



Educator Guide

# SKY JUMPERS

ESCAPE ONE DANGER.  
JUMP INTO ANOTHER. . .

Includes  
Connections to  
Common Core  
State  
Standards

PEGGY  
EDDLEMAN

# ABOUT THE BOOK



Grades 3–7

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Twelve-year-old Hope lives in White Rock, a town struggling to recover from the green bombs of World War III. The bombs destroyed almost everything that came before, so the skill that matters most in White Rock is the ability to invent so that the world can regain some of what it's lost. But Hope is terrible at inventing and would much rather sneak off to sky jump into the Bomb's Breath—the deadly band of compressed air that covers the crater the town was built in—than fail at yet another invention. When bandits discover that White Rock has invented priceless antibiotics, they invade and take everyone hostage. The town must choose whether to hand over the medicine and die from disease in the coming months, or die fighting the bandits now. Hope and her friends, Aaron and Brock, might be the only ones who can escape through the Bomb's Breath and make the dangerous trek over the snow-covered mountains to get help. For once, inventing won't help them . . . but the risk-taking that usually gets Hope into trouble just might save them all.

# SKY JUMPERS

## PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Lead students in a discussion about those products and devices they use in their daily lives that they most value. Students will most certainly list products such as cellular phones, iPods, computers, and digital tablets. Encourage students to think more critically to include items that are not as ubiquitous, such as GPS mapping (satellite technology), flash drives, and digital video recorders and services such as Netflix and Tivo. Challenge students to write a short essay about one item of technology that they would miss the most should it no longer exist. Give them time to share their writing with the class.

- Correlates to Common Core Standard: Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration: 5.1
- Correlates to Common Core Standard: Writing: Literacy. W.5.2

## QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

- This section Correlates to Common Core Standard: Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration: Literacy. 5.1, 5.1a, 5.1c, 5.1d

**COURAGE**—Does jumping into the Bomb’s Breath demonstrate Hope’s courage or her willingness to take risks . . . or both? After Hope shares her plan to get help, she thinks, “I knew there was a lot to fear. The truth was, I was more scared than I’d been in my life . . . I had to work to push all that out of my mind.” What does Hope proceed to do to keep her fear at bay? How does working for others, not only for her own family, help Hope face her fears and ultimately succeed? Reread chapters 31–36. Discuss examples from these chapters of how Hope uses decisiveness and problem solving, in addition to courage, to foil Mickelson.

**FORTITUDE/PERSEVERANCE**—On page 36, Hope thinks, “Just because it was difficult didn’t mean I was willing to give up.” What does this thought reveal about her character, given that she has failed at inventing every year since she was four years old? Hope’s inner strength is tested when her potato peeler fails to work during her demonstration. How does this failure set her on a course to realize her true strength? How does the talk that Hope’s mother give to her on p. 138 serve Hope and give her a better understanding of herself? On page 183, Hope is struggling through the snow, and reflects, “Everytime I wanted to quit, I’d focus on something in the distance. A tree. The top of a hill. A big lump of snow. And then I’d say to myself, *I can make it that far.*” How does this strategy of doing a little bit more help Hope reach her goal?

**INDIVIDUALITY**—Early in the story, Hope believes that doing tricks into the Bomb’s Breath is what makes her “special” and different. She feels “It was the one thing I was really good at.” (p. 7) Why is it important to recognize one’s personal strengths? Why, in the beginning of the story, does Hope feel that diving into the Bomb’s Breath is the only thing she is good at doing? On page 20, Hope says, “I always tried to do what everyone expected—it just hadn’t worked out as well for me as it had for everyone else.” How has trying to fulfill others’ expectations of her kept her from her goal of creating a useful invention? On page 58, Hope’s father tells her that she is a leader, and her mom agrees saying, “You find yourself in any situation and instantly know what to do. You lead others more than you realize.” Why is it important for leaders to embrace their individuality?

**COMMUNITY**—On page 43, Hope describes the Harvest Festival as “a celebration of how much a single person could contribute.” Why does inventing matter so much to the people of White Rock? Think about some of the inventions that are described in chapter 5 and discuss some of the basic machines and products that the White Rock community is so excited about, and what your life would be like should such things no longer exist. On pages 194–195, Hope observes that Brock’s mother and sister make clothing as a trade product. Discuss how the people of Browning and White Rock work as individuals for the good of the larger community. Think about members of your own community and discuss how others work to make your life easier. On page 270, Mr. Hudson tells the crowd, “We can accomplish great things when we come together. But we can’t forget the difference one person can make.” Discuss why the council decided to add Hope’s name to the Difference of One stone, even though she did not invent something of importance to the community?

## ACTIVITIES

**SOCIAL STUDIES**—In chapter 4, Hope’s history teacher, Mr. Allen, explains how in 2069 those fighting against General Shadel made a decision to move a group of scientists to an isolated location to develop a “green bomb.” Have students do a Web quest of the Manhattan Project, drawing parallels to this time in history that led to the development of the atomic bomb. For older students, challenge them to draw additional parallels between the fictional events leading up to the destruction in *Sky Jumpers*, and actual events from World War II.

In chapter 4, “Relics”, Hope’s class is looking at artifacts from the 20th and 21st centuries. The students are fascinated by a camera, a flashlight, and even a square of carpet. Create a classroom gallery of items that represent contemporary technology and products from the past century that would be considered useful to modern living. Instruct each student to write a description of their item, as if Hope and her classmates were discovering it for the first time.

- Correlates to Common Core Standard: Writing: Literacy.W.5.2e

**SCIENCE**—Ameiphus is a precious antibiotic that the people of White Rock rely on to cure them from the deadly disease Shadel’s Sickness. Like actual antibiotics, it is developed from mold. Give students time to research the development and uses of antibiotics and share their findings with the class. Students might also research common diseases, such as strep throat, that are easily cured by antibiotics.

- Correlates to Common Core Standard: Anchor Standards: Speaking and Listening: Literacy: CCRA.SL.4, CCRA.SL.5
- Correlates to Common Core Standard: Speaking and Listening: Presentation of Knowledge and Key Ideas: Literacy: SL.5.4, 5.5

Chapter 5, *Inventions Day*, describes the biggest day of the year in the town of White Rock: when every person four years or older shares his or her invention with the community. Plan and implement a school Inventions Day similar to the one described in *Sky Jumpers*. Students will devise, plan, and create an original invention and present their work to the class.

## LANGUAGE ARTS

*Sky Jumpers* contains many examples of figurative language, including simile. An example of simile from chapter 1 is: “The excitement of the jump filled my chest with a crazy humming, like dozens of miniature birds lifting me off the ground.” (p. 5)

As students read the text, bookmark examples of similes. After reading is completed, have students choose one example to illustrate. Write the example as a caption below the illustration.

- Correlates to Common Core Standards: Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details. 5.4 and Vocabulary and Language Acquisition: Literacy. L.5.5a

On page 44, the town’s master inventor Mr. Hudson asks the class to recite their motto: “Working with your strengths.” Have each student write a short personal essay about their own personal strengths. Encourage students to describe a time in their life when they used their strengths to solve a problem or accomplish a goal. Give each student time to read their essay aloud.

- Correlates to Common Core Standard: Writing: Literacy. W.5.3

## VOCABULARY

Ask students to jot down unfamiliar words and try to define them by taking by clues from the context. Such words may include: *theory* (p. 2), *momentum* (p. 4), *pressurized* (p. 5), *scoffed* (p. 6), *scrutiny* (p. 19), *blatant* (p. 20), *tyrant* (p. 31), *relics* (p. 33), *clamor* (p. 39), *sparse* (p. 76), *meandered* (p. 79), *stupor* (p. 111), *mottled* (p. 136), *immune* (p. 159), *scavenge* (p. 188), *hypothermia* (p. 191), *crevice* (p. 250), and *haggard* (p. 253).



Correlates to Common Core Standard:  
Vocabulary and Language Acquisition:  
Literacy. L.5.4

## INTERNET RESOURCES

U.S. History

[ushistory.org/us/51f.asp](http://ushistory.org/us/51f.asp)

Information about the Manhattan Project

Museum of Science and Industry

[msichicago.org/fileadmin/Activities/Games/  
simple\\_machines](http://msichicago.org/fileadmin/Activities/Games/simple_machines)

Games to learn about simple machines

Women and Children's Health Network

[cyh.com/HealthTopics/HealthTopicDetailsKids.  
aspx?p=335&np=285&id=2376](http://cyh.com/HealthTopics/HealthTopicDetailsKids.aspx?p=335&np=285&id=2376)

Information page for kids about antibiotics

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Photo: Erin Summerill

PEGGY EDDLEMAN lives at the foot of the Rocky Mountains in Utah with her husband and their three hilarious and fun kids. *Sky Jumpers* is her first novel. You can visit Peggy at [PeggyEddleman.com](http://PeggyEddleman.com).



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