

TEXT	THE TRAIL OF THE BADGER
AUTHOR	Sidford F. Hamp
THEMES	Telling Stories (Unit 7), A Great Place to Live (Unit 8), Surprise! (Unit 10), We are Family (Unit 11), Getting There (Unit 14)
VOCABULARY	Nature, surprises, friendship.
WRITING	Students write about a friendship.
SPEAKING	Students rank items for a mountain survival activity.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Sidford F. Hamp (1855–1919) was a British playwright and novelist. Hamp was born in England but with the help of his uncle, travelled with the Hayden Geological Survey from May to November 1872, visiting Yellowstone National Park before returning to England. His family later moved to Colorado Springs for health reasons in 1877. Hamp wrote a number of books, short stories and plays, many of which, like *The Trail of the Badger*, were set in Colorado.

WARMER

Focus on the picture and ask students to say where they think this place might be, who they think lives there and whether they would like to visit this place.

ABOUT YOU

The questions are intended to focus attention on the experience of being in the wild or at least far away from urban settings. They also encourage students to think about the nature of friendship, as this is an important topic for the text and subsequent activities.

1 There are two main unexpected events in this text. One is being pursued by the cinnamon bear in the mountains and the other is Uncle Tom's suggestion that Frank leaves school to join him in Colorado.

2 **Suggested answers**

- 1 It tells us that this is a wild and potentially dangerous place, due to the animals that live there.
- 2 Ask for suggestions. Perhaps they're looking for something or maybe they just want to explore the countryside.
- 3 They have a very good relationship, more like brothers than uncle and nephew.
- 4 Because the story opens with Frank having an adventure with his friend Dick it seems likely that he doesn't mind being taken out of school to join Tom in Colorado.

VOCABULARY

3

Answers

- 1 orphan
 - 2 doubtless
 - 3 taken aback
 - 4 sound the alarm
- (not used: fall)

4

Answers

- 1 grizzly bear
- 2 fall
- 3 sound the alarm
- 4 fellow
- 5 stiffen

WRITING

5 Go through the task with the students. If you think it's useful, ask for suggestions about the things we value in a friend and create a list of useful adjectives and expressions, e.g. *loyal, kind, helpful, trustworthy, has a sense of humour*, etc. Stress that the writing can be autobiographical or completely invented.

SPEAKING

6 Make groups of five or six. This is a version of the kind of survival activity used to encourage group dynamics. It's very important that students rank the items alone before discussing them as a group. Insist that the group must agree on an order from 1 to 12. This will mean explaining and justifying the reasons for choices and should generate discussion and an exchange of ideas. In this case there is no definitive solution. As a follow-up activity, ask groups to explain their choices to the whole class and consider if different groups have made similar decisions. As you monitor the discussions, try to avoid interrupting or correcting. This will help the authenticity of the discussion. Make notes on errors or language points and go through them when the activity is finished. You might want to revise typical functional language for agreeing and disagreeing.

MIXED ABILITY

It's a good idea to assign a stronger student the role of moderator in this activity. This gives them more responsibility and also helps the discussion if they are told to try and get everyone to speak and express their ideas. The moderator should also be prepared to summarize the group's ideas for the whole class.