

"I Survived a



▶ **ONLINE EXTRA**

Listen to Ben
tell his story!

**HARD-CORE
HIKER** Even after
his scary experience,
Ben still loves to go
hiking and camping.

Bear Attack"

Ben Davis, 14, lived through a terrifying experience in the mountains of Utah. This is his story of bravery. BY BEN DAVIS, AS TOLD TO ANNA STARECHESKI

At first I thought it was my dog, Mason, licking me. I felt a wet nose snuffling against my ear and turned my face into my pillow, trying to go back to sleep.

But then I remembered: I was camping. Mason was back at home.

That's when I knew I was in trouble.

VOCABULARY

backpacking: hiking while carrying your supplies on your back

dangling: hanging on loosely

eternity: a very long time that seems to be without an end

in shock: feeling nothing or feeling unreal after an injury or scary event

reattach: to connect one thing to another again

Outdoor Fun

Let's back up: For three years, I went to a sleepaway camp every summer. In 2019, my best friend Sam and I went on a **backpacking** trip run by that same camp. Our group included 11 kids and 2 counselors. We hiked and camped near Moab, Utah.

The area was beautiful. The bright-orange, flat-topped mountains glowed in the sun. I got to experience a lot of new things, like climbing in canyons. The trip was so much fun that I didn't want it to end.

On our last night, we decided to sleep under the stars instead of in our tents. The weather was perfect. We ate dinner and talked about our adventures that week. When it got dark, we put our



Ben after his surgery

sleeping bags in a line. I was on the end, next to Sam.

A few of us stayed up late talking and laughing—and being shushed by our counselors. Around 11 p.m., we fell asleep. The last thing I remember thinking was how beautiful the stars looked.

Wake-up Call

But soon, I woke up to what I thought was Mason licking me. It was still dark. For the first few moments, I was confused. Then it all became clear: I was camping, and there was a black bear biting my ear. I was too shocked to feel pain, but that didn't stop me from being terrified.

I could feel my ear **dangling** from the side of my head. The bear hadn't ripped it all the way off, but it had come close. I remembered hearing that you're supposed to lie still if a bear attacks you, so I did.

It felt like an **eternity**, but I was probably lying there for less than a minute. The bear kept pawing at me. I knew I needed to do something else.

In Shock

That's when I shook Sam awake. At first, he

was annoyed—but then I whispered what was happening. Sam whispered back that I should stay still. I already knew that wasn't working. The bear kept clawing at me and trying to get me out of my sleeping bag.

Then I felt the skin on my forehead rip open as the bear bit me again. I knew that if I didn't do something soon, I could end up dead. The bear moved down to my feet and started trying to drag me away. This was my chance to

escape. I took a deep breath and threw my sleeping bag aside as I sprinted over to a picnic table.

I started yelling, "Everybody wake up! Wake up! There's a bear!" Once everyone realized I wasn't playing a prank, we all yelled and made loud noises until the bear ran away. I was left standing on the picnic table, covered in blood.

All Better

If you've ever been hurt badly, you know what it's like to be **in shock**. At first, you don't feel the pain at all. But once you're safe, you feel everything. After the bear left, my counselors wrapped bandages around my head and drove me to the nearest hospital. That drive felt like the longest of my life.

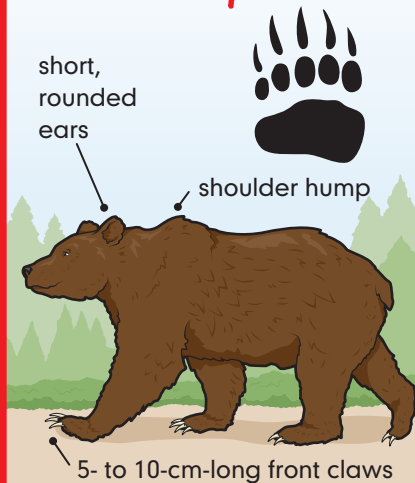
I had surgery to **reattach** my ear and fix the wound on my forehead. Now I'm fully healed. People ask me if I would go camping again. My answer is yes—I already have!

This experience has taught me that I can handle anything. It gave me the courage to do things I'm not sure about, like trying out for the school play. Now I have more confidence in everything I do—all thanks to that hungry bear. •

Bear Safety Basics

Ben played dead when a black bear was attacking him. That was a mistake. Here's how YOU can tell bears apart—and what you should do if you see one.

Grizzly Bear



If you see a grizzly bear:
Lie still, play dead.



Black Bear



If you see a black bear: Make a lot of noise and make yourself seem big.



Some grizzly bears are small, and some black bears are brown. Don't just look at color and size!

ACTION ACTIVITY

CAUSE AND EFFECT

You've just read "'I Survived a Bear Attack.'" Now it's time to do this activity.

TIP A **cause** is what makes something happen. An **effect** is what happens as a result.

WHAT TO DO: In the chart below, fill in the missing causes and effects.



PUP PALS

Ben plays with his dogs, Mason and Banjo.

CAUSE Why did something happen?	EFFECT What happened?
1. While Ben was sleeping, a bear started biting his ear.	Hint: Did Ben stay asleep?
2. Hint: When playing dead didn't work, what did Ben do to try to save himself from the bear?	The bear ran away.
3. Ben's ear and forehead were injured in the attack.	Hint: What was done to treat Ben's injuries?
4. Hint: How did surviving the bear attack make Ben feel?	Today, Ben is willing to do things he's not sure about—like trying out for the school play.

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FURTHER!
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ACTIVITIES
ONLINE**

Answers are in the Answer Key at Action Digital.