Canyons, by Gary Paulsen:  
A Novel Study  
Created By Jean Martin (jabmartin@aol.com)

This is a ready-to-use, 41 page packet designed for teachers with students in grades 6-9 who are reading Canyons, by Gary Paulsen. Included is a 20 page student booklet along with an answer key plus an optional vocabulary bookmark for students to use as they read. In addition, a 20 point, end-of-book test and answer key is provided. The student booklet divides the text into six reading assignments and provides questions and tasks to go with each one. Booklets are designed to be used independently so that they can either be worked on in class or as homework. The questions and activities also become a useful guide for discussion when students meet together.

The questions and tasks in this booklet cover and reinforce the knowledge and skills that good readers need to maintain. They include vocabulary, comprehension, visualization, point-of-view, foreshadowing, use of repetition, compare and contrast, character traits, and clarifying. The packet gives students needed practice in writing to explain their thinking and to demonstrate their understanding, as well as opportunity for creative writing.

➤ NOTE: Understanding that school districts and teachers operate on tight budgets, this packet appears mostly in black and white in order to cut down on printing and copying expenses. The only color used is in the teacher’s answer key (since many copies are not typically needed) which can be viewed on the computer, if preferred, or printed either in color or black and white.

Canyons in a nutshell:  

Another page-turner by award-winning author, Gary Paulsen! This story pulls in the spirit world as fifteen year old Brennan Cole experiences a mystical bond with an Apache boy he never knew but who lived and died a century earlier in the same setting that holds so much power over Brennan. The discovery of a skull is the beginning of a quest for Brennan that will truly become the challenge of his life and likely change the direction of his life. This is a book that will leave young teens with much to think about.

Appropriate for students in grades 6-9. Reading level approximately 6th grade.

http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jean-Martin-18
**Name**

**Canyons**

As you read, keep track of words that are new or unusual (or words that you think might be new to students in your book club). Write them on the lines below and be sure to include the page number that you found them on so that you can relocate them if you need to. Continue on the back if you run out of space.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>word</th>
<th>pg #</th>
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http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jean-Martin-18
A Student Booklet to Accompany

Canyons

By Gary Paulsen

Student: __________________________
Assignment 1: Canyons

READ CHAPTERS 1-4 (pg. 1-27)
Then, complete all work for this assignment.

VOCABULARY
Find the vocabulary words below in your reading and determine their meanings according to context. Write the word from the shaded box next to its definition on the right.

raid (5)  
marveled (10)  
steer (4)  
pointedly (6)  
tolerance (10)  
resent (10)  
pitied (11)  
ancient (15)  
bluebelly (17)  
goad (18)  
gully (18)  
poverty (23)

1. very old ____________________________________________________________
2. to drive or stimulate _______________________________________________
3. feel annoyed by something __________________________________________
4. deliberately _______________________________________________________
5. male cattle used for beef ____________________________________________
6. felt sorry for ______________________________________________________
7. small, valley-like passage ___________________________________________
8. acceptance of something irritating _____________________________________
9. amazed ___________________________________________________________
10. a sudden attack ____________________________________________________
11. member of the Union Army in the Civil War __________________________
12. the state of being poor _____________________________________________

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION
Once you have finished your reading, write two questions to read to your group at your next meeting. Try to make them OPINION questions, such as “Why do you think…”, or “How did you feel when…”, or “What would you do if…”.

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Assignment 1, continued
Chapters 1-4

SKILL TO PRACTICE: SUMMARIZE

Remember: when you summarize you give a shortened version of what the book has said including the main points and most important facts.

1. Summarize what you have learned about Coyote Runs so far.

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__________________________________________________________________________

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__________________________________________________________________________

2. Summarize what you have learned about Brennan Cole so far.

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__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Assignment 1, continued
Chapters 1-4

READING SKILL TO PRACTICE: CLARIFY

While you read, stop and think about things that are said.
Make sure you understand what the meaning or significance is.

1. Written below are two interesting statements which appeared in your reading assignment. Read the statements and locate them in the text. Think about each one. Next to each statement explain what you think it means.

"Usually work was almost impossible to find because of the closeness to Mexico—Juarez was right across the river—and the poverty there which sent thousands north each day to find work." (Page 23)

My Interpretation:

“He lived alone with his mother and when he was home—which was less and less as he approached fifteen and his mother spent more and more time working to live, working to be, working to feed and clothe her only son—the two of them existed in a kind of quiet tolerance.” [Page 10]

My Interpretation:
Assignment 2: Canyons

READ CHAPTERS 5-8 (pg. 28-54)
Then, complete all work for this assignment.

VOCABULARY
Below are quotations from your reading. Give a definition for each word or phrase in bold letters.

p33 “When she got into aerobics he avoided it…” ________________________________
p34 “loping along and letting the guy fall back…” ________________________________
p35 “They were all over the van like gremlins…” ________________________________
p35 “…finally he turned away and ignored them…” ________________________________
p36 “But if Bill heard his voice he gave no indication.” ________________________________
p40 “…the walls rose above them making a huge amphitheater.” ________________________________
p40 “High overhead an eagle caught a thermal and…” ________________________________
p43 “…pinching their horses’ muzzles…” ________________________________
p44 “…then Sancta started walking again, leading his mount…” ________________________________
p46 “…brought the party to the edge of a depression…” ________________________________
p52 “…the last stronghold of the Apache nation.” ________________________________

→ In the box below, create an illustration to represent one of the bold words found above. Write a caption using the word in a new sentence.

Caption:
____________________________
____________________________
____________________________

http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jean-Martin-18
COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Think about how Coyote Runs and Brennan Cole are alike and how they are different. List facts that are true only of Coyote in the circle with his name and the facts that represent Brennan only should be listed in the appropriate section of the other circle. Write how they are the same in the intersection.

Now, using information from your Venn Diagram above, write a paragraph that describes how Brennan and Coyote are similar.

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SELECT A RESEARCH TASK

Choose one of these research projects and use the space provided below for your report.

1) The locations mentioned in this story are real places. Make a list of all of the cities and places that have been mentioned so far in this book. Then using any resource to help you, create a map of the area showing where the story takes place.

2) Read two different articles about illegal immigration between Mexico and the US (possible resources: newspaper, magazine, or online news). Summarize what you learned about illegal immigration by reading them.
# Assignment 3: Canyons

**READ CHAPTERS 9-10 (pg. 55-84)**

Then, complete all work for this assignment.

## VOCABULARY

Below are some words found in this assignment. Find each one in the text, then copy the sentence or phrase it was found in. Write the meaning of the word as it was used in the context.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Sentence or phrase from the text:</th>
<th>Meaning:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>betrayal</strong> (page 75)</td>
<td>____________________</td>
<td>___________________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>vaqueros</strong> (page 59)</td>
<td>____________________</td>
<td>___________________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>gaping</strong> (page 83)</td>
<td>____________________</td>
<td>___________________________________________</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jean-Martin-18
Gary Paulsen uses this writing craft quite a lot in his books. He emphasizes a thought, a feeling, or a concept that he wants the reader to understand by using this technique which we can simply call repetition. In the reading you can easily find many places where Paulsen used repetition. Here is one example:

... His horse tried to keep running without stepping on him but could not and veered off into a circle fighting away from the body.

The body.

Magpie.

Magpie was a body. (page 71)

In the example above, what is it that Paulsen wants to be sure the reader understands?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Review this assignment and find other examples of repetition. Write two examples below.

Example from the text:

“____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

What does Paulsen want us to be sure to understand? __________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

Example from the text:

“____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

What does Paulsen want us to be sure to understand? __________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________
COMPREHENSION

1. What tribe of Native Americans did Coyote Runs belong to? ______________

2. Who was the best friend of Coyote Runs? ____________________________

3. What was Coyote Runs’ role in the raid? Describe what he was supposed to do.

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

4. At the end of Chapter 9, we read: “There was an enormous white flash, a splattering flash of white and the start of some mad noise to end all noises and then there was nothing.” Explain what you think happened.

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

5. In Chapter 8, Brennan had a hard time getting to sleep, but we learn in Chapter 10 that he woke up suddenly during the night. Why did he wake up during the night? Explain, using examples from the text.

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

6. Chapter 10 ends with Brennan saying to himself, “I am crazy, this is crazy, I am crazy.” Then the author tells us, “But he could not stop himself.” Explain what was happening.

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http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jean-Martin-18
**Assignment 4: Canyons**

READ CHAPTERS 11-15 (pg. 85-121)
Then, complete all work for this assignment.

**A Vocabulary Puzzle**

The word bank below contains vocabulary words that appeared in this assignment.

ACROSS
1. with extreme physical force
5. inside
6. unit of measurement for the diameter of a bullet
8. The science that deals with all forms of life.
10. many in number
13. sent out
15. lonely, helpless
18. curved, two legged instruments used to measure objects
19. a small tower
20. done to one’s self
21. the scientific study of diseases

DOWN
2. does not exist, absent
3. to move forward in a zigzag path
4. a room or building where dead bodies are kept until they are identified or autopsied
7. conclude; guess made on the basis of evidence
9. amazing, surprising, wonderful
11. according to what seems to be the case
12. looking at someone or something with resentment or anger
14. in a thankful way
16. the front, open end of a gun
17. surgical knife

**WORD BANK:** apparently, biology, caliber, calipers, emitted, forlorn, glowering, gratefully, incredible, interior, morgue, muzzle, nonexistent, numerous, pathology, scalpel, self-inflicted, surmise, turret, violently, weaving.

http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jean-Martin-18
Assignment 4, continued
Chapters 11-15

COMPREHENSION

1. How much time elapsed between Chapter 10 and Chapter 11?

2. In what ways had Brennan’s life changed since he had returned from the camping trip?

3. At the end of Chapter 13, Paulsen writes:
   “And the word Homesley came in.
    Perfect, he thought. Homesley.”

Who was Homesley and why did Brennan think he was perfect?

Do you think he was perfect? Why or why not?

http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jean-Martin-18
**VISUALIZING THE PLOT**

In Chapter 11, Brennan had four dreams. Make an illustration in each box below to represent each of his dreams. Include a caption for each to clarify what is happening in the dream.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dream 1</th>
<th>Dream 2</th>
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<tr>
<th>Dream 3</th>
<th>Dream 4</th>
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</table>
Assignment 5: Canyons

READ CHAPTERS 16-20 (pg. 122-150)
Then, complete all work for this assignment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>VOCABULARY</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below are some words found in this assignment. Find each one in the text and read the sentence or paragraph it was found in. Write the meaning of the word as it was used in the context.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>marauding</strong> (page 135)</td>
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<td>Meaning as used in the book:</td>
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<td><strong>redundant</strong> (page 135)</td>
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<td>Meaning as used in the book:</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>prudent</strong> (page 137)</td>
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<td>Meaning as used in the book:</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>prospectors</strong> (page 136)</td>
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<td>Meaning as used in the book:</td>
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<td><strong>concise</strong> (page 138)</td>
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<td>Meaning as used in the book:</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>skirmish</strong> (page 142)</td>
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<td>Meaning as used in the book:</td>
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COMPREHENSION:

1. What information was Tibbets able to tell Brennan about the skull? (Review chapter 15 as well as 16 for a complete answer)

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2. What are the measurements of this box according to the story? Explain the significance of this particular box.

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3. What details did Brennan learn about the skull from his reading?

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4. What made Brennan so certain that the details he learned were truly about the skull he found?

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http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jean-Martin-18
Assignment 5, continued
Chapters 16-20

**POINT-OF-VIEW**

*Point-of-view refers to the way an author tells the story. Sometimes an author tells a story in the third-person point-of-view which means that the author (or narrator) describes what the characters are thinking and feeling. Another way an author can tell the story is using first-person point-of-view: this is when the story is told in the words of one of the characters in the story.*

*Which point-of-view does Gary Paulsen use to tell this story?*

__________________________

Give examples from the text to support your opinion:

__________________________

__________________________

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__________________________

http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jean-Martin-18
Assignment 6: Canyons

READ CHAPTERS 21-24 (pg. 151-end)
Then, complete all work for this assignment.

VOCABULARY

Draw lines to match the definitions below with their meanings as used in the text.

- dehydration (p167)
- skeptical (p165)
- dehydration (p167)
- virtually (p171)
- exulted (p171)
- fissure (p179)
- sketched (p181)
- plaque (p155)
- cavalary (p172)
- confiscate (p155)
- fatigue (p164)

DEFINITIONS

- soldiers on horseback
- to take someone’s property with authority
- scrunched or gingerly moved
- doubtful
- felt triumphant; was very happy
- severe loss of body fluid
- almost; practically; in effect
- extreme tiredness
- inscribed wood, metal, or stone to commemorate something
- a long, narrow crack or opening
- a small, spiny tree or bush found in the SW
- virtually
- exulted
- fissure
LITERARY CRAFT: FORESHADOWING

Sometimes an author gives hints to the reader about something that will be happening later on in the story. This is called foreshadowing. There are several places in this book where Mr. Paulsen used this craft.

Use the chart below to show foreshadowing found in this reading assignment or elsewhere in the book. One example is completed for you. Look at the pages where foreshadowing can be found, then complete the empty sections of the chart. The last row is empty so that you can include another example of your own.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGE</th>
<th>SENTENCES THAT SHOW FORESHADOWING.</th>
<th>WHAT IS THE EVENT THAT WAS FORESHADOWED?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12&amp;13</td>
<td>“Later, he’d think back on this time; later when he had begun to try to find his spirit . . . How anything so big could come from something so small and simple. . . and it changed his whole life.”</td>
<td>Meeting Bill started a chain of events which resulted in Brennan finding the skull and becoming obsessed by Coyote Runs’ spirit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>“And Brennan was only half right. He would certainly see the country—but it wouldn’t be leisurely, and it wouldn’t be with anybody.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>171</td>
<td>“I can fly, he thought, and made the mistake of looking back.”</td>
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http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jean-Martin-18
Assignment 6, continued
Chapters 21-end

CLARIFY

1. As you read these last chapters in the book you, no doubt, noticed sentences written in *italics*. What did those sentences represent? Why did the author make them appear differently from the rest of the book?

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

2. Brennan was guided by “The voice—more a felt sound, an echo in his mind, than an open sound. It was his own voice, in his mind, but not his mind.” [p.161]
Give four examples of things that Brennan learned from the voice in his mind that he would not have known otherwise.

I. ________________________________________________________________
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_________________________________________________________________

II. _________________________________________________________________
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III. ________________________________________________________________
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IV. _________________________________________________________________
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_________________________________________________________________
RECOGNIZING THE AUTHOR’S PURPOSE
Authors write books for a variety of reasons. Sometimes an author is trying to teach/inform the reader, sometimes the purpose is to entertain the reader, and sometimes it is to persuade/convince the reader. Now that you have read this last section of the book, think about why Gary Paulsen wrote this book and explain your opinion on the lines below.

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____________________________________________________________________________________
A trait is a word or phrase that describes a character’s personality (such as greedy, selfish, kind, thoughtful, funny, sly, trustworthy). Choose one of the main characters from this book and select two traits that fit him. Give TWO pieces of evidence from the text: your evidence should be the character’s words, thoughts, or actions that show that trait.
Assignments 6, continued  
Chapters 21-end

**WHAT NEXT?**
What do you think could happen next in Brennan’s life? If the author were to write a sequel to this book, what should he include? Write a description below of what you think should happen in a sequel.

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http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jean-Martin-18

Stop
Answer Key for CANYONS Student Booklet

ASSIGNMENT 1: READ CHAPTERS 1-4 (pg. 1-27)

VOCABULARY
Find the vocabulary words below in your reading and determine their meanings according to context. Write the word from the shaded box next to its definition on the right.

1. very old ancient
2. to drive or stimulate goad
3. feel annoyed by something resent
4. deliberately pointedly
5. male cattle used for beef steer
6. felt sorry for pitied
7. small, valley-like passage gully
8. acceptance of something irritating tolerance
9. amazed marveled
10. a sudden attack raid
11. member of the Union Army in the Civil War bluebelly
12. the state of being poor poverty

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION
Once you have finished your reading, write two questions to read to your group at your next meeting. Try to make them OPINION questions, such as “Why do you think…”, or “How did you feel when…”, or “What would you do if…”.

Questions will vary.

http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jean-Martin-18
SKILL TO PRACTICE: SUMMARIZE

1. Summarize what you have learned about Coyote Runs so far. Possible response: Coyote Runs was an Apache boy of about 14 or 15 (14 summers) who was eagerly anticipating the rite of becoming a man. He was finally invited to accompany the other men on a raid and this would be his entrance into manhood. His task on the raid seems to be watching the horses. He seemed to have great respect/love for his mother.

2. Summarize what you have learned about Brennan Cole so far. Possible response: Brennan is a nearly-fifteen year old boy who lives with his mother; his father deserted them when Brennan was just 3. He seems to be a loner and loves to run “to be with himself”. He and his mother don’t seem terribly close; they tolerate each other and she has had a series of boyfriends over the years, which is tiresome to Brennan.

READING SKILL TO PRACTICE: CLARIFY

While you read, stop and think about things that are said. Make sure you understand what the meaning or significance is.

1. Written below are two interesting statements which appeared in your reading assignment. Read the statements and locate them in the text. Think about each one. Next to each statement explain what you think it means.

"Usually work was almost impossible to find because of the closeness to Mexico—Juarez was right across the river—and the poverty there which sent thousands north each day to find work." (Page 23)

My Interpretation: Actual interpretations may vary but might include that poor Mexicans cross the border illegally to look for jobs which results in fewer jobs available for citizens in areas near the border.

“He lived alone with his mother and when he was home—which was less and less as he approached fifteen and his mother spent more and more time working to live, working to be, working to feed and clothe her only son—the two of them existed in a kind of quiet tolerance.” (Page 10)

My Interpretation: Actual interpretations will vary. Likely will indicate that Brennan was almost 15 yrs old and not home a lot. Also his mother was busy most of the time working because she had lots of bills. As a result they didn’t interact much and ended up basically “putting up” with each other.
ASSIGNMENT 2: READ CHAPTERS 5-8 (pg. 28-54)

VOCABULARY

Below are quotations from your reading. Give a definition for each word or phrase in bold letters.

p33 “When she got into aerobics he avoided it…” exercises that increase heart rate
p34 “loping along and letting the guy fall back…” running with long, easy strides
p35 “…They were all over the van like gremlins…” little mischievous beings
p35 “…finally he turned away and ignored them…” paid no attention to
p36 “But if Bill heard his voice he gave no indication…” sign or signal
p40 “…the walls rose above them making a huge amphitheater…” semicircular auditorium or stadium
p40 “High overhead an eagle caught a thermal…” air current caused by warm air
p43 “…pinching their horses’ muzzles…” nose and jaws of an animal
p44 “…then Sancta started walking again, leading his mount…” horse
p46 “…brought the party to the edge of a depression…” dip or low area of land
p52 “…the last stronghold of the Apache nation…” place where a tribe is centered and strong

→ In the box below, create an illustration to represent one of the bold words found above. Write a caption using the word in a new sentence.

Illustrations and captions will vary.
Assignment 2, continued

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Think about how Coyote Runs and Brennan Cole are alike and how they are different. List facts that are true only of Coyote in the circle with his name and the facts that represent Brennan only should be listed in the appropriate section of the other circle. Write how they are the same in the intersection.

Some Possibilities:

**Coyote**
- Apache
- historic times
- horse rider

SW location
- 14-15 yrs old
- introspective
- tied to the land

**Brennan**
- Caucasian?
- Present day runner

**Both**
- watch mother
- spend time alone

Now, using information from your Venn Diagram above, write a paragraph that describes how Brennan and Coyote are similar.

*Responses will vary depending on what student listed in Venn Diagram.*

**SELECT A RESEARCH TASK**

Choose one of these research projects and use the space provided below for your report.

*RESPONSES WILL VARY*

1) The locations mentioned in this story are real places. Make a list of all of the cities and places that have been mentioned so far in this book. Then using any resource to help you, create a map of the area showing where the story takes place.

2) Read two different articles about illegal immigration between Mexico and the US (possible resources: newspaper, magazine, or online news). Summarize what you learned about illegal immigration by reading them.

http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jean-Martin-18
ASSIGNMENT 3: READ CHAPTERS 9-10 (pg. 55-84)

VOCABULARY

Below are some words found in this assignment. Find each one in the text, then copy the sentence or phrase it was found in. Write the meaning of the word as it was used in the context.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Sentence or phrase from the text</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>betrayal</td>
<td>“...his eyes fell on the ground in front of them and there it was, his betrayal.”</td>
<td>his blood that had dripped on the ground had given him away.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vaqueros</td>
<td>“...when he saw the Mexican vaqueros.”</td>
<td>when he saw the Mexican cowboys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gaping</td>
<td>“There was a gaping hole where the rear curve had been...”</td>
<td>There was a large hole in the back of the skull.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LITERARY CRAFT: REPETITION

...His horse tried to keep running without stepping on him but could not and veered off into a circle fighting away from the body.

The body.

Magpie.

Magpie was a body. (page 71)

In the example above, what is it that Paulsen wants to be sure the reader understands?

He wants reader to understand that Coyote Runs is upset to realize that his friend Magpie is now a dead body.

Review this assignment and find other examples of repetition. Write two examples below.

Student examples will vary.

http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jean-Martin-18
COMPREHENSION

1. What tribe of Native Americans did Coyote Runs belong to? Apache

2. Who was the best friend of Coyote Runs? Magpie

3. What was Coyote Runs' role in the raid? Describe what he was supposed to do. He would ride 3 days with the men and then was to be left alone below the cut in the river where he was supposed to keep watch over their extra horses while the other men participated in the raid. The men would then come back with the horses they had managed to steal from the Mexicans herd and Coyote would ride in the rear of the herd to help move the horses to their village.

4. At the end of Chapter 9, we read: "There was an enormous white flash, a splattering flash of white and the start of some mad noise to end all noises and then there was nothing." Explain what you think happened. Likely response: Coyote Runs was shot in the head by the bluebelly (soldier) and died.

5. Brennan had a hard time getting to sleep in Chapter 8, but we learn in Chapter 10 that he woke up suddenly during the night. Why did he wake up during the night? Explain, using examples from the text. He woke up with a pain in his leg and in his head and found he was thinking the words, "Take me Spirit" which were the same words and pains that Coyote Runs had. Likely this was because he had been sleeping on the partially buried skull of Coyote Runs and this was the spot where he had been shot and died.

6. Chapter 10 ends with Brennan saying to himself, "I am crazy, this is crazy, I am crazy." Then the author tells us, "But he could not stop himself." Explain what was happening. Brennan was following a strong impulse to secretly take the skull home with him and was finding this compulsion to be strange and unsettling and making him wonder if he was crazy to be hearing something say "Take me spirit".
ASSIGNMENT 4: READ CHAPTERS 11-15 (pg. 85-121)

VOCABULARY PUZZLE:

V I O L E N T L Y

W O M E N

I N T E R I O R

C A L I B E R

V E N O M

I N U M E R O U S

S T I M U L A T E

G E M I N A T E

E M I T T E D

S A L I E N T

F O R L O R N

O V E R T D I T R A T E

S C A R E Z I Z

S E L F - I N F L I C T E D

P E L L E T

P A T H O L O G Y

T U R R E T

H Y L E

B R O N C H E R

P A L M A R

A R T I C L E - F I X E D

G R A N I T E

B U R S T

S T R A I N

C H A R A C T E R

D R A S T I C

E L E C T D I S C A R D

T R A N S P O R T
COMPREHENSION:

1. How much time elapsed between Chapter 10 and Chapter 11? One week

2. In what ways had Brennan’s life changed since he had returned from the camping trip? He was having trouble sleeping; he was having strange dreams when he did sleep. He felt like a criminal because he was harboring a stolen skull.

3. At the end of Chapter 13, Paulsen writes:

   “And the word Homesley came in.
   Perfect, he thought. Homesley.”

Who was Homesley and why did Brennan think he was so perfect?

Homesley was Brennan’s former biology teacher (at Cardiff School). They had developed a sort of friendship that year when the teacher reached out and befriended Brennan, coaxing him out of his shyness by having him look for beetles and thus encouraging him that he could indeed be good at biology. The teacher also invited him to his home and his love of classical music. Their friendship made Brennan feel he was the only person he could confide in and who would take him seriously and help him.

Do you think he was perfect? Why? Opinion...answers will vary.

VISUALIZING THE PLOT

In Chapter 11, Brennan had four dreams. Make an illustration in each box below to represent each of his dreams. Include captions that identify the dreams.

Illustrations and captions will vary.
ASSIGNMENT 5: READ CHAPTERS 16-20 (pg. 122-150)

VOCABULARY

Below are some words found in this assignment. Find each one in the text and read the sentence or paragraph it was found in. Write the meaning of the word as it was used in the context.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>marauding</strong></th>
<th>Meaning as used in the book: roving around carrying out violent attacks or raiding a place looking for plunder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(page 135)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>redundant</strong></td>
<td>Meaning as used in the book: repetitive; saying the same thing over and over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(page 135)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>prudent</strong></td>
<td>Meaning as used in the book: sensible, using good judgement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(page 137)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>prospectors</strong></td>
<td>Meaning as used in the book: miners; people looking for gold, silver, oil, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(page 136)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>concise</strong></td>
<td>Meaning as used in the book: brief; to-the-point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(page 138)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>skirmish</strong></td>
<td>Meaning as used in the book: a brief fight between two small groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(page 142)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COMPREHENSION:

1. What information was Tibbets able to tell Brennan about the skull? (Review chapter 15 as well as 16 for a complete answer) It belonged to a 14 year old boy, he died violently from a close range bullet of about 45 calibers; it was murder not suicide; likely around 1865 by soldiers because they used that type of rifles.

2. What are the measurements of this box according to the story? Explain the significance of this particular box.

The box measures one foot by one foot by one foot (1 cubic foot).
Seven boxes, numbered 1-7, were given to Brennan and Homesley by Ted Rainger who worked for the Western Historical Archives in Denver. Ted told them that box #3 would likely be most helpful based on the information they had given to him because it concerned the area of El Paso and Fort Bliss between 1860 & 1890. So, the box pictured here, box 3, is indeed the box that ended up having the answers that Brennan was looking for.

3. What details did Brennan learn about the skull from his reading? He learned that it belonged to a young Apache boy named Coyote Runs from Horse Mesa. He was shot for stealing horses south of Dog Canyon in October, 1864 after being chased by 4 US soldiers patrolling the Fort Bliss area (their names were O’Bannion, Rourke, Daneley, and Doolan). He had been chased into a canyon and his mother later reported that his body was never returned.

4. What made Brennan so certain that the details he learned were truly about the skull he found?

The location was the same as where he found the skull, the year was what Tibbetts had guessed, the age was also what Tibbetts had thought as well as the fact that the death was caused by soldiers, the fact that the boy’s mother had reported that his body had not been returned would be right since he was found on an overhang in the canyon.

POINT-OF-VIEW

*Point-of-view refers to how the author chooses to tell the story. Sometimes an author tells a story in the third-person point of view which means that the author, or narrator, describes what the characters are thinking and feeling. Another way the author can tell the story is using first-person point of view this is when the story is told in the words of one of the characters.*

*Which point-of-view does did Gary Paulsen use to tell this story? Third person point of view*

*Give examples from the text to support your opinion: There is a narrator telling the story...he tells what Coyote Runs is thinking and feeling and also what Brennan thinks and feels. Examples: “But he could not stop himself” pg 84; “Still he had a moment of hope.” Pg. 75 (many other examples that can be used)*

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ASSIGNMENT 6: READ CHAPTERS 21-end (pg.151-end)

DEFINITIONS

soldiers on horseback cavalry
to take someone’s property with authority confiscate
scrunched or gingerly moved skitched
doubtful skeptical
felt triumphant; was very happy exulted
severe loss of body fluid dehydration
almost; practically; in effect virtually
extreme tiredness fatigue
inscribed wood, metal, or stone to commemorate something plaque
a long, narrow crack or opening fissure
a small, spiny tree or bush found in the SW mesquite

LITERARY CRAFT: FOreshADOWING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGE</th>
<th>SENTENCES THAT SHOW FORESHADOWING.</th>
<th>WHAT IS THE EVENT THAT WAS FORESHADOWED?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12&amp;13</td>
<td>“Later, he’d think back on this time; later when he had begun to try to find his spirit ... How anything so big could come from something so small and simple...and it changed his whole life.”</td>
<td>Meeting Bill started a chain of events which resulted in Brennan finding the skull and becoming obsessed by Coyote Room’s spirit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>“And Brennan was only half right. He would certainly see the country—but it wouldn’t be leisurely, and it wouldn’t be with anybody.”</td>
<td>Brennan would end up running alone trying to avoid the police in order to return the skull.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>171</td>
<td>“I can fly, he thought, and made the mistake of looking back.”</td>
<td>Looking back instead of where he was going caused him to land wrong on his ankle and break it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jean-Martin-18
Assignment 6, continued
Chapters 21-end

CLARIFY
1. As you read these last chapters in the book you, no doubt, noticed sentences written in italics. What did those sentences represent? Why did the author make them appear differently from the rest of the book?

Italics represented the voice in his mind which was Coyote Runs’ spirit.

2. Brennan was guided by “The voice—more a felt sound, an echo in his mind, than an open sound. It was his own voice, in his mind, but not his mind.” (p.161) Give four examples of things that Brennan learned from the voice in his mind that he would not have known otherwise.

Responses will vary.

RECOGNIZING THE AUTHOR’S PURPOSE
Authors write books for a variety of reasons. Sometimes an author is trying to teach/inform the reader, sometimes the purpose is to entertain the reader, and sometimes it is to persuade/convince the reader. Now that you have read this last section of the book, think about why Gary Paulsen wrote this book and explain your opinion on the lines below.

Opinions may vary but will likely include entertainment, adventure, and teaching the reader about the culture of Native Americans and the strong emphasis on the spirit world.

CHARACTER TRAITS

Responses will vary.

WHAT NEXT?

What do you think could happen next in Brennan’s life? If the author were to write a sequel to this book, what should he include? Write a description below of what you think should happen in a sequel.

Responses will vary.
Canyons

A Book Test and Answer Key
By Jean Martin

http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jean-Martin-18/Products
A Book Test for
CANYONS
By Gary Paulsen

Highlight the best answer.

1. What is the primary setting for this story?

2. Brennan Cole lives with ____________.
   a. mother & stepfather   b. mom, dad, & sister   c. mother       d. teacher

3. Magpie is ______.
   a. Brennan’s friend     b. a bird           c. a friend of Coyote Runs   d. an Apache chief

4. What was a bluebelly?
   a. a kind of fish       b. a kind of horse   c. a US soldier       d. a Mexican

5. How did Brennan earn spending money?
   a. collecting beetles for his teacher     b. mowing lawns
   c. doing research about American Indians  d. making burgers

6. Why did Brennan keep a stick in front of him as he ran through the sand?
   a. as a magic charm       b. to ward off snakes   c. to scare away coyotes

7. What was significant about the skull that Brennan found?
   a. it had no damage on it and looked new
   b. it appeared to belong to a small child that still had baby teeth
   c. it had been crushed on one side
   d. it had a bullet hole in front and a big piece missing in the back

8. How many soldiers chased Magpie and Coyote Runs?
   a. four       b. one       c. two       d. three
9. Who did Brennan turn to when he needed help with the skull?  
   a. his biology teacher  
   b. his mother  
   c. his father  
   d. Bill

10. What things are true of Mr. Homesley?  
    a. he was injured in Viet Nam and he worked in a mortuary  
    b. he studied beetles and he served in Viet Nam  
    c. he studied American Indian history and he was an opera singer  
    d. he was a runner and a rock climber

11. Why is this book written using two different types of font? (worth 2 points)

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

12. In what ways are Coyote Runs and Brennan similar? (worth 4 points)

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

13. Choose 2 characteristics that you feel are true of Brennan and use examples from the story to explain why. (worth 4 points)

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jean-Martin-18
ANSWER KEY

A Book Test for
CANYONS
Possible Points: 20

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   d. he was a runner and a rock climber

11. Why is this book written using two different types of font? (worth 2 points)
    The two fonts represent the two characters being told about: Brennan and Coyote Runs. The chapters that are about Coyote’s life were bold and those about Brennan’s life were not.

12. In what ways are Coyote Runs and Brennan similar? (worth 4 points)
    Answers may vary but will likely include that both boys were the same age (14-15), they were both looked forward to becoming men and wanted to show they were responsible, they both observed their mothers closely, they both were introspective & enjoyed being alone, they were both felt they could run all day, they both felt the power in the land.

13. Choose 2 characteristics that you feel are true of Brennan and use examples from the story to explain why. (worth 4 points)
    Responses will vary: watch for examples to back up opinions.
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➢ Locate the title of this product (Canyons…) and then click on the flashing “Provide Feedback” button.

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Jean Martin