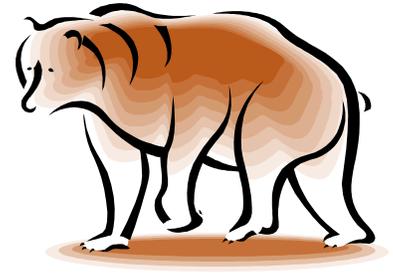


Rescue Josh McGuire

by Ben Mikaelson



Book Summary

Josh (13) and his family have had a bad year. His older brother died and his father is now drinking a lot because of his loss. One spring day Josh is out hunting with his father. His father shoots a bear, and Josh thinks he sees a small cub dash into the bushes. When he realizes his father will not acknowledge his mistake, and continues to drink, Josh goes back to the site and rescues the cub. Realizing the cub will be taken from him and probably killed, Josh takes the cub, his brother's motorbike, and family dog to hide in the wild until there is a law protecting bears.

Information about the author

Ben Mikaelson was born in La Paz, Bolivia on November 24, 1952. Ben and his family returned to the United States when he was twelve. He stated for *Something About the Author* (vol. 107, p. 144) that he was an outsider as a child in Bolivia and understands that feeling well. He now lives near Bozeman, Montana, with his wife and Buffy, the black bear.

He was inspired to write the book *Rescue Josh McGuire* after spending time with Buffy as a cub. He continues to work for restrictions on bear hunting, to outlaw spring hunting and save the many cubs that are orphaned every year.

Ben and his wife took in Buffy as a cub, since it would not be possible to return him to the wild. Buffy has affected their lives in many ways, and Ben shares some of their experiences (and photos) on a section of his home page: http://www.benmikaelsen.com/buffys_corner.htm

Visit Ben's web site for more information about his life, his writing, and Buffy:
<http://www.benmikaelsen.com/>

Other titles by Ben Mikaelson

Countdown, 1996

Petey, 1998

Red Midnight, 2002

Sparrow Hawk Red, 1993

Stranded, 1995

Touching Spirit Bear, 2004

Tree Girl, 2004

Activities:

Survival

Discuss skills and equipment needed to survive outdoors in the mountains. As a group or individually, have the readers list the skills and items they believe are most important for surviving in the wild.

Word Puzzles

Three word puzzles are available for you to use with your group of readers; they are included at the back of this packet. You are welcome to copy and distribute as many of these puzzles and as often as you like.

Distribute the clueless crossword puzzle to the students. A limited explanation of how to solve the puzzle is given on the page. You could give no explanation, half the fun is figuring out how to solve it. (The student must determine where the name or word fits in the puzzle based on the number of letters and how it intersects with the other words.)

The acrostic puzzle contains a quote from the book *Rescue Josh McGuire*. Ask the readers to answer the questions on the clue page and then transfer the letters to each one's numbered place in the puzzle. Some letters are used more than once, so their numbered spot may already be filled.

A word search puzzle is also included.

Pre-discussion ideas:

You may want to prepare your group or class for two difficult topics that are included in the book: alcoholism, and the death of a family member.

Talk about alcoholism and its potential effects on people and families.

Talk about death, the loss of a family member and its effect on the rest of the family.

Discussion questions:

What is Josh's life like at the beginning of the story? Name both positive and negative aspects of his life.

Why does Sam, his father, drink so much? What affect does the drinking have on Josh and Libby (Josh's mother)?

Is it hard to admit to mistakes? Isn't it easier to pretend it didn't happen?

Did Josh make any mistakes? If so, what were they?

What were Josh's choices? Why did he choose to run away? Was that the best choice?

Would you try what Josh did -- run away with a bear cub?

Is it ever a good idea to run away?

What would have happened to Pokey if Josh had not gone back to find him?

Is there anything you wish was different in the story? Is there anything you would add to the story?

Who was your favorite character, and why?

Additional activities and discussion questions can be found at:

Lincoln Public Schools has a list of activities and discussion questions.

[http://gifted.lps.org/discuss/msgReader\\$25?d=28&m=8&mode=topic&y=2001#rescue](http://gifted.lps.org/discuss/msgReader$25?d=28&m=8&mode=topic&y=2001#rescue)

The "Educator's Corner" on Ben Mikaelson's web page has other ideas and activities you may wish to use.

http://www.benmikaelsen.com/educators_corner_lessonplans.htm

