

Lost!

Denny and Mark had come to Sun Mountain Resort with their eighth-grade class. The first day had been great. Everyone enjoyed snowball fights and races down the slopes. The next day was very cold and no one wanted to go outside. "I'm not wasting the day inside!" Mark declared. He and Denny decided to brave the weather and try out a new ski run.

By noon the boys were bored, so they set off into the forest. At first it was great. The boys followed some wolf tracks for awhile, but when they realized they had left the path, they turned back. Before they could find the path, snow began to fall.

"This doesn't look good," Denny said. The snow seemed to fall faster, and the sun, which had been bright just a few minutes before, seemed to disappear all at once. Mark could hear fear in his friend's voice. He was scared, too. Their clothes, which had gotten wet while the boys were skiing, now offered little protection against the cold.

"We have to stay put," Denny said. "They'll figure out we're lost and come for us."

Peering up at the pine trees, Mark said, "I read a story once where someone trapped in a snowstorm made a tent from tree branches. Think it would work?"

Denny felt the snow coming down faster. "Can't hurt," he said, "but we'd better hurry."

The two worked quickly. Mark, who was taller, found a number of good-sized pine branches that were hanging low enough to pull down. Denny found a place where two tree trunks grew close together. They made a lean-to of branches and spread some of the branches on the ground underneath the shelter. Then they crawled inside.

The boys sat for what seemed like hours. It grew completely dark. The snow stopped, but an icy wind blew through the lean-to. Mark's hands and feet went numb. So did Denny's. "I don't want to die here," Mark whispered in the dark.

"We're not going to die!" Denny said. But in the back of his mind, he wasn't so sure. Before he could say anything else, he saw a flash of light. Rescuers! The boys scrambled out of their lean-to just as a crowd of people reached them.

"There you are!" Mr. Jenkins, their principal, said with relief. He grabbed the boys in a huge hug. "We saw the lean-to and thought it might be you," he said. "Are you okay?"

"We're fine," Mark said. "Half frozen, but fine!" Everyone laughed.

As the group turned to head back, Denny took one last look at their little lean-to. It was almost completely buried in the snow. Another hour and it would never have been seen.



Lost (cont.)

Reading Comprehension Questions

After reading the story, answer the questions. Circle the letter before each correct answer.

1. Denny and Mark were rescued because of their—
 - a. fire
 - b. shouting
 - c. flashlights
 - d. lean-to
2. The reason Denny and Mark built a tent of branches was—
 - a. to protect themselves from the snow.
 - b. Mark had always wanted to make one.
 - c. to have a dry place to cook their dinner.
 - d. they wanted to sleep overnight in the woods.
3. The lesson Denny and Mark probably learned was—
 - a. knowing survival skills is a good idea.
 - b. being caught in a snowstorm is not so bad.
 - c. shouting for help when you're lost is a good idea.
 - d. you can always find your way out of the woods.
4. According to this story, a good description of Denny and Mark would be—
 - a. cautious
 - b. ashamed
 - c. disobedient
 - d. determined
5. Who first spoke at the beginning of the story?
 - a. Mr. Jenkins
 - b. Mark
 - c. Denny
 - d. The boys' teacher
6. The words that show how Mark felt in the lean-to are—
 - a. . . . We have to stay put.
 - b. . . . I'm not wasting the day inside!.
 - c. . . . We're not going to die!.
 - d. . . . I don't want to die here.