

A SMOKY MOUNTAIN STICK-BOY ADVENTURE: RESCUE IN THE WILD



VOCABULARY, Chapters 1-3

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words.

1. A blue jacket, two mismatched shoes, a crumpled folder, and broken pencil pieces landed in the culvert near his mailbox. The bus pulled away to the sound of, “I’ll be seeing you this summer. Something to look forward to!”
“Not if I can help it,” muttered Evan, crawling into the ditch to retrieve his property.

2. While the family ate, Mr. Mace explained the rescue operation. “We finally located the hiker, but it was almost too late. He was dehydrated and semiconscious.”
“Why was he ‘drated,’ Daddy?” asked Esther.
“Dehydrated means his body didn’t have enough water in it.”

3. “Well, back to the hiker—‘disoriented’ means he was lost and not thinking clearly. He wandered in circles, and began making poor decisions.”

4. Esther seldom tended to her own business, and boldly inserted herself into the affairs of others, especially her brother’s.

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VOCABULARY, Chapters 4-5

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words.

1. “Here’s the plan: you and Mica may roam our forty-nine acres, your grandparents’ two hundred fifty-seven acres that are beside ours, and Mica’s home and acreage on the other side. You may also play in Hickory Creek that runs along the south side of all three properties. You may *not* go beyond the boundaries of this territory.”

2. “I bought one of these Storm Safety Whistles for you and one for Mica. I want you to carry them every time you go out exploring. If you should become lost or have an emergency, and you can’t reach help with your phone, use the whistle intermittently. Its sound will alert others that you need assistance.”

3. Today Evan Samuel Mace felt life was perfect. Summer vacation had started, the warm sun invited him outside into the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains, and his best friend had sent a cryptic text message.

4. “She *is* dirty, and her hairs are flying everywhere,” said Evan.
“*You* are not my boss!” said Esther, thrusting out her chin with a glare.
Mr. Mace intervened, “Esther, dear, put Persimmon outside, and go wash your hands.”

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VOCABULARY, Chapter 6

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words.

1. Evan completed his morning chores in record time—no dawdling today

2. Just as he said the words, his peripheral vision caught a glimpse of movement. A flying object hurled itself toward him, and Evan, expecting to be hit up the side of the head, instinctively jerked backwards.

3. Evan moved his right hand through the air all around the stick; nothing was attached. Meanwhile, it kept hovering in the same spot.

4. He grabbed it, just as a discouraged Boone plodded slowly up the path, his tail drooping in failure. He saw Evan holding the stick he had been searching for, and gave a sharp reprimanding bark, asking, “Are you pulling tricks on me?”

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VOCABULARY, Chapters 7-8

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words.

1. At the age of seven, a movie gave them the idea of pledging a solemn vow: “I’ve got your back.” After that commitment, they often played pirates, standing back to back on The Rock and fighting off would-be attackers with plastic swords.

2. The Rock was a huge boulder that protruded out of the bank into Hickory Creek like a peninsula. It had a large, flat, roughly triangular surface. Hickory Creek, about two feet deep at that point, flowed smoothly around it.

3. “Hooeee! That is a *tall* tale!” said Mica, rolling onto Boone. “Unbelievable—I mean, flat out un-be-liev-ab-le!”
“It’s the truth!”
“Prove it!” said Mica, his face reflecting skepticism.

4. “Hey, if it ain’t Drip and Drop in their ‘good ship Lollipop!’” he sneered. “The puny, pathetic pirates of Hickory Creek, along with Boo, their mangy dog.”

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VOCABULARY, Chapters 9-10

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words.

1. “It gets worse,” said Mica. “My dad said, ‘Mica and his friend love the woods and creek, and plan to explore it this summer. You’ll have a great time with them.’”
“Oh, no! He didn’t!”
“Yep, he did,” affirmed Mica. “So there you have it—Trouble, with a capital T. Before she left last night, she said she wanted to go to the creek with us today. Sorry, Ev—but we’re stuck with her this afternoon.”

2. “Oh, putrid pickles!” said Evan, spitting each word with disgust. “There goes our summer!” He stared into the dark woods across the creek. All at once a thought popped into his mind: “Hey! We could invent a devious plot.”

3. “Well, how about being disgusting, dirty, and boring—we’re good at all three. If we’re horribly repulsive, she’ll never want to be around us again.”

4. “I’ll certainly try,” he answered, promptly donning a blue lab coat and gloves, and grabbing his bag and a blanket. “Show me the way. By the way, call me Doc; everybody does.”

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VOCABULARY, Chapters 11-13

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words.

1. “Long ago our ancestors came through the Cumberland Gap with Daniel Boone, so I named my dog ‘Daniel.’ Later when I bred him to a female Border collie and the pups were born, one had to be ‘Boone.’”
“I like that,” said Charu. “A name should have significance.”
“Should have what?” asked Evan, before he could catch himself.
“A name should have special meaning,” said Charu.

2. “Wonderful,” said Doc. “I can see your Cherokee heritage with your high cheekbones, and dark eyes and hair.”

3. “Nope, Killer Goose Moose,” said Esther. “He can’t come out. He ain’t home.”
“You’re a weird kid,” said Moose.
Esther stuck out a defiant lip, as Moose mounted and spun away.

4. When Charu arrived at Evan’s house, he, Mica, and Boone reluctantly set off with her toward The Rock. The boys hoped this would be her first and last visit to Hickory Creek.

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VOCABULARY, Chapters 14-16

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words.

1. “A very embarrassed Moose apologized and walked meekly into the market.”

2. “Go on out to the infirmary. Doc’s there somewhere, nursing his injured animals.”

3. “Yeah, it’s fun to see how the roots developed,” said Mica, who was examining the bank nearby. “Heavy rains cause major erosion of the dirt and rocks, and leave those roots exposed.”

4. Evan stared at the motionless snake, its cold eyes fixed on Charu and forked tongue tasting the air. “Charu,” he said, “stay calm. If you move, the snake may strike. It’s a copperhead—venomous, yes. But you need to know that if the worst happens, and it bites you, its venom won’t kill you.

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VOCABULARY, Chapters 17-18

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues &/or a dictionary to determine the meanings of the underlined words.

1. “What a day!” sighed Charu. “I can’t wait to tell Mom and Dad about the snake *and* THE STICK.”
“NO!” shouted Evan and Mica simultaneously.
“What? Don’t you want everyone to know? It’s so . . . amazing!”
“No!” said Evan emphatically. “THE STICK must be kept a secret. Mica and I already decided.”

2. Of course, snakes lived in this temperate, mountainous environment. It made perfect sense, but she felt a sickening disappointment. Her new home’s setting wasn’t all safety and beauty—in truth, it concealed countless snakes—her greatest terror.

3. Oh, sure, she enjoyed the exploring, the arguing, the muddy water fights, and even the bullfrog. Well—she didn’t enjoy kissing Uggly Muggly, but it had helped to establish her credentials.

4. “Come on, guys, help me out here! You’ve lived near the wild your whole lives, and you’re not afraid. What do you know that I don’t?”
“Maybe we can help you,” said Mica, nodding at Evan for confirmation.
“Sure,” Evan said. “The best thing to know is that snakes want to stay away from you, and usually head the other way if they sense movement.”

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VOCABULARY, Chapters 19-20

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words.

1. Mr. Mace strode out of the shed. “Sorry, family,” he said, “but I must leave. Park Dispatch just called. A child is lost; in fact, it’s four-year-old Molly that I told you about—the one who reminds me of our Esther. The Chief Ranger has requested that I be the Incident Commander on this search.”
“Oh, no,” said Mrs. Mace, rushing to his side. “She’s so young and vulnerable.”

2. Mr. Mace disappeared into the house for a short time, and then emerged, ready to depart.

3. “I know,” said Evan. “Molly faces lots of dangers. The sooner they find her the better. If she isn’t found before dark . . .” Evan didn’t finish the sentence; Mica and Charu understood.
“Yeah, that’s for sure,” responded Mica.
The three silently pondered Molly’s fate. Although the sun was shining and many hours of daylight remained, a serious sense of foreboding settled on them.

4. Molly looked around for her trail, but she couldn’t find it. “Where did I come from?” she said, touched by the first inklings of fear.

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VOCABULARY, Chapter 21

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words.

1. Molly hunted determinedly for the correct path—the trail she had abandoned to gather flowers.

2. Finally Molly emerged onto a worn pathway. “Here’s the trail!” she shouted, with relief. “Blackberry, I *not scared now*.” She walked resolutely ahead—staying on the winding trek—though normally she would have lingered to climb rocks, follow rabbits, or walk on fallen logs.

3. As time passed, the sun moved downward on its daily route, and shadows began to obscure the trail.

4. Near the top Molly came to a dark crack in the rocky surface. “Can I jump over this hole?” she wondered, creeping closer to examine it. Suddenly, Molly lost her footing on the slick rocks. She stumbled forward and gravity pulled her into the black opening.

“Daddy!” she cried. As she fell, Molly grabbed hold of a protruding root. She held on with all her might, but her hands didn’t have the strength to support her. Finally, with a terrified wail, she plunged down the deep, dark crevice.

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VOCABULARY, Chapter 22

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues &/or a dictionary to determine the meanings of the underlined words.

1. Without delay, the on-duty Ranger notified Park Dispatch—the equivalent of 911 for the Park. From there, Park Dispatch began their vital function of setting up a Rapid Response Search and Rescue Team.

2. First, they phoned Ranger Jonathan Mace at roughly 8:00 A.M., and informed him that he was needed as the Incident Commander of the search for Molly. Then they began calling in rescue personnel, especially following Ranger Mace’s request for the individuals most skilled in searching for children.

3. In route to the Park, Ranger Mace began organizing the search in his mind. He knew it was essential for them to locate four-year-old Molly as quickly as possible. Countless dangers—natural, animal, and human—could harm a small child lost in the Park. He decided to waive the usual practice of waiting a few hours before calling in tracking dogs. He wanted two dog teams in on this rescue mission from the start. No short cuts—not dilly-dallying—he contacted Park Dispatch and specified, “Give me the best and the most—men, women, and dogs—on this search immediately. We must find Molly before dark!”

4. He found Molly’s mother weeping and her father pacing. Both were disheveled and frantic with worry. Ranger Mace reintroduced himself to the distraught Mom and Dad.

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VOCABULARY, Chapters 23-24

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words.

1. When Ranger Mace reached the entrance to the campground, he found his Search and Rescue Team—in all, thirty men and women—assembled, ready and eager to proceed. He handed Molly’s tee-shirt and socks to the searchers with dogs. Then Jonathan succinctly relayed the important facts about Molly

2. When the team assembled, Ranger Mace instructed them to do a rapid search of this one “hot” trail and the adjacent forest area. The plan was for some searchers to do a quick walk on down the trail, and for others to fan out on both sides of it, in case Molly might have ventured off-trail.

3. “Watch for any evidence of a struggle—with an animal, or a human.” Ranger Mace always hated adding those last words, because of the horrors they brought to mind. However, finding Molly’s stuffed bear was a relief to Ranger Mace for more than one reason. It meant, almost certainly, that Molly was in the Park and had not been abducted by a stranger leaving the campground by car early that morning—a possibility that had to be eliminated.

4. “Boone!” said Evan. “Get back over here. Now!” Boone looked Evan straight in the eye, but refused—unlike him; he had been well trained. Relentlessly, he kept yelping and jumping, begging Evan to go with him.

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VOCABULARY, Chapter 25

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words.

1. Evan, Mica, and Charu stared wide-eyed at each other—hearts racing. *Were* they in this together—this disobedience of their parents’ rules—this breaking of their word not to enter the Park without an adult?

“Come on,” said Evan anxiously. “Someone needs help. Are you with me, or not?”

“I’m in,” said Mica, standing to affirm his resolve.

2. “True,” said Evan. “But I think Boone is trying to tell us someone needs help. You heard that scream!”

“Yes!” said Mica. “And that someone could be Molly!”

“Oh, for crying out loud!” interrupted Charu incredulously. “We’re just kids—we’re smart—but we’re kids! Let’s leave rescuing to the experts. We wouldn’t know where to start; we’d end up getting ourselves lost—and in a heap of trouble!”

3. Charu watched Boone for a moment longer, and then shook her head in disbelief. “This is against my better judgment—in fact, it’s foolish, unwise, and perilous—but I’ll go along. Tell me what to do.”

4. “I stopped because I realized that we’re leaving the creek without getting our bearings. We have to be able to retrace our route to The Rock. Help me find some distinguishing landmarks.”

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VOCABULARY, Chapter 26-27

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues &/or a dictionary to determine the meanings of the underlined words.

1. Boone stood beside Charu and kept a watchful eye on Molly. He naturally assumed the role of guardian—a duty inherent to his Border collie breed.

2. “What are my choices?” Evan thought. “I could leave her as she is until help arrives—but that will probably take two hours or longer.” He had asked Molly to lie very still, but he noticed she kept scooting and shifting her body, as though in extreme discomfort.
“I could go down to her and make sure she stays on the ledge. But getting to her will be dangerous—one misstep, and I would fall downward, taking Molly with me into the black pit.” The very idea made him nauseous.
“Don’t feel good,” Molly said, interrupting Charu’s story and Evan’s deliberations. “Go to sleep now. Bye.”

3. It’s scary alright,” said Evan, scrutinizing the inner crevice walls. “But I fear what will happen if I don’t reach Molly soon. If at all possible, I’ve got to keep her from falling off that ledge.”

4. Charu stretched out to Evan—slipping dangerously herself—but she was too late to catch him. “Nooooo!” screamed Charu, in horror. “Oh, Boone, I couldn’t catch him! He’s falling!”
Evan disappeared from sight. Charu cringed, covered her eyes, and waited for a horrible crashing sound. But all was quiet. What had happened? Had he fallen so far down that his body’s landing was inaudible?

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VOCABULARY, Chapters 28-29

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words.

1. Suddenly, without warning, Mica plunged face first into a big round hole—a root pit, caused by a large tree falling over. His forward motion packed his mouth with earth and **debris**—including wiggly creatures—worms and bugs. Yuck! He spat out the wet clump of soil and creepy, crawly life forms, and hastily brushed the thick mass of dirt off his clothes. He had no water to wash out his mouth, so he spat a couple more times, clamped his mouth shut, and swallowed what was left.

2. Ranger Mace was utterly relieved; Molly had been found—though she was injured! That she had traveled so far was astounding! That the kids had located her was almost a miracle! He was also **apprehensive** about his father and the kids. Then, on top of it all, an insistent parental question entered his mind: “Why had the kids disobeyed and entered the Great Smoky Mountains National Park? Deal with that later!” he **admonished** himself.

3. Hopefully they had arrived soon enough to help Molly avoid serious dehydration and **hypothermia**. His dad had told him that both conditions: dehydration—the lack of fluids, and hypothermia—a dangerously low body temperature, were life-threatening.

4. Time dragged, and the temperature dropped lower. Now that Evan was **immobile**, he felt chilled to the bone, and his muscles became stiff.

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VOCABULARY, Chapter 30

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words.

1. Doc solemnly walked over and shone his light down on Evan and Molly. Doc didn't reveal it, but he was shocked by the precarious position of Molly—and Evan— approximately fourteen feet below the surface! It was worse than he had imagined!

2. “Now, listen Evan, we must bring you up first. There isn't room in that crevice to get Molly's sling past your body. Explain this to her.”
“She's not going to like being left alone,” thought Evan.
Evan spoke softly, “Molly, our friends have to pull me up first. Then I'll help them bring you up.”
“No! Don't leave me!” cried Molly. “Us go together!”
But Evan knew there was no other choice. He had to vacate the space before Molly could be safely lifted out.

3. As soon as Evan surfaced, he joined the hauling team, and all four slowly raised Molly up. Molly didn't weigh much, but lifting her required careful maneuvering, directed by Doc. They couldn't avoid bumping the crevice wall a couple of times, and Molly cried out in pain when her fractured arm was jolted.

4. “Molly, I'm going to check your heart beat,” he said, showing her his stethoscope. “It won't hurt; I promise.” Molly acquiesced. She also submitted to letting the thermometer slide under her tongue for a temperature check.

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VOCABULARY, Chapter 31-32

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues &/or a dictionary to determine the meanings of the underlined words.

1. At last, Ranger Jonathan Mace and eight other Rangers stepped out from the trees. Their headlamps lit up the small area. They carried medical equipment and a litter—a basket-like container for ground carry-out.

2. When Ranger Mace gave the signal, Molly’s ground carry-out began. Two Rangers with powerful headlamps led the way down the mountainside, scouting and clearing a route as best they could.

Six Rangers surrounded the litter: two in front, two in back, and one on each side to protect Molly from the dense foliage hitting or jolting her basket litter.

3. Evan took his normal seat at the table and rubbed his foot against Boone, who lay by his chair. “Good morning, Boone, old boy. We had a late night, didn’t we?”
“Woof, woof!” responded the dog, as if to say, “Yes, indeed!”
Esther, who had been groggily staring at her empty plate, perked up. “Me and ‘Simmon was *late*, too. Just as *late* as you and Boone—so there!”

4. “Am I in major trouble?” asked Evan, needing to know the bottom line.
“No,” said his dad. “Your mother and I still trust you to obey the rules, especially the one about staying on the designated land. We also believe you will learn from this traumatic experience. Your freedoms still stand.”
