The development and Writing of a Children's Story to Promote an Awareness of Deaf Culture and American Sign Language

Blaine J. Taylor

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THE DEVELOPMENT AND WRITING OF A CHILDREN'S STORY TO PROMOTE AN AWARENESS OF DEAF CULTURE AND AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE

by

Blaine J. Taylor

The project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in

The Education of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program in the Department of Communicative Disorders.

Utah State University
Logan, Utah
1993
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PROBLEM STATEMENT

Many advocates of the deaf fear that a whole generation of deaf children will be lost emotionally, socially, and educationally. This fear stems from the fact that many children who are deaf are not having their linguistic, sociocultural, and communicative needs met at home or at school (King, 1993). Their needs are not met primarily for three reasons. First, the hearing culture is often inaccessible to them because they do not understand most of the spoken language around them. When children lack the communicative abilities to interact with the hearing culture, they can not be expected to be knowledgeable of that culture, to participate in that culture, or to establish an identity as a part of that culture. Secondly, Deaf culture is unknown to many children who are deaf. Ninety percent of children who are deaf are born into hearing families who are unaware of Deaf culture (Moores, 1987). Most children who are deaf and hard of hearing do not know about Deaf culture until they become involved in
it through a residential school for the deaf or the Deaf community (Padden & Humphries, 1988). Thirdly, Deaf culture, history, heritage, and American Sign Language are not taught as part of the curriculum in most schools nor in the mainstreamed or self-contained classrooms (Gannon, 1990).

In the past, one of the strengths of the American education system was its ability to pass on the cultural and the social norms of society. Since 1817, Deaf culture has been passed on to the next generation normally and naturally in the residential schools for the deaf throughout the United States (Lane, 1984). With the passage of P.L. 94-142, this has not been happening for many children who are deaf because they have been mainstreamed, put in self-contained classrooms in hearing schools, or placed in day schools under the term "least restrictive environment". In these educational environments, deaf children have little access to Deaf culture, American Sign Language (ASL), or Deaf adult role models. Since children who are deaf and hard of hearing are often isolated from
both the hearing and Deaf worlds and are not taught curriculum related to Deaf heritage, they often fail to develop a cultural identity.

Jack Gannon (1990), the author of Deaf Heritage and an advocate of the Deaf, states,

Who or what is a person without an identity? What good is an education if a person has no cultural identity, no cultural values, no sense of belonging?

It is important that we understand the importance of this cultural identity if we want our deaf to succeed. They need successful role models.

They need to know that deafness is an obstacle, but not a barrier to success. (p. 21)

Mr. Gannon implores parents, teachers, and administrators to teach deaf children about Deaf heritage and to help deaf children learn of the rich culture that abounds in the Deaf communities around the world. Children who are deaf need to learn about successful deaf individuals in history. Through these means, deaf children can develop identities and have positive self-images (Gannon, 1990).
To develop a cultural identity, children need opportunities to participate in a culture and meet successful role models and peers. Through meaningful participation, children can have shared experiences and can identify with others who are like them. When children have these experiences, they can develop the cultural identity and healthy self-esteem that will be a tool for their future success. Often, because of the social and educational decisions made for them, deaf and hard-of-hearing children do not have knowledge of or access to a culture or role models who are like them. Thus, other options to learn and participate in Deaf culture need to be made available.

John Leonard, writer for *The New York Times*, once wrote, "Books change lives!" The role of children's literature is to shape, mold, uplift, explain, and inform children (Yolen, 1989). The reading of realistic contemporary fiction and biographies of Deaf people can be one avenue through which deaf and hard-of-hearing children can be exposed to Deaf peers and share experiences with them. Children who are deaf can learn about Deaf culture by reading fiction that
portrays the community and lives of other Deaf individuals. Literature offers children the opportunity to experience events, peoples, and places. It can introduce children to the needs, feelings, and lives of others. For deaf children, it can be the medium that introduces them to Deaf role models (Norton, 1983). When children read about other children in similar situations they may be led to realize that their problems are not unique and that they are not alone. Children may extend horizons, broaden interests, experience new adventures, and view problems from different perspectives when they read good contemporary fiction (Norton, 1983).

Although literature is one method of meeting the needs of deaf children, unfortunately, there is a shortage of children's literature containing information about Deaf culture, Deaf community, and American Sign Language. Only about 10% of the children's literature related to deafness has information about all three topics. There is a need for more children's books with Deaf characters with whom Deaf and hard-of-hearing children can identify (J. Andrews, personal communication, September, 1992).
PURPOSE

The desired outcome of this project is to provide a book that contributes to the small collection of children's books related to deafness. This book was written in an attempt to accomplish the following objectives:

1. To portray experiences of Deaf and hard of hearing children.

2. To provide:
   a. information about Deaf culture
   b. a positive view of deafness
   c. sociological information about the Deaf community.

3. To provide an opportunity for the reader to identify with children who are deaf and hard of hearing by using stories that are typical of those experienced by them.

4. To provide the reader with an opportunity to participate vicariously in the Deaf community and culture.
PROCEDURES

1. A review and search of available children’s literature was conducted through a computer search of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), Children’s Books in Print for the years 1989-1993, the Gallaudet University Press (1992), and An Annotated Bibliography of Children’s Book’s about Hearing Loss, Deafness, and Hearing Impaired People by D. Oldman-Brown (1985). The following are the key words that were used in the search: juvenile literature related to deafness, hearing impairment, culture, identity, deaf, hard of hearing, handicaps, and sign language.

2. A simple rating system was created to reflect the content of the books. The rating system reflects a continuum of views on deafness ranging from a pathological defect model on the left side to a linguistic minority perspective on the right side. A middle rating shows that the book views deafness from more than one view point. The following questions and scales comprise this rating system.
a. Does this book view a deaf child, as a pathological defect, a linguistic minority, or both?

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b. Does the author write about experiences of deaf or hard of hearing children in only hearing social situations, only in Deaf social situations, or in both environments?

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c. Is American Sign Language presented as a language, as a code for communication, or both?

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d. Does the book include information about the hearing culture, Deaf culture, or both?

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e. Overall Rating Scale

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The overall rating score is figured by adding all the scores from scales 'a' through 'd' and then divide by four. This score is compared with the overall rating scale to determine the general perspective of the book. The far left side of the overall rating scale reflects a strong pathological viewpoint and the right side reflects a strong linguistic minority perspective toward deafness. Refer to the Appendix for the ratings of each book.

3. All of the children’s books related to deafness available from the local library system were checked out. Eighteen books were read, reviewed, and evaluated using the rating system described above. Each book was evaluated and given a score in each of the four mentioned areas. The scores were totaled and averaged to give an overall rating regarding the general perspective of the book.

4. An annotated bibliography of the selected books was compiled. Each listing contains the following information: title, author, publisher, synopsis, comments, and evaluation (see Appendix).
5. Interaction and interviews with Deaf and hard of hearing adults and children were a major part of this project. Stories and experiences of Deaf individuals were collected through personal interviews. They are the foundation of the book. These real experiences give credibility to the story.

Many valuable interactions with deaf and hard of hearing children have contributed to an understanding of and an ability to write about them. Various experiences with children who are deaf or hard of hearing have provided a reservoir of ideas which were used in writing this book. Student teaching in both Oral and Total Communication classrooms, visiting a residential school for the deaf, and interviewing and associating frequently with children who are deaf or hard of hearing have greatly increased the author’s knowledge

Interviews with seven Deaf adults provided experiences and insights into the lives of children who are deaf. The ASL stories that are included in the book were collected from some of these
individuals. Many of the scenes in this book are based on experiences of Deaf or hard of hearing people.

The following is a list of some of the interview questions used to elicit stories, experiences, and information from Deaf adults:

a. Tell me what you enjoy most about the Deaf community.

b. Tell me about going to a party with hearing people.

c. Tell me an ASL number story, an ABC story, or any other story that is unique to the Deaf community.

d. Tell me about any situation you had when you misunderstood someone in the hearing community.

e. When did you become involved in the Deaf community?

f. Did you feel accepted and comfortable when you first became involved in the Deaf community?

g. Tell me about your experiences at a camp for deaf children.
h. What types of Deaf community activities are available to children that will give them exposure to Deaf culture?

i. Why is Deaf culture important to you?

j. Do you feel it is important for children who are deaf or hard of hearing to know about Deaf culture? Why or why not?

k. What assistive devices do you use? Show me how they work.

6. An author and a children's literature expert were contacted and asked to give advice and guidance that would facilitate the writing of the story. The following questions were used to gather information from the author and literature expert:

a. How do you make the story seem realistic?

b. How do you adjust the language level so that it is appropriate for the age of children for which the story is intended?
c. What advice can you offer me to facilitate the completion of this project?

7. The author wrote the story entitled: The Adventures at Camp Talking Hands.

RESULTS

1. In the search for children's books related to deafness, 100 books were found from these three sources, Books in Print for the years 1989-1993, Gallaudet University Press Catalog (1992), and An Annotated Bibliography of Children's Books about Hearing Loss, Deafness, and Hearing Impaired People.

2. The rating system described in step two of the procedure section was easy to use. Table 1 below shows the ratings of the each of the books listed in the annotated bibliography. The number in the
far left column is the number corresponding to the number of the book listed in alphabetical order in the bibliography. The number in the second column corresponds with the rating the story received on question letter 'a' regarding the story's perspective of deafness. Column three lists the score related to the story's settings. The fourth column shows the rating connected to the question about the presentation of sign language in the story. Column five relates to question 'd'-- How much information about Deaf culture does the story contain? The last column lists the overall rating for each book.

3. Ten of the books received an overall rating of 2 or less. Three books received overall ratings of 4 or greater. The rest, five books, overall ratings were between 2 and 4. Thus 55% of the books read have a strong Pathological bias, 17% reflect a linguistic minority perspective, and the remaining 28% of the books included information from both perspectives.
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<th>Books</th>
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Table 1: The individual and overall ratings of nineteen children's stories with deaf and/or hard-of-hearing characters.
4. The annotated bibliography of the selected books is contained in the Appendix section. (See pp. 27-43)

5. All individuals interviewed were willing and excited to share personal experiences and information about deafness to help the author have a better understanding of the topic. The following is a list of the questions and responses, in paraphrased terms, that occurred in many interviews:

   a. Q: Tell me what you enjoy most about the Deaf community.
      A: I enjoy the ease of communication that I find when communicating in ASL verses oral/auditory communication.

   b. Q: Tell me about going to a party with hearing people.
      A: I went a few times on dates to parties with hearing boys. I always felt alone and left out. I couldn’t understand the conversations. After a while I’d tell
the boy I wanted to go. If he didn’t take me home, I would just walk.

c. Q: Tell me an ABC story that you learned from other Deaf people.
   A: "The Drag Race"

d. Q: Tell me about any situation you had when you misunderstood someone in the hearing community.  
   A: That happens to me all the time at the store.  
   Sometimes the store clerk just walks away from me.  
   It used to bother me, but now it doesn’t. I just get what I need by myself.

e. Q: When did you become involved in the Deaf community?
   A: I became involved in the Deaf community when I went to the residential school for the deaf.

f. Q: Did you feel accepted and comfortable when you first became involved in the Deaf community?
A: No, but it didn’t take long to become a part and feel that I belonged with them.

g. Q: Tell me about your experiences at a camp for deaf children.

A: It was a lot of fun. Everybody signed. We went tubing down a river and we rode calves. I have a video of it. Do you want to see it?

h. Q: What types of community activities are available to children that will give them exposure to Deaf culture?

A: Summer camps, sports teams, Deaf community center sponsored activities, and Deaf club activities.

i. Q: Why is Deaf culture important to you?

A: It has helped me gain my own identity.

j. Q: Do you feel it is important for children who are deaf or hard of hearing to know about Deaf culture? Why or why not?
A: Yes, because I believe it can help them find an identity also.

k. Q: What assistive devices do you use? Show me how they work.

A: I use a vibrator alarm, lights for doorbells and telephone, TTY, and a close caption machine with my television. (Each was demonstrated.)

6. The following advice was given by the author and the children's literature expert during personal interviews and reiterated in the book *Guide to Writing for Children* by Jane Yolen. First, know the subject that you are writing about. Second, sit down and write. Don't worry about the language level. It can be revised, if need be, after the story is written. The story is the most important aspect of writing. "Any designation of readership is after the fact, the prerogative of the editor in consultation with the sales department."

(Yolen, 1989, iv).
7. Based on the information collected through the interviews, a fictitious story containing deaf and hard-of-hearing characters was written. That statement is entirely unable to describe the incredible complex process required to write the story. Uncountable hours were spent contemplating the characters, setting, plot, theme, and style of the story. The amount of time spent physically writing the story approached 300 hours. The amount of time spent researching and interviewing people was double that amount.

EVALUATION OF THE STORY

The author conducted an informal evaluation of the story. The manuscript was given to fourteen people to read. Among these individuals were professionals in deaf education, parents of a deaf child, a Deaf adult, an author, and two 12 year-old-boys, one deaf and one hearing. Each person who read the story was asked the following questions: 1. What was your overall impression of the story? 2. Tell me about any specific area that may have been confusing or any part that you didn’t understand.
The overall impression of all the readers of the story was good. Fifty percent of the readers commented on how they enjoyed the information presented about children who are deaf or hard of hearing and Deaf culture. Forty percent of the readers felt that Joel was a sympathetic character. They could identify with him.

Ninety percent of the readers had questions concerning the ASL stories. Most of them did not understand the story as it was presented in the manuscript but understood the stories when presented orally and visually. Fifty percent of the readers wanted a longer, stronger ending. Thirty percent felt that some of the language used by the characters was not true to life.
SUMMARY

Children who are deaf and hard of hearing need access to a culture to help them develop strong and healthy self-esteem. Often most children who are deaf and hard of hearing are not aware of the Deaf community and culture that is available which can fill their needs in this respect. Providing Deaf peers and role models through literature is one way to meet this need. Unfortunately, there are far too few books about Deaf and hard-of-hearing children. The Adventures at Camp Talking Hands was carefully researched and written in an attempt to meet this need.

The findings of this research verify that most children's books with deaf or hard-of-hearing characters are written from a hearing person's viewpoint. More books that view deafness from a linguistic minority perspective are needed.

The Adventures at Camp Talking Hands received an overall rating of 4. Thus, clearly recognizing it as a story that views deafness from a linguistic minority perspective.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SELECTED CHILDREN’S BOOKS RELATED TO DEAFNESS WHICH WERE READ BY BLAINE J. TAYLOR

The eighteen books read and evaluated by Blaine J. Taylor are listed below with the following bibliographic information: author, year of publication, title, and publisher. Summaries and comments about each book are also included. Each annotated bibliography is followed by the rating of each book using the system explained in step four of the procedures section (see pp. 9-11).

   Summary: This book defines fingerspelling. It illustrates and describes each letter of the American Manual Alphabet. It also contains some riddles and games to practice fingerspelling.

   Comments: This book does not have information about ASL. It mentions that if a person knows the manual alphabet he/she can "talk" with deaf people and that Deaf people use fingerspelling to "share thoughts with others". This book tends to treat fingerspelling as a code, and as a child's game. The illustrations of the letters of the manual alphabet are accurate, but in general the illustrations are poor.

   Evaluation: a. 1  b. 1  c. 1  d. 1  Overall Rating 1

Summary: Donald, who has learning disabilities, finds out that he is not the only one who struggles in school, when he meets Matt, a Deaf boy. They become friends. Matt teaches Donald sign language and fingerspelling. Together they form a club and track down a newspaper thief.

Comments: This book has a vocabulary level that is easy to read along with sentence and language structure that allows for easy understanding. The text is natural and unstilted. It has three Deaf characters in it. It introduces assistive devices used by people who are deaf: lights for doorbells and telephones; captioning for TV; the TTY; and interpreters. All of these devices are a normal and important part of Deaf life. It introduces the idea of the Deaf Community. It gives true to life frustrations often experienced by the deaf when they are forced to be mainstreamed into the hearing world. It also gives an idea of the expressive capabilities of sign language. All in all, it is a good story.

Evaluation: a. 3   b. 3   c. 3   d. 3 Overall Rating 3

   **Summary:** Donald and Matt are kidnapped by two crooks who have stolen two rare birds from the zoo.

   **Comments:** This is a fast action adventure involving a young boy who is deaf. This book is the third in a series of books called the Flying Fingers Club. All of them are written by the same author. Of the three books this one has less information in the four interest areas than the two previous Flying Fingers Club books.

   **Evaluation:** a. 3   b. 1   c. 3   d. 2   Overall Rating 2.25

Summary: Donald visits his friend Matt at the Kentucky residential school for the deaf. There they solve a mystery involving a stolen necklace.

Comments: This is a high adventure story that happens at a residential school for the deaf. It talks about ASL as the language used by Deaf students at the school. It views deafness from both perspectives. The Deaf character participates in both hearing and Deaf situations. Sign language is used both as a code and a language. It includes some cultural information about the Deaf.

Evaluation: a. 3  b. 3  c. 3  d. 3  Overall Rating 3


Summary: Three high school football players, one of whom is deaf, wait for colleges to offer scholarships to them.
Comments: This book doesn’t delve into the life of the deaf character. He seems to be a secondary character who gives strength to the conflict of the main character. There is nothing about Deaf culture or community. However, it strongly reveals a feeling common among Deaf individuals. Many people who are deaf don’t want to be considered handicapped. They don’t want to be pampered because of their deafness.

Evaluation: a. 1  b. 1  c. 1  d. 1  Overall Rating 1


Summary: This is an ABC book using sign language and fingerspelling to introduce ASL vocabulary through photographs.

Comments: This book is well thought out and designed in a creative, understandable way. Even if a person is not familiar with sign language, can figure out the meaning of each sign introduced in
the book. The book is able to capture some of the components of American Sign Language (ASL) through wonderful color photographs. The photographer tried to incorporate facial expression, movement, hand shape, and position into the signs. The fingerspelling hands are clear and easily recognized. Additional printed comments help clarify where needed. The introduction gives a good explanation of sign language and its use among the Deaf.

Evaluation: a. 5  b. 3  c. 5  d. 3  Overall Rating 4


Summary: This sign language book incorporates some of the components of American Sign Language into the photographs. It tells the story of MaryBeth's birthday using ASL. It uses the format of
an ASL number story. Watch closely as the signs in this story incorporate the signs for numbers in the signs for words.

Comments: This book has a wonderful presentation of an American Sign Language (ASL) number story, which is part of Deaf culture and folklore. This is not immediately apparent to an outsider of the Deaf community. The clever photography in this book tries to capture some of the elements of sign language. This is an important contribution to the collection of literature for deaf and hard of hearing children.

Evaluation: a. 5  b. 5  c. 5  d. 3  Overall Rating 4.5


Summary: The text and photos depict the life of Shane, a boy who is deaf. He goes to a regular school and enjoys normal activities with the help of sign language and a hearing aid.
Comments: The text is well written. The photos are in black and white. The story has good information about the life of a boy who is deaf in a hearing world. It tries to portray Shane as a "normal" kid. It talks about his limitations in learning, speech, and academic areas. It highlights his abilities and strengths. This book also talks about the use of sign language, cued speech, and speech reading. It does not mention ASL, the Deaf community, or culture of the Deaf. It views deafness from a pathological viewpoint. The illustrations for signs are poor.

Evaluation: a. 1  b. 1  c. 1  d. 1  Overall Rating 1


Summary: Frannie wants a friend her own age. Finally, a little girl moves into the neighborhood, but, when Frannie learns that the
new girl is deaf. She is very sad. Then, she learns sign language and a new friendship begins.

Comments: This is a good story. It gives a good view of sign language. The secondary character is deaf. This book doesn't give any information about Deaf culture or community.

Evaluation: a. 3  b. 1  c. 3  d. 1  Overall Rating 2


Summary: Angela tells how she finds out about her hearing loss.

Comments: This story is well-told in easy to read language. The vocabulary is easy but not overly controlled. The story is well-paced and interesting. It is told from a pathological view of deafness. The story has no reference to the Deaf community or
culture. It mentions sign language as another way to communicate for children with profound hearing losses.

Evaluation: a. 1 b. 1 c. 1 d. 1 Overall Rating 1


Summary: This book describes the life of two young sisters who are deaf. It describes hearing aids, lip reading, and some of the education aspects and home life of children who are deaf.

Comments: This book looks at deafness from the medical pathological viewpoint of deafness. It describes these two children as trying to be "normal" like hearing kids with a few differences. The main characters are deaf. There isn't any information about Deaf culture or community or ASL.

Evaluation: a. 1 b. 1 c. 1 d. 1 Overall Rating 1


Summary: A little girl explains how her deaf sister experiences everyday things.

Comments: The poetic-like text gives a certain tranquil style to the book. It is simple, but full of description. The illustrations add a lot to the story, but the text alone creates a picture in one's mind. This book is a quality book. However, this book doesn't contain information about Deaf culture or the language ASL. The perspective of this book is of a unique special child with special talents and abilities that set her apart as a unique individual, just as everyone is.

Evaluation: a. 4   b. 1   c. 1   d. 1 Overall Rating 1.75

Summary: Wisconsin is a 6th grade girl who is hard of hearing. She has a difficult time adjusting to her new school because she believes that when the other kids find out she wears a hearing aid they will think she is a freak. Finally, when Wisconsin is able to accept herself she realizes others are accepting her too.

Comments: This is a good contemporary, realistic novel that may help some post-lingual hard of hearing children see themselves vicariously. This story can give hearing children a perspective of the difficulties experienced and feelings felt by hard of hearing children attending regular schools, thus, enabling them to empathize with children with hearing impairments. The setting and plot of the story are okay. The sequencing and pacing are excellent. However, there is no reference to Deaf culture or community and no association with other hard of hearing or deaf kids. The moral seems to be that hard of hearing kids can be assimilated into the hearing world, if they continue to try hard enough, things just work out.

Evaluation: a. 1  b. 1  c. 1  d. 1  Overall Rating 1

Summary: Matt and his friends have an adventurous summer, even though each of them has a disability.

Comments: Great story! It includes a deaf girl who is a secondary character. It has no information about ASL, Deaf culture, or the Deaf community, but the girl uses sign language.

Evaluation: a. 1   b. 1   c. 2   d. 1 Overall Rating 1.25


Summary: Gustie, is a cheerleader and a very smart girl. She becomes ill with meningitis. This causes her to lose her hearing.
Gustie must accept her hearing loss and find an identity again. She must discover where she belongs. Her feelings are explained.

Comment: This is a very good story. It is well written. The author has portrayed a very real person. She gives the reader an understanding of the conflict a deafened teenager experiences. She gives a glimpse of two Deaf individuals and a quick mention of sign language as the language of the Deaf community. She gives some information about assistive devices for the deaf and education of the deaf.

Evaluation: a. 3  b. 3  c. 5  d. 3  Overall Rating 3.5


Summary: This vocabulary book of signs is illustrated in black and white pencil drawings. The signs are accurate and well thought out. The short stories and jokes are fun and entertaining. There are
150 words and signs presented along with the manual alphabet. It also presents signed puns.

Comments: Good book for fun.

Evaluation: a. 3   b. 3   c. 3   d. 3  Overall Rating 3


Summary: Children with learning problems and disabilities talk about their handicaps.

Comments: This book could be useful to introduce students to other students with disabilities.

Evaluation: a. 2   b. 1   c. 1   d. 1  Overall Rating 1.25

Summary: This book tells about the life of Amy Rowley, a Deaf girl. She is mainstreamed into a regular school and enjoys the same activities as other children her age.

Comments: This book contains a lot of fun information about the life of a Deaf child with Deaf parents. It includes information about assistive devices for the deaf such as flashing lights for the telephone, door bell, and alarm clock. The TTY and hearing aids are also explained. It gives some information about the Deaf community and hints about Deaf culture. Amy talks about her school and the training she goes through to learn speech and lipreading. Amy is captured in many action photos with her friends, family and pets. A list of signs are given in the book with Amy signing them in photos. This is one of the few books that contains information of the Deaf community and sign language together.

Evaluation: a. 3  b. 3  c. 5  d. 5  Overall Rating
THE ADVENTURES AT
CAMP TALKING
HANDS

BY
BLAINE J. TAYLOR
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CHAPTER 1  THE NOTE

The note said, "ALL BOYS MEET AT THE BIG TREE AFTER SCHOOL." Joel Jonnson's brown eyes glanced up at the clock. 3:05. Fifteen minutes before school's out. He quickly turned to watch Mrs. Raineer's face as she talked about one of the battles of World War II, the attack on Pearl Harbor.

"The Japanese airplanes flew over Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and began bombing..."

Joel loved war stories but he couldn't keep his mind on the lecture. His thoughts drifted back to the note. He had heard rumors about a class party at somebody's house to celebrate the end of school.

"Will they invite me to come?" he wondered.

Joel was new at Sunnyside School. Two weeks ago he had lived in Castle Rock, South Dakota. Now his father had accepted a job at Goodwell, a big computer company in Salt Lake City, Utah. Joel was forced to leave his school and friends just one month before
summer vacation. He had always thought the last month of school was the best part of the whole year. Now that was ruined.

"They won't invite me to come to the party," Joel worried. "Everybody seems to have his own friends. They won't invite the 'new kid' to their end-of-the-year celebration. The note said 'all boys' and Sam did pass it to me. Maybe they do want me to come."

"... after the Japanese planes had unloaded their bombs, three American warships had sunk to the bottom of Pearl Harbor," explained Mrs. Raineer. "This was terrifying news to the Americans. President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared war on Japan. This was when the United States joined in the fighting of World War II."

Joel was concentrating so hard on speechreading Mrs. Raineer that he forgot to watch the time.

The bell blared out, "RRRINNGGG!"

Joel jumped, then quickly reached up and turned down the volume of his left hearing aid. He sat in the front of the classroom near the bell. Every time the bell rang it nearly drove Joel through the ceiling. His hearing aid amplified the already loud ringing to a point
that was unbearable. He wished he could disconnect the bell.

"Remember," Mrs. Raineer said, turning her head as the students left their desks, "there will be . . ." Her face and words were lost in the confusion of the students leaving.

With his average height and medium build, he easily blended into the stream of kids as they left the room. He had missed the main part of the lecture. He didn't want to stay and have Mrs. Raineer quiz him about it. He hated staying after school.

Just as he reached the door, Joel felt her hand on his shoulder. She waited for him to turn around.

"Joel? I won't keep you long. How did the lecture go today?"

Mrs. Raineer spoke slowly and clearly so he would understand the first time.

"Fine," Joel lied, "I only missed the last sentence. It started, "Remember, there will . . .""

Mrs. Raineer repeated slowly and clearly, "Remember, there will be a quiz on Monday. It will cover the attack on Pearl Harbor."
"OK!" he reassured her. "I can review your lecture by reading chapter 22 in my history book. Right?"

"Right!" she beamed. Joel was pleased with himself for learning how to speechread Mrs. Raineer so quickly. He knew that it usually took a few weeks to learn how to speechread a new person well. This time it was easier. He thought to himself. Speechreading is like solving a crossword puzzle. Mostly I concentrate on the person's face. It gives me lots of clues about what the person is saying. Then I connect the sounds I hear with the shapes of the person's mouth. Some people are easy to speechread, but most of the time speechreading is hard.

"You're doing just fine," she reassured him.

"May I go now?" he asked politely.

"Yes, unless you have some questions for me."

Joel hesitated a moment. He knew he had missed most of the lecture today while he was daydreaming about the party. He knew the history book was boring, and it was also difficult for him to read,
but he didn’t want to miss the meeting about the party. He would have his mother help him at home.

"No questions!" he responded.

Joel appreciated Mrs. Raineer’s attempts to help in school. Yet, he also felt singled out. He didn’t want to be treated differently than the other kids.

"I am hard of hearing," he thought, "but I’m just as smart as the other kids. Sometimes she makes me feel dumb when she insists on always giving me extra help."

Joel quickly walked down the hall. He could see the other boys gathering around the tree outside the glass door ahead of him. He quickened his pace, hoping he wouldn’t miss any details of the party.
CHAPTER 2  AT THE TREE

When Joel arrived at the tree, Butch Coolbear was in charge, as usual. Lots of kids thought Butch was real cool, so they nick-named him "Cool Butch". But Joel thought he was a smarty pants. It seemed that nobody had good ideas except Butch. He was a good leader and he had lots of followers. To be part of the group, you had to be friends with him.

Joel could tell that Butch was making all the plans. It seemed that everyone was nodding their heads in agreement with the things that he said. When Butch saw Joel watching him intently he turned so that Joel could no longer speechread what he was saying. Joel had felt that Butch had something against him. This act of rudeness confirmed Joel's suspicion. Often Joel had been alone, but now with all these boys he felt very lonely. He felt that he had just been cut off from the world.

Joel was determined not to let Butch exclude him. He turned up the volume of his hearing aid, hoping he could get enough information about the party so that he could participate.
"You _ all come_ my _ou_ on _riday _ 0'clock. We will _ave pi_a. _e_ bring _ome_ing _ _u_ on _i_ a. I_ will be like _ bu_et." Cool Butch explained. "We will _lay gam_ and _ave a grea_im! _e_ you on _riday."

As the boys left the tree, Joel watched and listened to get more clues about Butch's party.

Sam and another boy whom Joel didn't know were talking about sleeping bags and extra clothes. "Just in case someone spills Coke on me," he said. "That happened to me once at a party and I had to wear those sticky clothes all night. It was bad news."

Sam noticed Joel watching them.

"Hi, Joel," Sam said facing him.

"Hi, Sam! What's happening?" Joel asked.

"We're planning a party at Butch Coolbear's house on Friday to celebrate the end of school. There will be pizza and games."

"It sounds like a great party. Who's invited?" Joel ventured.

"All the boys in Mrs. Raineer's class. Do you want to come?"

Sam asked.
"I'm not sure I should." Joel responded. "I get bad 'vibes' from Butch. He doesn't like me."

"What makes you think so?" Sam asked.

"I don't know. I just feel it," Joel replied.

"Don't worry about it. You can go with us. By the way, this is my friend Ivan. He is coming too."

"Hi, Ivan!" Joel offered a friendly greeting.

"Hi, Joel!" Ivan returned with a grin.

"Do I need to bring anything? Some food or something? I didn't understand what Butch said."

"His mom said it costs too much money to feed ten hungry boys. So she said that everybody needs to bring something to put on the pizza. Cheese is a good thing to bring. Pizza needs a lot of cheese to be good. I'm bringing Canadian Bacon because it is my favorite meat on pizza," Sam explained.

"What about sleeping bags?" Joel asked.

"Oh yeah! It's a slumber party, too," Sam explained. "We'll be sleeping on the floor. So bring your sleeping bag and pillow and any
other personal things you want." Sam glanced at his watch. "Sorry, I have to go now. I have soccer practice at 4:00. See you later."

Sam and Ivan both hurried down the sidewalk, leaving Joel to wonder about the slumber party.

When they were out of hearing range Ivan said to Sam, "He talks weird. He seems dumb."

"Joel is hard of hearing," Sam explained to Ivan. "He wears his hair long to cover the hearing aids he wears. Sometimes Joel's speech is difficult to understand because he forgets to say the words and sounds that he doesn't hear."

Joel slowly walked to the Coolbear's house. Everyone had talked about the party since Tuesday when they had the meeting around the tree. They discussed the games they would play, the movie they planned to watch, everything. Now it was Friday evening. Joel hesitated before going around the last corner.

"Should I go?" he asked himself out loud.

"Of course!" came a loud response.
Joel jumped. The voiced had scared him. He didn't know there was someone behind him. When he turned around, he saw Sam and Ivan coming behind him.

"Sorry if I scared you." Sam said.

"It's O.K. I didn't hear you coming," Joel responded.

"I hope you are headed to the party. I see that you have some cheese in your hand and your sleeping bag.

"Yeah!"

"Sam is a real nice guy," Joel thought. "He always helps others. In class, I've noticed how he helps other kids when they don't understand the work. Mrs. Raineer trusts him to help and not just give answers. Some kids think he is strange to do that, but it is something he just does naturally. Since I moved here, he has been very nice to me. I wonder why?"
CHAPTER 3  THE PARTY

The music from the party was loud. Joel could hear it blaring the minute Mrs. Coolbear opened the door. It was hard for him to hear what she said because his hearing aids amplified the music as loud as her voice, so he tried to speechread her.

"Hi boy_! I'm _appy you _ame. You ___ be ___ _ew boy. I've_____ abou_ __. Wha_ your _ame?" Joel smiled and tried to figure out what she said, but before he could piece it all together, she continued on.

"___ me _ak  tho__ th____." Sam handed his package of Canadian Bacon to Mrs. Coolbear and Ivan gave her a chunk of cheese. Joel quickly figured out what she wanted. He gave her the bag of grated cheese he had brought.

"Thank you fo_ b________ th_ _ee_. Hello _am. How are you? It' ni__ ee you _____. Ple__ ___m_ __. The boy_ ___ __ the __m_ _oom _ow_ the _______ the ___. Ma__ you_elv_ a_ _om_. The fir_ pi_ a will be ___ a few minu__." She talked quickly and with very little mouth movement.
Joel couldn't understand what she was saying. So he watched what Sam and Ivan did.

"Thanks, Mrs. Coolbear," Sam said as he and Ivan headed toward the stairway. Joel quickly followed.

About ten kids were scattered in a large room. Peter, Dan and Bob were sitting around a table talking and playing cards. Mark and John were playing pool. Four other boys that Joel didn't know were playing ping pong. Butch was adjusting his new CD player.

"Hi, Butch!" Sam called above the music. "Awesome CD player."

"Thanks! Come on over and check it out!" Butch replied. "Hi, Ivan. Come here and I'll show you how it works." Butch returned to his CD player and began showing them. He completely ignored Joel.

Joel felt alone again. With the music playing, it was very difficult for him to understand what the other kids were saying. As he looked around the room, it seemed that no one noticed him. They were all busy talking to each other and Joel couldn't figure out what anyone was saying. He began to wonder why he had even come.
Then he noticed the TV was on with a Nintendo game that he had never seen before. Joel was always interested in trying a new game. He looked around to see if anyone might have been playing it recently. Everyone was busy. He waited a few minutes to see if someone would come and continue playing. He noticed the score was only 500, so whoever had been playing had just started. He decided to go ahead and play. He would just give the game up when the person came back.

The boy in the game had to be guided through a cave. When he found jewels he received points. He had to jump over pits, scorpions, spiders, and stalagmites. Sometimes, he had to swim through water and dodge water snakes and rock mounds. When he found a dagger and picked it up, he had power to kill the snakes, scorpions, and spiders. As Joel progressed through the different levels, the game became harder with more dangers. He was having a great time.

"Who said you could play my Nintendo game?" Butch shouted at him.
Joel was so startled by Butch that he jumped and pressed the wrong button and his last guy was gone. Joel was so involved in the game that he hadn’t noticed Butch come up behind him. Butch was furious.

"I was playing that!" Butch shouted. "What right do you have to start playing my game? Couldn’t you see someone was in the middle of a game?"

Joel was so surprised by Butch’s fury, that he didn’t say a thing. He just backed away. Sam came to see what was going on.

"What’s up?" he asked Butch.

"Oh, Deafie acts like he owns the place! I had a Nintendo game going and he just jumped in and started playing without asking. He’s got a lot of nerve!"

"Calm down, Butch!" Sam said. "It’s only a game. WOW! Look at that score though --- 75,000! Joel, you are really good. Have you played this game before?"

"No. This is the first time I’ve seen it. What is it called?" Joel asked.
"You liar!" burst out Butch. "Most of those points are mine. I had 70,000 when I left."

"They are not!" Joel defended himself. "When I started playing there were only 500 points."

"That's a lie!" Butch shouted again. "I left to start a new CD and when I came back he had stolen my game. I had 70,000 points when I left."

"I don't care. Have your game back. It's too easy for me anyway." Joel gave in. He hated arguments.

"Now wait a minute," Sam said. "I want to know whose score that really is. I've never seen a score that good before. Now here's the deal. We will have a play off. Joel and Butch will both play a full game. The one who scores the highest points will get credit for the 75,000 points. OK! Who will go first?"

"Joel will," Butch volunteered.

"That's not fair," Ivan said. "The person who goes last will have the advantage because he will see how the game is played and learn most of the tricks. Let's toss a coin."
"Heads," called Butch.

With the music still playing, Joel had to rely mostly on his speechreading. The conversation jumped from person to person so quickly that Joel couldn't keep track of who was speaking or what they were saying.

"I have a coin," Sam said. "Since it is Butch's game, we will let him call it in the air."

Joel was really confused. He didn't know about tossing a coin to choose who goes first. He didn't want to seem dumb, so he just watched to see what would happen next.

Sam flipped the quarter into the air.

"Heads, I win. Tails, you lose!" shouted Butch.

The coin fell to the floor on its backside.

"ALL RIGHT!" beamed Butch. "You go first, Deaf-o!" He gave Joel a push towards the Nintendo.

Joel stood there without knowing what to do. He had missed what Sam had said about the score. He didn't understand why Sam tossed the coin into the air. What did Butch mean when he said,
"Heads, I win. Tails, you lose?" Why was Butch pushing him around? Did Butch want him to leave the party?

"Go ahead. Play the game, Deaf-o," Butch scoffed.

Joel was tired of Butch's name-calling. He didn't understand all that was going on. He picked up his sleeping bag and started up the stairs.

Sam quickly followed him.

"Why are you leaving?" Sam asked.

"Butch doesn't want me here," Joel said, "and I lost with the coin. Besides, I don't understand what is going on. With that music on, I can't hear what people are saying." Joel didn't know why he was telling Sam this. He never let kids his own age know how he was feeling. Joel felt like he was going to cry. But he couldn't. Not here. Not now.

"I just want to go. I shouldn't have come here in the first place," he finished. He started for the door.

"Joel, wait a minute," Sam pleaded. He made sure that Joel was watching him before he went on. "Let me explain it to you and
then you can choose to leave if you want. If you leave now, you will
never gain the respect of those kids down there. They will always
think you are a coward. I believe you got that high score. This is your
chance to prove yourself. If you can get a better score than Butch,
you will be the winner. If you leave now, those kids will never give you
another chance. Butch is a spoiled brat. He can't stand it when
someone else is better than he is. He is willing to have a play-off."

Sam explained about the coin toss and that Butch would get to
watch him play. That would give Butch the advantage, but if Joel got
the highest score he would be the winner of all the kids here.

"OK," Joel agreed to the play-off.
CHAPTER 4 THE PLAY-OFF

Joel was really nervous as he started playing. He wasn’t used to so many kids watching him play. When he played at home, there weren’t any distractions. Now all these kids were breathing down his neck as he played. He was tense, too. What if he got a low score? What if I lose? Then all the kids will think that he had lied about the score.” Joel was determined to do his best.

Almost at the end of level one, Butch stood up and bumped Joel’s arm, causing him to push button A at the wrong time. His first man was gone. He only had 1000 points.

”Hey!” exclaimed Sam. "Give him some more room. Let him breathe. How do you expect him to play his best when you’re all crowding around him?"

Everybody backed up a little as Joel started his second player. Mrs. Coolbear brought down some pizza. Everyone went and got some -everyone except Joel. He continued playing. Most of the kids sat down at a table to eat, but Sam and Butch came back to watch
Joel play. He had a real skill for playing Nintendo. He had played a lot at home. He had learned some tricks when playing that really helped him with this new game even though he hadn't played this one before tonight.

Joel put his complete concentration into the game. He ignored everything else going on around him, even the music. He passed level one, two, and three without any trouble. He had earned three extra lives, too. His score was now 40,000.

Sam was getting more and more excited. Butch was getting more and more agitated because as he watched Joel reached his highest score. Butch went over and got another piece of pizza. When he came back, Joel had scored another 10,000 points! Butch dropped the pizza on Joel's head. Joel jerked and unplugged the controls from the main Nintendo box. Joel pulled the pizza off his head and tried to plug the control back in before his player was killed. But it was too late.

Joel was mad. Not only did he have pizza sauce and cheese in his hair, but his concentration was broken.
"I'm going to get you!" he shouted. Jumping to his feet, he started towards Butch with his fists ready for a fight.

"Calm down!" advised Sam as he sprang between the two boys. "You played a great game, Joel. Butch, get started with your game. Joel and I will go clean up and eat our pizza."

Sam lead Joel away from the others and to the bathroom, calming him down with praise about how well he played Nintendo. Joel was very upset with the tricks Butch had used to distract him. He was furious!

"Let it go." advised Sam. "You will win the play-off. Butch is a big talker. I've seen him play before. He gets too tense when he plays. He can't score more than 50,000 points. Let's wash your hair and get the pizza out, then we will go and watch him become nervous."

Sam was right. Butch was a tense player. He didn't handle the tight places well. But he knew the game better than Joel. He knew where more secret things were and he got extra lives easily. The points added up quickly, 30,000 with the first 'man'. He continued
with the second 'man'. Joel began to worry that he would lose, but
the longer Butch played the more tense he became. Then it
happened.

"OH, DAMN!" he shouted.

No one dared say anything. Butch looked around as if he was
ready to punch anyone who did.
CHAPTER 5 THE GIRLS

The tenseness of the moment was broken by the sound of girls' voices giggling. They were looking through the window at them, pointing and giggling.

"Dumb boys!" one of the girls said. "They don't know how to have a fun party."

"They think it's fun to sit around and play Nintendo."

"How boring!" said another girl. All the girls laughed at that.

"And then to liven things up, they think it is fun to fight." commented the first girl.

Joel couldn't understand what they were saying, but he was glad the tension of the evening was broken. He didn't want Butch to have hard feelings towards him. He decided not to say anything more about the game. While some of the boys were letting the girls in the house, Joel quietly turned off the Nintendo.

The girls came down the stairs giggling and laughing at the boy's jokes. Sam challenged Joel to a game of ping pong. While
most of the guys and girls talked and laughed about who liked whom and that kind of stuff. Sam and Joel played ping pong.

Joel could tell Sam’s mind wasn’t in the game. He seemed very shy with the girls around, but he kept looking at Whitney. She was very pretty and very popular. She wore blue eye shadow that accented her azure eyes. She had on rouge to highlight her high cheek bones. Her bright smile flashed at Sam occasionally. He always quickly looked away. She wore blue jeans and a light blue blouse that matched her eyes. Joel wasn’t really interested in girls, but he could see that Sam was interested in Whitney.
CHAPTER 6 "SECRETS"

Sam kept looking at Whitney and missing the ball. It wasn't a very fun game for Joel because Sam couldn't concentrate on the game. Sam was too polite to quit playing before the game was over, and he kept apologizing for being distracted and missing the ball. In the end, Joel won the game, 21 to 10. As soon as they were finished playing, Whitney stood up and got everyone's attention.

"Let's play 'Secrets','" Whitney beamed with excitement.

Everyone cheered.

"OK! Here are the rules," Whitney explained. "Someone will go in the closet and think of a secret. One person at a time will be chosen to go in and hear the secret until everyone's had a chance to hear it. Any questions?"

Joel had never heard of this game before. It sounded pretty easy. But what was the point? It sounded pretty stupid to him. He sat down in an easy chair in a corner away from the others hoping he wouldn't have to play. He thought he understood the game but he wasn't sure he wanted to play. He would watch from a distance.
Whitney spoke up again, "Sally will go in first." A pretty brunette whom Joel hadn't seen before disappeared into a large closet. Whitney strutted around the room teasingly before she chose Butch to go into the closest to hear the secret. Some of the girls giggled knowingly. Everyone watched the closet door. Butch came out a minute later, a little bit flushed, but with a big grin on his face. Three more boys entered the closet and come out grinning from ear to ear.

"Time for a new secret," Whitney said. "My turn inside the closet." She opened the closet and let Sally out. "Sally you are in charge out here." She winked at her as she stepped into the closet.

Joel could see Butch and the other boys whispering about what had happened inside the closet. But he couldn't figure out what they were saying. Sally flashed a warning stare at them. They quickly stopped and watched Sally choose Sam to go inside the closet. He hesitated, suspecting something from these mischievous girls, but not knowing what, he cautiously entered the small room and closed the door behind him.
It was dark inside. Sam couldn’t see Whitney, but he sensed her presence nearby. Before his eyes could adjust to the darkness, Whitney reached out and kissed him right smack on the lips. Sam was shocked and embarrassed at the same time. He hadn’t expected this. Without thinking, he pushed Whitney away and opened the door. Then he saw everyone laughing and pointing at him. He was beet red from embarrassment. He ran up the stairs and out the door.
CHAPTER 7  THE COFFIN

Sam didn’t come back like many said he would. He was too embarrassed by Whitney. Most of the kids knew what was going on and they did a good job of keeping it a secret. Joel was really glad he had hidden himself in the corner. But he was now feeling very alone. Sam was gone. He had been a real friend to Joel when Butch had falsely accused him of stealing his high score on the Nintendo game.

"Why would they want to embarrass Sam so much?" Joel asked himself.

"Let’s play 'Coffin,' " Butch suggested. "Ivan, we will measure you first for the coffin. Now lie down here, close your eyes, and pretend you are dead. John and I will measure your legs, arms, and body so we know the right size of coffin for you."

Ivan obediently lay down. Butch and John carefully measured his arms, legs and the length of his body. Now it was time for someone else.
"Joel," Butch said, going to get him from the chair, "Let's measure you for a coffin." He spoke clearly and slowly to make sure Joel understood what he was saying. Joel was obviously cautious after what had happened to Sam.

"No. I really don't want to play this game," Joel said.

"Don't be a 'party pooper'," Butch said.

"Chicken!" someone else said.

"I really don't want to play," Joel tried again.

"How do you expect to be our friend if you aren't willing to play our games?" Butch asked.

Joel felt stuck. He didn't trust Butch. But if he didn't play, all the kids would think he was rejecting their friendship. Joel decided to go along with the game.

"OK!" he consented.

He went and lay down on the floor as he had seen Ivan do. Butch and John began measuring his arms. Then his left leg. They lifted it up and before he knew what was happening, they had poured
a glass full of cold water down his pant leg. He shook his leg loose from their grasp and quickly stood up hoping the water would run out. It was too late. The water had already soaked into his clothing. The back of his pants were wet, as well as the crotch. It looked as if he had wet his own pants.

When he looked up, everyone was rolling on the floor from laughter. Joel was mortified. Never had he been so embarrassed. He felt the red heat from his body rise up into his face. He wanted to disappear. But he couldn't make his body move. He stood there for what seemed an hour and the longer he stood there the more they laughed.

"I hate you!" he shouted. Out came a whole flurry of angry words.

Then he grabbed his sleeping bag and ran up the stairs and out the door just as Sam had done less than an hour before.
CHAPTER 8  MISERY

Joel lay on his bed. The sun was shining through the window. The birds were chirping outside. It was a great day to be outside. Joel wanted to go out, but every time he opened the door, he thought he saw a kid from his class down the street. He couldn't bear to talk to anybody and surely everyone had heard about last night.

"Joel," his mother said loudly as she came into the room. He was startled by his mother's voice. He wished she would warn him somehow. "Please take your sister, Katie, to the playground." His mom pleaded for the fifth time. "I have to finish this sewing before tonight. I can't do it with her pestering me every few minutes."

"Mom, I don't feel like going to the school playground," Joel whined. Every time she asked him he gave a different excuse. He was running out of ideas. "We just got out of school and you want me to spend more time there? I have a better idea. Why don't you take us to that real big park. Now . . . what's it called? Freedom? No. uhmmm uhmmm. Liberty! Liberty Park! Take us to Liberty Park
and I will watch Katie real well and we will both be out of your hair for two hours."

"What's wrong, Joel?" she asked. "You act like you want to go outside but you stay in. What's up?"

"Nothing." Joel avoided the real truth.

"Come on," she coaxed. "How was the party last night? For a week that's all you could talk about. Now you won't say anything about it. Did you have fun?"

"NO!" he blurted out. "I hated it!"

She was surprised by the loudness of his voice. She sat down beside him on the bed.

"Tell me about it," she encouraged.

All of Joel's feelings come pouring out. "Why do I have to be deaf and dumb?" Joel sobbed. "Yesterday was the worst day of my life. I felt so stupid. Why was Butch so mean to me? The other kids laughed at me. I don't have any friends. I hate summer. There is no one to play with or talk to. This will be the longest, most boring
summer of my life. Why did we have to move? I want to move back to South Dakota.

"I am so dumb. I knew the moment Mrs. Coolbear opened the door that I would have a hard time hearing. It was Butch's dumb CD player. I couldn't hear anything because it was playing too loud. Then they made me play this stupid game. I guess I didn't understand it so they poured water down my pants. It was all a horrible experience. Why did I go? I made a fool of myself. Nobody will play with me now. Why did I yell at Butch? Now everyone hates me. I ruined the party."

"There now," his mother said soothingly as she hugged him close to her. "It's okay to feel mad. It sounds like they played some mean tricks on you. I'm sorry those things happened to you. It makes me feel bad too. It's all over now. Let's do something to get your mind off last night. I think going to Liberty park is a great idea. Let's have lunch and I will drive you and Katie there. O.K.?"
His mother always seemed to know the right things to say to help him feel better. She always let him tell it all and then she knew how to get his mind off his troubles.

So Joel did as his mother suggested. Yet he felt he was moving in slow motion. He was numb from the shock of the experience last night. He didn’t want to think about it, but that’s all his mind would think about. His mother drove him and Katie to the park after a quick lunch of tuna sandwiches and Dorito Corn Chips. Joel walked slowly to the playground area of the park, kicking a rock as he went. Katie, who was three years old, was in a hurry. She ran ahead to the slides.
Joel sat down and watched Katie slide down the slide and swing on the swings. He looked around Liberty Park. To the south, he saw people playing tennis. To the east, he could see a small pond surrounded by a fence.

Then he noticed a boy running toward him with a little black Scottie dog. The boy had straight blonde hair and wore blue jeans and a yellow pull-over shirt. When he got to a nice green grassy spot, the boy dropped to the ground and let the puppy lick his face and jump on him. The boy made gestures to the dog. The dog seemed to respond. The dog shook his hand, sat down, and rolled over and played dead until the boy gestured again. Then the dog jumped up and ran as fast as he could. That's when Joel realized that the boy was using sign language with the dog.

Joel knew sign language because many of his friends in South Dakota used it and he had learned it from them.

Joel watched intently as the boy and dog played together. He noticed that the boy never spoke to the dog. He only signed. The
dog was very obedient. Joel was so fascinated by the dog and the boy that he didn’t see Katie toddle away.

The boy noticed Joel watching and waved at him. Joel waved back. They caught each other’s eyes for a moment. Then the boy signed to the dog to go. The dog ran to Joel and began licking his hands and face. Joel petted him welcomingly while the boy came closer.

"Hi! My name is Joel. What’s your name?" Joel spoke and signed.

"Hi! I’m Skylar Moore. My name-sign is 'Blue Eyes'. I’m Deaf. This is my dog, Black. He is hearing but he acts like he’s Deaf. What about you? Are you deaf or hearing?" Sky only signed, but Joel could understand him easily. He knew why Sky’s name-sign was 'Blue Eyes'. His eyes were the color of the sky on a clear summer day.

"I’m hard of hearing," responded Joel. "I like your dog. How did you teach him to do so many tricks?"

Joel and Sky talked excitedly about Black and how the dog learned tricks. Joel looked towards the swings.
"OH, NO!" he shouted. "She is gone!" Joel started running around like he was crazy. He searched frantically for his little sister. "KATIE! KATIE! Where are you?"

"Who are you looking for?" Sky asked.

"My sister!" Joel signed. "Where is she?"

"What does she look like?" Sky asked. "Tell me so I can help you find her."

"She is about three feet tall with dark curly hair and brown eyes. She is wearing a green shirt and white shorts. She was here just a few minutes ago."

"I remember seeing her. She was swinging on the swings. Now calm down and think a minute." Sky advised.

Joel stopped and thought. "If I were three years old, where would I go and what would I do?"

"Go find the little girl." Sky signed to Black.

The little black dog sniffed the ground and trotted towards the pond. Then Joel remembered the pond.

"Maybe she is over there." he said following the dog.
They ran to the pond and there she was on the other side, watching the ducks and geese.

"Katie! You bad girl. Why did you go away? You made me worry," he said kneeling beside her.

"I try talk. See duck. You not listen." Katie tried to defend herself with her three year old language. Joel did not understand.

"Why did you run away?" he asked again.

"Not run." Katie defended. "See ducks."

Joel had a hard time understanding Katie's baby speech.

Sky understood. He used to watch the mother ducks and their babies when he was little. He signed to Joel who hadn't noticed the ducks and geese around the pond yet.

"Oh," said Joel, and they all sat down and watched the ducklings follow their mothers around the pond. The ducklings seemed to be paddling their little feet as fast as they could to keep up with the mother.

Joel and Sky signed back and forth for a long while.
CHAPTER 10  MEETING SKY'S FAMILY

A few days later, Sky came to Joel's house to invite him to come to his house for the afternoon. At first Joel's mother was worried about his going. Joel begged and begged to go. Finally, she gave permission if he came home by 5:00.

Joel and Sky walked slowly down the sidewalk. Sky was excited. Joel had to stop him often to understand what he was telling him. When Sky was excited, his hands really flew. Joel knew sign language, but he had never known anyone as good at signing as Sky.

Joel was excited, too. He was really curious to meet Sky's parents. He had never met any deaf adults before.

"My house is just around the corner," signed Sky.

As they walked around the corner Joel heard a dog barking. Then he saw the same black Scottie dog whom he had seen at the park a few days before. The dog came running towards them. Sky signed to the dog.
"Hi, Black! What's up? I'm happy to see you. This is my friend Joel. Remember him? Shake hands." Sky bent down and held out his hand to the dog. The dog put his paw in Sky's hand, and they shook hands. Joel knelt down and petted Black. Sky signed, "Go home." The dog obeyed and ran home as Joel and Sky followed.

Sky's mother, Mrs. Moore, greeted them warmly as they came into the house. She signed differently from anyone Joel had met before. It was hard for Joel to understand.

"Hi, Joel. My name B-e-c-k-y M-o-o-r-e. Name sign 'Beautiful hair.' Nice meet you. Sky excited. Why? Deaf boy you live near. He thinks you he become best friends will."

When she finished signing, Joel looked to Sky for help. He hadn't understood what she had signed.

Sky smiled and signed, "She signs American Sign Language or ASL. You will understand her better later." Then he explained what she had said.

Even though Joel had met Sky just a few days ago, he felt that they would become best friends, too. They understood each
other in ways that nobody else did. Joel didn't know why but he thought maybe it was because they were both deaf.

"Thank you!" Joel signed back. "I hope so, too."

"Excuse me," Mrs. Moore signed. "Cookies cook finished. Cookies milk you want?"

"Yes!" they both said at once, and followed her into the kitchen. Joel sat down at the table while Sky got some milk and glasses and poured some milk for both of them. Mrs. Moore put some freshly baked cookies on a plate for them to eat.

A lamp near the phone began flashing on and off. Mrs. Moore quickly went to the phone and put the receiver on a typewriter machine and began typing.

Joel was really curious. He didn't use the phone because every time he put the phone to his ear it caused his hearing aid to squeal and he couldn't hear anything over the noise of his hearing aid. He didn't know that deaf people could use a telephone. He went closer to see how it worked. Joel could see the words that Mrs. Moore was typing on a little screen.
"May I watch?" he asked politely.

"Sure." Mrs. Moore signed back.

"HELLO, BECKY HERE. GA." Mrs. Moore typed into the machine.

"HI, DEAR! I TALKED WITH UAD PRES GOT TICKETS TO LAGOON FOR SATURDAY. GOT 2 EXTRA SKY CAN INVITE FRIEND TO GO. GA" The machine typed back.

"SKY'S FRIEND HERE NOW. I TELL THEM ABOUT TICKETS. GA TO SK."

"SEE YOU 5:30. OXOXOX. SKSKSK."

Becky turned off the TTY and hung up the phone.

Sky was watching too. He jumped up and down with excitement. It was Friendship Day with the Utah Association of the Deaf (UAD). He explained to Joel that Lagoon is an entertainment park about 20 miles north of Salt Lake City.

"It has all kinds of rides and games to play. Do you want to go with me?" Sky asked.

"That sounds like fun, but I'll need to ask my mom."
"Let's call her right now." Sky encouraged.

"But how?" Joel asked. "I can't use the phone."

"You can use the TTY," Sky signed.

"Will my mom hear the TTY?"

"No, Silly," Sky teased. "We will call the Utah Relay Service (URS). The operator at URS will call your mom and tell her the message you type into the TTY," explained Sky. "Then the operator will type the message your mom says, and we will get it on the TTY."

"O.K.," Joel consented a little reluctantly. He had never used a TTY before, but he thought he might as well try since Sky was so willing to teach him.

"O.K.," Sky began. "First, you put the receiver on the TTY and then you dial the number for URS. You wait for the operator to answer the phone. She will type a message on the TTY asking for the number and the name of the person you want to call. O.K.? Let's do that much."
Joel had a little trouble knowing which way to put the telephone receiver on the TTY. The mouth piece is usually on the left side of the machine. Then he dialed 298-9484.

He waited about one minute before he saw the typing appear on the screen.

"UTAH RELAY SERVICE THIS IS OPERATOR # 13. CAN I HELP YOU? GA."

"THIS IS JOEL JONNSON. I WANT TO CALL BETTY JONNSON AT 533-5353." Joel typed on the TTY.

"Oh, I forgot to tell you. You need to type 'GA' when you are finished typing. It means 'Go ahead'," Sky signed.

"GA." typed Joel.

"THANK YOU. HOLD PLEASE WHILE I DIAL THE NUMBER."

"My mom will be so surprised to get a call from me," Joel signed. "Now what do I do?"

"When your mom answers the telephone, the operator will tell you and then you type your message on the TTY and the operator will tell your mom what you typed," Sky explained. "Remember, when
you are finished typing and want the other person to talk to you, type
'GA' at the end."

"MRS. JONNISON IS ON THE LINE. GA."

"HI MOM! THIS IS JOEL. I'M CALLING FROM SKY'S HOUSE ON HIS TTY. GA."

"HI JOEL. WHAT A SURPRISE. IS EVERYTHING OK? GA."

"FINE! SKY'S FAMILY IS GOING TO LAGOON ON SATURDAY. THEY INVITED ME TO GO. MAY I GO? PLEASE? GA," Joel typed.

"I THINK THAT YOU CAN, BUT WE NEED TO DISCUSS IT WITH YOUR DAD BEFORE I CAN SAY YES. GA." Mom said.

"O.K. MOM. THANKS. OH, BY THE WAY, I WANT A TTY FOR MY BIRTHDAY NEXT MONTH. THEY ARE KIND OF FUN."

"How do I say 'I'm finished talking and ready to hang up?'" Joel asked Sky.

"Oh, sorry, I forgot to tell you. You type 'GA to SK'."

"BYE MOM. GA TO SK," typed Joel.
"I NEED YOU HOME IN AN HOUR. BYE. SKSK." The TTY stopped printing, and Sky reached over and turned off the TTY and hung the receiver on the phone again.

"Just as easy as that," Sky signed. "Now do you want to play my new Nintendo game?"

"Sure!" And off they went with a handful of cookies.

After the boys had played Nintendo for awhile, they sat back and Sky began telling stories and jokes in American Sign Language. At first, Joel didn't understand them. Sky patiently explained the parts that he didn't understand. One story went like this:

One time at a meeting of the Utah Association of the Deaf, a hearing man was talking to a group of deaf people. Another man was interpreting. The man talked and talked. The interpreter signed and signed. Finally, the hearing man said, "Excuse me," and he took a drink of water to moisten his mouth and clear his throat. The interpreter also said, "Excuse me," and he went to a bowl of water
and dipped his tired, dry hands in the water, shook them dry, then he
returned, ready to interpret again.

"That was really funny!" Joel signed still chuckling from the joke. "Where did you learn these jokes?"

"My parents' Deaf friends come to our house sometimes. They sit around and tell jokes and stories," Sky replied.

"I would like to come and watch. I don't know very many Deaf grown-ups," Joel said. "I used to think my hearing would get better when I grew up. Did you ever think that?"

"No. I always thought it was normal to be deaf until I went to school. My parents always treated me like I was the best thing in the world. Nothing was wrong with me. Then when I went to school everything changed. The teachers were shocked that I didn't have hearing aids. They said I was broken and that hearing aids would fix my problems."

"Yeah! I know what you mean," Joel agreed. "My teachers and parents told me if I wore my hearing aids that I would be able to hear. But they didn't fix my ears. I can hear some sounds better with them."
but I can’t hear everything. I still have problems understanding people when they talk.”

“I didn’t know that I had problems before I went to school,” Sky continued. “I was fine at home. But at school they couldn’t understand my signs and I couldn’t understand them very well, either. I was so confused. I had to say things their way or I didn’t get what I wanted. They said I had to learn to speak, too. I hated that school.

“When I was older my parents sent me to a residential school. A miracle happened. I became normal again. All the kids there were Deaf. They understood my language and I understood them. The teachers taught me why it was important to learn to speak and why I needed to know English. I was happy. The residential school teachers understood Deaf ways. At my first school, the teachers did not.

“Anyway, I learned some stories at the residential school, too. Sky concluded.
Joel looked at his watch. "OH, NO! It's five o'clock! If my mom calls, tell her I am on my way. See you on Saturday!"

Sky and Joel had a wonderful time at Lagoon. They spent the full day riding the roller coaster and other rides. They spent about two hours swimming and playing in the water park. Joel met a lot of Deaf people, too. He never knew there were so many Deaf in the world. The old Deaf sat around the pavilion and chatted about old times and new times. The teenagers, of course, went out and did the games and the rides.

Just before it was time to go home, Sky got real serious and said, "Joel, I'm really glad you came. I had a great time. You are the best friend I ever had."

"Thanks," Joel said "I feel the same about you."

"I know that sometimes it takes a long time for your mom to give you permission to do things, so I wanted to tell you now. It will give you time to get her to say yes. In August, there is a summer
camp for deaf children. I want you can go with me. We will have a
great time together. I brought the information so that you can read
about it and show your mom.”

Taylor 50
CHAPTER 11 PACKING

"Now where's my list?" Joel said out loud. "It was just here on my bed a few minutes ago."

Joel was really excited to go to Camp Talking Hands. His mother didn't understand why he wanted to go. She still believed he could hear much more than he could. Joel was very proficient in speechreading and he knew her so well that he could almost predict what she would say in most instances.

He rarely misunderstood her. When she was young, she had made it a habit to always face people when she spoke to them. These things made it very easy for him to speechread her. Consequently, she treated him as if he had normal hearing.

Joel still remembered her reaction when he asked her if he could go to Camp Talking Hands. "A DEAF CAMP! Why do you want to go to a deaf camp. You're not deaf! You might not hear everything, but you're not deaf!" He knew she wouldn't understand, but he still had to try. He had a feeling he might like being with Deaf
kids. Ever since he had met Sky and his family he felt good about himself. He didn’t understand why. He just did.

"Oh! There’s the list. Let’s see," he said out loud.

Pocketknife  X

9 Volt Battery  X

"I wonder why I will need a nine volt battery?"

000 Steel Wool  X

"I hope I won’t have to wash dishes with this steel wool."

Canteen  X

Bug spray?

"Oh no! Mom!" he shouted from his bedroom door. "I need some bug spray. Did you buy some at the store?"

"Yes!" she responded. "I’ll bring it up."

Joel sighed a breath of relief. Sky had said that last year the mosquitos were as busy as bees in a hive.

He liked the way Sky talked on his hands. Joel had learned a lot of sign language from his friends at his last school in South Dakota even though he had been in an oral classroom. The teachers
didn’t use sign. They only spoke, and became angry if the kids used sign in class. Some kids even had their hands slapped or had a privilege taken away for signing. The deaf and hard of hearing kids only used sign language outside of class and sometimes when the teacher was out of the classroom. However, Sky’s signs were different. Somehow they were more clear and easier to understand. Sky had a way of making pictures with his hands, his face, and his whole body. Joel felt very comfortable around Sky, and they had become best friends over the summer.

Joel packed his gear quickly. He knew he had to be at the corner parking lot at 5:30 in the morning. So he had to have everything packed tonight.

Joel’s mom came into the room.

"Here it is," she blurted out.

Joel jumped. He hadn’t heard her come in.

"Gosh Mom, I wish you would warn me somehow before you scare me like that."
"I'm sorry, Honey!" she said as she handed him a huge can of OFF. "Now, dear, before you go..." Joel knew what was coming. Every time he did something new, she always prepared a speech for him.

"Let's mark all your things before you go. I have this blue jay stamp we can use to stamp all the tags on your clothes. That way you can recognize your things by looking at the tag. OK? I talked to Sky's mother through the Relay service. She told me that last year he came home with clothes that looked the same as his, but they didn't fit."

"Here are two towels and two washcloths. I want them back. Remember to wash your ears--inside and out.

PLEASE don't forget to take your hearing aids out before you go swimming and riding wild broncos, and for heaven's sakes, DON'T LOSE THEM! You know how much your father paid for them!"

Joel nodded his head politely.
"Please be careful, honey. I don't want to . . ." She continued with this kind of motherly advise for fifteen minutes before Joel could stop her and remind her that it was getting late and he had to get up early. She hugged him and cried a tear or two before leaving the room.

"He's getting so grown up—so responsible. He's not my little boy anymore."

Joel quickly repacked his clothes after making sure everything was marked with the blue jay stamp. Then he set the special alarm that Sky had loaned him for 5:00 a.m. He didn't want to be late for the most exciting day of his life.

Joel was awakened by a strange vibration under his pillow. At first he ignored it, but the vibrating continued in pulses. He opened his eyes and saw that it was still dark outside. Then he glanced at the radio-clock. 5:00 a.m.
"OH!" Joel jumped out of bed. "It's Sky's alarm clock!"

Joel woke his father up at 5:05 a.m. Together they had a quick breakfast of Wheaties. They loaded Joel's backpack, duffel bag, sleeping bag, and camping equipment into the car and drove to the parking lot.

Sky was already there. He helped Joel put his things into the pickup truck that would take all the gear to Camp Talking Hands.

"I heard there will be a camp rodeo this year," Sky signed. "The staff has borrowed some young calves for it. A prize will be given to the person who rides a calf the longest."

"That's great!" Joel signed back. "Will you ride?"

"I think so, but I want to see someone else go first," Sky responded. "Will you?"

"Yeah! I think so. But what I really want to learn to ride is a horse. I want to swing a lariat and rope a calf like they do on TV. What do you want to do at camp?"
"I want to go camping in the back country. My friend said there are some really good instructors who teach camping and wilderness survival skills. He said it was really fun last year. An overnight backpack trip is planned to Blood Lake for those who pass all the survival skills."

"Blood Lake!! That's a strange name for a lake. Why's it called that?"

"I don't know, but it sounds like a great place to go."

Most of the kids were talking about the things they had heard would happen at Camp Talking Hands. Some were still in a sleepy state as their parents dropped them off with their packs and stuff. Soon everything was loaded and secured in the back of the truck. The kids were loaded into the vans and were soon headed to Camp Talking Hands for one exciting week.
CHAPTER 12  CAMP TALKING HANDS

The large banner reading, "WELCOME TO CAMP TALKING HANDS", hung from the huge log archway. Joel was excited. He wanted to be the first one out of the van. He quickly surveyed the camp through the window of the van as it drove into the parking lot.

A majestic three level barn-style lodge stood ahead of them across a large green lawn. Behind it, spruce and aspen trees covered the rising slope hiding the small bunk houses that dotted the hillside. The Wasatch mountains shadowed the camp area. A small stream appeared out of the trees and wound around to the right of the lodge. It fed a small reservoir that glimmered in the light of the morning sun. Canoes and row boats lined the shore near the docks. Nearby, a tall lifeguard’s chair towered fifteen feet above the lake. Beyond that, an open field was roped off with string and bright orange streamers. Piled bails of straw dotted the field with brightly colored targets hanging from them. To the left of the lodge, the old corral looked like a maze. It had been cleverly remodeled to become an obstacle.
course. A dirt road separated the obstacle course from the horse stables.

The van jerked to a stop. Joel and Sky quickly grabbed their things and hopped out. They wanted to be the first to explore the camp.

The camp was set up in such a way that kids can go to different areas and learn skills in an outdoor environment. The aquatic area or lake was set up to teach kids how to play in the water safely using row boats, canoes, or just swimming or fishing. Another area was set up under the trees where children could sit around and learn to tie knots and build useful things with poles and string. A small tepee was often a favorite thing to build. Some of the workshop areas were in the lodge. One room of the lodge had all the tools to work with leather. Another room filled with paint and easels was called the Art room.

It had been an exciting morning. Joel and Sky sat in their bunk house discussing the events of the day.

"This camp is awesome! Thanks, Sky, for inviting me."
"No problem," Sky signed. "I'm glad you came."

"The wilderness survival trip starts on Wednesday. I sure hope they choose us to go. They said it could be dangerous. I wonder what they mean by that?"

"Remember they said that living in the wilderness requires a lot of common sense," Sky said. "You must be prepared to survive in the wilderness. Kids who go thinking it will be easy usually hate it by the end because they aren't prepared. The camp counselors are watching for kids who show initiative and who really want to go."

"What does initiative mean?" Joel asked.

"I think it means doing things without being told," Sky suggested. Let's look at the schedule and try to figure out what we should do."
## WILDERNESS SURVIVAL SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 10, Wednesday</td>
<td>If you are lost...</td>
<td>Learn about gathering food. Learn about building fires without matches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>morning</td>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Eat Lunch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:00pm</td>
<td>Hike to Doughnut Falls. Learn about water purification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>Practice building shelters. Sleep!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 11, Thursday</td>
<td>Hike to the Sister Lakes, Mary and Martha.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>morning</td>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Find your own lunch near the lakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:00pm</td>
<td>Hike to Clayton’s Peak.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>Blood Lake: Set up and build own shelters.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kids who are interested in the wilderness survival trip should visit the following work areas before Wednesday morning: Pioneering, Nature, and Aquatics.
"I wonder if part of the preparation for the trip is to learn how to do some of these things before you leave camp?" Joel thought out loud.

"I think you are right. Let's go eat lunch and start at the aquatics area right after that," Sky signed.
That evening everyone met in the lobby of the lodge. There were about 100 kids at Camp Talking Hands, and they were all signing back and forth excitedly as they waited for the Camp Director to officially open this year's camp. A fire was blazing in the large stone fireplace. Finally, Mr. Reed came and all grew quiet and still.

"I welcome you all to Camp Talking Hands!" He began. "It is my hope that each of you will have a wonderful time. To help everyone be safe, I want to tell you our rules and expectations for a safe camp." Then he explained the rules.

"Now I want to introduce to you this year's distinguished guest counselor who will lead the wilderness survival trip." Mr. Reed took a deep breath and a long pause before going on. "He is none other than the famous David Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier!"

Everyone cheered by waving and shaking their hands in the air. In came a young man dressed in buckskin clothes and a raccoon hat, waving and shaking hands as he entered the room filled with kids.
"Welcome to Camp Talking Hands. I am excited to be here with you. I'm here to 'fire you up' about the wilderness survival trip and to encourage you to learn all you can about living off the land before you go. I will be watching to see who will be ready for such a trip. I must tell you that it will not be any easy one, but it will be a lot of fun. Work hard at the Pioneering and Nature areas. They will be your key to your survival."

"For tonight's entertainment," Davy said, changing the subject, "the staff at Camp Talking Hands want to share with you some folklore from the Deaf community. American Sign Language (ASL) stories are invented and shared at gatherings of Deaf people throughout the United States. You will notice that the storyteller will use only the hand shapes of each letter of the alphabet to tell the story. Watch carefully. We want you to create your own stories, because on the last night of camp we will have a storytelling contest. The kid with the best ASL story will win a plaque declaring him or her this year's best storyteller. Use your imagination as Steve Brubaker tells the first story called, "The Race".
Steve came zooming to the front of the crowd like a race car driver. He explained some parts of the story before he started. He demonstrated how one sign could be used to convey a large idea. Then he told the story of a jealous drag car racer who smoked smelly cigars and challenged everyone to race him. It was easy for Joel to understand the story because Steve was such a good actor and his face was very expressive.

At the end all hands waved in the air, applauding Steve's performance of The Race.

"Wow! That was neat!" Joel exclaimed. "I never knew someone could say so much about a race with only 26 signs. Do you know any ASL stories, Sky?"

"Yeah, but watch this next one. I will show you some later."

"The next story will be signed by Jill Jenkins," Steve said. "She will tell a number story using only the hand shapes for the numbers one through ten. This story is called 'The Grocery Store Cashier'."

Joel and Sky shook with laughter at the silly girl cashier who broke her fingernail and filed it while ten people waited in line.
The evening ended with several more stories. Then the camp director ordered everyone to bed.

Joel and Sky spent all day Tuesday working at the pioneering and nature areas. They learned what native plants they could eat and where to find them. They learned which plants they should avoid. They learned how to tie knots and lashings and how to put wooden poles and sticks together.

That evening at supper, Davy Crockett came and congratulated each boy and girl individually that had shown initiative. Those who had learned many skills in nature and pioneering were invited to go on the wilderness survival trip with him and two other camp counselors. Sky and Joel were two of the eighteen kids who were chosen to go. They were very excited. After they had eaten, they went to their bunk house and packed their backpacks with all the necessary gear. They were ready.
CHAPTER 14 DOUGHNUT FALLS

It felt good to be in the mountains. Joel scanned the beautiful scene ahead of him. The snow-capped mountain peaks gleamed in the distance. The dark forest green of the evergreen trees was intermixed with the spring green of the quaking aspen trees. This, Joel thought, was a perfect place for camping and hiking. He loved being out in the wilderness.

Backpacking wasn't new to Joel. He went every year with his family. Ever since Joel could remember, his family had gone camping. Almost every summer they hiked with their backpacks to a secluded area and spent a few days there. He felt comfortable in the woods.

The van struggled up the mountain road while the kids busily discussed their plans. Big Cottonwood Canyon, east of Salt Lake City, Utah, is a favorite canyon for all who enjoy the outdoors. The quartzite boulders and cliffs of Storm Mountain provide challenging climbs for rock climbers. Cool mountain lakes and streams are full of
trot waiting to be caught by fishermen. It is also an interesting place for rock hounds and geologists.

"There's the Cardiff Fork turnoff and the sign that says, 'Doughnut Falls 2 miles'," signed Davy, the Deaf counselor. The van slowed and turned right onto a dirt road, then it stopped while Davy explained about the meeting of the glaciers at this part of the canyon.

"Many hundreds of thousands of years ago, two glaciers slowly crept down these two canyons," he said. "At this place the glaciers met." He showed them the mountain formed by the huge mound of soil that was pushed in front of the glaciers.

"When the glaciers stopped moving down the canyon, and melted," he continued, "they left this mound called a terminal moraine. See how the upper part of the canyon is shaped like the letter U."

Deaf Davy pointed toward the east and up the canyon. "It was carved and made by the glacier. The lower part of the canyon is shaped like a V." Davy pointed down the canyon. The sides of the canyon seemed to form the letter V. "It was cut by the stream."
After the explanation the van slowly drove to Spruces Campground and the trail head that leads to Doughnut Falls. When the van stopped, the kids jumped out and started up the trail. However, Davy stopped them before they could go very far.

"Whoooo! Stop!" he signed. "You forgot. We have about two hours of learning and work to do before you can enjoy the cool waters of Doughnut Falls."

"OOOOOH! BOOOOO!" commented the 18 disappointed kids.

"Let's all move over to the picnic tables under that spruce trees and discuss the topic—What to do when you are lost."

Davy was fun to watch. His enthusiastic and friendly grin made everyone feel comfortable as he discussed the five important rules to follow when you realize you are lost. He told funny stories that help you remember the rules.

"1. STOP HIKING! Don't go any further until you know where you are or someone comes to help you."
2. **STAY TOGETHER** with your buddy no matter what. If he is hurt, don’t go get help. Stay with him/her and take care of each other.

3. **STAY CALM!** Help will come if you remembered to tell someone where you were going.

4. **DO SOMETHING!** means build a fire or make a sign that will aid the searchers in finding you.

5. **PROTECT YOURSELVES!** You don’t know how long you may have to wait for help to come. Prepare yourselves for the night by building shelters, a fire, collecting fuel for the fire, maybe collect some edible berries if some are nearby.”

   Davy discussed different kinds of edible plants. He showed them each plant, discussed places where they most often grew, and showed them how to eat them. Strawberries, thimble berries, and service berries are all different berries that can be found in the Wasatch Mountains at different times of the year. He showed them which plants they grew on. They ate thimble berries from a large patch they found growing nearby. Davy demonstrated how to
prepare and eat the stem of a thistle plant using a pocketknife. He taught them to be careful of poisonous plants with the rhyme:

Leaflets three,
Leave them be!
Berries white,
Poisonous sight!

They learned how to start a fire without matches. One method is to use a nine volt battery and place 00-size steel wool over the terminals. When it begins to spark and burn, place it on some fine tinder such as dried grass or tissue paper. Have small dry twigs ready to put on the flame as soon as it is ready. All the kids tried starting a fire with a flint and steel. That method was much more difficult and no one had any success starting a fire that way.

Finally, it was time to hike to Doughnut Falls.

"But before we start," Davy said. "Let's review the rules for safe hiking."

"Stay together!" Sky signed. "Stay with at least one other person. Never hike by yourself!"
"Good," replied Davy. "Another rule?"

"Watch where you are walking." said Joel.

"Right! But why?" asked Davy.

"To prevent accidents," replied Joel. "If you don't watch where you are walking, you can easily twist an ankle by stepping in a hole or trip on a rock on the trail.

"Good rule," said Davy. "Virginia?"

"Stay on the trail."

"Good environmentally conscious rule. If you stay on the trail you save the vegetation and help prevent erosion," Davy explained.

"Now one last rule and it's the most important. ENJOY YOURSELVES and don't forget to take your lunch packs with you!"

Everyone went up the trail like a horse headed for water. It was getting hot and everyone wanted to get cooled off. The uphill trail was fairly easy so the pace was quick. Within forty five minutes the kids were splashing in the creek that flowed from the falls. Doughnut Falls could be seen in the distance. The stream above falls through a large hole in the roof of a small cave into a pool of cold mountain
water and then flows out of the mouth of the cavern. The stream, after thousands of years, had worn a 'doughnut hole' through the top of the cave. To look at it from below, it seems that someone is pouring milk through a doughnut hole. This is how it got its name.

Many kids had left their hearing aids back at camp. Others quickly took them off and put them safely inside their backpacks, before wading in the water and splashing each other.

"Hey Joel!" Sky signed, "I dare you to stand underneath the waterfalls."

"You are kidding me!" Joel replied.

"I'll do it for your Butterfinger you have in your lunch," Sky ventured.

"It's a deal!" Joel replied.

Sky carefully waded into the pool of icy water and walked underneath the falling water.

"Nothing to it!" he grinned. Knowing that Joel had a King sized Butterfinger made the cold water bearable. Virginia waded up to Sky with a knowing grin.
"I bet that Butterfinger you just won from Joel, that I can stand under the waterfall longer than you can," she challenged. Virginia was known for her tomboy ways. She loved to outdo boys in any and every challenge they were foolish enough to accept from her. But Sky couldn’t let the Butterfinger go after getting it with such ease.

"Oh yeah?" Sky signed. "Joel will hold the candy bar and keep time for us. And since you are the challenger, you go first Virginia."

As Joel was getting ready to time the event, other kids came to watch the stand-off.

"On your marks . . . get set . . . GO!" Joel signed. "One . . . two . . . three . . . four . . . five . . . six . . . seconds." he finished as Virginia came out of the falling water.

"Your turn!" she signed to Sky with water dripping from her beet red face and her long dark hair. "Try to beat six seconds. Sounds easy, but each second seems like an hour when you are under the water."
"Is she trying to scare me or encourage me?" Sky asked himself. "I can't back out now." He glanced up at Joel to see if he was ready. At Joel's nod and without another thought, Sky plunged under the waterfall. He stood there feeling the beating water against his head. At first he tried to count to himself--One . . . two . . . the water began to feel like hailstones hitting his head--three . . . four . . . now the water was piercing like falling icicles stabbing his head. Just two more seconds, he thought. Then everything went black!
"GRAB HIM, VIRGINIA!" Joel shouted. But Virginia couldn't hear him. He had forgotten that she was deaf. He quickly signed something that she understood before he scrambled into the water to assist her in dragging Sky's limp body to the shore of the pool. Everybody came running to see what had happened.

"We need to get him into the sunlight. His body is very cold. We need some blankets or sleeping bags to help warm him up, and maybe a fire." Davy signed. As they moved Sky's body away from the cool dark cave of Doughnut Falls to a sunny place on the bank of the creek, Sky began to come to.

"Win?" he asked with a weak smile.

"Later," Joel signed back.

In just fifteen minutes everyone had worked together to get a fire going and Sky was wrapped in blankets and sitting beside the fire. Things had settled down now that Sky seemed to be warming up and feeling better. Kids were eating their lunches and talking amongst
themselves instead of hovering around Sky. Joel brought Sky's lunch to him and sat down beside him to eat his own.

"Wow, you really scared me there for a minute," Joel signed to Sky. "What happened?"

"I don't know," Sky said. "Maybe the cold water beating on my head caused me to pass out. I'm feeling much better and warmer now. Tell me. Who won?"

Joel reached into his backpack and handed Sky a King sized Butterfinger bar.

That afternoon and evening was spent practicing more survival skills. Sky was back to his ambitious self. He and Joel made the best shelter out of all the kids there. The time they had spent at the pioneering area at Camp Talking Hands had taught them many things about making shelters. Tomorrow they would hike to the Sister Lakes, Mary and Martha, at the top of Big Cottonwood Canyon.
It was a beautiful morning as the campers hiked to the lakes. The grass and wild flowers were still wet from the morning dew. The meadow grasses were twinkling with a million tiny rainbows. Birds were darting from tree to tree chasing each other. The shrill trill of the tree squirrels caught the attention of some of the deaf children as they passed by them. Several times the hikers stopped to look at the sea of green trees they were leaving behind them as they climbed higher up the mountainside.

"OOOOOO! How beautiful!" Sky signed as he caught his first glimpse of Lake Mary. The lake is nestled in a bowl shaped pocket on the side of rocky Millicent Peak. Huge granite boulders left behind by the glaciers many thousands of years before are a reminder of the strength the glaciers had in shaping many of the canyons in the Wasatch Mountains. Boulder islands dot the lake, some are topped with small Quaken Aspen trees. The sun reflecting off the crystal clear water was inviting. But not to Sky. He had had enough mountain water yesterday!
"No swimming is allowed in this lake," Davy signed. "This dam was built to hold the water here until the people in Salt Lake City need it. It is called a watershed reservoir. The water is slowly drained out of the lake during the summer and used in Salt Lake City as drinking water. If you are caught swimming in it, you can be fined $200.

"Now lunch today will be what you can find near the Sister Lakes. If you are not sure of your directions, please don’t wonder far away from here. I will stay near the dam if you need me. The counselors and I will be glad to help you learn to fish or if you have questions about the plants you can eat. Good Luck finding lunch!"

"You have three hours. Remember to be back here at two o’clock. We have five miles to hike before we reach Blood Lake where we will camp tonight."

Sky and Joel came prepared. They had fishing poles and bait. They had realized during their nature training that berries and plants are not always plentiful. Berries do not satisfy hunger as well as meat. So they planned to fish for their lunch.
"Let's go around to the other side of the lake. There are less people there." Joel suggested. "It might be better fishing there."

As they hiked around the lake, they kept seeing something moving in the water. As they got nearer they could see that it was someone swimming in the lake. They decided to go tell the person that it was against the law to swim here.

They found a fishing pole and a pile of boy's clothing near the shore. Obviously the boy was skinny dipping.

"Hey!" Joel shouted as the boy's head appeared above the water. "There's no swimming here."

"Who said?"

Joel remembered that voice from somewhere. But he couldn't quite put a name to it yet.

"Go mind your own business, Deaf-O! Or better yet, go wet your pants!" the boy said loudly and clearly. Then he laughed as he splashed water at Sky and Joel.

The embarrassment of the party flooded back as Joel recognized Butch's laugh.
"Let's go," Joel signed and he turned and walked away from the lake. "I don't want to fish at this lake."

Sky followed. "What's the matter?" He hadn't understood anything that Butch had said. He could see the hurt look in Joel's face.

"I'll tell you later." he signed back.

"No! Tell me now. Maybe we can get even." Sky sensed that Joel was really mad at the boy in the water. He could see Joel's body become tense.

"I can't." Joel signed.

Sky's mind worked quickly. This boy had done something terrible to his friend. Now he had a plan. He ran back to the pile of clothes and grabbed it all—shoes, socks, underwear, and all!

"Hey you thief! Come back here with my clothes!" Butch shouted. But it didn't matter. Sky couldn't hear the screaming and he didn't care!

Joel and Sky both ran into the trees and bushes away from the lake. They hid themselves so that Butch could not see them. Now
they could plan what they would do next while Butch froze his backside off in the lake or exposed himself to the whole world!
CHAPTER 16 THE STORM

After they laughed at the predicament they left Butch in, Joel told Sky about the party. Joel described how Butch had accused him of stealing his Nintendo game, and about embarrassing him and Sam. They decided to force Butch to apologize before they would give him back his clothes.

Joel walked down to the lake where they had left Butch stranded. He found Butch standing behind a rock with his teeth chattering.

"Hi Butch. Have you seen my deaf girl friends yet?" he said teasingly.

"Give __ __ clo____ back!" He demanded with his back towards Joel.

"I'm sorry," said Joel. "I'm deaf. If you want me to understand you, you will need to turn so that I can speechread you. Here's a branch so you won't need to be so embarrassed." Joel tossed a branch from a fir tree to Butch.
Butch reached down and picked up the branch and turned to face Joel. He was mad that he was at the mercy of this deaf kid.

"GIVE ME MY CLOTHES!" he shouted.

"Maybe we will, and maybe we won't." Joel said.

"I'll get you!" Butch started toward Joel but after three steps on the rough ground, he realized that he wouldn't catch Joel.

"Give me my clothes," he said, beggingly.

"Well, since you are asking for favors, I have some favors to ask of you. Then you can have one piece of clothing back for each favor you grant." Joel bargained. He signed so that Sky could understand what was happening. "Fair enough?"

Sky was standing in the middle of a thimble berry patch up the hill a ways. He held up Butch’s shirt teasingly. He was protected by the thorny bushes. If Butch tried to get the clothes from him, he would be badly wounded by the thorns.

"On the night of the party, who scored 75,000 points on the nintendo game?" Joel asked.

"You did." Butch confessed.
"Why did you lie about it?" Joel asked.

"I wanted to be the best player there," Butch said. "I knew I couldn't score that many points so I thought I could take the credit without anybody knowing. Everybody at school thinks you are dumb so I thought I could get away with it."

"What do you mean, dumb?" Joel challenged. His feelings were hurt when he heard the words, "You are dumb."

"Well. Sometimes you are hard to understand." Butch tried to explain. "Your speech sounds funny. So the kids at school think you are dumb because you don't speak the same as they do."

"What do you think? Am I dumb?" Joel asked. He was trying to understand Butch's actions towards him at the party.

"I don't know." Butch confessed. "How about some clothes. I've answered a lot of questions for nothing."

"O.K. What do you want first?" Joel asked. "But you are not through yet."

"My shirt." Sky tossed Joel the shirt and he handed it to Butch who quickly put it on.
Joel was beginning to trust Butch. He was being real honest. Yet Joel wasn’t ready to let him off the hook. Joel wanted to understand why hearing kids avoided him and he wanted an apology from Butch for pouring water down his pant leg at the party.

"Why are you mean to me?" Joel asked.

"You are easy to tease because you talk different." Butch said.

"Why do so many kids avoid me?" Joel asked.

"Well, I don’t know all the reasons but, I think mostly because they don’t understand your speech. They are a little afraid of you because of your strange speech.

"That’s enough." Joel said. "Now, show us your best fishing hole and you can have your clothes."

"It’s not at this lake." Butch said. "Give me my clothes and I will take you there."

"How do we know you aren’t lying? What guarantee will you give us?" Joel asked.
"You can keep my wallet until you catch three fish. I know. We can have a fishing contest. You can use my best fishing hole and I'll go somewhere else." Butch offered.

Joel liked the offer. Besides he was getting hungry. Fresh fried fish sounded good. He explained the deal to Sky. He agreed too. Butch put on his clothes and led the way. He took them past Lake Martha and still further until they reached a third lake. They circled around this lake until they came to the far end.

"This is the best fishing place around," Butch said. "You two fish here and I will go a little further. I always catch the most and biggest fish here. Good Luck!"

It was great fishing. They both caught two fish right away. They Sky looked up and noticed the time. It was 12:50. Big fluffy gray and white clouds began filling the sky.

"Maybe we should start back to the dam. It is almost one o'clock. We are far from it now and we need to be there at two." Sky signed.
"Just one more fish." Joel begged. "Then we will have five. The fish have been biting real well. I think we can catch one more before we need to go back."

"O.K." Sky consented. "It was real nice of Butch to show us this great fishing hole," he snickered. "I wonder how many fish he has caught?"

"I think I have another fish!" Joel signed excitedly and tried to reel in his line at the same time. "I think this one is big. He sure is giving me a good fight."

It took ten minutes for Joel to tire the fish out and pull it in. Butch came just then and examined the fish.

"That's a beauty! About two pounds, I would guess." he said.

"That's a big fish for this lake. Good job, Joel!"

"How many did you catch?" Joel asked.

"I only caught one." Butch confessed. "We need to go now. I heard thunder in the distance a while ago. I think we better start down the mountain."
As they gathered up their fish and gear, Joel could hear the thunder in the not so far distance. Sky helped Joel get his backpack on.

"Let's hurry!" Butch said. "Sometimes the clouds just blow their horns, but other times they really let the mountains have it. We don't want to be stuck on a mountain during a thunderstorm."

Butch had taken them further than they had realized. They had found Butch on the backside of Lake Mary. They had walked passed Lake Martha. They had fished at the far end of the third lake called Lake Catherine. They probably had to go three miles to get back to the dam. Joel began to worry. The sky was becoming dark and the clouds were more threatening. Lightning flashed in the distance.

Just as they came to the end of Lake Catherine, a loud clap of thunder sounded. It was so loud, that it caused Sky to jump too. Then the big drops of rain began to fall. Slowly at first, yet gradually gaining speed. Joel reached into his backpack and pulled out three large garbage bags and cut holes in them.
"Put this on over your head and pull it down over you," Joel said, handing both of the boys a garbage bag. "It will help keep you dry."

"Let's stand under those tall trees to get out of the rain," suggested Sky.

"NO!" Joel signed and spoke, so that both Butch and Sky could understand. "If the lightning were to strike one of those trees, it could kill us if we were standing near them. Let's find some shelter away from the tall trees."

"I think we should continue on," Butch urged. "I have to be back at the cabin at five o'clock or I'm in trouble." The rain continued to come down faster and harder. The trail was becoming muddy.

"COME ON!" he shouted above the pounding of the rain. He began walking before Joel had finished interpreting what he had said for Sky.

"I don't think we should continue," Sky signed. "The trail is slippery. It dangerous to walk on it. And maybe we will get struck by lightning if we stay out in the open."
"We can't let him go alone." Joel reminded Sky. "You know the rules of safe hiking. You should always stay together, especially in a storm like this. Let's go."

They walked slow and carefully because of the slippery trail. Butch was impatient with them for being so slow. The wind blew the rain into their faces, stinging their eyes. It seemed to be getting colder quickly, but Butch insisted that they continue on down the hill. The rain changed to pea sized hail, yet Butch pushed them on ahead of him so they wouldn't stop. The ground was covered with hail and more slippery than before.

Joel stopped in the middle of the trail and insisted that Butch listen to him.

"We must stop and find shelter."

Butch would not listen. He pushed Joel aside and said, "I have to be at the cabin at five or my parents will kill me. I'm going on. You can stay, but I must get back!" With that he hurried down the trail without looking back.
Joel and Sky watched him as he slipped and slid down the rocky path, wondering what they should do. Just as Butch was about to disappear in the blur of the hail and rain, his feet slipped out from under him and he fell to the ground. They watched to see if he was O.K. They waited. But he didn't move. They waited a little longer. Still he didn't move.
Butch could smell fish cooking nearby. When he opened his eyes he could see Sky cooking over a small fire. He found himself wrapped in a sleeping bag and sheltered by a small lean-to made out of fir boughs. One side the lean-to was supported by a large boulder. The area was protected by a large grove of trees. Butch was warm and dry. But his head hurt terribly and so did his left leg.

"How you feel?" Sky asked Butch. This was the first time Sky had spoken to Butch. He was surprised that Sky could speak. His voice was strange, but he could understand it.

"Awful!" Butch answered, trying to speak carefully. "What happened?"

Butch was intrigued by the way Sky used his hands to show how he had fallen. The visual description of Butch's fall was so funny that Butch began to laugh and then cry.

"It hurts to laugh." Butch said. Then after a long paused he asked. "What time is it?"

Sky held up his hand and said, "Five."
"I have to go." he said. He tried to get to his feet, but the pain in his leg and head forced him to lie back down.

"What happened to my leg?" he asked.

"We think it is broken." Sky signed.

"What?" Butch didn’t understand this time.

Sky pantomimed a broken leg with his witty sense of humor so that Butch could understand.

"Oh." After a long pause and when Sky was looking at him again, he asked, "Where’s Joel?"

"Gathering wood." Sky acted it out again. Then he turned his attention to the fish cooking in the pan.

In a few minutes Joel returned with a big armload of wood. He sat down next to Butch and explained what had happened.

They had acted quickly when they realized that Butch was hurt. Sky stayed with Butch and kept him covered from the rain and hail, while Joel searched the nearby area for a spot that was protected from the storm. He found this group of boulders protected by the grove of trees. The ground was damp, but it had been protected from
the storm. The rain and hail had stopped, but the clouds were still
dark and threatening.

"We will stay here until help comes," Joel said to Butch. "You
are in no condition to walk with your broken leg. We might have to
stay here over night. The best thing you can do is rest. We will eat
the fish and then Sky and I will make an SOS sign in the opening
near the trail. We will leave a trail of rocks to show where we are.
That way we can stay here where it's drier in case it rains again.
Anyone searching for us will be able to find us. We will also gather
enough wood to last us all night."

Butch began to cry. "Why did this happen to me? My parents
don’t know where I am. They will be mad at me. I didn’t return to the
cabin at five o’clock like they told me to. My dad has an important
meeting at seven o’clock tonight. I need to go."

"We can’t carry you down the trail." Joel said. "It’s too
dangerous when it is wet and slippery. I’m sure everyone is worried
about us. The best thing to do is stay together and take care of
ourselves until someone comes to help us."
CHAPTER 18  RESCUED

Butch began to realize how badly he was hurt. Each time he
moved his head he felt dizzy. He felt like he might lose
consciousness. He tried to eat the fish, but the more he moved to eat
it the more he felt sick. He decided it was best to lie still. He realized
he was helpless. All he could do was wait.

Joel and Sky had worked together to make Butch comfortable.
Now that he was conscious, they decided they could leave him alone
for a while. They went together to make the SOS sign and gather
more wood for the night.

It began to rain again just as the boys brought the last bunch of
branches to make another lean-to. The boys were mostly protected
from the rain under the grove of trees but they wanted to keep their
gear dry and have a dry place to sleep. They carefully built another
shelter on the other side of the boulders while Butch slept. It was
dark by the time they finished the second lean-to. The boys were
tired and hungry again.

"Do you want some candy?" Sky asked Joel.
"Sure! But where did you get it?" Joel asked.

"I brought it just in case we couldn't find enough food in the wilderness." Sky signed proudly.

"Smart thinking," Joel replied.

As they sat eating the candy and watching the fire burn, Sky told some ASL stories that he had learned at school.

"It's getting late," Joel signed. "I'll stay up and keep watch. You can sleep. I will wake you in a couple of hours and we will trade. Okay?"

"Okay," Sky agreed. "Good night!"

"Good night!"

Joel was beginning to doze off when he saw something move beyond the fire. He straightened up and tried to look closer. A large dark object slowly moved toward the dying fire. Its eyes glowed orange-red from the light of the glowing embers. Joel shook with fear.
"Sky," he said, shaking his friend. "Sky, what is that over there."

"What?" Sky looked sleepy eyed at Joel. "What do you want?"

"There is something over there. Can you see its red eyes?"

"What is it?" Sky asked. "I don't see anything."

"I just saw a big black animal beyond the fire." Joel signed. "I think it's a bear."

"What do we do? How can we frighten it away?" Sky asked.

"Let's throw rocks at it and make a lot of noise to scare it away." Joel suggested.

"If we hit it with rocks, it might make the bear mad. I don't like that idea," Sky said. "I once heard that animals are afraid of fire. Let's build the fire up. You hold a big stick just in case it comes toward us, while I put the wood on the fire. okay?"

"Okay," Joel agreed to the plan. "I can't see it now. Let's hurry!"

The two boys quietly ran to the wood pile. Joel found a strong knobby branch about three feet long to use as a club. Sky found
small pieces of wood and put them on the red coals. He blew the fire to life and quickly added more wood. All the while, Joel kept watch for the animal. As the fire grew and gave off more light, the shadows became more distinct.

"There it is!" Joel shouted and pointed at the same time to a large black shape slowly climbing a fir tree. It was a porcupine!

"Ha ha ha ha ha ha!" They both burst into laughter at the same time. They were relieved that it wasn’t a bear and surprised that it was a porcupine.

They turned to see Butch laughing, too.

"Joel, the great hunter!" Butch said teasingly. "Thanks for saving our lives!"

Joel and Sky told Butch the whole story using mime, and they all laughed together again and again until their sides hurt from laughing so hard.

After a long pause, Butch turned to Joel with serious teary eyes and said, "Joel, please interpret for Sky. I have something important to say to both of you." After a deep breath he continued.
"Thanks for taking care of me. It was really stupid of me to keep going in that storm. If I hadn't been so mule-headed, we wouldn't be stuck out here tonight. I'm sorry."

The next morning was clear and beautiful. The clouds of yesterday's thunderstorms had vanished during the night. Sky entered the grove just as Butch began to stir.

"Hi," Butch gestured to Sky. "What do you have?"

"Berry," he said with his voice, and he held out his shirt filled with thimble berries.

"Wow!" Butch exclaimed. "Where did you find all of those?"

Sky ignored the question. It was too hard to explain. "Come eat," he offered.

Butch tried to sit up, but he couldn't. The pain in his leg was too great.

Sky noticed the pained look on Butch's face and he brought the berries to him.
Joel woke up and insisted on eating some berries, too. While they were eating, Sky signed to Joel, "I think we need to get Butch to a hospital soon. His face looks white and sick."

"What's going on? Joel, please interpret what Sky said. We need to work as a team," Butch insisted.

"Okay," Joel said. "Sky is worried about your health. He thinks we need to get you to a hospital. No one has come to help us yet. Your parents don't know where you are. Our leaders haven't found us yet. We need to think of a way to carry you down the mountain."

"I have an idea," Butch said. "The Plains Indians built a travois to carry things behind their horses."

Butch knew by their blank stares that Sky and Joel didn't understand what he was talking about. So he drew a pictures in the dirt and explained it as simply as he could until they understood.

"Maybe you two could make something like that," he concluded.

"Great idea! Let's get started!" Sky jumped up and spilled the berries. "Sorry," he signed with the saddest face he could make.
Within two hours Joel and Sky had made a travois with one of their sleeping bags and two small trees. Butch was situated on it with his left leg in a splint.

"Okay," Butch said. "Ready or not, Let's go!"

Joel and Sky pulled the sled over the grassy meadow to the trail. Each time they went over an unavoidable rock, Joel would hear Butch cry out in pain. They tried to choose the smoothest way, but mountains are not smooth. They had been going down the trail for about 45 minutes, when they saw a group of people coming towards them. It was a rescue team with Davy, the camp counselor, leading them. The Canyon Search and Rescue team called for a medical helicopter to come for Butch when they saw how hurt he was.

The helicopter arrived in about fifteen minutes.

"Have a great ride, Butch!" Joel said. "I hope you will be okay. See you later."

"What do you mean?" one of the rescuers said. "You and Sky are going, too. Hop in."

"What? We have to go, too? Why? We are okay," Joel said.
"Those are the captain’s orders," the rescuer replied. "You will be taken to the hospital and checked by the doctors there. They will decide if you are okay or not. Your parents will meet you at the hospital."

Both Joel and Sky didn’t understand why they needed to go to the hospital. Finally Davy was able to explain it to them. He promised to come and get them and take them back to Camp Talking Hands as soon as the doctors had determined that they were okay.
CHAPTER 19   HEROES

"How was the helicopter ride?" Davy asked as they rode in the van toward Camp Talking Hands.

"Awesome!" Joel responded.

"Beautiful!" Sky signed. "The mountains look very different from the sky. I'm glad they forced us to ride in the helicopter. It was a neat ride."

"I'm really glad you two are fine," Davy signed. "I was worried about you. However, you two were very brave. You did the right things. You took care of yourselves and also Butch. I'm very proud of you. You saved his life."

"Did you go to Blood Lake?" Sky asked.

"No," Davy said. "While everyone was fishing, I listened to the weather forecast on my mini-radio. There was a severe thunderstorm warning broadcast for the Wasatch Mountains. I started to worry. When I saw the thunderheads coming, I decided to cancel the hike to Blood Lake. I sent all the kids down the mountain with the other leaders before the storm started. They went back to camp. I stayed