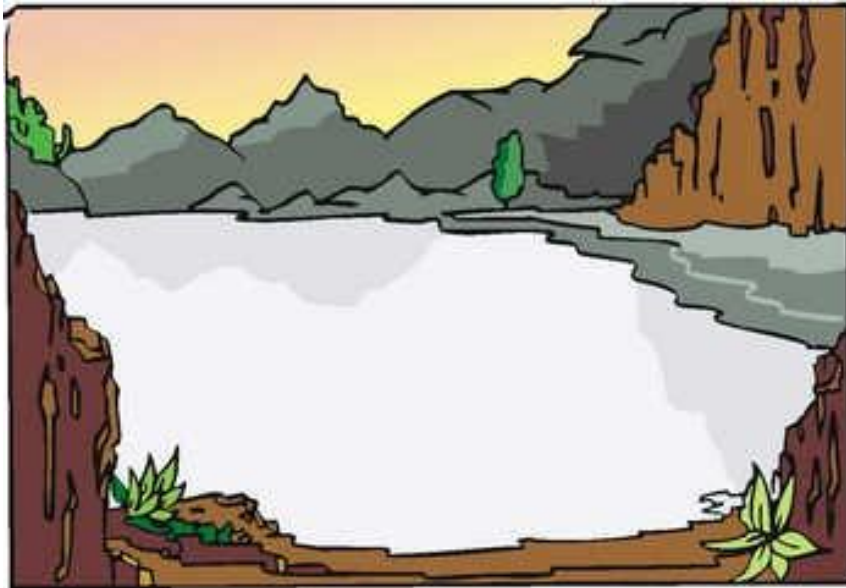


Hatchet

by Gary Paulsen

A 1987 Newbery Honor Book



A Novel Teaching Pack

by Margaret Whisnant

with

Chapter Summaries

Prereading Activities

Vocabulary

Short Answer Questions

Objective Tests (Chapter-by-Chapter and Whole Book)

**Think, Write, Create Activities
(Chapter-by-Chapter and Whole Book)**

Graphic Organizers for Writing

Answer Keys

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by Gary Paulsen
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Chapter Summaries

Chapter 1

- Because of his parents' divorce, thirteen-year-old Brian Robeson finds himself boarding a single engine Cessna 406 for the oil fields of northern Canada where he plans to spend the summer with his father, a mechanical engineer.
- A bitter Brian knows a secret and blames his mother for the divorce.
- During the silent trip from New York to Hampton, Brian's mother gives him a hatchet, which he is wearing on his belt when he boards the bushplane.
- In the air, the pilot allows Brian to take control of the plane for a quick flying lesson.
- Into the flight the pilot has a massive heart attack, causing the plane to veer to the side and fly off course.
- Brian is alone, without a pilot, flying seven thousand feet in the air above the Canadian wilderness.

Chapter 2

- The pilot is dead, and Brian tries to help himself by flying the plane but manages only to pull the nose up and push it down.
- Brian doesn't know his location or the meanings of the dials in the cockpit.
- Brian manages to make contact using the plane's transmitter, but the signal is weak and soon lost.
- Brian thinks about his choices of waiting for the plane to run out of gas or pushing the throttle to make the plane go faster and crash sooner. He decides to keep the plane going where at least he is safe.
- Not only does Brian not know his original course, he has no idea how much the plane has gone off course.
- Mentally Brian practices his plan for bringing the plane down when it runs out of gas by slowing it and landing in a lake.
- As Brian is trying to make contact by radio, the plane runs out of gas.

Chapter 3

- A series of errors causes the plane to drop too quickly so that it crashes through trees before it slams into a lake.
- Brian frees himself from the submerging plane and pulls himself out through the shattered front window.
- A screaming Brian struggles through the water to shore.

Chapter 4

- In Brian's memory is the secret of seeing his mother with a man in a strange station wagon.
- Brian remains on the shore halfway in the lake for most of the day until he crawls away from the water and sleeps.
- Awake before dawn, Brian is bruised and in pain but grateful to be alive.
- With the rising sun, Brian is attacked by swarms of mosquitos that clog his nostrils, pour into his mouth, and cause his eyes to swell shut. They leave when the sun is fully up.
- Brian sees that he is at the base of an L-shaped lake surrounded by small hills with evergreens, some leafy trees, small brush, and thick grass. A rocky ridge sticks out over the lake.
- The lake contains fish and a beaver dam.
- At first Brian thinks his new surroundings are silent, but then he begins to hear the noises of the wilderness.
- Drained of energy, Brian leans against a tall pine and sleeps.

Vocabulary List with Definitions

(Arranged According to Story Order)

- drone** A continuous low dull humming sound (p.2)
- lashed** Secured or bound, as with a rope, cord, or chain; struck a blow as if with a whip; made a caustic verbal attack; thrashed (p. 7)
- grimacing** Making a sharp contortion of the face as in expressing pain, contempt, or disgust (p. 10)
- audible** Heard or able to be heard (p. 10)
- rigid** Stiff; not flexible, not moving; strictly maintained (p. 11)
- massive** Affecting a large area of bodily tissue; huge; on a large scale (p. 12)
- turbulence** Instability in the atmosphere; a state of violent disturbance and disorder (p. 14)
- ultimately** At last; in the end; eventually (p. 14)
- intervals** The amount of time between two specified instances, events, or stages (p. 24)
- visualize** To form a mental image of (p. 24)
- remnants** A surviving trace; something left over; a remainder (p. 36)
- abating** Reducing in amount, degree, or intensity; decreasing (p. 38)
- viciously** Severely or intensely; fiercely; in an evil or savage manner (p. 43)
- murky** Cloudy; lacking clarity; dark, dim or gloomy (p. 45)
- frantic** Highly excited with strong emotion or frustration; frenzied (p. 47)
- extensive** Large in spatial extent or range, or amount (p. 47)
- amphibious** Able to operate both on land and in water (p. 48)
- intense** Extreme in degree, strength, or size (p. 51)
- diminish** To make smaller or less or cause to appear so (p. 57)
- pulverized** Pounded, crushed, or ground into fine particles. (p. 58)
- lush** Having or characterized by luxuriant vegetation; abundant; plentiful (p. 62)
- tart** Having a sharp pungent taste; sour; a pastry shell with shallow sides, no crust, and various fillings (p. 64)
- ruefully** Done in such a way as to cause, feel, or express sorrow or regret; pitifully or compassionately (p. 65)
- welted** Characterized by a ridge or bump on the skin caused by a lash, a blow, or a bite (p. 69)
- gorge** An instance of gluttonous eating; a deep narrow passage with steep rocky sides (p. 74)
- initial** Of, or relating to, or occurring at the beginning; first; designating the first letter or letters of a word (p. 83)
- imbedded** Deposited in a partly inclosing mass, as of clay or mortar; within (p. 86)
- ignite** To set fire; to cause to burn (p. 87)
- tinder** Readily combustible material, such as dry twigs, used to kindle fire (p. 87)
- exasperation** A state of annoyance; frustration (p. 87)
- tendrils** Things, such as ringlets of hair, that are long, slender, and curling; twisting threadlike structures by which a plant, such as a grape vine, grasps another object or plant for support (p. 88)
- incredibly** Astonishingly; unbelievably (p. 89)
- dormant** Inactive but capable of activating (p. 99)
- convulse** To shake or agitate violently; shake; to move with irregular or involuntary muscular contractions (p. 101)
- bonfire** A large fire built outdoors, as for signaling or celebrating an event (p. 106)
- gnarled** Knotty or misshapen (p. 107)
- flailing** Waving or swinging vigorously; thrashing (p. 110)
- persistent** Refusing to let go or give up; never ceasing; relentless (p. 115)
- abrupt** Unexpectedly sudden; curt; brusque (p. 116)
- tension** The act or process of stretching something tight; the condition of being stretched tight; tautness (p. 121)
- partially** To a degree; not totally (p. 123)

Synonym Search

In the answer choices after each item, find the **synonym** that can replace the bold print word in the sentence without changing its meaning. Context clues are present, but a dictionary or a thesaurus will ensure a successful search. Write the correct **words** in the blanks to the left.

- _____ 1. My new sneakers are so **rigid**, I can't bend my foot or wiggle my toes.
tight stiff exact flexible
- _____ 2. Gardner's unexpected trip down the stairs left a **massive** bruise on his leg.
painful cumbersome enormous surprising
- _____ 3. Faith **ultimately** memorized the song's difficult lyrics by listening to them repeatedly.
constantly faithfully eventually completely
- _____ 4. The **remnants** of an ancient wardrobe hung in the musty room's small closet.
scraps rudiments collection beginnings
- _____ 5. The frightful wind seemed to be **abating**, and we gathered the courage to peep through the window.
intensifying surging canceling diminishing
- _____ 6. A ravenous Sharad **viciously** attacked the pizza that was placed before him.
quickly fiercely intensely hesitantly
- _____ 7. I drew my foot back into the boat when something slithered by in the **murky** water.
cloudy ashen foggy amphibious
- _____ 8. We made a **frantic** race for the door when Dad yelled, "All aboard for the Segal's vacation!"
orderly quick frenzied intense
- _____ 9. The baby's squeal was so **intense** several patrons in the restaurant covered their ears.
distracting forceful inspiring pitiful
- _____ 10. Grandpa says Grandma's backyard garden is overgrown; she says it's **lush**.
luxuriant natural overflowing gorgeous
- _____ 11. The cherries were somewhat **tart**, but Mom transformed them into a palatable treat.
underripe mushy sour welted
- _____ 12. **Ruefully** Abigail looked at the grade on her paper and wished she had studied more seriously.
quickly regretfully intensely hopefully
- _____ 13. My **initial** reaction to the remark was disbelief.
first true personal heartfelt
- _____ 14. After several attempts to hit the target, Ethan gave up in **exasperation**.
defeat anger frustration regret

Short Answer Questions

Chapter 1

1. As he sat in the copilot's seat of the single engine Cessna 406, what did Brian start thinking about?
2. What was the first sign that there was something wrong with the pilot?
3. How long had Brian's parents been divorced?
4. What was the location of the oil fields where Brian's father was working?
5. In addition to some drilling equipment, what else was being carried in the rear of the plane?
6. Why did Brian have a hatchet on his belt when he got on the plane?
7. What happened to the pilot?

Chapter 2

1. Why did Brian put his hands on the control wheel and try to raise the plane?
2. What did Brian see when he looked out the window?
3. Why did Brian touch the dead pilot though he did not want to do so?
4. Why did Brian start screaming and crying?
5. What decision did Brian have to make?
6. What was Brian's landing plan?

Chapter 1
Pages 1-12

Write either **True** or **False** in the blank before each statement.

- _____ 1. Brian was thirteen years old.
- _____ 2. Brian had known the man who was flying the plane for several years.
- _____ 3. The single engine plane, in which Brian was a passenger, was flying over small towns and villages in upper New York state.
- _____ 4. Brian still cried every time he thought about the divorce that had separated his parents and changed his life.
- _____ 5. The pilot talked to Brian almost constantly once the plane was in the air.
- _____ 6. Brian was seated in the copilot's seat of the plane.
- _____ 7. The pilot allowed Brian to take over the controls of the plane for a few minutes.
- _____ 8. It was Brian's father who wanted the separation and divorce from his mother.
- _____ 9. Brian lived with his mother during the school year, but his father had custody in the summer time.
- _____ 10. Brian's parents had been divorced for over a year.
- _____ 11. The bush plane was taking Brian to spend the summer with his father in the oil fields of Canada.
- _____ 12. In addition to Brian, the plane was also carrying drilling equipment.
- _____ 13. Brian noticed that the pilot rubbed his shoulder and arm and that he had gas which made the plane smell bad.
- _____ 14. Brian and his mother did not speak during the long drive to the airport.
- _____ 15. Brian knew a secret about his mother, but he wouldn't talk to her about it.
- _____ 16. Brian's mother bought the hatchet for him to use in the woods while he was with his father.
- _____ 17. Brian put the hatchet on his belt because his mother forced him to do it.
- _____ 18. The pilot had a heart attack and died while the plane was in the air.
- _____ 19. The pilot's leg jerked during his last jolt, which turned the plane to the side.
- _____ 20. When the pilot died, Brian immediately grabbed the plane's controls.



Think, Write, Create

Chapter Activities

Chapter 1

After giving Brian a brief flying lesson, the pilot said to him “All of flying is easy. Just takes learning. Like everything else. . .”

- What are some things that you find easy to do, as the pilot said, simply because you have the necessary skills? Who taught you or how did you learn?
- Think of a person you admire—an athlete, an entertainer, a mechanic, a teacher—who makes the work they do look easy. Along with learning, what part do you think effort, talent, goal setting, and attitude play in this person’s success?
- Do you think the pilot is correct in believing that “learning how” is all a person needs to do? Explain.
- What is something you would like to be able to do well enough to make it look easy? What steps would you need to take in order to reach your goal?

Which of the following do you think is the **best** description of the way Brian was reacting to his parent’s divorce? Find evidence from the first chapter to support your choice.

*My father doesn’t understand. I’m the only one who really knows what happened.
The divorce is my mother’s fault because she wanted it to happen.
Lawyers, judges, and visitation rights--I hate all of them.*

Chapter 2—Chapter 3

Having decided to let the plane fly until it ran out of gas while trying the radio every ten minutes, Brian worked out a plan for landing the plane. He ran a picture of how it would go over and over in his mind.

- How did Brian’s plan compare with the actual way he landed the plane? Was planning ahead of any value? Explain.
 - Do you think it’s a good idea to work out a difficult situation in your imagination before you face it for real? Give examples from personal experience to support your thinking.
-

Chapter 4

After swimming free from the submerged plane, Brian found himself lying with his face and chest on the shore and his legs still in the lake. It was the beginning of the evening and night that introduced him to the wilderness.

Begin with Brian’s location at lake’s edge and use the following phases of the sun as a guide to explain what Brian was thinking and experiencing at each point:

*the late sun coming across the water
evening*

*the darkness of night and the promise of dawn on the lake
the coming of dawn and sunrise*

Write a composition about Brian’s **Introduction to the Wilderness**. (See **Graphic Organizer #1**)

Brian tried to decide if he was having good luck or bad luck? What do you think? Was Brian’s predicament a matter of luck or something else entirely different?

Think, Write, Create

Whole Book Activities

Brian thought his father did not understand the cause of the divorce because he did not know the Secret.

- Do you think Brian was right in believing that his father didn't know the reason for the divorce? Explain your thinking.
 - Would it have been better for all concerned if Brian had told his father the Secret? Why or why not?
 - Speculate as to what would have happened if Brian had talked to his mother about the Secret during their ride to the airport.
 - How did the Secret hurt Brian possibly even more than it hurt his parents?
-

Brian put the hatchet on his belt to please his mom, though he was angry with her and thought wearing it was hokey.

- Why do you suppose Brian's mother bought the hatchet for him in the first place?
 - How would Brian's struggle to survive have been changed if he had not controlled his anger toward his mother and refused to wear the hatchet onto the plane?
 - Explain why both the ideas in the following statement are true. *Several times, Brian blamed his mother for the awful situation he was in when, in fact, she made it possible for him to survive.*
-

Trying to make sense of the surreal situation he was in, Brian kept reminding himself to slow down and think in simple short thoughts.

- How did this idea make it possible for him to do the things necessary for his initial survival? How is his approach like the idea of *one step at a time*?
 - How can the *keep it simple—one step at a time* technique serve as a guide to achieve or complete any complicated task? Give examples
-

Brian realized that his time in the wilderness was changing him so that he no longer just noticed things. He was learning to really hear and see them—to know what they were and what they meant.

- Think of **five** ordinary sounds that are parts of your daily life—such as a school bell—and explain how each one is of value.
 - What are **five** things (not people) that you see every day but don't really notice or have an appreciation for. Why is each one important?
 - How would your life be diminished if any of the sounds or sights that you picked were suddenly gone?
-

The Comforts of Home

Brian worked for several hours to make his shelter under the rock ledge “safer” and “more livable.” His mind was, in a way, leading him to duplicate the home he had left behind when he boarded the plane.

How did Brian’s wilderness shelter compare to his former home? In what ways was the area under the rock ledge the same as a house? How were the two structures markedly different?

Use the organizer below to collect your thoughts. In the three center bubbles, tell how the two structures were alike based on the functions of **protection** from the elements, **safety**, and **comfort**. Fill in the top row of bubbles with ideas about how the rock ledge was unique. In the bottom row, explain how Brian’s former home was different from the wilderness structure. Write a composition about ***The Comforts of Home***.

