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INTRODUCTION

Read through the Common Core Standards for “Reading: Literature,” and you will find that the work expected of students is expressed using such academic terminology as describe, determine, develop, support, and cite. Requirements such as these cannot be met via the comprehension-question worksheets and culminating quizzes that have long been the staples of literature guides designed for classroom use. The primary objective of those traditional activities was to make sure that students were keeping track of what was happening in the section of the novel that they had just read. Very little rigor and synthesis was asked of students—and usually none until the entire novel was read.

From a teacher’s standpoint, this style of classroom analysis misses multiple opportunities to delve deeply into the details that make a specific piece of literature a classic. From a student’s standpoint, this way to reflect on literature is monotonous and inflexible, and it fails to nurture the momentum experienced when one is invested in a compelling work of art. That is why the guides in the Rigorous Reading series aim to do much more: they aim to transform the reading of a great novel into a journey of discovery for students.

Instead of merely asking students what happened in any given section, this resource asks questions that require closer reading and deeper analysis—questions such as, “Why did the author choose to include this information?” and “How does this information further the plot or offer more insight into the themes, characters, settings, etc.?” And instead of waiting until the end of the novel to put the pieces of the puzzle in place, students will learn to add to and alter their understanding of the novel as they are reading it. The various activities in this resource systematically prompt students to consider and appreciate the many ingredients the author has combined to form the novel as a whole.

A CUSTOM RESOURCE

This in-depth guide has been written specifically for Gary Paulsen's Hatchet. The lessons and activities have been structured and scaffolded to maximize the experience of reading and teaching this novel.

To prepare your students for their reading of Hatchet, utilize the novel information and pre-reading activities included on pages 7–9 of this guide. Included in this section is information about the book and its author, along with activities designed to acclimate students to the themes and/or concepts present in the book they are about to read.

This resource provides activities that help foster comprehension and reinforce knowledge of literary elements as students read Hatchet. These section activities allow students the opportunity to process short sections of the novel individually, laying a strong foundation for their ability to engage more deeply with the chapters to come. For each section of the novel, students will complete individual and collaborative activities that encourage close reading, referencing textual evidence, and drawing their own conclusions about the text.

Additionally, this resource provides students with another avenue through which they can reflect on recurring literary elements, while also connecting personally with the novel. Each student maintains his or her own Interactive Novel Log, using it as a way to consider and then reconsider various aspects of the novel.

Upon completion of the entire novel, students can synthesize their ideas about the novel by completing several individual and/or collaborative post-reading activities (pages 56–72). This section of the resource includes such larger assignments as group projects and essay assignments.

On pages 73–74, vocabulary lists are provided for each section of the novel, along with suggestions for ways to teach vocabulary during reading and after completing the novel. Also included is a glossary of literary terms on page 75.

At the end of this guide, an answer key is provided for activities that require specific answers, and a list identifies how each activity correlates to Common Core State Standards.

Key Notes

For a description of Interactive Novel Logs and how to use them in your classroom, see page 5 of this guide.

An ideal way to use this resource would be to follow the complete lesson plan given on page 6 of this guide.

The use of multiple texts can help build and extend knowledge about a theme or topic. It can also illustrate the similarities and differences in how multiple authors approach similar content or how an individual author approaches multiple novels. See the bottom of page 7 for suggestions about using *Hatchet* as part of a text set.

When teaching other novels in your classroom, consider using the specific ideas and also the general approach presented in this resource. Ask students to mine small sections of a novel for clues to theme and characterization. Examine the craft, structure, and purpose of select passages. Explore inferences and encourage connections.

This guide is designed for use in grades 5–8, and the standards correlations on pages 79–80 reflect this range. This leveling has been determined through the consideration of various educational metrics. However, teacher discretion should be used to determine if the novel and guide are appropriate for lower or higher grades, as well.

KEEPING NOVEL LOGS

Great works of literature are complex texts, and complex texts are multilayered. They enrich and reveal as they go along. Successful readers are those who “go along” with the novel, too. Interactive Novel Logs give students a place and a space to record their thoughts and observations as they journey through the book. After each section of the novel is read, students use their Interactive Novel Logs to track the introduction and development of such literary elements as plot, setting, theme, characterization, craft, and structure, while also choosing their own ways to connect the novel to their own life experiences.

Materials needed for each student:

- ✦ a three-ring binder or presentation folder
- ✦ a blank sheet of plain paper with holes punched for the title page
- ✦ two or three sheets of blank lined paper for the Table of Contents
- ✦ several extra sheets of paper (both lined and plain) for student’s responses to the “Ideas for Your Interactive Log” prompts at the end of each section

Key Notes

One Interactive Novel Log can be kept for multiple novels, in which case a larger three-ring binder will be needed. If it will be used only for the activities included in this guide for *Hatchet*, a ½-inch binder or presentation folder will be adequate.

Assembling the Interactive Novel Log:

1. On the plain paper, allow students to design and decorate their own title page. Have them write “Interactive Novel Log” and “Hatchet” in the middle of the page. They should include their name and grade at the bottom.
2. Add blank lined paper for the Table of Contents. Have students write “Table of Contents” at the top. They will add to this list as they create new pages.



3. Before reading each section of the novel, photocopy and distribute new copies of the Interactive Novel Log worksheets (pages 10–15). Directions for completing these activities can be found in the “Teacher Instructions” that begin Section I.
4. For the final activity in each section, photocopy and distribute the “Section Log-In” page for the section. Follow the directions given. Students select one or more of the four topics in the “Ideas for Your Interactive Log” section and create an Interactive Novel Log page that responds to that topic.

5. After the class has completed the entire novel and the post-reading activities, you may wish to have students include the “My Book Rating” worksheet (page 72) as a final entry in their Interactive Novel Logs.

Section III
Chapters 7–10

NAME(S): _____

ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS

In this section of the novel, Brian has close encounters with three animals: a bear, a porcupine, and a turtle. Along with your partner, complete the chart below about each encounter. Then, use the chart as the basis for a discussion about Brian’s experiences so far.

Animal			
Chapter			
What happens in this encounter?			
What does Brian learn from this encounter?			



Practice Speaking and Listening

Take turns answering the following questions. After each speaker has spoken, the listener should take five minutes to write down his or her partner’s response.

Speaker 1: _____
(name)

Speaker 2: _____
(name)

Answer this question aloud and support your opinion with reasons:

Brian learned the most valuable lesson from his encounter with the _____. Because he learned this lesson, Brian _____.

Listen to Speaker 2’s answer. On a separate piece of paper, summarize your partner’s answer.

Answer this question aloud and support your opinion with reasons:

Brian learned another valuable lesson from his encounter with the _____. Because he learned this lesson, Brian _____.

Listen to Speaker 1’s answer. On a separate piece of paper, summarize your partner’s answer.

Section III
Chapters 7–10

NAME: _____

A REAL LIVE FIRE

Authors use literary devices to make their writing more interesting or memorable. One such literary device is personification.

Personification

the use of human qualities or characteristics to describe something nonhuman



A prime example of the use of personification occurs in Chapter 9 when Brian describes the fire as his “friend.” Reread Chapter 9, and record three ways in which Brian describes the fire—or the material used to make it—as if it were a person.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Now choose two of the other animals or objects described in Chapters 7–10. Place a checkmark next to each choice. For each, write a few sentences as if you are Brian. Use personification to talk about the chosen animals or objects. Use what you know from your reading to give them human qualities.

gut cherries

hatchet

bear

raspberries

porcupine

turtle

1. _____

2. _____

ONE CHARACTER, TWO SETTINGS

At its core, *Hatchet* is a book about one character, Brian Robeson. It is also a book that features just two main settings. The first 2+ chapters take place in one setting, and the rest of the book takes place in the other. As far as novels go, this is about as simple of a setup as can be.

Think about the experience of reading a novel like *Hatchet*. What are the advantages? What are the challenges? Also consider a novel like *Hatchet* from the author's perspective. Would it be easier or more difficult to write an interesting full-length novel with so few characters and settings?

	Name the pros (benefits) of a novel with such a simple setup.	Name the cons (challenges) of a novel with such a simple setup.
from the perspective of the reader		
from the perspective of the author		

The word "simple" was used to describe the setup of the book — the number of characters and settings introduced, etc. Would you describe the themes and ideas behind *Hatchet* as "simple"? On the lines below, make a case stating whether or not *Hatchet* is a simple novel.
