



Camping With BUDDY

1 Camping, I find, is one of those activities that you either love or absolutely hate. I definitely love it, but I think that some members of my family are the opposite, especially after our last trip to Hidden Valley.

2 Our car was a moving sardine tin, packed tight with my sister, Beck, our little brother, Sam, and me jammed in the back. Our faithful Irish red setter, Buddy, also came for the ride. His slobbering maw dominated all the space between Mum and Dad in the front of the car. It made for a very interesting journey, as Buddy felt the need to launch into a gooey cheer whenever another car passed us by.

Dad's shirt was completely drenched by the end of the trip, and Mum was just keen to have a shower.

3 To everyone's amazement and relief, we arrived at the Hidden Valley Camping and Recreation Grounds in one piece. Mum suggested we set up camp down near the small lake, as far away from the other campers as possible, in an effort to protect them from any unwelcome doggy visits. Unfortunately, the remoteness of our site provided quite a challenge to anyone who wished to use the amenities block — especially in the middle of the night. Mum was the first, but not the last,

to miss the tent on her return and walk straight into the lake. She got no sympathy from Dad, who reminded her that she was the one who selected the spot near the water.

4 On the second day, Uncle George, Mum's unmarried brother, arrived unannounced. Weeks before he had mentioned that he might join us at Hidden Valley, but nobody took any notice because we knew he hated camping. He had regularly told us that camping was only for people who had lost their taste for civilisation. It seemed he had had a change of heart and, on a whim, had purchased one of those 'quick-assemble' two-person tents. Dad, who had supervised the setting-up of our monolithic two-room canvas mansion, offered to help George erect his little dome tent. Uncle George refused, insisting that any fool could put up a tent. After two hours of hard labour, the dome tent was up, wobbling with the uncertainty of a badly made jelly. Dad explained that it just didn't look right. George waved him away, claiming it was fine and that he was ready for a swim in the lake.

5 Almost an hour later, Beck and I bumped into George and Buddy returning from the lake. The two had become the best of friends while playing in the water, but it was now time for Uncle George to get changed into dry clothes. Unfortunately for him, Buddy did not understand that small tents were not built for large, wet dogs; it also did not help that Buddy was hopping around with dangerous excitement. Within minutes, the entire camp could hear the frustrated yells of a man fighting for his life as a crazy dog tore down his bedroom. When the stays tore out of the ground, the bracing poles gave way, turning

the tent into a collapsed pile of nylon and tangled rope. The battle to find the exit, by both man and dog, was one of the funniest things anyone had ever seen. It looked like a small parachute had become possessed by demons as the two tried to fight their way out. Once the bedlam had subsided, Uncle George graciously consented to a little help with the reconstruction of the disaster site.

6 The next morning panic swept our camp. Buddy was missing. Dad wondered if he'd gone to the other campsites begging for breakfast. Mum thought it more likely that he had set off to explore the local bushland. Sam went down to the lake to see if he had gone for an early morning dip, while Beck and I checked at the general store, just in case Buddy was pestering customers. Sadly, no matter how far or wide we searched, we could find no sign of our reckless, four-footed friend.

7 When we returned to the campsite Uncle George was only just emerging from his sleeping bag. He had no knowledge as to where Buddy was, but he promised that he'd look once he'd removed the sleep from his eyes. By lunchtime there was still no sign of Buddy, even though everyone at Hidden Valley was keeping a lookout. Jokes about falling tents and chasing cars had been silenced; concern deepened throughout our camp as everyone tried to ignore the awful thoughts about where Buddy may have actually ended up.

8 At about midnight Buddy returned to camp — with a 'friend'. It seems somewhere in the dense bushland he had stumbled across a huge lizard. The lizard, which Buddy dragged

into the campsite, was less than impressed.

9 Buddy, however, bounced with excitement. He seemed keen to show off his new friend and, having had so much fun with Uncle George already, decided to pay him a visit. Buddy carefully reversed under the loose flap and into Uncle's tent, dragging the reluctant, hissing lizard with him.

10 The screams from the tent echoed around the small valley and must have woken the whole campsite! For the second time in two days, George, with some help from Buddy, demolished his tent in a matter of moments. Grumbling obscenities, George didn't wait for breakfast; as soon as it was daylight he packed his things and threw them in his car. He ran over the remains of his dome in his

rush to leave, muttering that he never wanted to see another tent, let alone sleep in one again.

As for the rest of us, we were just happy to have our canine companion returned, safe and sound.



Questions

- 1 How many people went camping on the first day?
 - a 5
 - b 6
 - c 7
- 2 Why did they set up near the lake?
 - a to keep Buddy away from the other campers
 - b so they could swim easily
 - c to be close to the amenities
- 3 Who originally put up Uncle George's tent?
 - a Dad
 - b Uncle George and Dad
 - c Uncle George
- 4 Who thought that Buddy was out begging for breakfast?
 - a Mum
 - b Dad
 - c Uncle George
- 5 What was the last straw for Uncle George?
 - a a wet dog in his tent
 - b Buddy going missing
 - c a lizard in his tent
- 6 What word suggests that Uncle George makes quick decisions without thinking about them?
 - a whim
 - b graciously
 - c obscenities

Vocabulary

Find words in the text that match the meanings below. The word is in the section shown in brackets.

- 7 Thoroughly soaked with water (2)
- 8 To have compassion for someone (3)
- 9 Watched or oversaw something (4)
- 10 To be irresponsible and wild (6)
- 11 To pay no attention to someone (7)

Grammar

A **compound word** is made of two separate words, e.g. *afternoon*.

Make compound words from the following lists.

- | | |
|----------|------|
| 12 bed | room |
| 13 lunch | site |
| 14 camp | land |
| 15 bush | time |

Back To The Text...

- 16 Did the family know that Buddy could be a menace at the campsite before he tore George's tent down?
 - a no
 - b yes
- 17 In which part of the library would you find this text?
 - a fiction
 - b non-fiction

18 What would be a good sub-heading for section 6?

- a Buddy Goes Missing
- b Buddy Messes Up

Sequencing

Look back through the card to find what happened first. Choose **a** or **b**.

- 19 a Mum was drenched when she fell in the lake.
b Dad's shirt was completely drenched.
- 20 a George put up the tent by himself.
b George waved dad away.
- 21 a Buddy reversed into the tent.
b Buddy stumbled across a huge lizard.

Think About This

22 The illustration on the front of the card is described in

a section 7.	b section 8.
c section 9.	d section 10.

- 23 Why did Mum and Dad have Buddy in the front of the car?
 - a So he could see better and bark at other cars.
 - b They enjoyed the serenity of his company.
 - c There was no room anywhere else for him.

Challenge Option



Writing: Write an acrostic poem called **CAMPING**.