should he have taken the whip with him? Was it unwise for him to have left his rifle at the place where he found Ben's shoe? (Answers will vary.)

After Reading:

Why did Ben fight his brother John? Could two months on the prairie have caused him to forget his brother? During the summer, do you forget everything that you've learned in school? (Answers will vary.)

CHAPTER TWELVE (pp. 163-176)

Synopsis: Minutes after Ben is reunited with his family the badger is seen glaring and growling at the family from the doorsill. As Will snatches his rifle and aims it at the beast, Ben breaks free from his mother and runs to the badger. After realizing there was a special bond between Ben and the badger, the badger's life is spared and she becomes a member of the household. Over the next several days, Ben relates his adventure to the family.

Before Reading:

Vocabulary

1. "... she stood before the house *paralyzed* with *astonishment* for a moment . . ." (p. 163)
2. "His nostrils *dilated* as he sniffed . . ." (p. 165)
3. "For a week Ben *alternated* between two lives . . ." (p. 169)
4. "... along with the *ramifications* of what would occur if ever it became public knowledge." (p. 172)
5. "... neither were they lies in the sense of deliberate and *malicious prevarication*." (p. 173)

Predicting

What will Ben's reaction be when he sees his mother?

During Reading:

1. Describe the picture on page 166. Who is holding Ben? Is the entire family pictured? What are his sisters doing? (John is holding Ben. While Will is standing on John's left side, the girls are clutching to Esther on John's right.)
2. On page 167, Will aims his rifle at the badger. Remember what he said about badgers in Chapter 1. Will he shoot the animal? (Answers will vary.)

After Reading:

1. What is a "parable"? (A *parable* is a short tale which teaches a moral lesson by comparison with natural or familiar things.)

2. Who or what is "Mittenusk"? (*Mittenusk* is the Indian word for badger. The archbishop invents the story [parable] of a Blackfoot Indian Chief named Mittenusk who cares for Ben on the prairie.)

CHAPTER THIRTEEN (pp. 177-191)

Synopsis: George Burton makes his second appearance at the MacDonald home. He sees the badger and quickly fires two shots. On the second shot, the badger falls motionless to the ground. Will MacDonald storms from the house and engages Burton in a violent fight. While disarming Burton, Will suffers a flesh wound. Burton is approaching the wounded man with his skinning knife when Esther fires a shot at Burton. Will gives Burton three days to get out of the territory and the cowardly trapper quickly departs. Ben realizes that the badger is still alive. His father cleans the animal's wounds and bandages her. They are unsure if the animal will live through the night. The novel ends with Ben clinging tightly to his father.

Before Reading:

Vocabulary

1. "MacDonald instinctively swung the *mutilated* weapon in his grip at Burton . . ." (p. 180)
2. "... John fell *flaccidly*, face down in the dirt." (p. 181)
3. "... he was not yet in full control of himself and was leaning *groggily* against the wheel of the machine." (p. 181)
4. "As his eyes move *furtively* back and forth . . ." (p. 182)
5. "MacDonald felt a sudden strong *impulse* to be cheerfully *optimistic* for Ben's sake." (p. 189)

Predicting

What will happen when George Burton returns to Hawk's Hill?

During Reading:

Why does Burton always couch his rifle in his arms now? (Answers will vary, but special note should be given to the fact that he no longer has the protection of Lobo and that he has heard Mittenusk is searching for him.)

After Reading:

1. If Esther would not have been home, would the story have ended differently? Remember she fires the shot at Burton when he is stalking Will with his skinning knife. Rewrite the ending of the story without Esther present.
2. Why doesn't the narrator tell us if the badger survives? Do you think she will live? Why? Why not?

EXTENDED ACTIVITIES

1. Write a research report on badgers.
2. Write a blow-by-blow description of Mr. MacDonald's fight with Mr. Burton as if it were a professional wrestling or boxing match.

3. The artwork prints in this edition of *Incident at Hawk's Hill* are the exact same ones that appeared in the original edition of the book. Write an essay describing how the artwork reinforces the theme of the book.
4. Discuss the literary terms *foreshadowing* and *irony*. Make a list of examples of both terms in the story.
5. Act out a script of an interview of Ben by Oprah Winfrey.
6. *Incident at Hawk's Hill* was first published as a book for adults, but the book became popular with younger readers. Discuss why this particular book might be popular with younger readers.
7. Compare and contrast Ben with the badger.
8. Write a letter from Ben to his mother after his first night spent in the badger den.
9. Compare and contrast Ben and the badger with Burton and Lobo.

10. Write captions for each of the drawings in the book.
11. Design your own cover for the book.
12. The headline reads, *Boy Bites Dog*. Write a newspaper account of Ben and the badger's encounter with Lobo.

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VOCABULARY TEST ANSWER KEY

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

COMPREHENSION TEST A ANSWER KEY

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

- | | | | |
|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. C | 4. D | 7. D | 10. B |
| 2. C | 5. C | 8. C | |
| 3. C | 6. D | 9. C | |

Part II: Matching (30 points)

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1. L | 4. H | 7. N | 10. O | 13. B |
| 2. F | 5. C | 8. K | 11. E | 14. I |
| 3. D | 6. M | 9. G | 12. A | 15. J |

Part III: True or False (20 points)

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

Part IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B ANSWER KEY

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

- | | | | |
|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. D | 4. B | 7. D | 10. C |
| 2. C | 5. B | 8. B | |
| 3. A | 6. D | 9. A | |

Part II: Matching (30 points)

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1. H | 4. D | 7. C | 10. F | 13. G |
| 2. E | 5. B | 8. J | 11. N | 14. I |
| 3. L | 6. A | 9. M | 12. O | 15. K |

Part III: True or False (20 points)

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

Part IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

Answers will vary.

INCIDENT AT HAWK'S HILL

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Select the answer that completes each of the following statements. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided.

- _____ 1. George Burton shoots (a) the badger (b) Will (c) both a and b (d) neither a nor b nor c.
- _____ 2. Ben bites (a) his sister Coral (b) his mother (c) Lobo (d) neither a nor b nor c.
- _____ 3. Mittenusk is (a) an Indian word for a badger (b) an imaginary Blackfoot Indian (c) both a and b (d) neither a nor b nor c.
- _____ 4. Esther shoots (a) the badger (b) Will (c) Burton (d) neither a nor b nor c.
- _____ 5. Lobo is a (a) badger (b) horse (c) dog (d) neither a nor b nor c.
- _____ 6. Ben attacks (a) his father (b) his brother (c) Lobo (d) a, b and c.
- _____ 7. John finds (a) Ben's right shoe (b) Ben's left shoe (c) Ben (d) a, b and c.
- _____ 8. Ben imitates (a) his father (b) Burton (c) animals (d) neither a nor b nor c.
- _____ 9. Ben is (a) shy (b) introverted (c) both a and b (d) neither a nor b nor c.
- _____ 10. Burton buys a farm from (a) Will MacDonald (b) Edgar Cecil (c) Robert McKinzie (d) neither a nor b nor c.

Part II: Matching (30 points)

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

- _____ 1. is MacDonald's neighbor of 18 years.
- _____ 2. is Will's horse.
- _____ 3. is Ben's 16-year-old brother.
- _____ 4. is an Indian word for badger.
- _____ 5. is Ben's 9-year-old sister.
- _____ 6. is the name of the MacDonald farm.
- _____ 7. is Burton's dog.
- _____ 8. is the Archbishop of Winnipeg.
- _____ 9. is the doctor of North Corners.
- _____ 10. sells his farm to Burton.
- _____ 11. shoots at George Burton.
- _____ 12. is John's horse.
- _____ 13. clubs a male badger to death.
- _____ 14. is Ben's oldest sister.
- _____ 15. is Ben's father.

- | | | | | |
|------------------|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| A. Dilly | D. John | G. Richard Simpson | J. Will | M. Hawk's Hill |
| B. George Burton | E. Esther | H. Mittenusk | K. Peter Matheson | N. Lobo |
| C. Coral | F. Dover | I. Beth | L. Robert McKinzie | O. Edgar Cecil |

INCIDENT AT HAWK'S HILL

Part III: True or False (20 points)

Respond to the following statements either T for true or F for false.

- _____ 1. George Burton kicks Ben.
- _____ 2. Will sees Ben's head pop out of the badger hole.
- _____ 3. The badger kills Lobo.
- _____ 4. Esther saves Will's life.
- _____ 5. Will buys Hawk's Hill for \$3,000.
- _____ 6. Ben imitates the movements of a mouse.
- _____ 7. John finds his brother on the prairie.
- _____ 8. Winnipeg is north of Hawk's Hill.
- _____ 9. Ben kills four baby mice and feeds them to the badger.
- _____ 10. The Red River flows from Winnipeg.

Part IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

1. Compare and contrast Ben MacDonald and the badger with George Burton and Lobo.

2. Throughout this novel, Eckert employs *foreshadowing*. Foreshadowing gives the reader an advanced indication, warning, or hint of things to come. Explain the significance of foreshadowing in *Incident at Hawk's Hill*. Make sure to cite at least two examples from the story in your answer.

3. *Instinct* is a natural impulse that causes animals to act in characteristic ways. Discuss the role instinct plays in *Incident at Hawk's Hill*.

INCIDENT AT HAWK'S HILL

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Select the answer that completes each of the following statements. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided.

- _____ 1. Ben hugs (a) his brother (b) his mother (c) his father (d) a, b and c.
- _____ 2. Hawk's Hill is south of (a) Winnipeg (b) North Corners (c) both a and b (d) neither a nor b nor c.
- _____ 3. Will MacDonald was a (a) Scotsman (b) a trapper (c) a fearless man (d) a, b and c.
- _____ 4. Burton buys (a) Hawk's Hill (b) the Cecil place (c) North Corners (d) neither a nor b nor c.
- _____ 5. Prairie dogs are related to (a) weasels (b) rodents (c) both a and b (d) neither a nor b nor c.
- _____ 6. Will threatens to kill (a) Esther (b) John (c) Ben (d) Burton.
- _____ 7. The story takes place in (a) the United States (b) Germany (c) Scotland (d) Canada.
- _____ 8. Will skins a (a) deer (b) a badger (c) a wolverine (d) a, b and c.
- _____ 9. Badgers are related to (a) weasels (b) prairie dogs (c) both a and b (d) neither a nor b nor c.
- _____ 10. Ben bites (a) his sister Beth (b) his mother (c) Lobo (d) neither a nor b nor c.

Part II: Matching (30 points)

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

- _____ 1. teaches a moral lesson.
- _____ 2. is located less than 20 miles north of Hawk's Hill.
- _____ 3. finds Ben on the prairie.
- _____ 4. are used to bait traps.
- _____ 5. is the location of the nearest school.
- _____ 6. is the Indian word for badger.
- _____ 7. is Burton's dog.
- _____ 8. shoots Will MacDonald.
- _____ 9. is John's horse.
- _____ 10. fires a shot at Burton.
- _____ 11. sells his farm to Burton.
- _____ 12. is the name of the MacDonald farm.
- _____ 13. slaps Ben.
- _____ 14. gives a hint of upcoming events.
- _____ 15. is the opposite of what is expected.

- | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| A. Mittenusk | D. Sardines | G. Will | J. George Burton | M. Dilly |
| B. North Corners | E. Winnipeg | H. Parable | K. Irony | N. Edgar Cecil |
| C. Lobo | F. Esther | I. Foreshadowing | L. John | O. Hawk's Hill |

INCIDENT AT HAWK'S HILL

Part III: True or False (20 points)

Respond to the following statements either **T** for true or **F** for false.

- _____ 1. Badger fur makes excellent shaving brushes.
- _____ 2. Esther is Will's oldest daughter.
- _____ 3. John shoots George Burton.
- _____ 4. Ben wanders out on the prairie and gets lost.
- _____ 5. A badger is a member of the weasel family.
- _____ 6. Allan Eckert wrote this novel.
- _____ 7. Burton is a fearless man.
- _____ 8. The badger follows John and Ben back to Hawk's Hill.
- _____ 9. Burton clubs a male badger to death.
- _____ 10. Ben buries the badger.

Part IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

1. Compare and contrast Ben MacDonald and the badger with George Burton and Lobo.

2. Throughout this novel, Eckert employs *foreshadowing*. Foreshadowing gives the reader an advanced indication, warning, or hint of things to come. Explain the significance of foreshadowing in *Incident at Hawk's Hill*. Make sure to cite at least two examples from the story in your answer.

3. *Instinct* is a natural impulse that causes animals to act in characteristic ways. Discuss the role instinct plays in *Incident at Hawk's Hill*.

INCIDENT AT HAWK'S HILL

VOCABULARY TEST

Fill in the blanks in each of the following lines with pairs of words from the list that follows. Write the letter of your answer in the blank provided at the left.

- _____ 1. Now there was a kind of _____ ruggedness to his _____ that one might well have expected of the frontier type that this fur trader was.
- _____ 2. The thick dark tail, only four or five inches long, _____ back and forth with her _____ as she dug.
- _____ 3. Few wild animals — regardless of _____ — ever live out their full life-span; a violent death almost always _____.
- _____ 4. But the _____ he shared with them was a truly remarkable thing, as was his _____ ability to mimic so closely their movements and sounds.
- _____ 5. He _____ a young beaver _____ across the prairie.
- _____ 6. He sounded as if he was tired of Burton's _____, overdone _____ and somehow insincere friendliness.
- _____ 7. Thus began a period of incomparable _____ and _____.
- _____ 8. A few of the crowd were mildly _____ that the Scotsman should be so _____ after all their efforts.
- _____ 9. He was no longer so particular about what he could eat and _____ with equal _____ any prey she brought him.
- _____ 10. The riverbanks themselves — had been _____ _____ without success.

A. assiduously, scoured

E. loquaciousness, joviality

H. lashed, exertions

B. irked, ungrateful

F. unkempt, countenance

I. affinity, uncanny

C. agony, anguish

G. devoured, alacrity

J. encountered, migrating

D. species, intervenes



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62650**

**PHONE
1-800-637-6581**