



TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

Hatchet

based on the book by

Gary Paulsen

Written by

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A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR  
GARY PAULSEN

PAULSEN, Gary 1939- Gary Paulsen was born on May 17, 1939, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He is a second-generation American. His father's family emigrated to the United States from Denmark, and his mother's family came from Norway and Sweden. Paulsen's father was a career Army officer, and the family moved frequently. He had few friends and did not do well in school. Due to family problems, Paulsen spent much of his growing-up years with his aunts and grandmother. During these years, he was introduced to books by a friendly librarian, and began reading voraciously.

Paulsen attended Bemidjii College from 1957-1958. He paid his tuition by working as a trapper for the state of Minnesota. From 1959-1962 he worked with missiles in the United States Army. Upon his release, he took courses and became a field engineer. He worked as an aerospace field engineer from 1962-1966. During this time he read an article about flight testing and thought getting paid to write about things he liked would be a good way to earn a living.

In order to break into the writing field, Paulsen made up a resume. He was hired as an associate editor by a magazine in Hollywood, California. Although his supervisors realized he had falsified the resume, they were willing to teach him about the writing business and he worked there for one year. He also worked as a film extra and a sculptor.

*The Special War* was Paulsen's first book. It was based on his interviews with servicemen who had served in the Vietnam War. In the next twelve years he published 40 books, 200 magazine articles, short stories, and two plays. His topics included hunting, trapping, farming, and young adult and adult fiction. Many of the adventures in his books come from his own experiences. Paulsen has sailed alone to Hawaii, lived in the northern wilderness alone with only a bow and arrow, and driven a motorcycle cross country.

After he published *Winterkill* in 1977, he was sued for libel. He won the case after a long battle. By this time he was almost bankrupt and had no desire to write, so he returned to trapping predators for the state of Minnesota. During this time a friend gave him a four dog sled team. He took the dogs on a seven day run. At the end of the run he resigned from his job, determined not to kill any more animals. Next, Paulsen entered the Iditarod, the 1200 mile long dogsled race in Alaska. A publisher gave him the money to enter the race and asked to be the first to see whatever writing Paulsen did after the race.

Paulsen published *Dancing Carl* in 1983. This was originally a narrative ballet for two dancers, and a short version was shown on Minnesota Public Television. He published *Tracker*, the story of a young boy who is hunting alone for the first time after his grandfather's death, in 1984. This was followed by *Dogsong* in 1985. Paulsen actually wrote *Dogsong* while training his team for the Iditarod. It is the story of a young Eskimo boy who takes his dog team across Alaska. It was a Newbery Honor Book in 1986. *Hatchet*, the story of a young boy lost in the Canadian wilderness for 54 days with nothing but a hatchet, was named a Newbery Honor book in 1988. Several other books have been chosen as American Library Association

Best Books for Young Adults, Notable Children's books, and National Council of Teachers of English Notable Books in the Language Arts.

One of his current works is *Madonna*, a collection of stories about some of the strong women he has known. Other works include *The Foxman* (1977), *The Spitball Gang* (1980), *The Crossing*, (1987), *The River*, (1991), *The Haymeadow*, (1992), and *Nightjohn*, (1993).

Mr. Paulsen continues to write and lives in Leonard, Minnesota. He also gives public readings and performances near his home.

## INTRODUCTION

This unit has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, listening and speaking skills through exercises and activities related to *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen. It includes eighteen lessons, supported by extra resource materials.

The **introductory lesson** introduces students to one main theme of the novel, survival in difficult circumstances, through a bulletin board activity. Following the introductory activity, students are given an explanation of how the activity relates to the book they are about to read.

The **reading assignments** are approximately thirty pages each; some are a little shorter while others are a little longer. Students have approximately 15 minutes of pre-reading work to do prior to each reading assignment. This pre-reading work involves reviewing the study questions for the assignment and doing some vocabulary work for four to eight vocabulary words they will encounter in their reading.

The **study guide questions** are fact-based questions; students can find the answers to these questions right in the text. These questions come in two formats: short answer or multiple choice. The best use of these materials is probably to use the short answer version of the questions as study guides for students (since answers will be more complete), and to use the multiple choice version for occasional quizzes. It might be a good idea to make transparencies of your answer keys for the overhead projector.

The **vocabulary work** is intended to enrich students' vocabularies as well as to aid in the students' understanding of the book. Prior to each reading assignment, students will complete a two-part worksheet for approximately four to eight vocabulary words in the upcoming reading assignment. Part I focuses on students' use of general knowledge and contextual clues by giving the sentence in which the word appears in the text. Students are then to write down what they think the words mean based on the words' usage. Part II gives students dictionary definitions of the words and has them match the words to the correct definitions based on the words' contextual usage. Students should then have an understanding of the words when they meet them in the text.

After each reading assignment, students will go back and formulate answers for the study guide questions. Discussion of these questions serves as a **review** of the most important events and ideas presented in the reading assignments.

There are eighteen **Daily Lessons**, which include suggestions for reading the book with the students. There are two minilessons on characterization (Lessons 2 and 9), two on conflict (Lessons 3 and 6), and one on flashback (Lesson 4). These lessons include blackline masters for graphic organizers.

Following the reading of the book, a lesson (Lesson 14) is devoted to the **extra discussion questions/writing assignments**. These questions focus on interpretation, critical analysis and personal

response, employing a variety of thinking skills and adding to the students' understanding of the novel. These questions are done as a **group activity**. Using the information they have acquired so far through individual work and class discussions, students get together to further examine the text and to brainstorm ideas relating to the themes of the novel.

The group discussion is followed by a **project** session in which individuals or groups share their ideas about the book with the entire class in the form of art work, dramatizations, writing, and further discussions. Thus, the entire class gets exposed to many different ideas regarding the themes and events of the book.

After students complete extra discussion questions, there is a **vocabulary review** lesson which pulls together all of the separate vocabulary lists for the reading assignments and gives students a review of all of the words they have studied.

There are three **writing assignments** in this unit, each with the purpose of informing, persuading, or having students express personal opinions. The first assignment is to express a personal **opinion**: students will give their views on who should decide where a teenager lives when his/her parents divorce. The second assignment is to **persuade**: students will try to persuade the Canadian government to continue searching for Brian. The third assignment is to **inform**: students will write a newspaper article about finding Brian alive after the plane crash.

In addition, there is a **nonfiction reading assignment**. Students are required to read a piece of nonfiction related in some way to *Hatchet*. After reading their nonfiction pieces, students will fill out a worksheet on which they answer questions regarding facts, interpretation, criticism, and personal opinions. During one class period, students make **oral presentations** about the nonfiction pieces they have read. This not only exposes all students to a wealth of information, it also gives students the opportunity to practice **public speaking**.

The **review lesson** pulls together all of the aspects of the unit. The teacher is given four or five choices of activities or games to use which all serve the same basic function of reviewing all of the information presented in the unit.

The **unit test** comes in two formats: all multiple choice-matching-true/false or with a mixture of matching, short answer, and composition. As a convenience, two different tests for each format have been included.

There are additional **support materials** included with this unit. The **resource sections** include suggestions for an in-class library, crossword and word search puzzles related to the novel, and extra vocabulary worksheets. There is a list of **bulletin board ideas** which gives the teacher suggestions for bulletin boards to go along with this unit. In addition, there is a list of **extra class activities** the teacher could choose from to enhance the unit or as a substitution for an exercise the teacher might feel is inappropriate for his/her class. **Answer keys** are located directly after the **reproducible student materials** throughout the unit. The student materials may be reproduced for use in the teacher's classroom without infringement of copyrights. No other portion of this unit may be reproduced without the written consent of Teacher's Pet Publications, Inc.

## UNIT OBJECTIVES *Hatchet*

1. Through reading *Hatchet* students will analyze the main character and his situation to better understand the themes of the novel.
2. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text on four levels: factual, interpretive, critical, and personal.
3. Students will practice reading aloud and silently to improve their skills in each area.
4. Students will enrich their vocabularies and improve their understanding of the novel through the vocabulary lessons prepared for use in conjunction with it.
5. Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in *Hatchet*.
6. Students will practice writing through a variety of writing assignments.
7. The writing assignments in this are geared to several purposes:
  - a. To check the students' reading comprehension
  - b. To make students think about the ideas presented by the novel
  - c. To make students put those ideas into perspective
  - d. To encourage critical and logical thinking
  - e. To provide the opportunity to practice good grammar and improve students' use of the English language.
8. Students will read aloud, report, and participate in large and small group discussions to improve their public speaking and personal interaction skills.



UNIT OUTLINE *Hatchet*

1 Unit Intro Distribute Unit Materials  PV 1-3	2 Minilesson: Characterization  R 1-3	3 Study ?? 1-3  Minilesson: Conflict  PVR 4-5	4 Study ??4-5  Minilesson: Flashback  PVR 6-7	5  Writing Assignment #1
6 Study ?? 6-7  Minilesson: Conflict	7 PVR 8-11  Oral Reading Evaluation  Study ??8-11	8 Quiz 1-11  PVR 12-15	9 Study ?? 12-15  PVR 16-17  Study ?? 16-17	10  Writing Conferences  Writing Assignment #2
11 Minilesson: Characterization  PVR 18-Epilogue	12 Study ?? 18-Epilogue  Check Predictions	13  Writing Assignment #3	14  Extra Discussion ??	15  Group Work
16  Vocabulary Review	17  Unit Review	18  Test	19  Non-Fiction Assignment Presentations	20  Movie/ Audio Cassette and Discussion

Key: P = Preview Study Questions    V = Vocabulary Work    R = Read

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET *Hatchet*

<b>Date to be Assigned</b>	<b>Chapters</b>	<b>Completion Date</b> (Prior to Class on This Date)
	Chapters 1-3	
	Chapters 4-5	
	Chapters 6-7	
	Chapters 8-11	
	Chapters 12-15	
	Chapters 16-17	
	Chapters 18-Epilogue	

## LESSON ONE

### Student Objectives

1. To preview the *Hatchet* Unit
2. To receive books and other related materials (study guides, reading assignment)
3. To relate prior knowledge to the new material
4. To become familiar with the vocabulary for Chapters 1-3
5. To preview the study questions for Chapters 1-3

### Activity #1

Direct attention to the bulletin board display of wilderness areas. Ask students to describe what they see. Then show pictures of hatchets, or show a toy hatchet. Have students form small groups and brainstorm what they would do if they were alone in the wilderness with only a hatchet. Each group should record their answers on a piece of paper. Invite students to read their ideas aloud. Collect and save the papers until students have finished reading the novel. Tell students that the boy in the story, Brian Robeson, gets stranded in the wilderness with only his hatchet. After they read the novel, they will have the opportunity to compare their answers with what he did to survive.

### Activity #2

Distribute the materials students will use in this unit. Explain in detail how students are to use these materials.

Study Guides Students should preview the study guide questions before each reading assignment to get a feeling for what events and ideas are important in that section. After reading the section, students will (as a class or individually) answer the questions to review the important events and ideas from that section of the book. Students should keep the study guides as study materials for the unit test.

Reading Assignment Sheet You need to fill in the reading assignment sheet to let students know when their reading has to be completed. You can either write the assignment sheet on a side blackboard or bulletin board and leave it there for students to see each day, or you can "ditto" copies for each student to have. In either case, you should advise students to become very familiar with the reading assignments so they know what is expected of them.

Unit Outline You may find it helpful to distribute copies of the Unit Outline to your students so they can keep track of upcoming lessons and assignments. You may also want to post a copy of the Unit Outline on a bulletin board and cross off each lesson as you complete it.

Extra Activities Center The Unit Resource portion of this unit contains suggestions for a library of related books and articles in your classroom as well as crossword and word search puzzles. Make an extra activities center in your room where you will keep these materials for students to use. Bring the

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 *Hatchet*  
Writing to Express a Personal Opinion

PROMPT

Brian thinks frequently of his parents' divorce, and the courtroom scene where the judge told him he would live with his mother and visit his father. The reader is not told whether or not Brian was asked to give his opinion on where he should live. You will give your opinion in this paper: Should teenagers be given a choice of where to live if their parents get divorced?

PREWRITING

If your parents are divorced, you will probably already have an opinion on this topic. If they are not divorced, you may want to talk to a friend who lives with one parent and visits the other to find out what the experience is like. You may also want to read about the topic in a magazine, newspaper, or another book. Then form your opinion. Next, brainstorm a list of reasons for your opinion. Decide on the best order for your reasons, and number them on your list.

DRAFTING

Your opening statement should state the topic and give your opinion about it. Next state your most important reason. Explain your reason with personal experiences or facts about the topic. In the next paragraph, state your next reason and the facts that support it. Write one paragraph for each reason. In your closing paragraph, state your topic and opinion again.

PEER CONFERENCE/REVISING

When you finish the rough draft, ask another student to look at it. You may want to give the student your brainstorm list so he/she can double check for you and see that you have included all of the information. After reading, he or she should tell you what he/she liked best about your opinion paper, which parts were difficult to understand or needed more information, and ways in which your work could be improved. Reread your opinion paper considering your critic's comments and make the corrections you think are necessary.

PROOFREADING/EDITING

Do a final proofreading of your opinion paper, double-checking your grammar, spelling, organization, and the clarity of your ideas.