

# Amazing Survival Stories

- Stories and activities for reluctant readers and those experiencing reading difficulties.



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# Teachers' Notes

The *Amazing Survival Stories Book* was designed to provide high interest language activities. The book aims to encourage interest in reluctant readers through providing literature and activities based upon real life stories of human endurance and survival.

This book may be used in a number of ways:

- As a general library resource.
- As a home or supplementary reader.
- In small group reading circles.
- As a tool for the individual tutoring of students at educational risk.

The photocopiable activities are structured to provide comprehension, vocabulary, grammar and open ended language based tasks. There are approximately five activities designed to relate to each one of the corresponding stories.

The *Amazing Survival Stories* provide high interest topics for upper primary/lower secondary students. The vocabulary and syntax in the book is relatively simple so as not to discourage these readers. The "Words You Will Need" section at the beginning of each chapter provides some of the more difficult words within the piece. Talking through this vocabulary before reading will give students confidence in approaching the text and, in particular, these words as they encounter them.

Each topic can be extended within the classroom.

**Some possible extension ideas for *Amazing Survival Stories* are:**



## Story 1: Air Acrobats

**Continue the discussion of World War 11. Students can research and write a report on life for children in World War 11.**

The following websites may be helpful:

- ▶ <https://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/world-war-two/children-and-world-war-two/>
- ▶ <https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/growing-up-in-the-second-world-war>
- ▶ <http://www.primaryhomeworkhelp.co.uk/war/children.htm>
- ▶ <https://www.theschoolrun.com/homework-help/world-war-2>
- ▶ <https://www.mylearning.org/stories/childrens-experiences-during-ww2/487?>



## Story 2: The Ice Children

**Children can perform different scientific experiments involving ice, and record and report their results.**

Some suggested experiments can be found at the websites below:

- ▶ <https://www.sciencefun.org/kidszone/experiments/ice-fishing/>
- ▶ <https://www.sciencekids.co.nz/experiments/icecubemagic.html>
- ▶ [www.sciencekidsathome.com/science\\_fair/what\\_is\\_an\\_experiment.html](http://www.sciencekidsathome.com/science_fair/what_is_an_experiment.html) - how long does an ice cube take to melt? Change and test different variables.

# Air Acrobats



Image Source: Wikipedia Public Domain

## Words You Will Need

- during
- pilot
- bail
- air raid
- force
- mission
- exploded
- parachute
- declared
- amazingly



On the night of November 4, 1944, Joe Herman, an Australian pilot from Queensland, had an experience he would never forget. He took off from Driffield in England that evening with his crew, heading towards Germany on a bombing mission. When they flew over Germany they were nearly spotted by searchlight, but Herman was a skilful pilot and they got closer towards their target without being seen. Herman had a bad feeling, though, that something was about to go wrong and he told the rest of the crew in the plane to clip on their parachutes. Herman didn't follow his own orders as he was too busy up front.

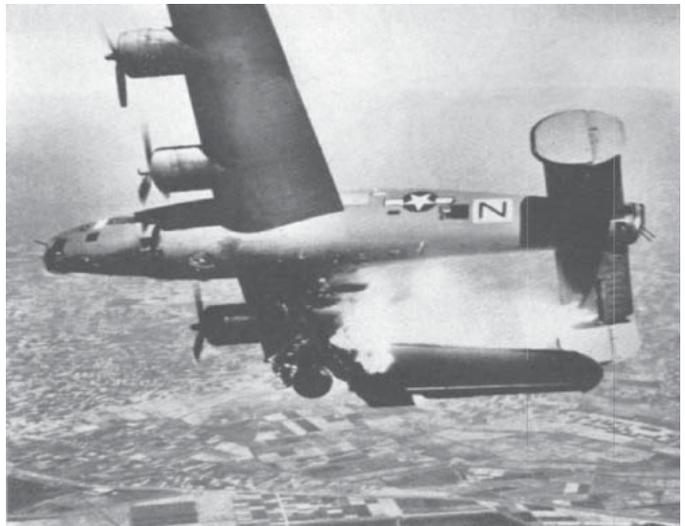


Image Source: Wikipedia Public Domain



# Food Rations

1. List your favourite five foods below:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

2. Imagine you were no longer able to eat these foods due to the food shortages caused by the war – how difficult or easy would you find this?

\_\_\_\_\_

## Think!

Choose 14 foods to ration:

- Your country is at war and food is in short supply. Many of the farmers, growers etc. have gone to fight and a lot of the foods that are being produced are being sent away to the soldiers.
- **You have the task of deciding what foods you will concentrate on producing and distributing to the city.**
- Although other foods will sometimes be available the foods you choose will make up the main diet of the people in your city. Consider the health requirements and popularity of some foods and choose what you think would be most suitable. (*Look at the Healthy Food Table.*)
- When you have finished read your list to the group and explain the reasons behind your choices.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_

**Healthy Food Table**

<b>Eat Most</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cereals, breads</li> <li>• rice, pasta</li> <li>• vegetables, legumes</li> <li>• fruit</li> </ul>
<b>Eat Some</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• milk, yoghurt, cheese</li> <li>• lean meat, fish, poultry</li> <li>• eggs, nuts</li> </ul>
<b>Eat Least</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• butter, margarine</li> <li>• fats, oils, sugar</li> </ul>

In 1986 in Utah, America, a little girl called Michelle Funk was having a picnic with her family. Michelle, who was only two and a half and her brother, who was four, were playing. They were throwing rocks into the stream and seeing how far they could go, when she lost her balance. Michelle was swept down stream and trapped under the freezing water for an amazing one hour and six minutes.



When she was finally rescued Michelle was pulled out of the water, blue with cold and clinically dead. Everybody thought there was no way that Michelle could survive. She was warmed by a machine normally used in heart surgery and an hour later Michelle was showing signs of life again. Her father was so happy when he stuck his tongue out and saw Michelle stick out her tongue back at him. From then on he knew she was going to be alright.

It took six months for Michelle to completely recover. Now an adult, Michelle knows how lucky she is to be alive and enjoys sharing her story with other people.

Michelle made the Guinness Book of World Records for the longest time submerged, surviving under water for 66 minutes.

# Survival Priorities

Survival priorities are essential in the outcome of whether or not a person survives in an extreme situation.



In a group discuss the four survival priorities above.

**1. Which is the most important for determining your survival?**

Rate your answers from most important to least important.  
(1 being the most important and 4 being the least important.)

**SURVIVAL FACTS**

- You can survive without oxygen or with major bleeding for 3 minutes.
- You can survive exposure to extreme cold or heat for 3 hours.
- You can survive without water for 3 days.
- You can survive without food for 3 weeks.

**2. Do these survival facts change your ideas? If so, how?**

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**MORE FACTS ABOUT SURVIVAL**

People have slightly different ideas about what the most important survival priority is. Providing you are not injured, shelter is generally seen as being the most important priority, as being in very cold or hot environments is hard upon your body. Fire is often seen as the next most important priority. Fire gives warmth, scares away any dangerous animals, can be used to purify water and gives us a positive feeling. Water comes before food in priority order as without it we would soon die of dehydration.

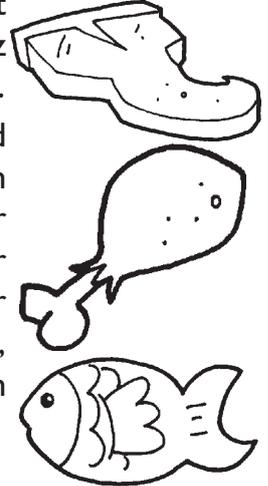
**Imagine!**

*You are going with a friend for a long hike in the bush, quite far from any town or city.*

On the back of this sheet list 10 items you think would be essential to take with you, considering what you now know and what other problems you may encounter.

# The Vegetarian Dilemma

It is quite shocking to us as readers to hear that Mawson and Mertz had to eat the dying dogs in order to survive. It was a particularly hard thing for Mertz to do as he had raised and trained the dogs and was normally a vegetarian. Different cultures have different attitudes towards food and what should and shouldn't be eaten. Some people consider it wrong to eat certain meat such as pork which is considered unclean. Others don't eat beef as they consider the cow to be a sacred animal. Some people do not eat any sort of meat or eat or use any sort of product made or taken from an animal. On the other hand, although it's not common in the Western world, dog, musk cat, snake, turtle, birds' eggs, whale and even parts of some endangered animals such as the Asian bear and the tiger are eaten in other places.



**1. Do you believe that people need to eat some sort of meat?**

Look at the statement below and circle the word that you agree with.

I am  for  against eating meat.

**2. List four reasons as to whether people should or shouldn't eat meat.**

Give examples for each reason.

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Extra: When you have finished gather together with those who have a similar opinion to you and present your answers as a debate.**

# Adrift



## Words You Will Need

- torpedo
- unbelievably
- Portuguese
- honour
- freighter
- nutrients
- colonial
- civilian



# Luxury Lifeboat

Imagine you have to spend 133 days in a life raft.

**Design a life raft you can imagine spending that much time in.**

Think about what you would like in it – you can have any design features and supplies you want that are possible in these conditions. Design your life raft so you are as comfortable as possible.

Consider:

- Comfort – *you will be sitting for a long time.*
- Shelter – *heating and cooling.*
- Food – *you will only have enough room for a small amount.*
- Tools – *what will you bring to catch your own food?*
- Entertainment – *133 days is a long time with nothing to do!*

**Draw a detailed and labelled diagram of your life raft here.**

SAMPLE

When you have finished explain the features of your life raft to someone else.