

# TIPS FOR FAMILIES

## WHAT IS MY GRADE 4 STUDENT LEARNING IN MODULE 2?

Wit & Wisdom® is our English curriculum. It builds knowledge of key topics in history, science, and literature through the study of excellent texts. By reading and responding to stories and nonfiction texts, we will build knowledge of the following topics:

Module 1: *A Great Heart*

### **Module 2: *Extreme Settings***

Module 3: *The Redcoats Are Coming!*

Module 4: *Myth Making*

In Module 2, we will examine how people react to extreme environments. Students will analyze what makes landscapes such as mountains challenging. We will ask the question: How do humans survive against the odds?

## OUR CLASS WILL READ THESE BOOKS AND STORIES

### **Novel**

- *Hatchet*, Gary Paulsen - Additional text details are on page 3.

### **Short Story**

- “All Summer in a Day,” Ray Bradbury

### **Scientific Account**

- *Mountains*, Seymour Simon
- *SAS Survival Handbook: The Ultimate Guide to Surviving Anywhere*, John “Lofty” Wiseman

### **Poems**

- “Dust of Snow,” Robert Frost
- “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening,” Robert Frost

## OUR CLASS WILL EXAMINE THIS ARCHITECTURE

- *Fallingwater*, Frank Lloyd Wright

## OUR CLASS WILL ASK THESE QUESTIONS

- How does the setting affect the characters or speakers in the text?
- What makes a mountainous environment extreme?
- How does setting influence character and plot development?
- How does a challenging setting or physical environment change a person?

## QUESTIONS TO ASK AT HOME

As your Grade 4 student reads, ask:

- What's happening?
- What does a closer look at words and illustrations reveal about this text's deeper meaning?

## BOOKS TO READ AT HOME

- *Guts: The True Stories Behind Hatchet and the Brian Books*, Gary Paulsen
- *Grand Canyon*, Jason Chin
- *Moonbird: A Year on the Wind with the Great Survivor B95*, Phillip Hoose
- *Hurricanes*, Seymour Simon
- *A Girl Named Disaster*, Nancy Farmer
- *The Sign of the Beaver*, Elizabeth George Speare
- *Navigating Early*, Clare Vanderpool
- *My Side of the Mountain*, Jean Craighead George
- *The River*, Gary Paulsen
- *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, Scott O'Dell
- *Brian's Return*, Gary Paulsen
- *Brian's Winter*, Gary Paulsen
- *Brian's Hunt*, Gary Paulsen
- *The Wild Robot*, Peter Brown
- *Falling Water: The Building of Frank Lloyd Wright's Masterpiece*, Anna Egan Smucker and Marc Harshman
- *Time of Wonder*, Robert McCloskey

## PLACES YOU CAN VISIT TO TALK ABOUT THE HEART

Visit the library or go online at home. Search for some images of extreme environments, such as the Canadian wilderness, Mono Lake, Octopus Springs, Killington (Vermont), Grenada, Southern Belize, or Iceland.

- What do you notice and wonder about this region?
- What do you think life is like there?

Title and Author	<b>*<i>Hatchet</i> by Gary Paulsen</b>	
Description of Text	<p><i>Hatchet</i> is a fictional story of a thirteen-year-old boy named Brian who is flying on a bush plane when the pilot suddenly has a heart attack and dies. Brian manages to keep the plane level until it crashes into a lake. Brian survives the crash, but that is just the beginning. Brian must find a way to survive the wilderness of the Canadian forest. His hope of survival and ultimately his belief in himself keep him going despite overwhelming setbacks. <i>Hatchet</i> is an adventure story that shows self-reliance and determination are the key to survival and success.</p> <p>*Note: The point of the novel is that the main character is resilient and ultimately overcomes great obstacles. The overall theme of the book is triumph over adversity. This title contains topics that some may consider sensitive. For example, the main character's mom shares a kiss with another man. Also, the main character engages in self-harm.</p>	
Complexity Ratings	<p>Quantitative Complexity</p> <p>Lexile: 1020</p>	<p>Qualitative Complexity</p> <p><u>Meaning:</u> Straightforward story line with a driving, motivational plotline; familiar survival theme; one main character sharing his thoughts and showing resulting action.</p> <p><u>Language:</u> Style and structure of language consistent throughout the novel; some possibly unfamiliar vocabulary but well supported in context.</p> <p><u>Structure:</u> Conventional structure as a novel with chapters in chronological order; a few flashbacks as family issues live in the protagonist's memories.</p> <p><u>Knowledge Demands:</u> Canadian wilderness geography; the vegetation and animals in the taiga biome; life experiences with parental struggles.</p>