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Humanities

### Creating A Survivor

Positive thinking can make even the worst of situations seem better. *Hatchet*, by Gary Paulsen is about a boy named Brian who gets stranded in the wilderness after his plane crashes and the pilot dies. He is forced to figure out how to survive alone until he is rescued. In the novel, *Hatchet*, Brian starts out as naive and negative, but throughout the story becomes more thoughtful and positive.

When Brian first crashes and is stranded, he is uneducated in the ways of the wild and doesn't have a positive outlook on things. For example, after waking up the morning after the crash, Brian is parched and runs to the lake to drink, "When he was out of where the water was clear and he could see no bugs swimming, he kneeled on the log to drink" (Paulsen 41). Brian doesn't consider the dangers of drinking the water straight from the lake or how he could make it safe. Because he is uneducated as well as very thirsty, he doesn't complete the correct procedure before drinking the water and so he pays for it. In addition, after having spent more time in the wild, Brian thinks to himself, "It means, a voice in his thoughts said, that they might not be coming for you tonight or even tomorrow" (Paulsen 49). Brian is having a hard time staying positive and believing that he will be saved because he hasn't been yet or seen any signs yet that he will be. This affects his ability to focus and figure out how to survive because he becomes wrapped up in the negatives and the worrying and takes his mind off of what he should really be focusing on. Overall, Brian starts off as most probably would, unknowing and not positive for the future.

After being in the wild for awhile, Brian starts to learn more and become less negative. For example, while trying to hunt, Brian realizes that has to "retrain" his eyes, "He had to look for the outline instead of the feathers or color, had to train his eyes to see the shape" (Paulsen 133). Brian is learning

that he needs to see things differently than what he's been used to because he's in a new environment that requires a new outlook and perspective. After being in the wilderness for so long he's starting to realize what he needs to change in order to survive. In addition, after not being saved by the plane, Brian reminds himself to stay positive, "But hope in his knowledge. Hope in the fact that that he could learn and survive and take care of himself. Tough hope, he thought that night. I am full of tough hope" (Paulsen 120). Even though Brian has been through lots of trials and tribulations, he refuses to give up hope. He acknowledges the fact that positive thinking is a key part to his survival and that's why he keeps going back to that and makes sure that he remains positive. Brian has grown during his time in the wild and it benefits him for the rest of his time as well as the rest of his life.

Brian starts out not knowing what to do or how to keep the negative thoughts out but throughout the book gains insight and a positive outlook. Brian experiences many things over the course of his time in the wild that change him, mentally and physically. He is altogether a better with more overall ground knowledge and a better, more thorough thought process. This proves that staying positive can ultimately save lives.