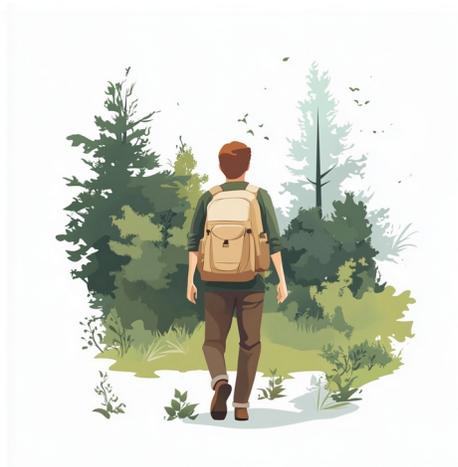


Brian's Return



By

Gary Paulsen

A Novel Study
by Joel M. Reed

Brian's Return

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Table of Contents

Suggestions and Expectations	3
List of Skills	4
Synopsis / Author Biography	5
Student Checklist	6
Reproducible Student Booklet	7
Answer Key	49

About the author: Joel Reed has over 70 published novel studies and is the author of four novels. For information on his work and literature, please visit www.reednovelstudies.com

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Suggestions and Expectations

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on three chapters of **Brian's Return** and is comprised of five of the following different activities:

- Before You Read
- Vocabulary Building
- Comprehension Questions
- Language Activities
- Extension Activities

Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities in this unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to the following:

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases... including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters ... respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story ... **and many others.**

A principal expectation of the unit is that students will develop their skills in reading, writing, listening and oral communication, as well as in reasoning and critical thinking. Students will also be expected to provide clear answers to questions and well-constructed explanations. It is critical as well that students be able to relate events and the feelings of characters to their own lives and experiences and describe their own interpretation of a particular passage.

A strength of the unit is that students can work on the activities at their own pace. Every activity need not be completed by all students. A **portfolio cover** is included (p.7) so that students may organize their work and keep it all in one place. A **Student Checklist** is also included (p.6) so that a record of completed work may be recorded.

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List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homonyms
3. Identifying/creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identify *foreshadowing*.
6. Identify *personification*
7. Use of singular / plural nouns
8. Listing compound words
9. Identifying parts of speech
10. Identifying syllables
11. Identify/create *similes*
12. Identify anagrams

Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Complete Five W's Chart
4. Identify *cliffhangers*
5. Identify the climax of the novel.
6. 3-2-1 Activities

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Identify the protagonist
3. Relating personal experiences
4. Interview a character

Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Casting characters for a film.
5. Write a description of personal feelings
6. Write a book review
7. Complete an Observation Sheet
8. Complete a KWS Chart

Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Create a comic strip

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Synopsis

As millions of readers of *Hatchet*, *The River*, and *Brian's Winter* know, Brian Robeson survived alone in the wilderness by finding solutions to extraordinary challenges. But now that he's back in civilization, he can't find a way to make sense of high school life. He feels disconnected, more isolated than he did alone in the north woods. The answer is to return, to "go back in," for only in the wilderness can Brian discover his true path in life, and where he belongs. (Courtesy of the publisher - Random House)

A complete synopsis and other helpful reviews can be found on the following website:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brian's_Return

Author Biography

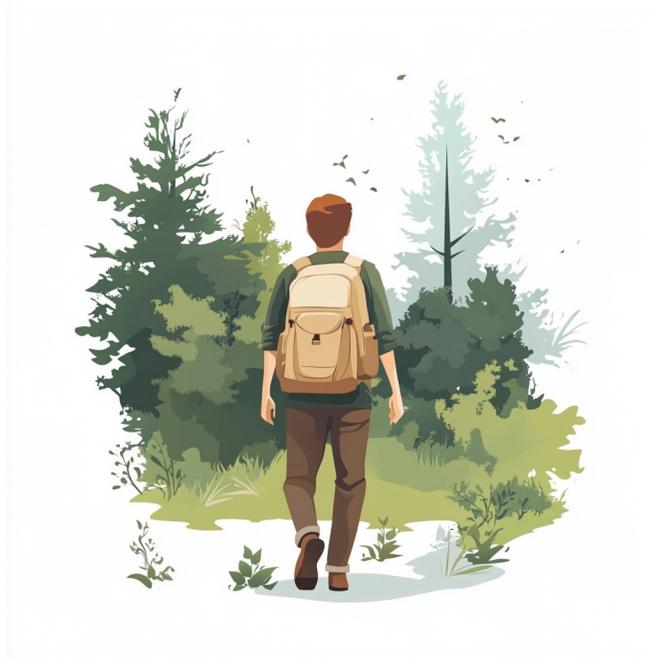
Gary Paulsen

Gary Paulsen, a renowned author of novels for young people, presently lives in New Mexico. Three of Gary Paulsen's novels have been acclaimed as Newbery Honor Books: **Hatchet**, **Dogsong**, and **The Winter Room**. **The River** is Gary's exciting sequel to **Hatchet**. His other novels include: **Brian's Winter** (sequel), **Brian's Return** (sequel), **Canyons**, **The Crossing**, **Dancing Carl**, **The Island**, **Popcorn Days** and **Buttermilk Nights**, **Sentries**, **Tracker**, **Woodsong**, **The Legend of Red Horse Canyon**, **Escape From Fire Mountain**, **Danger on Midnight River**.



Gary Paulsen is an avid outdoors-man who competed in the Iditarod, a dog sled race across Alaska. He also frequently sails the Pacific Ocean.

Brian's Return



By Gary Paulsen

Name: _____

Brian's Return

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Chapters 1-3



Before you read the chapter:

Briefly describe what you already know about the first novel in our series, *Hatchet*.



Vocabulary:

Draw a straight line to connect the vocabulary word to its definition. Remember to use a straight edge (like a ruler).

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1. Carnivorous | A. To continue without pause or interruption. |
| 2. Perplexed | B. An internal muscular partition. |
| 3. Incessant | C. To put forward a plan for consideration. |
| 4. Diaphragm | D. Something clearly visible or understood. |
| 5. Velocity | E. An animal that feeds on other animals. |
| 6. Apparent | F. To throw away or give something away. |
| 7. Teeming | G. The speed of something in any given direction. |
| 8. Propose | H. Completely baffled, or very puzzled. |
| 9. Dispose | I. To be flooded or swarming with something. |
| 10. Reacquainted | J. To be familiar with someone/something again. |

Questions



1. Describe the setting of the story as Chapter One begins.

2. Briefly describe how London and Paris were said to be developed by beavers.

3. Do you believe it's right or wrong for humans to hunt animals purely for sport?
Be sure to defend your answer.

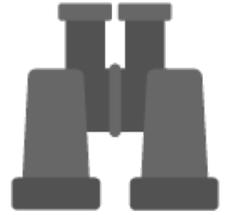
4. Why did Brian object to the newspaper articles claiming that he had 'beaten nature'?

5. Why did Brian have the urge to go back into the Northern wilderness?

Language Activities



A. Foreshadowing is a literary device used by authors to provide clues for the reader so they are able to predict what might occur *later* in the story. How might the following statement taken from Chapter One be considered an example of this literary device: "*He (Brian) hadn't conquered nature at all - he had become part of it. And it had become part of him, maybe all of him. And that, he thought as the canoe slid gently forward, had been exactly the problem.*"



B. A simile is a comparison using the words "like" or "as". The following is an example taken from Chapter One: "*But he (Brian) did not hit once, or twice - he smashed again and again, striking like a snake, the blows multiplying their force.*"



What two things are being compared in this example?

--	--

Invent two of your own **similes** comparing two different things from your own imagination:

a)

b)

C. Identify The Species

Using resources from your school library or the Internet, research the following species of *deer* (a.k.a. Cervidae) listed in the box below and match each name with their picture.

1. White-tailed deer	3. Moose	5. Elk	7. Roe Deer
2. Black-tailed deer	4. Caribou	6. Pudu	8. Chital

<p>A)</p> 	<p>B)</p> 
<p>C)</p> 	<p>D)</p> 
<p>E)</p> 	<p>F)</p> 
<p>G)</p> 	<p>H)</p> 

Extension Activity

Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A storyboard can tell the story of only one scene – or the entire novel.

Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events described in the last 3 chapters of *Brian's Return*. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.



1	2
3	4
5	6

Brian's Return

By Gary Paulsen
Chapters 4-6



Before you read the chapter:

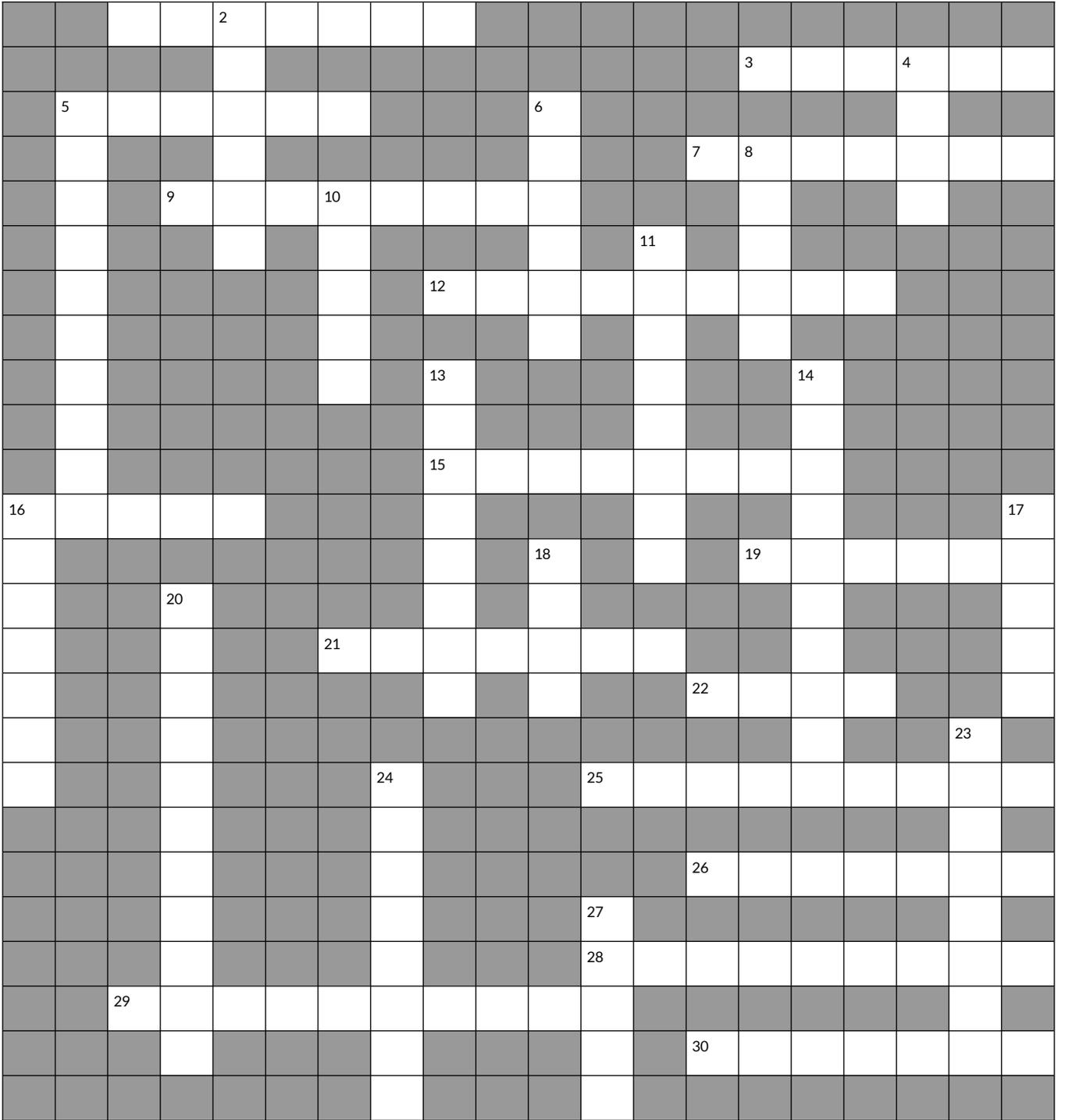
The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. What characteristics do you think make for an especially interesting **protagonist**?



Vocabulary:

Most of the words in this Crossword Puzzle are taken from the last six chapters. Use the words in the box to complete the puzzle.

ACROSS	DOWN
1. An even distribution of weight.	2. The capital city of the United Kingdom.
3. A burrowing plant-eating animal	4. A male deer, as well as a form of currency.
5. An artificial underground passage.	5. A device used to convert images and sound.
7. A self-powered vehicle with two wheels.	6. The civil force of a state/nation.
9. An institution providing medical care.	8. Native Aborigines from Northern Canada
12. Native American leather slippers or shoes.	10. The world's largest french speaking city.
15. The state or fact of continuing to live or thrive, despite difficult circumstances.	11. A periodical publication containing articles and illustrations, often on a particular subject.
16. A limbless reptile, as well as an insult.	13. A family of small, midge-like flies.
19. Commonly referred to as <i>nature's engineer</i> .	14. An uncultivated, often inhospitable region.
21. A person who sees an event, typically a crime or accident, take place.	16. A kind of protective dwelling or sanctuary.
22. A rugged North American vehicle.	17. A series of thoughts, images or sensations occurring in a persons mind during sleep.
25. A professional one seeks for guidance.	18. Native Aborigines from Central Canada.
26. The activity of searching for something.	20. To meet someone at a set time/place.
28. The pointed head of a common projectile.	23. A natural elevation of the earth's surface.
29. A request for a person's presence.	24. A popular sport in the United States.
30. A common sigh/phrase; 'Gone _____'	27. A light, narrow boat with pointed ends.



Questions



Cloze Call

Complete the following exercise filling in the correct words from the **Word Box**.

frowned	sunset	interest	friends
Television	Police	private	believe
people	remembered	thought	school
knowing	being	normal	thinking

There it was, out in the open. The _____ had been in Brian's mind ever since the _____ had brought him home, and before that without his _____ it. Small at first, then bigger and bigger. And Caleb had seen it.

“Yes. More than anything. I miss . . . _____ there. I feel I should go back.”

“Is it running away or running to?”

Brian _____, thinking. “It's neither. It's what I am now – for better or worse. It's more that I just can't be with _____ anymore.

“You hate people?”

“No – not like that. I don't hate them I have _____ and love some people. My mother and father. And I've tried to do things with people and go to _____ and be . . . _____ . But I can't – it just doesn't work. I have been, I have seen too much. They talk about things that don't _____ me and when I talk about what I think about, what I see, they just glaze over.

“Like the sunset . . .”

Brian nodded, then _____ again that Caleb couldn't see. But he'd “seen” more of Brian than anybody else. “That and other things, many other things . . .”

“Can you tell me some of the other things?”

“Like the _____?”

Caleb nodded. “If you wish. Whatever you want to tell me.”

“If it's too _____ . . .”

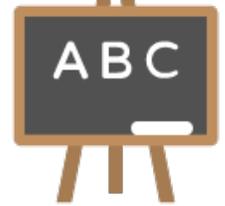
Again Brian paused, _____.

“No. It's not that. It's more that what I've seen is different from how people think things really are. _____ makes them see things that aren't real, that don't exist. If I tell you how it really is you won't _____ it.”

Language Activities



A. Many authors enjoy using **alliteration** – a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Here's an example of an alliteration: “... screaming, shrieking, shouting, screeching about something scary.”



Using your imagination, create your own examples of **alliteration** from the following topics. Each example must contain a minimum of three words.

The sounds of a rainstorm	
The appearance of a fire	
The sounds of a plane	

B. Where In The World?

Using resources from your school library or the Internet, do some research on the nation of **Canada** and complete the questions listed below.

Questions	Answers
Population	
Official Language(s)	
Currency	
Largest City	
Capital City	
Land Size (Kilometres or Miles)	
Prime Minister	
Kind of Government (Democracy, etc)	

Extension Activity

A Book Cover

Create a book cover for *Brian's Return*. Be sure to include the title, author, and a picture that will make other students want to read the novel.

