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Gary Paulsen

Born May 17, 1939 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Gary Paulsen became interested in reading at a very young age after a librarian gave him a book to read. At the age of 14, Paulsen ran away from home to join a carnival, where he acquired a taste for adventure. Paulsen first realized that he would become a writer suddenly while working as a satellite technician for an aerospace firm in California. One night, he walked off the job and never returned. Paulsen spent the next year in Hollywood as a magazine proofreader, working on his own writing at night. He then left California for a rented cabin on a lake in northern Minnesota. By the end of the winter, he had completed his first novel, *The Special War*. Paulsen has written more than 175 books and 200 articles and short stories for young readers. Paulsen's work features the outdoors and highlights themes such as coming of age, where the main character must master the art of survival in isolation as a rite of passage to manhood and maturity. In 1983, Paulsen entered his first Iditarod, a 1,150-mile Alaskan dog sled race, and in 1985, he completed his second. When he suffered from an attack of angina — a constriction of the airways — he was forced to give up his dogs. After a 20-year absence from dog sledding, Paulsen was scheduled to compete in the 2005 Iditarod, only to back out shortly before the start of the race. He then participated in 2006, but had to finish after only two days. Paulsen and his wife Ruth spend their time between a home in New Mexico and a house in the Pacific.



Did You Know?

- Paulsen has had many different jobs such as an engineer, construction worker, ranch hand, truck driver, and sailor.
- Three of Paulsen's books, *Hatchet*, *Dogsong*, and *The Winter Room* are all Newbery Honor Books.
- The novel *Brian's Winter* is a sequel to *Hatchet*, stemming from an alternate ending.

Chapter Four

Answer the questions in complete sentences.

1. In Chapter 4, Brian reminisces about the Secret that split his parents up. What do you think the Secret is?

2. At the end of Chapter 3, Brian had just crashed the plane into the lake and was swimming to shore. What next obstacle do you think Brian will face in his new surroundings?

Vocabulary

Complete each sentence with a word from the list.

hoarse	keening	remnants	horde
abating	collapse	hummocks	mound

1. Low mounds resembling _____ more than hills surrounded the wooded area that Brian now found himself in.
2. The funeral procession erupted in a loud _____ cry for the lost loved one.
3. A _____ of bicycles descended the sloping road during a cycling contest.
4. Amanda was screaming for hours that her voice became _____.
5. Despite the massive headache Brian received from the crash, the pain in his forehead seemed to be _____ somewhat.
6. After a long day of working in the field, Steven climbed the stairs to his bedroom in order to _____ in his bed.
7. A small _____ came out of the lake and a small beaver swam out of it.
8. Brian only had torn _____ left of his windbreaker after escaping the sinking airplane and swimming to shore.



Chapter Four

1. Fill in each blank with the correct word from the chapter.

- a) For seconds he did not know where he was, only that the _____ was still happening.
- b) Thick, swarming hordes of _____ that flocked to his body.
- c) He couldn't identify most of it — except the evergreens — and some leafy trees he thought might be _____.
- d) It was a beaver house, called a beaver _____.
- e) The memory came in pieces — Brian looking over his head to see the _____ and his mother sitting with the man.

2. Complete each sentence with a word from the list.

hammered scrunched agony slops blurks

- a) In the end he sat with the windbreaker pulled up, almost crying in frustration and _____.
- b) He tried to move, but pain _____ into him and made his breath shorten into gasps.
- c) And if by a signal there were suddenly little _____ all over the side of the lake.
- d) Hisses and _____, small sounds — there was great noise here, but a noise he did not know.
- e) He managed to come to a sitting position and _____ sideways until his back was against a small tree.

Chapter Four

Answer each question with a complete sentence.

1. What was the Secret that caused Brian's parents to divorce and how did Brian find out about it?

2. What temperature and time was it when Brian found out about his mother's Secret?

3. What sort of injuries did Brian sustain from the crash?

4. What did Brian believe to be "not possible"?

5. Brian describes the shape of the lake the plane crashed into as an "L" shape. At which part of the "L" did Brian swim to after the crash?

6. What types of animals, insects, and trees did Brian encounter in this chapter?

Journaling Prompt

In Chapter 4, Brian wakes up on the banks of the lake alive and relatively well. Imagine you are Brian and first waking up from a plane crash. Write a journal entry describing your feelings and observations on your new environment.



Chapters 8 to 10

A Comic Strip

This activity is especially for students with an artistic flair or who love comic books! It can be done for events described so far in *Hatchet*, or included in Chapters 8–10.

The first step is to decide on the length of your comic strip (6–12 frames is suggested); next, consider what events you will include. You may wish to highlight a brief incident or encompass the highlights of a chapter — or even the first 10 chapters. You may even want to provide an alternate ending to your scene!

A quick sketch of the comic strip can first be accomplished in a **storyboard format** before a final, good copy is attempted. The strip should include a title, dialogue, and color. It should be neat and imaginative.



Chapters 11 to 15

Drawing the Scene

Brian's shelter improves throughout the course of the book; however, the location remains the same.

Brian describes his shelter and surrounding location in great detail. In Chapter 6, Brian describes the location of his shelter as:

- On the northern side of the ridge, a glacier scooped part of it, leaving a sideways bowl under a ledge.
- Not as deep as a cave, it had a roof and a small sand beach that went down to the edge of the water.

In Chapter 14, Brian describes the improvements he made on his shelter:

- First he tore down his old shelter, fastened several logs from dead pines across the opening, wedging them at the top and burying the bottoms in the sand.
- He wove long branches in through them to make tighter walls.
- He wove a door of willows in a tight mesh, and arranged some cut-off limbs to hook the door in place.

Draw Brian's shelter and location. Be sure to include the lake and improved shelter he made.



Word Search Puzzle

Find the following words from the story. The words are written horizontally, vertically, diagonally, and some are written backwards.

bear	bushplane	hatchet	porcupine	survival pack
beaver	divorce	moose	shelter	tornado
birchbark	fire	mosquitoes	skunk	turbulence
bow and arrow	foolbirds	pilot	spear	windbreaker

b	i	r	c	h	b	a	r	k	g	u	p	s	s
u	o	m	s	u	p	v	l	d	z	l	i	e	u
s	o	w	u	x	e	r	i	r	b	o	l	o	r
h	r	f	a	f	a	d	e	e	d	o	t	v	
p	s	y	v	n	i	h	n	s	a	p	t	i	i
l	u	b	b	o	d	i	v	o	r	c	e	u	v
a	t	e	h	c	t	a	h	l	y	r	s	q	a
n	i	a	o	s	e	r	r	u	q	v	l	s	l
e	w	v	e	d	a	n	r	o	t	n	o	p	
s	c	e	t	r	m	e	s	o	o	m	u	m	a
t	u	r	b	u	l	e	n	c	e	w	p	s	c
s	h	e	t	t	e	r	r	l	k	u	a	t	k
k	k	u	c	s	d	r	i	b	l	o	o	f	i
u	l	o	p	o	r	c	u	p	i	n	e	p	l
n	r	e	l	w	d	b	i	r	v	e	b	m	m
k	a	g	u	p	y	t	r	s	m	o	f	l	w
r	e	k	a	e	r	b	d	n	i	w	s	u	v



Comprehension Quiz

Answer each question in a complete sentence.

- Why did Brian want to build his shelter near the lake?

- Describe the location of Brian's shelter.

- Describe the dream Brian had in Chapter 8.

- Name TWO animals that attacked Brian!

- What did Brian discover was another advantage of having a fire?

- Describe what the turtle eggs looked and tasted like.

- What did Brian have hope for other than to be rescued?



SUBTOTAL: /13

Story Map

Complete each section with the appropriate details.

Setting (Time and Place):

Characters

Major:

Minor:

Problem/Challenge:

Plot/Key Events:

Resolution:

NAME: _____

After You Read 



Chapter One

Answer each question with a complete sentence.

- Brian's parents are recently divorced. What were Brian's living arrangements with his parents?

- Brian mentions something about a Secret that only he knows that is the cause for his parent's divorce. In your opinion, what do you think the secret might be?

- Brian is able to recognize that the pilot is having a heart attack. How does Brian know this and what are the signs mentioned?

- What were the stages of the pilot's heart attack?

- What was Brian's interaction with his mother like before getting on the plane?

- Describe Brian's father's job.

EASY MARKING



Journaling Prompt

Brian mentions a bit about the setting of Northern Canada as he flies over it. As a journal entry, research the environment of Northern Canada and write your own description of what it might look like as you fly over it.



1.
In the summer Brian would live with his father and during the school year with his mother.

2.
Answers will vary.

3.
When he was at the mall with his mother, he witnessed an older man suffering from a heart attack. The signs include "going down" and screaming about his chest.

4.
Aches and pains in his left shoulder, a strong jaw pain, pain down the left arm, stomach pain, spasms, body jerks, chest pains.

5.
Brian was silent during the drive to the airport because of anger he felt for his mother due to the Secret about his parents' divorce. He felt guilty for being silent so he wore the hatchet, a gift from his mother for the trip, on his belt even though he didn't like it. His mother was speaking to him as she did when he was younger.

6.
Brian's father was a mechanical engineer who had designed or invented a new drill bit for oil drilling: a self-cleaning, self-sharpening bit. He was working in the oil fields of Canada.



1.
Answers will vary.

2.
Answers will vary.

Vocabulary

- C
- H
- G
- B
- J
- F
- D
- A
- I
- E



- F**
- T**
- F**
- F**
- T**
- T**

- 2.**
a) 4
b) 2
c) 6
d) 1
e) 3
f) 5



1.
Answers will vary. Altimeter, transmitter radio, clock, speed, compass.

2.
Putting his hand on the control wheel and his feet on the pedals, Brian pulled back on the wheel to raise the plane. He then pushed the wheel back in. He continued to do this until the nose was level with the horizon.

3.
The altimeter is a device that tells you your height above the ground or sea level.

4.
Trees and lakes.

5.
Answers will vary.

6.
Chapter 2 ends with the plane running out of gas. Chapter 3 ends with Brian swimming to shore after crashing the plane into a lake.

