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Prestwick House
Literature
Teaching Unit
Chapter-by-Chapter Study Guide



Hatchet

by Gary Paulsen

- Learning objectives
- Study Guide with short-answer questions
- Background information
- Vocabulary in context
- Multiple-choice test
- Essay questions
- Literary terms



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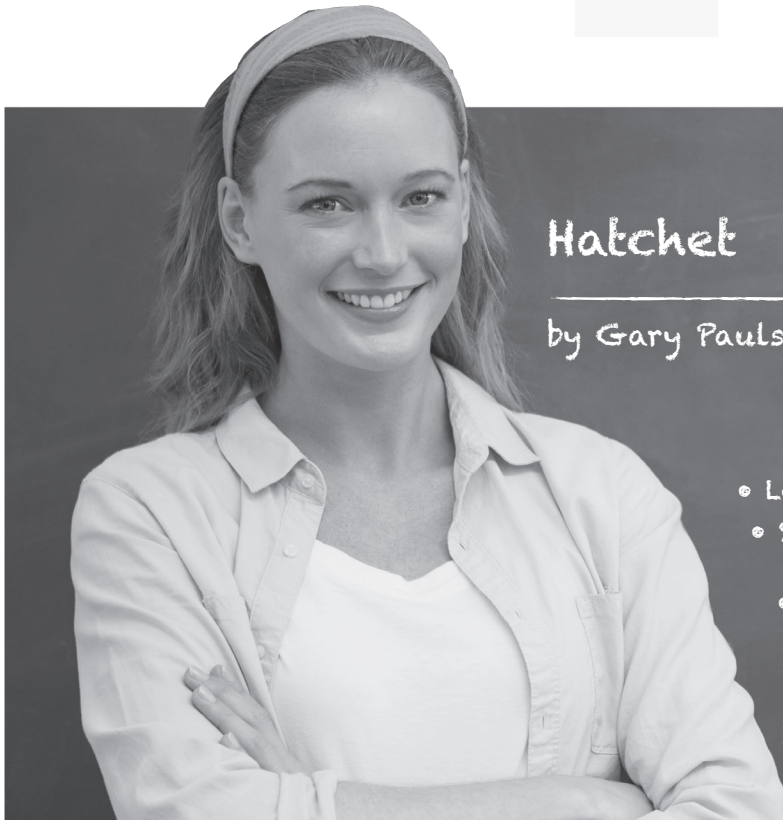
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Objectives

By the end of this unit, the student will be able to:

1. point out and discuss why this novel may appropriately be called a “coming of age” novel.
2. discuss why, or why not, this novel may also be considered an example of the “loss of innocence” novel.
3. define and point out examples in the novel of
 - A. flashback
 - B. foreshadowing
4. distinguish between the forms of narration, and state what narrative form is used in this novel.
5. point out and give examples of the different forms of conflict found in this novel.
6. write an essay identifying those qualities of mind and heart that one needs to survive on his or her own in the wilderness.
7. trace the plot in this novel and point out the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.
8. comment on the author’s style of writing and point out how his style is similar or different from the style of other authors you’ve read.
9. point out and give examples of how the character’s relationships with nature changes in the course of the novel.
10. understand the importance of keeping a positive outlook in troubling times.
11. follow the theme that having a purpose in life brings satisfaction and some happiness to individuals.
10. discuss fire as a symbol in the story.
11. recognize general statements about life in the story.

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Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. In this novel, Brian Robeson survives in the wilderness by “inventing” fire and tools. Compare the sequence of development of fire and tools by early man to the sequence and development of tools in this novel.
2. Many children are traumatized by divorce. Trace how Brian comes to terms with his parents’ divorce.
3. Describe the scientific information Brian remembers from school that is instrumental to his survival.
4. Discuss the problem solving techniques employed by Brian Robeson and determine how students can apply them to their modern lives.
5. Third person narrative can take three forms: omniscient, limited omniscient and camera view. Define which form of narrative is used in this novel.
6. Trace the plot line in this novel: the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.
7. Discuss the author’s style of writing. Why do you think he makes up words such as *clouddown* and *foolbird*?
8. Many students have trouble setting goals. Discuss the main character’s ability to set and to accomplish his goals.
9. Compare and contrast Brian’s relationship to nature at the beginning of the novel and his relationship at the end.
10. The brief biography of the author on the back flap states that he really ate turtle eggs and made a fire with a hatchet and rock. Discuss the believability of the events in the book. Could a boy realistically survive alone in the wilderness for 54 days? Are there still areas of wilderness where he would not be found for months?

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CHAPTER 1

VOCABULARY

grimace – facial expressions of pain or disgust
rudder – a plate at the rear of an airplane which helps to steer the plane
slew – to turn or twist to the side
tundra – a frozen, treeless expanse of land

1. In chapter one, Brian Robeson is taking his first plane ride. Why does he believe there is no chance for conversation with the pilot?

2. Brian notices the instruments in the plane. How high are they flying and in what direction? Over what kind of terrain are they flying?

3. Why does Brian feel like crying soon after takeoff?

4. Speculate on Brian's "Secret." What do you think he knows about his mother?

5. Speculate on the type of injury Brian sustains in the crash. The narrator says, "A color came that he had never seen before..."

CHAPTER 4

VOCABULARY

hoarse – low and husky in sound
horde – a swarm
hummock – a low hill
sprain – injury caused by the tearing of a muscle or joint

1. In Chapter four, Brian has another flashback in the form of a dream. Briefly identify the two new characters who are introduced.

2. How long is Brian lying at the edge of the lake?

3. Describe Brian's injuries. How does he know nothing is broken?

6. List four ways Brian plans to use his hatchet.

CHAPTER 12

VOCABULARY

crude – roughly made; not refined
persistent – constant and unstoppable
staff – a pole or rod used sometimes as a weapon
taper – to become narrow

1. Explain this statement from chapter 12: “He had worked on the fish spear until it had become more than just a tool.”

2. How does Brian react when the fish tool does not work?

3. Do you think this statement is true? “...discoveries happened because they needed to happen.” If so, give an example of a discovery you know about that supports your answer.
