

1. Read passage.
2. Annotate with CUR: Circle main idea, Underline details and unknown words, Respond in margin (T2T,T2S,T2W)
3. Answer multiple choice questions.
4. Turn in for quiz grade on Friday.

## Ski Tracks on Silver Bell

*by Jean Heyn*

Slipping from the chairlift at the top of Mt. Werner, Chip felt sure he would win. He had worked hard on his slalom turns all week, and now they were smooth and fast. After a quick run down the mountain to warm up, he'd be ready for any and all competition in the slalom race down Howelsen Hill. Winning the race would make him Junior Champ of the Steamboat Springs Ski Club.

②

"I bet I could win with only one ski," he said to his younger brother, Roger.

③

"You'll win," said Roger, "the way you've been practicing."

④

They skied along the gentle slope from the lift to the headwall above Elk Meadows. Below them, the white flank of the mountain fell away steeply. On either side of the trail stood spruce laden with quilts of sparkling white. The bare branches of aspen, velvety with frost, looked like deer antlers in early spring. There was no sound. Nothing moved in all the vast expanse of snow and forest. The brothers were alone on the mountain.

"Come on! Let's go!" Chip said. He pushed hard on his poles and took off. Roger was close behind, and they dropped rapidly, making short, tight turns.

Before they reached Elk Meadows, Chip turned off onto Silver Bell, a little-known shortcut that ran steeply down through the trees. Halfway down, he saw the tracks—odd tracks that ran off the edge of the trail into the woods, making deep marks in the soft snow. He checked his downward plunge with a quick turn, skidding to a stop.

"Look out!" Roger yelled. But he was too close. The next moment they were down in a snowy tangle of skis, legs, and poles.

"What's the big idea?" Roger said as they sorted themselves out.

"Didn't you see those tracks? They headed straight into the woods. We'd better take a look."

"You don't have time, Chip. It's still a long way down."

"Just the same, we ought to see what's at the end of those tracks."

"Not me." Roger's voice quavered. "Let's get out of here. It's spooky way out here in the woods."

"You wait, then—I'll just be a minute," Chip said. He sidestepped back to the place where the tracks left the trail. Then he slid cautiously along them.

"What is it, Chip?" Roger called.

"A man. He's unconscious, and his leg looks broken!" Chip called back, staring at the figure sprawled to one side of a tree. He stooped down and touched the man's shoulder. He didn't move.

Chip climbed back onto the trail and then slid down to Roger. "When we reach the bottom, we'll report the accident. It'll be all right."

Roger shoved off, dropping into the next hollow. Chip crouched, then straightened up again. The light had changed. A snowflake fell on his nose. "Roger!" he shouted.

Roger stopped and looked back. "What's the matter now?"

"I have to stay here, that's all. The Ski Patrol will never find those tracks if it's snowing. But tell them to hurry. Tell them halfway down Silver Bell."

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With Roger gone, Chip felt terribly alone. He began to wonder if he was missing the race. About now the crowd would be gathering on either side of Howelsen Hill. The timers and judges would be in their places on the course. The other skiers would be wound up like springs, waiting only for the timer's signal to zing through the gates.

The snow was coming down fast now, and Chip could barely see the tips of his skis. He stamped his feet to keep them warm and beat his arms about his chest. All at once he thought he heard something. Was it a muffled shout . . . or only his imagination? "Hello!" he shouted. "Anyone there?"

"Hello-o! Where are you?" came the answering cry.

"Here. Halfway down Silver Bell."

In seconds, three members of the scarlet-jacketed Ski Patrol appeared. Big Matt was in the lead, dragging the first-aid toboggan. Big Matt was not only head of the Ski Patrol but also a one-time Olympic skier and idol of every skier in Steamboat Springs.

"In there," Chip said, pointing.

"Good," said Big Matt, feeling for the downed skier's pulse. "Now, Chip, go on. The judges are trying to hold the race for you, but . . ."

Chip needed no coaxing. A jab of his poles sent him flying down the trail. The light was flat, making it hard to judge the terrain. He turned down Jack Rabbit Jumps, skiing hard and fast. The snow went by faster and faster. Suddenly, his skis flew out from under him. He fell hard. A stab of pain shot up his left leg. He lay in the snow until the pain eased a little, then he rolled onto his back, straightened his skis, and brought them down parallel to the slope. Gingerly, he pushed himself up with his poles and was off again.

At the bottom of Jack Rabbit Jumps, sun flooded the slopes. Through squinting eyes, Chip saw the slalom course stretching below him. A figure was streaking down the course. Chip gritted his teeth. Was he too late?

He skied to the top of the slalom course and slid to a stop.

"Well, Carson," the judge said, "you're just in the nick of time. Are you ready to race?"

"Yes, sir." Chip stepped into the starting position.

The judge nodded to the timer, who looked at his stopwatch and began the countdown. "Five, four, three, two, one . . . go!"

Chip zoomed down the course. His skis bit the snow as he zigzagged through the gates—ten, fifteen, twenty. There were fifty-five in all. Though his knee hurt, he thought only of winning the race.

His friends cheered as he maneuvered around a pole, cutting close but not touching. Above the others, Chip heard Roger. "Faster, Chip! Faster!"

He had lost count of the gates now. He just saw them coming at him . . . to the left, touch pole, shift weight . . . to the right. Suddenly, his injured knee buckled beneath him. He fell, tumbling over and over, taking several gates with him. Chip was disqualified.

He was taken to the clinic to have his knee strapped, then home to rest. He tried to watch TV, but he couldn't stop thinking about the race. He'd lost. He'd had the best time—and then he fell—and he'd lost.

The doorbell rang. He heard his mother in the hall, then the stamping of heavy boots. A moment later, Big Matt was standing in the doorway. Chip struggled to get up.

"Stay there," Big Matt said, walking over to Chip's chair and putting his hand on his shoulder. "How's the knee?"

"Okay," Chip said, grinning a little.

"Can you walk?"

"Sure!"

"Come on, then." Big Matt held out his hand.

Hanging onto him, Chip got to his feet. They started slowly toward the door. "Many skiers win races," Big Matt said, "but you're a cut above. I'd like to see you in my kind of work when you're older. We need people like you on the Ski Patrol."

"The Ski Patrol? Me?"

"Sure. You're a fine skier, and you have a compassionate heart. Now we're going to the hospital to see a friend of yours."

"I don't have any friends in the hospital," Chip objected.

"Sure you do. Remember the man on the mountain? His leg is badly broken, and he's suffering from exposure. But he wants to thank the boy with the big heart who rescued him on the mountainside."

- 1 Which quote from the selection supports the theme?
- A "Winning the race would make him the Junior Champ of the Steamboat Springs Ski Club."
  - B "His skis bit the snow as he zigzagged through the gates—ten, fifteen, twenty."
  - C "Though his knee hurt, he thought only of winning the race."
  - D "'You're a fine skier, and you have a compassionate heart.'"
- 2 How are the characters in this selection affected by the setting?
- A Chip becomes a stronger person because he helps a man in need during a snowstorm.
  - B Roger becomes scared and skis away by himself, leaving Chip alone in the woods.
  - C Big Matt is disappointed that Chip almost left a man alone in the woods to compete in a race.
  - D Chip crashes during the snowstorm and gives up his dream of skiing in the Olympics.
- 3 How does the conversation in paragraphs 2 and 3 impact the story's plot?
- A It foreshadows how Roger will easily win the race with no problems.
  - B It predicts that a conflict will prevent Chip from winning.
  - C It shows that Roger is jealous of Chip and will start a conflict.
  - D It demonstrates how arrogance can negatively affect anyone.

- 4 What is the effect of the author's use of foreshadowing in paragraph 4?
- A It hints that danger is approaching.
  - B It hints that happiness is in the air.
  - C It hints that a win is sure to happen.
  - D It hints that peacefulness will continue.
- 5 In paragraph 4, what does the figurative language below describe?  
"On either side of the trail stood spruce laden with quilts of sparkling white."
- A coverings used to stay warm in cold weather
  - B a white light shining through the trees in the forest
  - C a thick blanket of snow covering the trees
  - D a snowfall that has weighed down the grass
- 6 In paragraph 20, what is the effect of comparing the skiers to springs?
- A It shows that the skiers were eager and ready to ski.
  - B It shows that the skiers were wound around their skis.
  - C It shows that the skiers were bouncing up and down.
  - D It shows that the other skiers were angry that they had to wait.

- 7 Which quote from the selection shows the reason Chip nearly missed the race?
- A "Before they reached Elk Meadows, Chip turned off onto Silver Bell, a little-known shortcut."
  - B "Halfway down, he saw the tracks—odd tracks that ran off the edge of the trail into the woods."
  - C "Suddenly, his injured knee buckled beneath him. He fell, tumbling over and over."
  - D "He was taken to the clinic to have his knee strapped, then home to rest."
- 8 Based on the selection, what can be inferred about slalom skiing?
- A It is a form of racing on one ski that involves exploring little-known trails.
  - B It is a form of straight downhill racing on skis where the fastest time wins.
  - C It is a form of skiing that requires agility and speed in stopping to open and close gates.
  - D It is a form of racing on skis that involves rapid turns around carefully placed obstacles.