



# *The Bears on Hemlock Mountain Study Guide*

by Rebecca Gilleland

For the book by  
Alice Dalgliesh



Progeny Press

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**Bears on Hemlock Mountain Study Guide**

A Progeny Press Study Guide

by Rebecca Gilleland

Edited by Andrew Clausen.

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# Table of Contents

Note to Instructor.....	4
Synopsis .....	5
About the Author .....	6
Background Information .....	7
Before-you-read Activities .....	8
Chapters 1 & 2 .....	10
Chapters 3 & 4 .....	13
Chapters 5 & 6 .....	16
Chapters 7–10 .....	20
Mystery Words .....	28
After-you-read Activities .....	30
Suggestions for Further Reading .....	32
Answer Key .....	33

## Synopsis

Jonathan is sure there are no bears on Hemlock Mountain. When he is given the task of going over the mountain to get a large pot for his mother, he reassures himself over and over: “THERE . . . ARE . . . NO . . . BEARS . . . ON . . . HEMLOCK . . . MOUNTAIN . . . NO . . . BEARS . . . NO . . . BEARS . . . AT . . . ALL.” But Jonathan dawdles at his Aunt’s house, enjoying cookies and a nap. Suddenly awakening, he realizes it is late, and he must now return over Hemlock Mountain—in the dark! “THERE . . . ARE . . . NO . . . BEARS . . . ON . . . HEMLOCK . . . MOUNTAIN . . . NO . . . BEARS . . . NO . . . BEARS . . . AT . . . ALL,” he repeats as he walks up over the mountain. But there *are* bears, and poor Jonathan meets them! Thinking quickly, Jonathan puts the iron pot upside down on the snow and hides under it. Frightened and alone, he can do nothing but wait for them to go away. While hiding under the pot, Jonathan realizes that he is not truly alone. When rescued by his father, he is proud to finish his task of bringing the pot to his mother in spite of his harrowing experience.

## Chapters 7–10

### Vocabulary:

Look at the underlined word in each sentence and define it in your own words. Then look it up in a dictionary and compare the definitions.

1. He stood still in the snow, feeling very cross with himself.

Your definition: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. They went lumbering off into the woods.

Your definition: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*The Bears on Hemlock Mountain Study Guide*

3. "H'm," said his father. "It is not the way to do when you are sent on an errand."

Your definition: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Word Pictures:**

4. A word picture is made by using words to create a feeling or picture in your mind. They are called imagery, similes, and metaphors. A simile uses the words *like* or *as* to compare. Finish this simile from the book.

"Crack!" a branch broke in the woods. It was *as* loud *as* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Questions:**

1. When Jonathan awakens, what is the first thing he thinks of? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you ever been cross with yourself for forgetting to do something? What was it? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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*The Bears on Hemlock Mountain Study Guide*

3. Jonathan goes back for the pot and tells his Aunt the truth—that he forgot it. Do you think it was difficult for him to tell the truth? Why or why not?

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4. Read Proverbs 16:13:

Kings take pleasure in honest lips; they value a man who speaks the truth.

According to this verse, what do even kings value? Why do you think this is so?

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5. What did Jonathan feel when he saw the pot for the first time? How would you have reacted if you were Jonathan? \_\_\_\_\_

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*The Bears on Hemlock Mountain Study Guide*

6. As Jonathan walks up the mountain chanting, "THERE . . . ARE . . . NO . . . BEARS . . . ON . . . HEMLOCK . . . MOUNTAIN . . . NO . . . BEARS . . . NO . . . BEARS . . . AT . . . ALL," what does he see? What does he do? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you think it was a good idea? What else could he have done? \_\_\_\_\_

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What might you have done if you were Jonathan? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. What reminds Jonathan that he is not alone? \_\_\_\_\_

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*The Bears on Hemlock Mountain Study Guide*

At what times do you feel alone and afraid? \_\_\_\_\_

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Read Psalm 23:1–4:

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside still waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Which part of this psalm do you like the best? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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*The Bears on Hemlock Mountain Study Guide*

8. Imagine yourself under the pot. What is your reaction when you hear your father's voice? When you wonder if he hears you? Do you think this is how Jonathan felt? \_\_\_\_\_

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9. Jonathan runs into his father's arms. Why? What do his father's arms represent?

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10. When his father does not believe there were bears, how does Jonathan respond? What proof did he have? \_\_\_\_\_

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*The Bears on Hemlock Mountain Study Guide*

11. Do you think Jonathan had to tell his father the truth about why he was late? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Dig Deeper:**

12. Because Jonathan had made some mistakes he was now paying the consequences. Look up and define consequences. \_\_\_\_\_

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13. As Jonathan hides under the pot, he asks himself why he had stayed at Aunt Emma's so long, eaten cookies, and slept. When he realizes there are no answers, he stops asking. Do you think he forgave himself? Are there times when it is very hard to forgive yourself? When? Why is it so hard? \_\_\_\_\_

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*The Bears on Hemlock Mountain Study Guide*

14. Read Psalm 103:12:

[A]s far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

According to this verse, when we ask for forgiveness, how far away has God taken our sins? If God forgives us completely, should we also forgive ourselves completely? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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# Answer Key

### *Before-You-Read-Activities:*

1. Mountain: an area of the earth's surface that rises steeply, usually more than 1,000 feet above the surrounding land. Hill: an area of the earth's surface that is smaller than a mountain and usually has a rounded top. Mountains are much larger and steeper than hills.

### *Chapters 1 & 2*

#### *Vocabulary:*

Answers may vary. Accept reasonable responses.

1. He was a healthy, strong, big boy. 2. It was done until just golden and perfectly cooked. 3. It was a good thing. 4. That is what they did.

#### *Questions:*

1. She served them delicious suppers even though she wished they did not come quite so often.  
2. Romans 12:13: Share with others and be hospitable. 1 Peter 4:9: Welcome people in without complaining. Yes, she did do these things.  
3. He payed attention to what was around him and noticed and remembered details.  
4. They never scared the animals and birds, and they gave food to them. They stayed very still and very quiet. Every day they did this until the animals came to trust them. They did not throw sticks at the animals or scare the birds.  
5. We see many things constantly but don't always remember all of them. When we observe something, we study it, look closely, think and talk about it. When we observe, we usually remember it.

### *Chapters 3 & 4:*

#### *Vocabulary:*

1. b; 2. d; 3. f; 4. a; 5. c; 6. e.

#### *Questions:*

1. Jonathan's father milks the cows, feeds all the other animals, cuts wood, and does other farm work.  
2. *Stuff and nonsense* means no, it couldn't be, that's silly, or any similar answer.  
3. The phrase means to sit as still as a statue; to freeze.  
4. The phrase occurs three times in Chapter 4.  
5. He was not lonely or worried because he had a lot of company.  
6. This verse tells us that we are never completely alone.  
7. It would comfort and encourage us to remember this.

### *Chapters 5 & 6:*

#### *Vocabulary:*

1. "Jonathan lifted the brass knocker and let it fall." a hammerlike device attached to a door and used in rapping on the door.  
2. "He began to feel big and noble and brave." famous, excellent, virtuous, righteous.  
3. "'Mercy sakes, Jonathan!' said his Aunt Emma." "good grief!", or "oh my goodness!"  
4. "It was quite hard to be polite." well-behaved, refined, courteous, civil.  
5. "'Tush!' said his aunt. 'You can't tell me that you came all the way over Hemlock Mountain just for a visit?'" "Unbelievable!" "No, it couldn't be."  
6. "'Please. Thank you,' said Jonathan hoping he did not sound too eager." keenly desiring to do something, avid, anxious, looking forward to something.

#### *Questions:*

1. He chanted the refrain "There are no bears on Hemlock Mountain, no bears, no bears at all." The students' answers may vary.