

PATHFINDERS

RELUCTANT READERS NOVELS

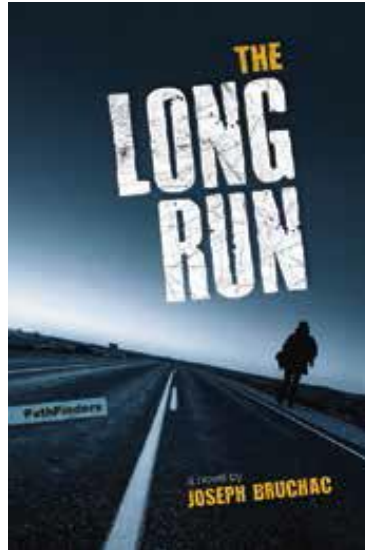
THE LONG RUN

*Award winning
author*

Joseph Bruchac

RL 2.5

INTEREST 12-16



Teacher summary:

Travis Hawk is a nice teenager in a rough situation. His mother died from meningitis when Travis was twelve years old. His father is an alcoholic, unemployed and abuses his son when he is drunk. Travis and his father are living in a homeless shelter in Seattle Washington.

One night after his father physically and verbally abuses Travis, Travis realizes he has to get away from him. Not only does he have his father to contend with, two racist young men who also live in the shelter also harass him.

Travis always dreamed about being reunited with his loving grandparents who live outside Bangor Maine. He is sure he will be welcome there so that is where he decided to go.

Travis has always been an excellent runner. He was never able to join a team since he and his dad moved around to different shelters. He decides he is going to do the only options left to him, run. He packs his meager possession in a backpack, counts his limited amount of money and takes off running to the bus station.

The story follows Travis' adventures, as he travels to Maine. He starts out on a bus, from Seattle to Spokane. He then tries hitching hiking, but is not successful. He buys another bus ticket to Missoula MT.

From Missoula to Maine, Travis manages to get rides with interesting, unusual, and regular people.

When he arrives in Maine, he finds his grandparents are living in a senior center while his grandfather's broken leg heals. He is surprised to find out his grandparents were expecting him.

When Travis's father realized his son had run away, he called his parents in Maine and told them Travis was on his way. When Travis talks to his father, his dad apologized for the abuse he gave his son. He tells Travis he has checked in to an alcohol rehab center and promises to do better.

Travis wants to believe his father, but he knows it will not be an easy road for his dad to follow. Travis is allowed to live with his grandparents.

The Long Run

Chapter discussion questions

Chapter 1 Seattle

1. Do you think Travis was impulsive when he decided: I have to leave. I have to run. Not tomorrow. Now!

Chapter 2 Reasons

1. Do you think it was a good idea when Travis placed the crake/cocaine in Evan and Manny's room?
2. What is your interpretation of the saying: The best way to fight your enemies is not by fighting.

Chapter 3 The Bus

1. Do you think it was a good plan for Travis to take a bus on the first leg of his journey?
2. Why do you think Travis opened up to Lawrence Diggs and told him about his plan to travel to his grandparents?

Chapter 4 Missoula

1. What is your opinion of dumpster diving for food. Should Travis just have used some of his money at a fast food restaurant?
2. Was Travis taking too big a risk when he scared the twins?

Chapter 5 A Good Ride

1. Have you ever seen the Northern Lights? If so, explain to your classmates why you think Travis had a lump in his throat when he saw them.
2. Travis's last thought before falling asleep at Dolly's, *There really are good people in the world*. Has someone unexpectedly helped you and what were your thoughts about the help?

Chapter 6 Good People

1. What do you think Travis was in danger when he sat in the back of the pick-up in the recliner chair as the truck traveled down the highway?
2. The brothers stopped at Devil's Tower, *Tsoai-talee* where the oldest brother told Travis this was a sacred site to their people. Do you have a sacred place?

Chapter 7 Sioux Falls

1. In this chapter Travis has a close call with a potentially dangerous situation. Do you think he dealt sensible with the situation? Would you have done something different?
2. During his journey, do you think Travis probably would have come across more danger situations than are presented in the story, or do you think his good manners and honesty saved him from more trouble?

Chapter 8 The Senator

1. Why do you think the author added this chapter about the senator?
2. Do you think the senator was a liberal or non-liberal senator?

Chapter 9 Big Rig

1. Were you surprised when the driver of big rig that picked up Travis was a woman?
2. Why do you think the author choose to have this character be a woman?
3. Why do you think Travis opened up to Mimi and told her his story?

Chapter 10 His Grandparents Cabin

1. How would you describe what Travis was feeling when he was hiking to his grandparents cabin? How many different emotions do you think he was experiencing?
2. Travis must have known something was not right when he found the outside of the cabin in disarray. Should he have been more careful when entering the house? Did you expect a black bear?

Chapter 11 Gone

1. Describe how you think Travis felt when he found no one at the cabin?
2. Travis was very happy to find his grandparents. What emotions do you think he was experiencing when he saw his father on the cell phone screen?

Geography

In *The Long Run*, Travis travels from Seattle, Washington to Bangor Maine.

Use a road map of the United States to find the follow information:

1. Find the major cities and states Travis traveled through, chart his route.
 - a. Seattle
 - b. Spokane
 - c. Missoula
 - d. Sioux Falls
 - e. Chicago
 - f. Cleveland
 - g. Albany
 - h. Boston
 - i. Portsmouth
 - j. Bangor
2. Using the cities, figure out Travis' route and calculate the total number of miles he traveled.
3. Choose five of the cities listed above and research the following information:
 - a. Population
 - b. Ethnic groups that are part of the population
 - c. Average winter and summer temperatures
 - d. Average snow fall
 - e. Terrain
 - f. Historic or popular sites in the city

Writing

Three-Part Thesis

Background:

Travis is stuck in a bad situation. He feels like his only option is to run. Using the following outline for a three-part thesis, explain Travis' decision.

1. Use the outline to write a three-part thesis. Topic: Travis had no other option but to run away.

A three-part thesis has **five** paragraphs.

Paragraph 1 Introduction

Paragraph 2 Topic #1 – abuse from his father

Paragraph 3 Topic #2 – bullying from other people in the shelter

Paragraph 4 Topic #3 – has no one to turn to but his grandparents

Paragraph 5 Closing - summary

Paragraph #1 – Introduction: The last sentence of the introductory paragraph should include the three facts, abuse from his father, bullying for boys in the shelter and his grandparents are his only hope.

Example: Because Travis was living a nightmare of abuse from his father, bullying from boys in the shelter, he had no one to turn to but his grandparents

Paragraph #2 this paragraph is ONLY about the abuse from his father. The words, abuse and father, must be in the topic (first) sentence of the paragraph.

Paragraph #3 this paragraph is ONLY the bullying Travis is getting from the boys in the shelter. The word, bullying, must be in the topic (first) sentence of the paragraph.

Paragraph #4 this paragraph is ONLY about the fact that Travis had no one to turn to but his grandparents. The word, grandparents, must be in the topic (first) sentence of the paragraph.

Paragraph #5 – Closing: You can think of this as the summary paragraph or a recap. Just be sure to stick to the three topics in your paper. DO NOT bring in another, unrelated topic.

Opinion Paper:

Using the three-part thesis format using three reasons to support your opinion.

- a. Travis was smart to run away and hitchhike to Bangor Maine.
- b. Travis took too much of a risk to run away. He should have stayed with his dad.

Creative Writing:

Take on the persona on Travis and write a travel journal he might have kept during his trip.

Interview:

You are a newspaper reporter for your local newspaper and you hear the remarkable story of a seventeen-year-old boy who hitchhiked across the county. Make a list of questions you would use in an interview with Travis.

Art:

Travis traveled through beautiful country and saw many amazing sites. Research either The Northern Lights or Devil's Tower and create a piece of art that represents them.

Drama

Use an excerpt from the book to recreate and act out a scene.

Suggestions:

Travis' reaction when his father verbally abuses him.

The boys in the shelter try to bully Travis.

Travis accepts a potentially dangerous ride from a woman.

Travis arrives at his grandparent's cabin and finds it empty.

Research project:

How many teens runaway each year?

Do kids from one ethnic group more likely to run away?

Which states have the largest percentage of runaway teens?

Are there any resources available to help kids who have run away from home?

The Long Run
Vocabulary Words

1. **foghorn**, noun - A horn for sounding warning signals in fog or darkness, used especially on ships, buoys, and coastal regions. (page 4)
2. **convenience**, noun - anything that saves or simplifies work, or saves time (page 23)
3. **traverse**, verb - to pass or move over, along, or through (page 29)
4. **Koran**, noun - the sacred text of Islam (page 32)
5. **lanky**, adjective - ungracefully thin and rawboned; bony (page 38)
6. **curfew**, noun - a regulation requiring a person to be home at a certain prescribed time (page 68)
7. **accelerate**, verb - to move or go faster; increase in speed (page 80)
8. **monopolize**, verb - to have exclusive possession of something and keep entirely to oneself (page 81)
9. **groggy**, adjective - dazed and weakened, as from lack of sleep (page 89)
10. **heritage**, noun - something that is handed down from the past, as a tradition (page 98)
11. **apparent**, adjective, easily perceived or understood (page 102)
12. **kindling**, noun - material that can be readily ignited, used in starting a fire (page 103)
13. **brochure**, noun - a pamphlet or leaflet (page 105)

14. **entitled**, verb, to give (a person or thing) a title or right to do something (page 107)
15. **dillydally**, verb - to waste time

The Long Run: Vocabulary Test

1. to pass or move over, along, or through
2. a pamphlet or leaflet
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5. to give (a person or thing) a title or right to do something
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_____ groggy

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1. In chapter 1, where are Travis and his father living?
 - a. With friends
 - b. On the streets
 - c. In a homeless shelter
 - d. On a reservation

2. Why did Mannie and Evan hate Travis?
 - a. They were jealous because Travis could run a marathon.
 - b. Travis would not do what they wanted him to do.
 - c. Travis was friendly and people liked him.
 - d. Travis was strong and could defend himself.

3. Why did Travis *not* want to talk to Lawrence Diggs?
 - a. Travis didn't want to talk to a stranger.
 - b. Travis wanted to sleep on the bus.
 - c. Travis didn't want to be remembered by anyone.
 - d. Travis was afraid that Lawrence wouldn't like Indians.

4. In Missoula, what warning did the old woman give Travis?
 - a. Watch out for the twins
 - b. Watch out for the police
 - c. Watch out for mean dogs
 - d. Watch out for drunks

5. What tribe does Travis's family belong to?
 - a. Cherokee
 - b. Iroquois
 - c. Seneca
 - d. Passamaquoddy

6. When four Indian men give Travis a ride in their pick-up truck, where does Travis sit?
 - a. On a hay bale in the truck bed
 - b. On top of a bunch of tires in the truck bed
 - c. In a recliner chair in the truck bed
 - d. Squished between two men in the back seat of the truck

7. Where does Travis tell the police sergeant he is going?
 - a. To live with his grandparents in Maine
 - b. To live with his mom in Maine
 - c. To live with his uncle Joe in Maine
 - d. To live with his best friend, Will

8. Who gives Travis a ride in a semi-truck?
 - a. The senator
 - b. Cowboy Bob
 - c. Mimi Kinnell
 - d. Wayne Earl Jones

9. What does Travis find when he finally makes it to his grandparents' house?
 - a. The house had been sold, and his grandparents no longer lived there.
 - b. A black bear was licking a sugar bowl.
 - c. The windows were boarded up.
 - d. Stray dogs were all over the front porch.

10. Where does Travis find his grandparents?
 - a. In an assisted-living residence
 - b. Back home on the reservation
 - c. Living in a new home in town
 - d. In the hospital

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