



TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 6-8

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

The Haymeadow

Gary Paulsen



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The Haymeadow

Gary Paulsen

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NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Skills and Strategies

Thinking

Brainstorming, classifying
evaluating, visualizing,
analyzing details

Writing

Interior monologue, poem,
descriptive, letter, narrative,
epilogue

Vocabulary

Antonyms/synonyms

Listening/Speaking

Participation in discussions,
participation in cooperative
groups, drama, role-play

Comprehension

Predicting, sequencing,
comparison/contrast,
inference

Literary Elements

Character, setting, plot,
flashback, simile, proverbs,
personification

Summary

On the first day of his summer job, 14-year-old John Barron realizes that caring for the sheep herd in the haymeadow will be no easy task. On that day alone he must kill a rattlesnake, treat a lamb for a snakebite, disengage the dog Billy from a skunk, treat the dog Pete for a torn toe pad, wait out a sheep stampede under the wagon, and live through a flash flood. John's life does not get easier. He learns there are some things over which he has no control. Nevertheless, as his life changes, John finds he doesn't want for anything out in the haymeadow.

(Suggested topics for study include sheep herding, Wyoming, border collies, animal training, ecology, and genealogy.)

About the Author

Gary Paulsen was born May 17, 1939, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He attended Bemidji College, 1957-58, and the University of Colorado, 1976. He has worked as a teacher, field engineer, editor, soldier, actor, director, farmer, rancher, truck driver, trapper, professional archer, migrant farm worker, singer and sailor. His father's family came to this country from Denmark and his mother's family emigrated from Norway and Sweden. Paulsen's father was a military career man, so the family was constantly on the move. The longest time Paulsen spent in any one school was about five months. He was miserable as an "Army brat." Because of family problems, he was sent to live with relatives and began working at a young age. "Had teen suicide been a topic in the news as it is today, had it in any way suggested a way out, I know I would have seriously considered the possibility." Paulsen found refuge in the public library. When he got his library card he felt "...as though I had been dying of thirst and the librarian had handed me a five-gallon bucket of water. I drank and drank."

"I write because it's all I can do," says Paulsen. "Every time I've tried to do something else I cannot, and have to come back to writing, though often I hate it—hate it and love it. It's much like being a slave, I suppose, and in slavery there is a kind of freedom that I find in writing. I'm not 'motivated,' as you put it. Nor am I particularly driven. I write because it's all there is." He writes for the youth market because he feels that "...art reaches out for newness, and adults aren't new."

Introductory Information and Activities

Note: It is not intended that everything presented in this guide be done. Please be selective, and use discretion when choosing the activities you will do with the unit. The choices that are made should be appropriate for your use and your group of students. A wide range of activities has been provided so that individuals as well as groups may benefit.

Initiating Activity

Collect books, pamphlets, and posters about the state of Wyoming, sheep herding, border collies, and environmental concerns. Display these materials in the room and have them available for student use. Make arrangements for volunteer guest speakers such as a veterinarian, breeder, or owner of a border collie, cowboy, or horse trainer.

Highlight the state of Wyoming on a map of the United States. Have students share knowledge and experiences pertaining to Wyoming. Put the K-W-L chart on the bulletin board. Record information about Wyoming in the top K section. (See Bulletin Board Idea.) Be sure to include the fact that raising sheep is one of the principal livestock industries of Wyoming. Change the topic of discussion on the KWL chart from "Wyoming" to "Sheep" and record information discussed in the bottom K section. Incorrect information on the chart may be changed as more is learned about the topics. Find out what the students want to learn about Wyoming and about sheep; record this in the W section of the chart. Fill in the L section as the story is read and more is learned about Wyoming and sheep.

Go on to Previewing the Book.

Bulletin Board Idea

Cover the bulletin board with plain paper. Make a large K-W-L chart on the board. Divide the chart into two sections horizontally so that knowledge of Wyoming may be recorded in the top section and knowledge of sheep may be recorded in the bottom section.

What They Know	What They Would Like to Know	What They Learned

Recommended Procedure

Some chapters have been combined in this guide. As each section ends, have students make predictions as to what might happen next. These predictions are, in reality, good guesses based upon what has already happened in the story and on the clues given by the author. Predictions may be reviewed as the story continues. Knowledge of vocabulary words may be reviewed either individually or as a group; have students write or give simple definitions. Check these definitions by seeing how the vocabulary words are used in the story context. Use a dictionary if any definition is unclear. The vocabulary activities may also help to clarify meanings.

Chapter Eight, Pages 61-68

As they continue the drive, Cawley and John watch the dogs tend the sheep. They marvel at the dogs' innate abilities to herd and care for the sheep.

Vocabulary

plague 62

dwindled 66

endurance 66

Vocabulary Activities

1. Make synonym trains for the vocabulary words. For example:

PLAGUE - torment - worry - annoy

DWINDLED - decreased - declined - petered out

ENDURANCE - stamina - toughness - durability

2. Use all three of the vocabulary words in the same sentence. For example: The thought of losing the race *plagued* him as his *endurance dwindled*.

Discussion Questions

1. Cawley joins John in the wagon. What does Cawley want to talk about? (*Pages 64 and 65, Cawley wants to remind John about taking care of the dogs. "Dogs don't think of the end, only the beginning. So you've got to take care of them."*) What does Cawley mean by this remark? Do you agree or disagree with Cawley's reasoning? Discuss.
2. John becomes restless as he sits in the wagon all day. What does Cawley tell John about the chore? (*Page 67, Cawley tells John, "But it's your wagon, ain't it? You're going to live in it so you take care of it."*) Do you think this makes sense? Why or why not? How do you think John is feeling about his situation at this time? Discuss. See Supplementary Activity #2.

Supplementary Activities

1. Find out more about border collies. If possible, invite someone in to speak to the group about that breed of dog.
2. Imagine that you will be camping outdoors for the summer and will have no electricity. What is the one thing you think you will miss the most? Why? Write about your feelings in prose or poetry form.
3. Make a prediction as to what you think might happen next.

Chapters Nine & Ten, Pages 71-84

Cawley, John, and the dogs get the sheep to the haymeadow late in the day. Camp is established and Cawley plans to return to the ranch early the next morning. Before Cawley leaves, he reminds John to "keep a horse to hand." Unfortunately, before John can round up the two horses, Peg alerts him to the presence of a rattlesnake in the herd. John runs to the area, kills the snake with a rock, and finds that one lamb has been bitten by the snake.

Vocabulary

windbreak 73

altitude 80

venom 83

Vocabulary Activity

Write an acrostic poem using the vocabulary word *windbreak* as the title and the skeleton of the poem. (In an acrostic poem the verse is usually unrhymed and the letters, written vertically, are used to stimulate creative thinking about the topic.) For example:

W
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b
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k

I
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D
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R
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a
c
h
i
n
g

E
a
g
e
r

A
r
m
s

K
i
n
d
l
y

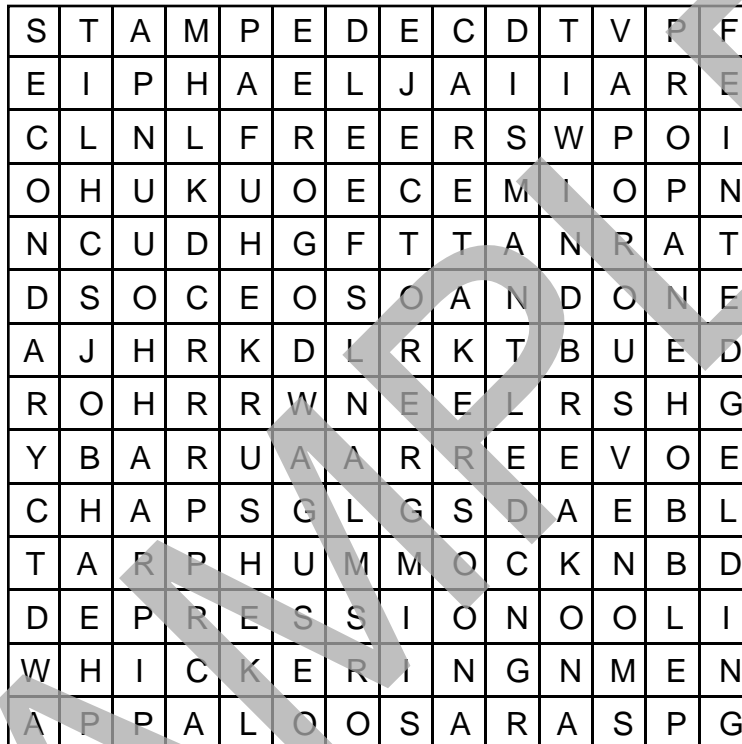
Discussion Questions

1. What advice does Cawley give John as he is about to leave the haymeadow? (Page 76, Cawley tells John, "Keep a horse to hand.") What do you think this advice means? Why does Cawley think this is so important? Discuss.
2. How does John feel as he watches Cawley ride away from the camp? (Page 76, John feels alone and sorry for himself. He thinks, "I am the only person here.") What makes John change his attitude? (Page 76, John thinks about his great-grandfather and remembers that the old man was only four or five years older than John when he claimed the land for himself.) Why do you think that remembering the old man changes John's attitude? What do you think might have happened if John did not have the old man about whom to reminisce? Discuss.
3. How does John feel about killing the rattlesnake? (Page 81, John really doesn't want to kill the snake. "He had always thought that if they left him alone he'd leave them alone and he almost liked their attitude.") Why does John kill the snake? (Page 81, John knows that if he doesn't kill the snake it will come back again and again. It will not leave the sheep alone.) Would you feel the same way as John does about killing a snake? Discuss.

Vocabulary Word Search Puzzle

Do the word search. Write down the letters that have not been used, starting at the top and working left to right in each row. Group the letters into words to find out what changes in the haymeadow.

What changes is _____



APPALOOSA
CARETAKERS
CHAPS
CHUCKWAGON
CORRAL
DEPRESSION
DISMANTLED

EJECTOR
ELUDED
FEINTED
GELDING
HOBBLE
HUMMOCK
MARE

PLUGS
PROPANE
RASP
SECONDARY
SHRUG
SINKHOLE
STAMPEDE

TARP
VAPOROUS
VENOM
WHICKERING
WINDBREAK

Some other things to do:

1. Put the words in alphabetical order.

2. Number the words and:

- define every odd-numbered word.
- use every even-numbered word in a sentence.