

Name _____

Family Times

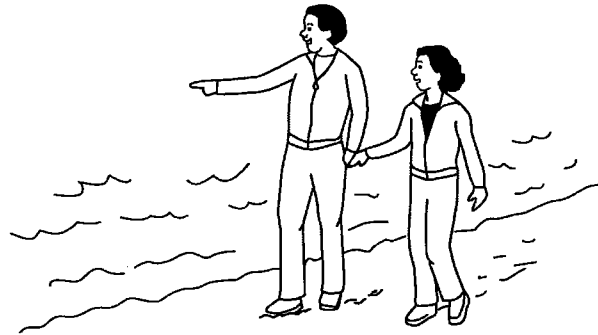
Summary

Cliff Hanger

When Axel's dog, Grits, follows some hikers up a mountain but doesn't come down with them, Axel and his dad set out to rescue Grits. But a storm is coming quickly, and they don't have much time. With the storm only a half-mile away, Axel begins climbing Cathedral Wall to get his dog. It takes courage and concentration, but he gets to the top of Monkey Ledge safely. The next challenge is in climbing down. Axel's father, Dag, watches anxiously as Axel makes his heroic descent.

Activity

Family Outings Axel and Dag enjoy mountain climbing together, and they have a chance to be heroes when they rescue Grits. Talk with your family about activities you do or have done together in the past. Have any of them allowed you to be heroes? Discuss the qualities you admire in each other.



Comprehension Skill

Character, Plot, and Theme

The **characters** in a story are the people, and sometimes the animals, in the story. The **plot** is the story line or series of events that shows the **characters** in action. A plot begins when a character has a problem or **conflict**. The problem builds up during the **rising action**, is met directly at the **climax**, and comes to an end, with the action winding down, during the **resolution**. The **theme** is the big idea of the story.

Activity

Scene Change With your family think of the plot and characters of a fable or fairy tale that you have always imagined as being from long ago. Now tell the story with the same basic plot, characters, and theme, but happening someplace that is current and familiar. For example, instead of three little pigs building houses, three little kids might build treehouses, which might get knocked over by a bully instead of a wolf.

Lesson Vocabulary

Words to Know

Knowing the meaning of these words is important to reading *Cliff Hanger*. Practice using these words.

Vocabulary Words

coil a spiral or ring formed by winding

descent an action of moving downward

foresaw predicted

rappel to go down a rock face or other steep surface by using a doubled rope coiled around the body

ridge a long, narrow hilltop

shaft a long, narrow, usually vertical hole

trekked made a slow, hard journey

void a completely empty space

Conventions

Comparative and Superlative Adjectives and Adverbs

A **comparative adjective** compares two things. A **comparative adverb** compares two actions. Add *-er* to most adjectives and adverbs to show this comparison. Examples: (adj.) *big, bigger*; (adv.) *fast, faster*. A **superlative adjective** or **adverb** compares three or more things or actions. Add *-est* to make most adjectives and adverbs superlative. Some adjectives and adverbs do not add *-er* or *-est*. Instead they pair with *more* or *most*. Others have irregular comparative and superlative forms, such as *good, well, better, best; bad, badly, worse, worst*.

Activity

Adjective Adverb Add-on Play this game with your family. Write down all the adjectives and adverbs mentioned above on cards and shuffle them. Have each player pick a card and name an appropriate noun or verb to go with the word. Say them together.

Practice Tested Spelling Words

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____