



VOCABULARY, Chapter 1: Just a Bony Kid

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. Evan felt a surge of manliness—confronting the barbershop alone. He squared his shoulders, stretched to his full height, and strolled confidently to the corner, where he and Boone waited for the light to change. Just as he started across Main Street, the barbershop door opened and out stepped the last person he wanted to see.
- “Putrid pickles!” mumbled Evan, feeling his emerging sense of manliness evaporate.

2. For years now, Moose had bragged about his daring deeds and extreme sports prowess, and often showed up uninvited. Then, this summer, to make matters worse, Moose’s dotting parents had given him an all-terrain vehicle for his thirteenth birthday. They put no restrictions on him whatsoever. So, Moose roamed wherever he pleased, audaciously ignoring property rights and public safety.

3. When they entered the barbershop, Mr. Cutter was buzzing the head of a high school football player whom Evan recognized. Two other men sat in chairs waiting their turn.
- “Hey, look who has graced our premises!” said the barber, as Evan closed the door. “Fellows, meet our locally famous, rescue dog, Boone, and his valiant owner, Evan Samuel Mace. How are you doing, Ev? Any more dangerous, midnight, mountain exploits?”

4. “Otto Cutter, what are you talking about?” guffawed a large man in overalls, as he leaned forward and doubtfully scrutinized Evan from head to toe. “He’s just a bony kid!”

THIEF IN THE PARK: A SMOKY MOUNTAIN STICK-BOY ADVENTURE



VOCABULARY, Chapter 2: The Stick Flies Again!

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. “Well, anyways, that little old retired teacher, Ms. Charm, couldn’t tolerate bein’ elbowed—no siree! She took her jumbo-sized purse—heavy as a fat hog, I’d reckon—and she swung that big ole thang up in the air—twisted her whole self around in the job—and ‘BAM!’ she landed it right up the side of Moose’s head!”

2. “Homer! Homer Shield!” hollered an authoritative voice from within the bank. “Get yourself back inside and do some guarding, like you’re supposed to!”

3. “Hey, Mom! You ready to go?” called Evan.
“Almost,” she said, stroking Boone’s furry back. “I have some business in the bank; then we’re off. Be patient just a little longer.” The bank’s ornate door closed behind her.

4. Desperate for help, Evan studied the streets of Neelburg. There wasn’t a soul in sight. All was quiet. White puffy clouds drifted lazily across the clear, blue sky, as though it were any other day. The town’s dreamy summer tranquility had been violently disrupted, and no one outside the bank knew—except Evan—and, wouldn’t you know it, he had left his cell phone in the van.

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VOCABULARY, Chapter 3: What Smells?

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. Gramps was a retired veterinarian whom everyone called “Doc.” He kept a menagerie of needy animals on his farm, and the boys often assisted with their care.

2. Initially, Mica and Evan fervently opposed having this former city girl enter their domain—so much so, that they tried to repel her offers of friendship. But their efforts didn’t scare Charu away; she demonstrated that she was more than adequate for their challenges, even joined their mud fights in Hickory Creek. And, to prove herself to the boys, she not only held the giant frog, Uggly Muggly, *she kissed him*. In the end, the boys found her to be a true and fun-loving friend. Also, though the boys might not admit it, she sometimes served as a conscientious monitor of appropriate behavior and parental boundaries.

3. Evan’s text message called his friends to their usual meeting location, The Rock. It was their ultimate haven—private, safe, and almost equidistant for each—about a half mile, if they took shortcuts.

4. Evan’s grandparents, Doc and Lizetta Mace, owned farmland that encompassed an infirmary, a barn, pastures, an orchard, a huge amount of undisturbed forest, even the original Mace log cabin. Also Doc had two other fascinating sites—Chestnut Pond and Elijah’s Cave—but both were off limits due to potential hazards.



VOCABULARY, Chapter 4: The White Stink Bomb

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. At the infirmary, Evan, Mica, and Charu briefly explained their disgusting situation to Doc and borrowed his cleaning supplies. He advised a plain creek-water scrub, instead of soap, explaining that a sudsy wash would pollute the creek and might harm the natural habitat. The overabundance of manure would be bad enough.

2. The three scrubbed, rubbed, and rinsed, but dried manure still adhered to the rough surface.

3. “How about we apply sand and gravel from the creek bed?” said Charu. “We can dump it on and use it as a scouring cleanser.”

4. “Why is he an albino?” asked Charu, still mystified by the unusual white skunk.
“Here’s the deal, scientifically speaking,” whispered Mica. “Any animal’s color—its pigment—is determined by the genes that it inherits from its parents. If an animal inherits traits that interrupt the making of the pigment, then the animal will be all white or have just a little color, and its eyes will be deep pink or icy blue. The chance of an albino skunk being born is very slim.”



VOCABULARY, Chapter 5: Of Pouters and Clouters

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

- Jonathan Mace initiated the conversation at the supper table that evening. “Okay, family, tell me about your day. From your faces I’d say all of you are about to burst with exciting news.”

- But I declare, Mr. Meckel needs to control his son—put that boy to work on the farm—teach Moose to be productive, instead of destructive. Moose seems to find delight in irritating you three kids.

- “I’m glad, ‘cause Evan is my onliest brother,” said Esther, looking at Evan dubiously. “He’s a good brother, but he is a little bit bad sometimes.” Evan looked only mildly offended at his sister’s assessment.

- So, by the time the hikers return from their two to three hour hike, discover the damage, and report it to a Ranger, the clouters are long gone.”
“What a bummer!” said Evan.
“You’ve got that right, son,” said Jonathan Mace. “We do all we can, but the Park doesn’t have enough Law Enforcement Rangers to keep all possible clouting zones under surveillance. We’ve caught a few, but the number of incidents increases significantly in the busy summer season.”

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VOCABULARY, Chapter 6: Master of Deception

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. Leather-gloved hands swung the heavy pipe wrench backwards, like a batter loading for power. Suddenly the muscular arms whipped the steel jaws forward with malicious intent.
Bam! Window glass exploded!

2. Early that morning the clouter had concealed himself within the thick grove of trees and rhododendrons that bordered this “Quiet Walkway,” one of several the Park provided to encourage tourists to experience the Smoky Mountains firsthand.

3. As he reasoned it, he was a performer—rather like the pretend robbers on the old train at the Dollywood Theme Park in Pigeon Forge. However, he was giving the customers more for their money—a guaranteed, deeply felt, *personal* encounter, complete with a never-to-be-forgotten memory. In his own logic, he was doing them a favor.

4. He prided himself on being a true explorer at heart. He’d hiked this Park for years and never been lost, not even once. Some got it—some ain’t. He had honed his natural scouting ability with years of practice and map study. Gotta have maps! With maps, supplies, and common sense, he remained safe and self-sufficient.

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VOCABULARY, Chapter 7: Smashed-In and Weaseled-Out

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. He pulled his official Ranger truck into an overlook parking lot, especially created to allow visitors to leave their cars, stroll along the manmade path, photograph the natural grandeur, even hike on a short scenic trail. The area buzzed with activity. Children ran off excess energy, breathing in clean, mountain air. Daring teens scrambled over boulders and down the rugged mountainside—relegating the less demanding trails to their elders.

2. Ranger Mace strolled among the visitors, welcoming them to the Park and answering their questions. Always alert, he observed the variety of people, watched for potential hazards, and checked car license plates—knowing full well that most persons were trustworthy. But he was also aware that a small percentage of unscrupulous individuals used the Park as a hideaway, even as a place to perpetrate crimes; therefore, constant vigilance was necessary.

3. “We men do like to make life easy,” said Jonathan, thinking about Oscar’s loneliness since his wife died. “Do you have an itinerary—a travel plan?”

4. “A clouter is a person who breaks the windows out of parked vehicles and then steals valuables. Where did this happen?”



VOCABULARY, Chapter 8: Cook-Out at Doc's

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. “Zip it, guys,” warned Charu. “You don’t want to hurt Gran’s feelings. Besides, you know perfectly well that our parents will expect us to be hospitable . . . helpful . . . friendly . . . and available.” She frowned, realizing she had talked herself into sharing the boys’ concern.

2. We have a lot of fun together. A few times we have taken short day trips around the area, but now we want to stretch our horizons, and I suggested we visit the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

3. Sixteen of us are coming. We are all in our seventies and physically able to do light hiking and sightseeing. We will reimburse you for any expenses—we are not beggars—or maybe we are!

4. “Are you suggesting that we stay with them *day and night*?” said Evan.
“*Like, live with them?*” asked Mica, thinking that was a bit more than just “helping out.”
“Actually, that’s a good idea for several reasons,” said Evan’s father, ending the kids’ comments with that cooperate-or-else parental stare. “You guys could carry luggage, run errands, and let us know if any problems occur. Besides that, you can acquaint them with the Park.”
Evan, Mica, and Charu hesitated. Unfortunately, they could not claim prior obligations.



VOCABULARY, Chapter 9: Senior Guests Arrive

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. “A yellow bus!” shouted Nandan, bouncing with excitement and almost falling from his precarious perch.

He and Esther were standing on the railing of Doc’s front porch, where they had climbed so they could see down the road. The children had been maintaining a one-handed grip on the decorative posts, while dangerously stretching their bodies farther and farther over the edge.

2. Nandan and Esther, quiet and curious, leaned against their mothers, unusually subdued as they watched the strangers step from the bus. Esther tapped her mother’s arm and motioned for her to lean over so she could whisper in her ear. “Do all old people look alike?”

3. “Certainly,” said Jonathan, stepping forward. “Welcome, everyone! I’d like you to meet our very special friends. To my right is Coach Habber. He’s a renowned science teacher and legendary football coach at Neelam County High School.”

4. “Home at last,” whispered Sarah Edwards, smiling wistfully as she looked off into the distance.

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VOCABULARY, Chapter 10: Who's Who?

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. A charming black woman, named Makayla Bevel, said that after being a principal for many years, she now sometimes fills interim positions for administrators on medical leave.

2. The lady instinctively leaned away and stared down at this unnerving youth. She raised one eyebrow and lowered the other, hoping a stern look would send the child away. But Esther, oblivious to any disapproval, studied the lady and tried to imitate the eyebrow movements.

3. Mica was curious about the nicknames, but Tank explained right away how his high school teammates gave him that name because his shape resembled a tank—stout, low to the ground, and unyielding.

4. “I don’t mean to brag,” Tank said, “but I was quite a football player for the Thornton High Bobcats. I played left tackle for the offense. You can see that I’m built for that position,” he said, chuckling and patting his belly. “Used to be all muscle! Well, we were playing the Northwestern Tornados for the conference championship. All week at practice the main question was, ‘Can Tank block the three-hundred-pound, defensive tackle for the Tornados?’”

Mica wondered, but didn’t ask, “Why was that the *main* question?”

Tank continued. “On our first offensive play, I shot out of my stance like a sprinter, right toward the big guy. See, if you beat ’em on the first play, they’re afraid of you the rest of the game!”



VOCABULARY, Chapter 11: Advice from a Cop

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. “Well,” said Mac, “it was challenging, frustrating, dangerous, difficult—but fulfilling. The best years were the ones I worked in the Canine Division. My favorite dog was a German Shepherd named Wyatt; we trained for hours every week. We operated as a team, and believe me, he took his work seriously. He actually saved my life several times when we were apprehending criminals or searching for drugs.”

2. “Now, you tell me about being a Protection Ranger in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. What does that entail?” asked Mac.

3. “In addition,” continued Jonathan, “since this is a Park environment, we must also be proficient in Search and Rescue, as well as Emergency Medical Services. The number of hikers who get lost or injured is greater than you might think.”

4. Mac paused a moment, then added, “I will tell you about one incident that might help. My wife and I always walked in a city park near our home. It was a safe family area, with extensive children’s play equipment, a shelter, and people walking, biking, and running all the time. My wife had commented on seeing young mothers lean over to tuck their purses under the front seat before unloading their children and walking away from the parking lot. Of course, that freed their hands to control the children, but left their purses vulnerable.”

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VOCABULARY, Chapter 12: Of Bugs and Formaldehyde

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. Evan sat in the midst of chattering adults, feeling like a pop quiz was imminent. The only one whose name he remembered was Makayla Bevel, the retired elementary school principal.

2. “Anyway, back to the embalming,” continued Neal, fearing he might lose the attention of his audience. “Charu, you should see it done. The job’s quite proficient, out with the blood, in with the formaldehyde. That’s about it—although I did vacuum out intestinal matter.”

“My dear sir!” asserted a lady at the table. “We *are* trying to eat!”

“Ah . . . yes. Of course we are,” said the mortician, taking a mouthful of baked beans and reluctantly discontinuing his gruesome saga.

3. Bug jumped in to fill the conversational void. “I’ll tell you all about my job of exterminating bad bugs. To exterminate means ‘to destroy, kill, massacre, or wipe out.’”

4. Bug responded: “Okay, ladies—Neal—got another idea. Let’s talk about amazing facts. If you cut off a cockroach’s head, it can stay alive and crawl around for a week. Doesn’t that get your juices flowing?”

The beleaguered ladies paled. One clutched her neck and swallowed.

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VOCABULARY, Chapter 13: Touring Doc's Place

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. After the senior citizens had eaten their fill, Doc led them on a tour of his farm. First he took them to his spotless infirmary, explaining that he kept it in constant readiness for emergencies. In the barn, he introduced his menagerie of recovering animals and expounded on their injuries.

2. Next, Doc led everyone down the old farm lane to the original Mace cabin which was built in 1801. He directed their attention to the notched logs at the four corners and the two large chimneys on either end. On the inside, he described how the wide floor boards had been hewn by hand from the same type logs as the cabin—tulip poplar. His great-great-grandfather had scraped and planed the top of each plank until it was silky smooth, thus, saving little bare feet from splinters.

3. “This large cabin was actually my great-great-grandfather’s gift to his bride,” said Doc. “In the beginning, he and his brothers had built a small, crude, one room cabin, just to get by while they began clearing and farming the land. But getting married and planning a family motivated him to construct this larger cabin.

4. “Oh, help!” said Polly.
“We plan to,” said Esther. “The end.” With the friendship clearly established in Esther’s mind, she swung Polly’s hand as though she too were four.

Engulfed in childish chatter, Polly gritted her teeth, breathed deeply, and pledged to wash her hands with anti-bacterial hand sanitizer as soon as she reached her purse.

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VOCABULARY, Chapter 14: Ranger's Orientation

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. “Scientists explain this smoky look as the natural result of four factors working together. First, the Park has a high amount of rainfall, about fifty-five inches in the valleys and over eighty-five inches on some peaks. Second, this rainfall and our warm temperatures create high humidity, especially in the summer. Third, the humidity and warm temperatures cause the continual decomposition of leaves and debris on the forest floor. Fourth, the trees transpire—which means they give off water vapor through their leaves. One large tree may transpire fifty to seventy-five gallons of water a day.

2. “Remember,” added Jonathan, “rainfall here is normally so high that the Smoky Mountains are actually considered a temperate rainforest.”

3. “Are the bears dangerous?” asked Tootsie, looking hesitantly at Ranger Mace and then at Tank, who put his arm protectively around her.
“They can be, but you’ll be safe if you obey the Park’s rules,” said Jonathan. “Federal regulation states you must not *willfully* come within fifty yards of a bear—that’s half a football field. Do not even come close enough to cause a bear to change what it is doing.”

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VOCABULARY, Chapter 15: Charu Confronts a “Wild Beast”

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. Late Monday evening Mr. Meckel’s bus reached the Overview Parkway Retreat Center, and the senior citizens unloaded at their respective cabins: the women at the Doe Lodge and the men at the Buck Lodge.

2. Suddenly a loud scream echoed through the lodge, and Polly burst out of her room. “A wild beast! A huge rat! In my closet. Help!” and with that she fainted onto a couch.
“Well! That was dramatic!” said Sarah, obviously not fretting over the unconscious woman. “Charu, it’s probably nothing, but would you mind checking her closet? Polly’s a bit fragile.”

3. Hearing commotion, she glanced over her shoulder at the entrance to the room and saw many pairs of eyes peeking around the doorframe—supportive in their own way, but hesitant to confront a *wild beast*.

4. Polly made no effort to thank Charu. Rather, the easily agitated senior simply said, “I knew it would be like this. We might as well be sleeping in a tent!” Then she stomped off to her room, announcing to Charu, “When you come to bed, make *no noise*; I am a light sleeper.”



VOCABULARY, Chapter 16: Of Men and Food

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. Evan and Mica opened the double doors to the Buck Lodge and stepped into the large, impressive room. Cushy sofa sections faced a two-sided fireplace. A high cathedral ceiling and one whole wall of windows conveyed a sense of spacious luxury.

2. “Where you going?” asked Tank, suddenly wanting to be somewhere else.
“Out for some exercise,” Mac said.
“Hey, hold on a minute, and I’ll join you,” said Tank, looking askance at Neal. “We need to scout out the premises.” He lowered his voice to a whisper, “And escape this lecture on corpse toes!”

3. The sleeping senior citizens drifted into deep slumber, while all around their lodges, the nocturnal mountain animals awakened and stirred in their nightly routines of foraging for food. Owls perched on tree branches and kept a silent, deadly watch for mice or rabbits. Raccoons gathered on the creek banks, turning over rocks and searching for crayfish, insects, or salamanders.

4. Black bears moved sure-footedly, yet stealthily over the steep slopes seeking their summer berries and insect larvae. In truth, the entire forest turned into a gigantic, gourmet restaurant—with every species hoping to be the consumer, not the consumed.

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VOCABULARY, Chapter 17: Bug Burns It!

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. From an upper shelf where seldom-used items were stored, Bug hauled out what he called a “wrap-your-arm-around-me” bowl. In a lower cabinet he found a man-sized glass. Enjoying his solitary hunt immensely, he stuck his head into the refrigerator to search for a soda.

2. *Bwwaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!* The blaring sound ricocheted off of every surface, violently vibrating his eardrums.

3. Protecting his ears, Mac turned to Mica and Evan, and shouted, “Fellows, maybe we should check the lodge. If the rest of you will help, I’d appreciate it.”
Bwwaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah! The shrieking continued unabated.
Grouchy men, some barefoot, some in floppy slippers, scattered and began to investigate.

4. The siren stopped, but the truck’s lights continued to swirl. Firefighters gathered their gear, stretched out hoses, grabbed ladders, and headed toward Buck Lodge.
The first firefighter spoke: “Please vacate the lodge immediately!” The bath-robed men obeyed, gathering in an uneasy huddle near the porch.



VOCABULARY, Chapter 18: A Brave Deed Rewarded!

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. “You’ll impress them with your strong, muscular build,” said his dad. “A little lift here, a supportive arm there, and you’ll have loads of tips dumped in your lap. Tourists believe in passing out generous gratuities, you know.”

2. He paused in front of the mirror, spiked his hair, wiped chocolate from his cheek, and proudly thumped his thirteen-year-old chest. “Those old codgers are going to love me!”
Sauntering into the kitchen, Moose found his dad hastily devouring a syrupy stack of pancakes.

3. “Oh, my, Brucie Moosie,” said Mrs. Meckel, coming over and wrapping her arms around his shoulders. “You’re always thinking of others. I am so proud!”
Moose complacently accepted her praise, while seriously listening for his dad’s response. After all, pinpointing just the right wealthy person among the senior citizens would be crucial to raking in the gold.

4. No one moved. The women all recognized the weeping voice of their drama queen, and reluctantly watched Polly Poutway’s self-pitying performance. Was her problem serious? Probably not, but somebody had to help calm her down. Would she appreciate their efforts? Not a bit.
