In this gripping tale of survival, 13 year-old Brian is left stranded in the Canadian wilderness after his pilot has a heart attack and their plane crashes in a lake. This excerpt describes the day after the crash.

The paragraphs are numbered to make it easier for you to refer to parts of the excerpt as you think and write.

You may mark up this passage as you read, think, and plan to answer the item on the last page.

1 They would look for him, look for the plane. His father and mother would be frantic. They would tear the world apart to find him. Brian had seen searches on the news, seen movies about lost planes. When a plane went down they mounted extensive searches and almost always they found the plane within a day or two. Pilots all filed flight plans—a detailed plan for where and when they were going to fly, with all the courses explained. They would come, they would look for him. The searchers would get government planes and cover both sides of the flight plan filed by the pilot and search until they found him.

2 Maybe even today. They might come today. This was the second day after the crash. No. Brian frowned. Was it the first day or the second day? They had gone down in the afternoon and he had spent the whole night out cold. So this was the first real day. But they could still come today. They would have started the search immediately when Brian's plane did not arrive.

3 Yeah, they would probably come today.

4 Probably come in here with amphibious planes, small bushplanes with floats that could land right here on the lake and pick him up and take him home.

5 Which home? The father home or the mother home. He stopped the thinking. It didn't matter. Either on to his dad or back to his mother. Either way he would probably be home by late night or early morning, home where he could sit down and eat a large, cheesy, juicy burger with tomatoes and double fries with ketchup and a thick chocolate shake.

6 And there came hunger.

7 Brian rubbed his stomach. The hunger had been there but something else—fear, pain—had held it down. Now, with the thought of the burger, the emptiness roared at him. He could not believe the hunger, had never felt it this way. The lake water had filled his stomach but left it hungry, and now it demanded food, screamed for food.

8 And there was, he thought, absolutely nothing to eat.

9 Nothing.

10 What did they do in the movies when they got stranded like this? Oh, yes, the hero usually found some kind of plant that he knew was good to eat and that took care of it. Just ate the plant until he was full or used some kind of cute trap to catch an animal and cook it over a slick little fire and pretty soon he had a full eight-course meal.
The trouble, Brian thought, looking around, was that all he could see was grass and brush. There was nothing obvious to eat and aside from about a million birds and the beaver, he hadn't seen animals to trap and cook, and even if he got one somehow he didn't have any matches so he couldn't have a fire....

Nothing.

It kept coming back to that. He had nothing.

Well, almost nothing. As a matter of fact, he thought, I don't know what I've got or haven't got. Maybe I should try and figure out just how I stand. It will give me something to do—keep me from thinking of food. Until they come to find me.

Brian had once had an English teacher, a guy named Perpich, who was always talking about being positive, thinking positive, staying on top of things. That's how Perpich had put it—stay positive and stay on top of things. Brian thought of him now—wondered how to stay positive and stay on top of this. All Perpich would say is that I have to get motivated. He was always telling kids to get motivated.

Brian changed position so he was sitting on his knees. He reached into his pockets and took out everything he had and laid it on the grass in front of him.

It was pitiful enough. A quarter, three dimes, a nickel, and two pennies. A fingernail clipper. A billfold with a twenty dollar bill—"In case you get stranded at the airport in some small town and have to buy food," his mother had said—and some odd pieces of paper.

And on his belt, somehow still there, the hatchet his mother had given him. He had forgotten it and now reached around and took it out and put it in the grass. There was a touch of rust already forming on the cutting edge of the blade and he rubbed it off with his thumb.

That was it.

He frowned. No, wait—if he was going to play the game, might as well play it right. Perpich would tell him to quit messing around. Get motivated. Look at all of it, Robeson.

He had on a pair of good tennis shoes, now almost dry. And socks. And jeans and underwear and a thin leather belt and a T-shirt with a windbreaker so torn it hung on him in tatters.

And a watch. He had a digital watch still on his wrist but it was broken from the crash—the little screen blank—and he took it off and almost threw it away but stopped the hand motion and lay the watch on the grass with the rest of it.

There. That was it.

No, wait. One other thing. Those were all the things he had, but he also had himself. Perpich used to drum that into them—"You are your most valuable asset. Don't forget that. You are the best thing you have."

Brian looked around again. I wish you were here, Perpich. I'm hungry and I'd trade everything I have for a hamburger.
**THE BASICS: PLANNING MY ARGUMENT ESSAY**

**Writing PROMPT:** Perpich is an important character in this excerpt despite the fact that he is not directly part of the action. Why is he important? Even though Perpich is not physically with Brian, what impact does he have on Brian at this life-changing moment? Use evidence from the text to support your response.

**Argument Claim:** Despite the fact that he is not directly a part of the action, Perpich is important during Brian's life-changing moment. 

**Reason 1 (this comes from your observations):** ________________________________________________

**Evidence for Reason 1:** _______________________________________________________________

**Explanation of Evidence 1:** ____________________________________________________________

**Reason 2 (this comes from your observations):** ________________________________________________

**Evidence for Reason 2:** _______________________________________________________________

**Explanation of Evidence 2:** ____________________________________________________________

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**THE BASICS: HOW TO STRUCTURE MY ARGUMENT ESSAY**

I think __Despite the fact that he is not directly a part of the action in Chapter five of Gary Paulsen's novel Hatchet.__

Perpich is important during Brian's life-changing moment in this chapter. One reason I argue this is because __state your first reason__. A second reason why I argue this is because __state your second reason__.

Most importantly, __Perpich is important during Brian's life-changing moment__ because __state your first reason__. For example, in the text Hatchet it states “__evidence from the text proving your first reason__.” This evidence shows/illustrates __explain this evidence in a way that shows how it is clearly connected and proves your first reason__.

Furthermore, __Perpich is important during Brian's life-changing moment__ because __state your second reason__. An excerpt from the text Hatchet that supports this is “__evidence from the text proving your second reason__.” This evidence shows/illustrates __explain this evidence in a way that shows how it is clearly connected and proves your second reason__.

In conclusion, __in chapter five of "Hatchet," Perpich is important during Brian's life-changing moment__ because __state your first reason__ and __state your second reason__.