

CURRICULUM GUIDE

SURVIVOR DIARIES

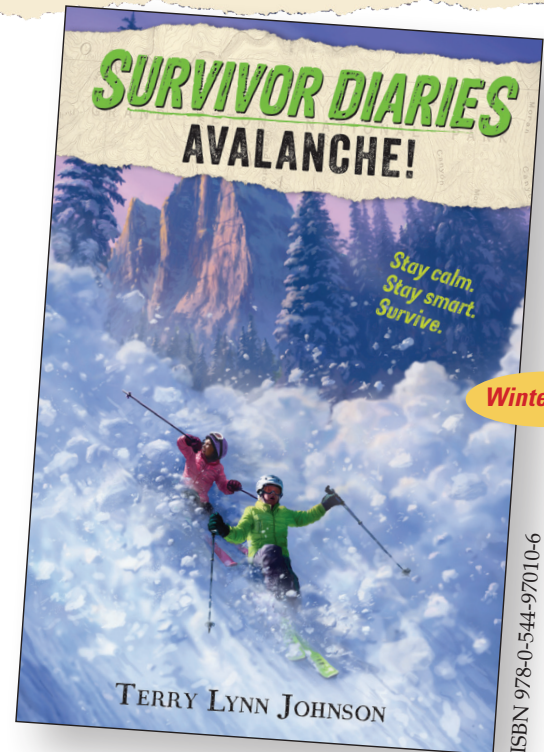
BY TERRY LYNN JOHNSON

A high-stakes adventure series by the real-life survival expert and author Terry Lynn Johnson!



**Stay calm.
Stay smart.
Survive.**

***Features U.S. Coast Guard
survival tips!***



***Features National Avalanche
Center survival tips!***

ELEVEN-YEAR-OLD TRAVIS and his family are on a whale-watching tour off the east coast of Washington when their boat is struck by a rogue wave in *Overboard!* Twelve-year-old twins Ashley and Ryan are skiing with their parents in Wyoming's Grand Teton Mountains when there's a ground-shaking rumble in *Avalanche!*

Kids are tested to the extreme in Terry Lynn Johnson's heart-pounding adventure series. It will take all of their grit and knowledge to survive. Packed with real survival expertise and tips, the books in the Survivor Diaries series will make readers better prepared should disaster strike.

New titles coming soon: *Lost!* and *Dust Storm!*



Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Books for Young Readers

survivordiaries.com

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

All discussion questions are aligned with [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.1](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.1](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.1](#) unless otherwise noted.



- ☀ The story begins with Travis being interviewed by a reporter about how Travis survived the capsizing of his whale-watching boat. What do you think would be important survival tips for Travis to share about being thrown overboard?
- ☀ Travis's mom forces him to wear an immersion suit before they set off whale watching. Why is Travis's mom so protective of him?
- ☀ Who is Marina? What does Marina wear that shows she knows about marine safety?
- ☀ Unexpectedly, the whale-watching boat capsizes. What are some of Travis's thoughts as he finds himself in the cold, choppy ocean?
- ☀ What is the first safety lesson Marina teaches Travis after the two find themselves drifting away from the life raft and feeling the effects of the cold water?
- ☀ What does Marina share with Travis about how many minutes people have to react and save themselves in frigid water?
- ☀ How does the piece of wood floating in the ocean help Marina and Travis reach land?
- ☀ What is a selkie? How does a seal provide comfort to Travis as he and Marina battle the waves?
- ☀ Marina suffers an injury to her wrist during the ordeal on the boat. How does Travis provide first aid for Marina and her injured wrist once the two reach the island?
- ☀ Getting and staying warm is important for Marina and Travis to survive. What steps does Travis take to try to start a fire to warm him and Marina?
- ☀ The morning after Marina and Travis camp out on the island, they awake with two new problems: hunger and thirst. How do the two find water and food?
- ☀ Why was the appearance of eagles key to the rescue of Travis and Marina?
- ☀ In this story, not only did Travis have to deal with the dangers of falling overboard, but he also had to face other fears. What events in the story challenged Travis to confront his fears? How did he respond to these challenges?

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.3](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.3](#)

ACTIVITIES

- ☀ Create a map of the island where Marina and Travis are stranded after their ordeal at sea. Reread the description of what the children found on the island and draw these as part of your map. Include a key that describes what each feature on your map represents.
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.7](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.7](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.7](#)
- ☀ Travis is delighted to find a wide variety of sea life on his whale-watching trip, including dolphins, orcas, and humpback whales. Later, he and Marina encounter a harbor seal. Select one of the animals Travis spotted on his trip and research your chosen animal to discover what the animal looks like, what it eats, how it is adapted to living in the sea, and how it takes care of its young. Write a paragraph presenting all of the facts about your animal.
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.2](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2](#)
- ☀ Pretend that you are a newspaper reporter covering the story about two children swept overboard during a whale-watching trip. Write a factual article that describes what happened to Travis and Marina, what they went through, and how they survived. Remember to include a headline for your article. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.2](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2](#)

NAME: _____

COLD-WATER SURVIVAL QUIZ

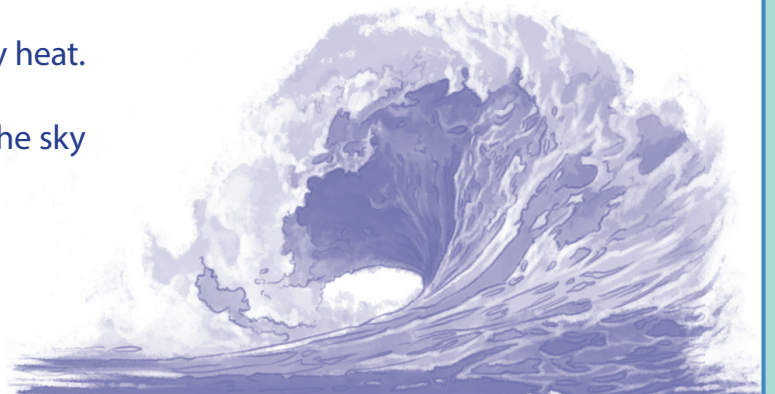
Travis and Marina must navigate the freezing ocean water and survive alone in the wilderness on a tiny island until help arrives.

Do *you* have what it takes to survive? Take the quiz and find out!



WHICH SEVEN OF THE FOLLOWING ARE U.S. COAST GUARD-APPROVED COLD-WATER SURVIVAL TIPS?

1. Raise your arms out of the water and wave them around.
2. Get to a survival craft—a boat, a raft, or anything floating.
3. Swim as fast as you can to stay warm.
4. Stay calm and hold your knees to your chest and clasp your arms around your calves to preserve body heat.
5. Minimize your time in the water.
6. Strip off your clothes so they don't weigh you down in the water.
7. If you're in a group, separate so there's a greater chance you'll be spotted.
8. Stay in one place. Don't try to swim.
9. Huddle with others to preserve body heat.
10. Float on your back so you can scan the sky for rescue planes or helicopters.
11. Keep your clothes on.
12. Save your energy.



Answers: 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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- * Chapter 2 starts two months earlier than the events in chapter 1. What is the setting of chapter 2? [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.7](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.7](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.7](#)
- * The twins explore more of the mountain before meeting their parents. What inspires them to deviate from the plan? What does it mean to “skin up” the face to the untouched snow?
- * Ashley hears an “ominous sound” as she goes across the open area between trees. What does the sound mean for the two young skiers?
- * Ryan and Ashley had safety training from their ski club at home. When the avalanche happens, how does Ash use what she learned to survive the disaster when it first occurs?
- * What tool does Ash use to save Ryan? Why does she have to work so quickly?
- * After rescuing Ryan, Ash discovers that her brother has at least one major injury. What happened to Ryan during the disaster and how do Ryan’s injuries make the twins’ survival efforts even harder?
- * Wintertime in the mountains can be dangerously cold. How does Ash try to provide warmth for herself and her brother?
- * Ashley and Ryan make good use of things found in nature in order to survive. How do they use branches and snow to stay alive on the mountain?
- * The twins have to deal with the snow, the cold, and their injuries. On top of those challenges, they also face wild animals. What do the twins do when their paths cross with a wolverine and a bear?
- * An avalanche is powerful enough to carry away everything in its path. How do Ashley and Ryan make use of the broken avalanche warning sign?
- * The reporter who interviews Ash is impressed with how she and her brother survived the avalanche. What is the message in this tale of survival?
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.2](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.2](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.2](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.2](#)
- * Throughout the story, Ash remarks about how she feels less than her twin brother and about how she wants to make her dad proud. How do you think the twins’ dad’s feelings about his children changed over the course of the story?
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.3](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.3](#)

ACTIVITIES

- * The twins struggle to survive in the snow and brutal cold on the mountain. Humans are not naturally adapted to life in very cold temperatures. In comparison, wolverines are ideally suited to mountain life and are fierce and fearless. Look for information in the story about wolverines and their special adaptations for living in the cold and snow of the mountains. Write an informative essay about wolverines.
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.2](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2](#)
- * The contents of the twins’ backpacks were essential to their survival. Read the appendix to the story and think about story events related to what a prepared skier would need to stay safe. Make a list of the key items to pack and write a reason why each item would be important to include.
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.1](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.1](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.1](#)
- * Work with a partner to come up with a good title for each of the twelve chapters in *Avalanche!* Remember, a title should make the reader want to read more, and also hint to story events in the chapter. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.1](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.1](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.1](#)

NAME: _____

ARE YOU AVY SAVVY?

Ashley and Ryan were able to survive an avalanche because they were prepared for the unexpected. Test your knowledge about avalanche conditions and preparation by taking this quiz.



WHICH ANSWER BEST COMPLETES EACH SENTENCE?

1. Avalanches generally occur on slopes steeper than _____.
A. 25° B. 35° C. 45°
2. One sign of unstable snow is _____.
A. shooting cracks B. animal tracks C. snow drifts
3. One common avalanche trigger is _____.
A. burrowing animals B. airplanes flying overhead C. people
4. Avalanche probes—long, collapsible poles—are most useful for _____.
A. searching for someone buried in snow
B. measuring snow depth
C. fighting off bears
5. One of the most essential tools for backcountry skiers to carry with them is _____.
A. a pair of snowshoes B. a shovel C. a charged cell phone
6. When venturing into the backcountry, it's most important to _____.
A. bring a buddy
B. wear sunscreen
C. eat breakfast before you go

Answers: 1. b; 2. A; 3. C; 4. A; 5. B; 6. A