



Pushing the Limits of Survival

Suggested Reading and Discussion Questions

This theme explores the fundamental urge to survive and how it has manifested in society in the past and today. Issues to consider in group discussions include the ways in which we strive for the survival of the planet, of our families, and as individuals.

Down River

Will Hobbs, Fiction-Young Adult. No adults, no permit, no river map. Just some "borrowed" gear from Discovery Unlimited, the outdoor education program Jessie and her new companions have just ditched. Jessie and the others are having the time of their lives floating beneath sheer red walls, exploring unknown caves and dangerous waterfalls, and plunging through the Grand Canyon's roaring rapids. No one, including Troy, who emerges as the group's magnetic and ultimately frightening leader, can foresee the challenges and conflicts. What will be the consequences of their reckless adventure? *Goodreads.com*

- How do the different characters face the group's river journey, and the challenges they encounter?
- How does the group work together when they face danger? What is the connection between friendship and survival? Are we humans more like "lone wolves" or "herd animals" when it comes to survival, or something in between? What makes us so hardy and able to survive as a species?
- Where do you see courage show up in this book? Were you surprised by who demonstrated courage? How does the scientific idea of "fight" and "flight" fit into our idea of "courage"?

