



Activity One

Wild Berries

When Brian went out searching for food, he came across some berries he had never seen before. After eating some of them, he got sick to his stomach.

He called these berries "Gut Cherries." When he was finally rescued and returned home, Brian researched the berries he had eaten that made him sick. He found out they were called "Choke Cherries."

While some berries are harmless, others can be poisonous. Brian found out the hard way that "Choke Cherries" are poisonous.

Do some research on berries that can be found in the Canadian North. Write a 1-2 page paper describing the different kinds of berries that can be found there. Aim to answer the following questions:



The chokecherry, or prunus virginiana, is common to most of Canada and the United States. Part of the plum family, the chokecherry seeds are highly poisonous while the flesh is not.

- What are the most common berries found in the Canadian wilderness?
- What are some common berries that are harmless?
- What are some common berries that are poisonous?
- What are some key features of poisonous berries?
- How might you be able to tell the difference between harmless and poisonous berries if you were lost in the wild with no food.

As an added bonus, do some research on wild berries commonly found in the United States. Try to answer the same questions as above, then compare the berries found in the two countries.



Activity Two

Native American Tribes

"The pilot who landed so suddenly in the lake was a fur buyer mapping Cree trapping camps for future buying runs — drawn by Brian when he unwittingly turned on the emergency transmitter and left it going. The Cree move into the camps for fall and winter to trap and the buyers fly from camp to camp on a regular route."

This is an excerpt from the Epilogue from ***Hatchet***. It describes one of the many Native American tribes located in North America.

The Cree are one of the largest Native American groups in North America with 200,000 members living in Canada. In the United States, they can be found mostly in Montana where they share a reservation with Chippewa.

Do some research on other North American tribes that are found in Canada and the United States. Choose one tribe from each country, then write a 1–2 page paper comparing the two, covering subjects such as way of life, language, trading materials, culture... etc... Be sure to highlight the similarities and differences between the two tribes.

Below is a list of Native American tribes found in North America. Choose two of the following, one from each list, or you may choose two that are not listed here. Be sure to get your teacher's permission beforehand.

Canada	United States
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cree • Chipewyan • Algonquin • Iroquois (also found in the U.S.) • Inuit • Metis • Ojibwe (also found in the U.S.) • Mohawk (also found in the U.S.) • others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cherokee • Navajo • Seminole • Lakota • Sioux (also found in Canada) • Mohican • Chippewa (also found in Canada) • Apache • others

NAME: _____



Activity Three

Do Some Research

In the Epilogue, Brian describes how he did some research about the food and animals he was surrounded by on the lake when he got back home. He found that “gut cherries” were termed “choke cherries”, and “nut bushes” were really hazelnut bushes. The list below describes what he found out from his research about the different food and animals he encountered:

Before the Research	After the Research
Gut Cherries	Choke Cherries
Nut Bushes	Hazelnut Bushes
Rabbits	Snowshoes and Cottontails
Foolbirds	Ruffed Grouse (Fool Hens)
Small Fish Food	Bluegills, Sunfish and Perch
Turtle Eggs	laid by a Snapping Turtle
Wolves	Timber Wolves
Moose	Moose

Do some research of your own on these different animals and food that Brian encountered while surviving alone in the Canadian wilderness. You may choose one listed above, or choose something else that was mentioned in the book, like the bear, porcupine or skunk.

Then, with the knowledge you gain from your research, write your own descriptions as if you were encountering them yourself in the wild. How might you react to the situation? How might you interact with them? How might you protect yourself? How might you hunt them for food? How might you judge their safety?

Finally, reread the descriptions Brian gave in the novel and compare your description with Brian’s. As an added bonus, compare your description with a classmate who chose the same animal or food as you.



Activity Four

Northern Canada Brochure

The setting of the novel *Hatchet* takes place in the wild of Northern Canada. Imagine after Brian was rescued, the Canadian government made the L-shaped lake where he kept his shelter a National Park.

Create a brochure advertising this new tourist attraction. You can visit the websites of other National Parks for some help, such as Banff National Park in Alberta and Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming.

Your task is to create a brochure designed to attract tourists to your area. A good starting point might be to study a few brochures and collect some ideas regarding layout, and what they typically include. Next, rough out some ideas (a picture or two, pertinent information, etc.).



Yellowstone National Park

Do some research into what other National Parks include in terms of activities, programs, camp sites, and so on. Be sure to always keep in mind the layout of Brian's shelter and surrounding area. Give great detail in your images and descriptions of your Park.

Your final product should be professional-looking, include at least one picture, and feature a number of reasons that should draw people to your Park.

Have fun!



Activity Five

An Alternate Ending

- **This activity can be done individually or in small groups.**

"Predictions are, for the most part, ineffective; but it might be interesting to note that had Brian not been rescued when he was, had he been forced to go into hard fall, perhaps winter, it would have been very rough on him. When the lake froze he would have lost the fish, and when the snow got deep he would have had trouble moving at all. Game becomes seemingly plentiful in the fall but in winter it gets scarce and sometimes simply nonexistent..." – excerpt from the Epilogue from **Hatchet**.

Hatchet was the first in the "Brian's Saga" series, followed by 4 sequels, **The River** (1991), **Brian's Winter** (1996), **Brian's Return** (1999) and **Brian's Hunt** (2003). Although **Brian's Winter** is the third book in the series, it is however a direct continuation from an alternate ending for **Hatchet**.

What if Brian hadn't been rescued at the end of the novel? What would happen had he been faced with Canadian Winter? How would he survive the dramatic change to his environment? These questions are leaned to at the end of the novel but never really answered. However, audiences are given the rare opportunity to find the answers to these questions with Gary Paulsen's third novel in the "Brian's Saga" series, **Brian's Winter**.

If you haven't already read the novel **Brian's Winter**, you will be given the opportunity of putting your imagination to work in coming up with what might have happened if Brian was never rescued at the end of **Hatchet**, and was forced to survive Canadian winter.

Working with a group or alone, brainstorm possible alternate endings to the novel. Remember to consider the challenges Brian will face with the change in weather. You may have to do some added research to learn what happens to the environment once winter comes. From your list of ideas, choose one ending to present to the class. Write a detailed synopsis of your alternate conclusion, presenting as much detail as possible. After presenting it to the class, you may wish to get their input as to additional changes that might be made to further improve your alternate ending.

Have fun!

NAME: _____



Activity Six

Up for Review

There have been a number of memorable books and movies made whose theme deals with the future, for this has always been a fascinating topic.

With the approval of your teacher, your task will be to select one of the books or movies from the lists below (or one not listed but approved by your teacher), then write a review of this book or movie. Your review should describe the characters, setting and plot, as well as making a comparison to **Hatchet**. (Please don't give away the ending.)

In 1990, the novel **Hatchet** was made into a TV movie called "A Cry in the Wild". You may wish to compare the book to the movie, highlighting the differences and similarities.

Possible Books:

Scott O'Dell, *Island of the Blue Dolphins* © 1960
Jean Craighead George, *Julie of the Wolves* © 1972
Johann David Wyss, *The Swiss Family Robinson* © 1812
Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* © 1719
William Golding, *Lord of the Flies* © 1954
Rudyard Kipling, *The Jungle Book* © 1894

Possible Movies:

- A Cry in the Wild (1990)
- The Swiss Family Robinson (1960)
 - Cast Away (2000)
 - Robinson Crusoe (1997)
- Far from Home: The Adventures of Yellow Dog (1995)
 - Eight Below (2006)