

Sample Pages from
**Objective Tests
and Answer Keys**

for

The River

By Gary Paulsen



A Teaching Pack

By Margaret Whisnant

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The River

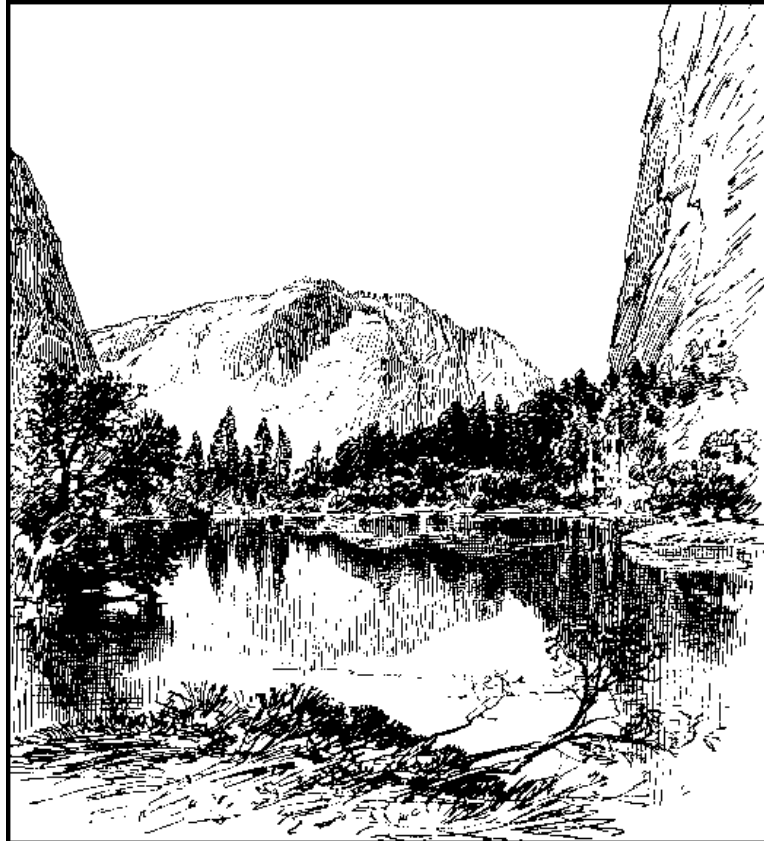
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1 Pages 1-3

2 Pages 5-10

Write either **Yes** or **No** in the blank before each statement.

- _____ 1. Had Brian been expecting the three men dressed in dark suits to come looking for him?
- _____ 2. Had Brian lived alone in the Canadian woods for fifty-four days with only a hatchet and his own wits as tools for survival?



- _____ 3. For months after his ordeal in the wilderness, had Brian reached a level of fame that brought constant attention from the press?
- _____ 4. Had Brian enjoyed being famous and found he missed the attention of reporters when their interest slowed down?
- _____ 5. Did Brian think it was too much when the press started to bother his girlfriend?
- _____ 6. Were the three men from a government survival school where people such as downed pilots, astronauts, or soldiers were taught to live off the land and get out safely?
- _____ 7. Was Derek Holtzer a psychologist and the other two men instructors?
- _____ 8. Did Brian feel that luck was the main reason he had survived his ordeal in the wilderness?

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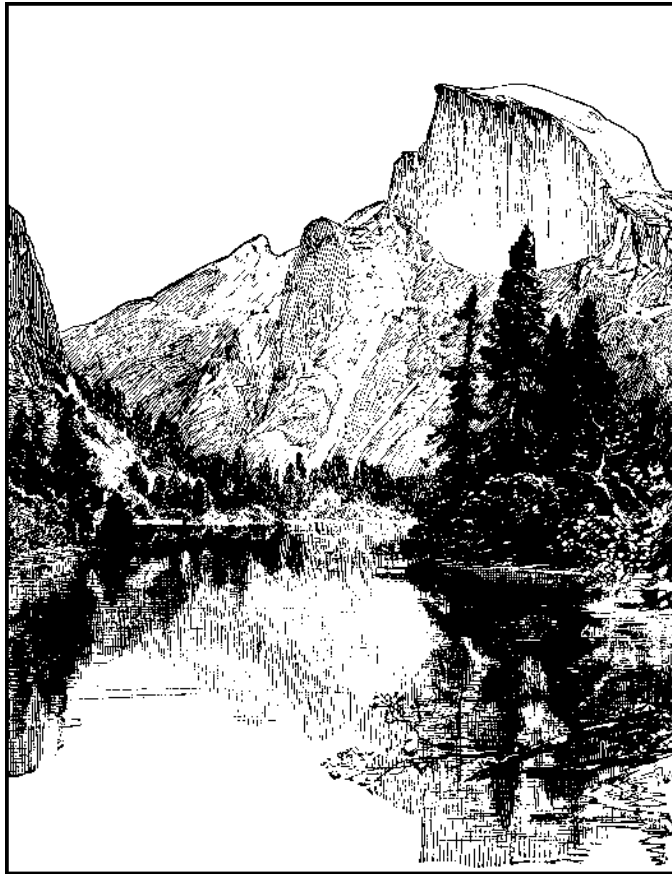
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5 Pages 23-27

6 Pages 31-35

Write the **letter** of the correct answer in the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. During the plane flight, Brian (A) watched the pilot, (B) remembered the other wilderness lake, (C) slept.
- _____ 2. Brian realized, as the pilot landed the plane onto the lake, (A) just how lucky he had been to survive his own experience in landing a plane, (B) how much he wanted to be a pilot, (C) that his fear of crashing again was stronger than he had thought.
- _____ 3. The lake was (A) nothing like it had appeared on the map, (B) almost perfectly round with a river flowing southeast through a forest, (C) larger and more isolated than Brian had expected.



- _____ 4. It occurred to Brian that Derek was excited because he (A) didn't understand the situation they were going into, (B) was obviously a person who liked a challenge, (C) knew something he hadn't shared during the planning stage.
- _____ 5. Brian noticed that Derek (A) seemed to be at home in the wilderness, (B) wasn't very coordinated or athletic, (C) seemed to be eager for the pilot to leave.

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7 Pages 37-42

8 Pages 43-49

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

- _____ 1. When it came, the rain was a ripping downpour.
- _____ 2. The lean-to provided adequate shelter from the night of rain.
- _____ 3. Brian and Derek dried their wet clothes by hanging them on branches along the shore of the lake.
- _____ 4. Derek asked Brian to talk about what he was thinking so it could be written down.
- _____ 5. Brian knew they had to find shelter, a fire stone, and food at sometime during the day.
- _____ 6. Even with his limited experience in wilderness survival, Derek had eaten grubworms.



- _____ 7. In nature, Brian had learned, food was everything.
- _____ 8. During their search for food, Brian and Derek found raspberries, chokecherries, and hazelnuts.
- _____ 9. As he walked the shoreline of the lake and searched for the things he needed, Brian realized it was luck he was waiting for.
- _____ 10. If they saw a bear, Brian advised Derek to stare into the animal's eyes.
- _____ 11. Derek stood too close to the rain-soaked edge of the small cliff on the northern end of the lake and fell into the water.

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9 Pages 51-54

10 Pages 55-57

11 Pages 59-63



a big, happy camping trip
the briefcase and radio
food
thunder
the shelter

tension
Brian
Derek
warm

lightning
the radio
burned hair
knocked out

broad daylight
blurred vision
dead
the call signal

From the list above, choose the name, word, or phrase that matches the definition below and write it in the blank. **All** answers will be **used at least once**. **Some** answers will be **used more than once**.

- _____ 1. When Brian awoke from the lightning strike, it was this time of day.
- _____ 2. This was so close that, to Brian, it seemed to come from inside him.
- _____ 3. Brian used his mother's name for this.
- _____ 4. Early in the trip, there was enough of this to last a year; and, in Brian's mind, it felt wrong.
- _____ 5. Even though he saw Derek lying motionless on his side with his eyes not closed, Brian did not want to use this word.
- _____ 6. Brian felt his wilderness experience with Derek was going too smoothly and not of much value because this element was missing.
- _____ 7. Brian saw a bolt of lightning appear to roar down a tree and hit him.

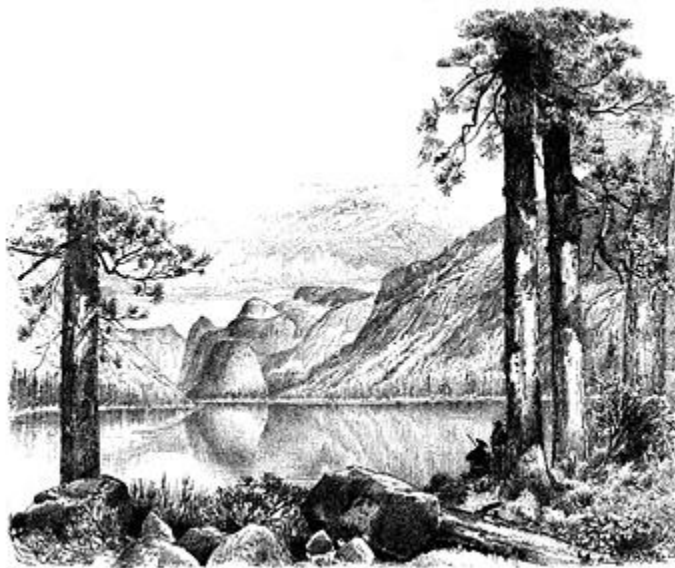
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Whole Book Test

Write the **letter** of the correct answer in the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. Brian Robeson had survived alone in the Canadian woods for almost two months with nothing but a (A) pack of matches, (B) hatchet, (C) knowledge of hunting.
- _____ 2. The men wanted Brian to go back into the wilderness (A) so they could learn and teach others to survive, (B) to test new equipment and ideas, (C) to learn what part luck and skill played in survival.
- _____ 3. Derek Holtzer was (A) an army doctor, (B) a college professor, (C) a psychologist.
- _____ 4. After his original ordeal, Brian's life was complicated by (A) the press, (B) doctors, (C) military personnel.
- _____ 5. Brian called his experience (A) The Survival, (B) The Struggle, (C) The Time.
- _____ 6. After his time in the woods, Brian (A) didn't feel any different, (B) didn't come back the same, (C) hated everything about the wilderness.
- _____ 7. One change that came over Brian after his rescue was that he (A) talked more, (B) loved to cook, (C) had more friends.
- _____ 8. Brian's counselor didn't understand when he tried to explain how he had (A) learned to fish, (B) discovered fire, (C) found the will to live.
- _____ 9. Brian's parents were (A) divorced, (B) getting back together after a long separation, (C) living in the same neighborhood.
- _____ 10. Brian agreed to go back into the woods because (A) the government offered him a great deal of money, (B) his parents thought it would help him deal with the bad things left from his other experience, (C) he felt he had to if it would help others.



About Your Novel Teaching Pack

The primary goal in creating the teaching packs for children's novels is to provide a **classroom-ready**, non-threatening method for checking student comprehension and stretching thinking skills. **When used as a basic guide for teaching a novel, the materials offer many and varied opportunities for learning.**

Use your teaching pack as a guide and lead your students into discovering new ideas about

THE PLOT

Each test page is actually an outline of the plot. In your teaching pack, the chain of related events that tell the story has been pulled from the novel and reformatted into a series of questions. Whether they are aware of their ability or not, all good readers sense the **rhythm** of the **connected** events that compose the plot; and consequently **comprehend** the story. This "plot rhythm" is the basic structure of the tests.

To further your students' understanding of plot, try the following activities:

Summarizing the Story: Using only the chapter questions as a guide, have your students write a summary of the chapter. For a set of ten questions, limit the number of sentences they may write to seven. For twenty questions, allow no more than twelve sentences.

Reporting the News: Have students write a newspaper article, based on the events from a set of questions, and add the *who, what, when, where, why* format. Some needed information may be located in previous chapters.

Twisting the Plot: Choose one or two questions from each chapter and change its answer—true to false, no to yes, or a different answer—and explain how changing a single (or several) events would change the story. To further illustrate the rhythm of a good story, try changing the answers to one complete set of questions. Your students will see how difficult, if not impossible, it is to tell a sensible story from a tangled set of events.

THE CHARACTERS

Questions that illustrate character motivation and personality are purposely included. Too often, when they are asked to tell what kind of person a story character is, the only answer many of our students can muster is "nice."

In your efforts to remove "nice" from your students' literary vocabulary, try this idea:

Character Charts: Display individual charts for the main characters. As the chapters are read, record **facts, behaviors, or events** that relate to the each character. Then connect the items with several appropriate words such as **empathetic, brave, calloused, bold, untrustworthy**, etc. The teacher can take the lead by contributing the first few words and then assigning the task of identifying more terms to students. Record the word collections on the charts with the story facts.

This information is a valuable student resource when displayed in the room for all to see and use during a writing assignment. In creating and using character charts, students will soon begin writing more fluently and insightfully about story personalities.

Use the charts to encourage your students to try some "predicting" or "detective" writing about what the character(s) might do next or what might have happened after the story ended. Let the charts help your students recognize **CHARACTER CHANGE (dynamics)**.

Another fun activity with the charts is to match a book personality with a zodiac sign. Students must justify their reason for thinking a character is a particular sign by citing his/her behaviors, words, reactions to situations, etc. that prove the match.

READING BETWEEN THE LINES

(Implied Meaning)

Because the primary goal for the objective questions is **basic comprehension**, items requiring a student to **interpret** an event or a character's behavior are not included. Always included, however, are questions that *establish the existence of a story component carrying an implied meaning.*

MAKING PREDICTIONS

(Recognizing Story Clues)

Authors subtly place clues in the story line giving the reader hints as to what is about to happen. Like the implied meaning, these clues are brought to the reader's attention in the form of a question. Once a student learns to spot the gems, his/her ability to comprehend and enjoy a story tends to leap forward.

Use "thinking-out-loud" class discussions to list all the possible meanings of the clue questions. Have your student write their individual predictions (no sharing or telling), store the papers until the novel is finished, and then retrieve them for reading. Sometimes, a wrong prediction makes a story as good as the original.

OTHER FUNCTIONS

The objective test pages are excellent discussion guides for both whole groups and small groups. They work well as homework reading guides and as conferencing tools. They are also useful management tools for teachers who wish to use multiple titles in one classroom.

IMPROVING/DEVELOPING LISTENING SKILLS

Rather than always requiring your students to answer test questions on a printed page, surprise them (and save paper!!) by occasionally doing the test orally.

Try this technique:

Student Rules for an Oral Test:

The teacher will read each question *two times*. No comments or questions that interrupt this initial phase of the test are allowed.

When all questions have been read, individual students may ask for repeats of any question he/she wishes to hear again.

No interruptions/comments during the re-reading part of the test.

Teacher Rules for an Oral Test:

The teacher will read each question *two times*. Except to remind students that a re-reading phase will follow after the last question, he/she will not respond to comment/question during this period.

The teacher will repeat **any** and **all** questions (even if it results in reading the same question multiple times).

(The second teacher rule is a *vital* part of the exercise. Asking for multiple repeats of a question does not mean students aren't paying attention. It does indicate their desire to *understand* and *answer* the question correctly.)

As students become more comfortable and experienced with oral test-taking, the number of requests for repeated questions will diminish. An added bonus to this technique is that skills learned in these testing periods tend to translate into other situations where teacher-talking and student-listening are required components of learning.

Final Note

The Novel Teaching Packs are designed for use as supplementary material that supports a total reading program. It is my goal to provide busy teachers with a classroom-ready, practical resource loaded with motivational and learning opportunities for their students. It is my hope that your purchase will prove to be a hard-working instructional component for years to come. Thanks for choosing one of my products for your classroom.



Margaret Whisnant, Author