



Flight from Bear Canyon Anita Daher

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Consider the following question as you read *Flight from Bear Canyon*:

How can an unexpected event affect a developing friendship?

Story

Kaylee is upset about being left to spend the summer with a girl her own age, Jaz, and Jaz's uncle, Jack. All she wants is time alone with her dog, Sausage. Things change quickly, though, when Jack is injured when his helicopter goes down near a group of grizzly bears. Kaylee and Jaz must team up to save him and Kaylee finds herself once again at the controls of a plane.

Author

Anita Daher has been blessed to spend time in many regions of Canada including the far north. One hot July afternoon she stumbled upon a news story about grizzly bears congregating at the mouth of a swollen river. That was all she needed. She set *Flight from Bear Canyon* in the region of the mighty and mysterious South Nahanni River in the Northwest Territories. Then, she says, it was all she could do to hang on tight and enjoy the flight of her life! Anita is the author of another book about Kaylee and Sausage, *Flight from Big Tangle*. She lives with her family in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Curricular Integration

Science

- In order to understand how a plane actually stays in the air, one must know the principles of flight. Four forces act on any plane to make it fly: lift, thrust, gravity and drag. Have students use an encyclopedia or website to find out more about how these forces enable a plane to fly. You may want to divide the class into four groups, giving each group a force to research.
- The Wright Brothers: Anything that has to do with flight must include mention of the Wright Brothers. They revolutionized flying with their

historic twelve second flight on December 17, 1903 at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. As this event has just celebrated its 100th anniversary, much information is available on the topic. Have students find out information about the first airplane designs and who was instrumental in the development of flight.

- **Flying Animals:** While there are many flying insects and birds, few other members of the animal world can fly. Using a book such as *Aircraft and Flight* (629.13) as a reference, find four flying animals (Some examples are flying fox, fruit bat, flying lemur and pterosaur.). Research what makes them such good fliers. Create a chart or web to display your thinking.
- Choose one flying animal to sketch, specifically capturing its flying apparatus. Using your sketch as a guide, design an object that flies, such as a plane, kite, boomerang or frisbee. Everyone in the class should have the same material to work with, such as a single sheet of 8 ½ x 11 inch paper or a yogurt container for example. Test your flying object and explain to the class how it is modeled after your flying animal.
- **Communication:** Several types of two-way radios are commonly used. Some areas of the world rely on these radios for communication. The radio in the story is a regular high frequency/very high frequency radio for aircraft. Arrange for a local park ranger, an emergency services person, someone who works as an air traffic controller or someone who works in radio operations to come in and speak to the students. Perhaps a local ham radio group would be able to bring in their equipment so students can experience it firsthand.

Language Arts

- **Maintaining the Balance:** This topic is discussed in the book *Life In a Wetland* (577.68). While it refers to the Everglades ecosystem, the message of maintaining a balance between the wildlife, plants and humans is relevant everywhere. The Nahanni River Valley region was formed during the Precambrian Era. You will find fossils and shells far from the water's edge. Students may compare and contrast these two areas and write about which is most at risk from human pollution and why.

- Contact your local airline or airport to find companies who fly into the bush or provide helicopters for different jobs. Invite a bush or helicopter pilot to speak to your class about their jobs or have a representative of one of the companies speak about the role their planes have in protecting the communities into which they fly. As a follow-up, have students write a newspaper ad that an airline might write looking for a pilot or an advertisement highlighting a particular flight.
- Try writing from the point of view of a bird or other flying creature. Much of what we see as humans is at our eye level, above or below it at times. What would happen, if we had the chance to see through the eyes of a seagull, butterfly, wasp or fly? Our perspective on things would be very different. Choose a flying creature to become and write a descriptive paragraph or two telling about what you see as you fly over Jack's downed helicopter. (*Silverwing* by Kenneth Oppel and its sequels may help here.)
- Jargon and symbols: Many groups and organization have their own set of symbols, words and sayings. Pilots use the phonetic alphabet below as a communication system worldwide.

A = ALPHA

J = JULIET

S = SIERRA

B = BRAVO

K = KILO

T = TANGO

C = CHARLIE

L = LIMA

U = UNIFORM

D = DELTA

M = MIKE

V = VICTOR

E = ECHO

N = NOVEMBER

W = WHISKEY

F = FOXTROT

O = OSCAR

X = X-RAY

G = GOLF

P = PAPA

Y = YANKEE

H = HOTEL

Q = QUEBEC

Z = ZULU

I = INDIA

R = ROMEO

Can you spell your name out loud? Create your own set of symbols for everyday things such as hello, goodbye, asking for something, organizing people in a group. Write a short skit to highlight what you have come up with.

Social Studies

Geography

- **Mapping:** On a map of your local area, identify and label mountains, rivers, lakes and tree types. Draw a map of the area in the Northwest Territories where the story takes place including the same types of features. Compare the maps and list their similarities and differences.
- **The Language of Caves:** Caves provide a fascinating porthole into the underground world. Stalagmite, stalactite, flowstone and helictite are just a few of the colourful words that describe what can be found inside. Have students draw a picture of a cave in as much detail as they can. Share actual cave pictures or video with them and develop a list of words that describe and explain the world of caves.
- **The Nahanni National Park** was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1978. It contains, along with the Nahanni River, Virginia Falls, the largest wilderness waterfall in North America. It is twice the height of Niagara Falls! A full listing of locations can be found online at the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. Have students find other waterfalls in the world and locate them on a world map. Label other UNESCO World Heritage Sites in North America and find out how they reflect the heritage of humankind.
- A compass is an important tool in helping us find locations. The first magnetic compass was invented in China about 210 BC. Have students locate items in the classroom or outside the school using a compass. You may want to connect a compass activity to the map lesson above as well.

History

- **Biography Writing:** Many important pilots and airplane pioneers can be used for this activity. Students are to select one and research his or her life, noting particularly information that highlights his or her contribution to the craft. Some to choose from: William Lear, Paul Cornu, Charles, Lindberg, Amelia Earhart and Chuck Yeager.
- Radios have been around since the early 1900s by that name, though earlier by the name of wireless telegraphy. Guglielmo Marconi is usually

credited with the invention of the radio in 1874. How many different types of radios do you think there are? Using a variety of resources have students draw at least six kinds of radios and write a short explanatory caption for each.

- Donald Hings is the relatively unknown Canadian inventor of the walkie talkie, two-way radios for airplanes as well as many other radio inventions. Find out about his work as well as that of other less known inventors.

Art

- Paper airplane construction: Look at some samples of paper airplanes in *Paper Airplanes* (709) or on any of the many web sites on the subject. Design a paper airplane with a long range travel ability of at least ten meters. Make sure that each plane is made from the same size and weight of paper.
- Beacons, flares and black boxes already exist to assist in the location of lost or downed planes. Design and construct a detection device to be housed inside planes to help rescuers locate downed planes. Your design is to meant to improve upon these resources.

Drama

- Puppet Plays: Using any selection of puppet types, create short plays that highlight different relationships between people. In the story you see such situations as: a gold miner who goes off to stake a claim but never returns, Sausage's experiences after the crash, Jaz's suggestion that she and Kaylee may become cousins or what Kaylee will tell me mother about the events in the story.
- Developing a sense of how the unknown influences our lives can be a very motivating experience. Have students create a series of short skits about life threatening situations such as plane crashes, boating accidents, wild animal encounters, going off ski trails...
- Bear signals: using the information below on how to speak and act like a grizzly, create a series of scenarios.

- Orienteering: Have students learn how to find their way using an orienteering compass and a set of instructions.

Suggested Resources

Fiction

Daher, Anita. *Flight From Big Tangle*

Defoe, Daniel. *Robinson Crusoe*

George, Jean Craighead. *Firestorm*

Giff, Patricia Reilly. *pictures of hollis woods*

Hutchins, Hazel. *Robyn Looks for Bears*

Morpurgo, Michael. *Longway Home*

Morris, Deborah. *Real Kids Real Adventures Number 2*

Myers, Edward. *Survival of The Fittest*

Paulsen, Gary. *Brian's Winter, Hatchet, The River*

Peterson, P.J. *Whitewater*

Young, Ed. *What About Me?*

Nonfiction

(Dewey Decimal Classification numbers appear in parentheses where applicable.)

Alvarado, Amy Edmonds and Herr, Patricia R. *Inquiry-Based Learning Using Everyday Objects* (372.13)

Busby, Peter. *First To Fly: How Wilbur and Orville Wright Invented The Airplane.* (629.13)

Downs, Mike. *The Noisy Airplane Ride.* (387.7)

Drake, Jane and Love, Ann. *Cool Woods: A Trip Around The World's Boreal Forest.* (577.37)

Fertl, Dagmar, Reddy, Michelle and Stoops, Erik D. *Bears.* (599.78)

Hansen, Olle Steen. *The Story Of Flight: Helicopters.* (629.13)

Hickman, Pam. *The Kids Canadian Tree Book* (582.16)

Hodge, Deborah. *Bears: Polar Bears, Black Bears and Grizzly Bears*. (599.74)

Llewellyn, Claire. *Kids Survival Handbook*. (796.4)

MacLeod, Elizabeth. *The Wright Brothers A Flying Start* (629.13)

Mellet, P. and Roston, J. *Aircraft and Flight* (629.13)

Platt, Richard. *Inventions Explained* (609)

Ruth, Maria Mudd. *The Pacific Coast* (577.51)

Stewart, Melissa. *Life In A Wetland* (577.68)

Tresselt, Alvin. *The Gift of The Tree* (574.52)

Turner, Dick. *Nahanni* (971)

Online

“U.S. Centennial of Flight: Cessna Aircraft Company”

centennialofflight.gov/essay/GENERAL_AVIATION/cessna/GA4.htm

“Preserving Canada’s Helicopter History”

telusplanet.net/public/bpetite/home.htm

“NASA’s Observatorium: How Do Planes Fly?”

observe.arc.nasa.gov/nasa/exhibits/planes/planes_1a.html

“Education World: Up, Up, and Away! Aviation Activities!”

education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson236.shtml

“Grizzly Bear Info”

bcadventure.com/adventure/wilderness/animals/grizzly.htm

“Grizzly Bear Recovery” mountain-prairie.fws.gov/species/mammals/grizzly/

“Canada’s Bush Pilots”

collections.ic.gc.ca/heirloom_series/volume4/76-81.htm

“How Stuff Works” howstuffworks.com

How to Speak and Act like a Grizzly

Ever wake up feeling like a bear? For days that you do, here are ways you can act out that animal instinct:

Huff – If you are waiting to find out how you did on your math test, you might let out a series sharp, rasping breaths, showing you are tense. If you are a mama bear, this is how you might get your cub's attention.

Woof – When your brother or sister jumps out at you from around a corner saying “boo!” you can respond with a “Woof!” showing that you are startled. If you are a mama bear and you hear your cub woof, you will hurry over to see what is wrong.

Jaw-Popping – If you are quite certain a monster is crawling out from under your bed, you might make a gruff popping sound in your throat while dropping your jaw, showing you sense danger. If you are a mama bear, this is how you call your cubs close for safety.

Growl, snarl, roar – This is how you say: “Leave me alone!”

Standing on hind legs – This does not mean you are angry. If you are exploring in the woods and are not sure about what's ahead of you, this is how you get a better look and smell.

Head swinging – If your best friend has taken your bat and ball on the playground, won't give it back, and has you so mad, you might swing your head from side to side showing you are upset, but don't really want to charge.

Playing – Being a bear isn't all huffing, jaw popping and head swinging. If you are feeling playful you might roll, chase at shadows and butterflies, or slide down mountains on your backside.

A Few Words From the Author

Dear Readers,

After I'd finished writing *Flight from Big Tangle*, I didn't know there would be a sequel—Kaylee didn't tell me her plans! I never forgot her (or

Sausage), however, and after a while I realized I missed her. When I read a news story about grizzly bears in the north, I thought, hmmm. Kaylee could have quite an adventure in that part of the country.

I decided I not only needed to read as much as I could about the Nahanni River Valley region of Canada's Northwest Territories, but that I actually needed to go there—to see what Kaylee would see (and smell what Sausage would smell!). It was like nothing I could have expected. Standing above Virginia Falls, I was awed by the river's power and exuberance, and by the history scattered in the soil of this ancient land, virtually untouched by the last ice age.

I hope you enjoy sharing Kaylee's northern adventure as much as I did, that you feel what it's like to crawl through caves and climb mountains (and fly airplanes!) in this mysterious part of the world.

Happy reading!
Anita Daher