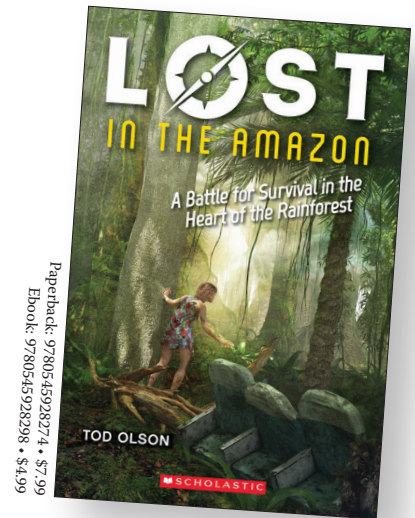
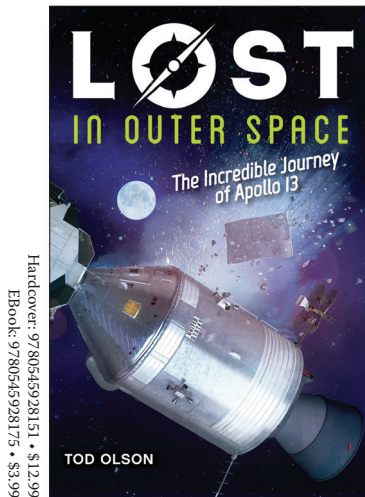
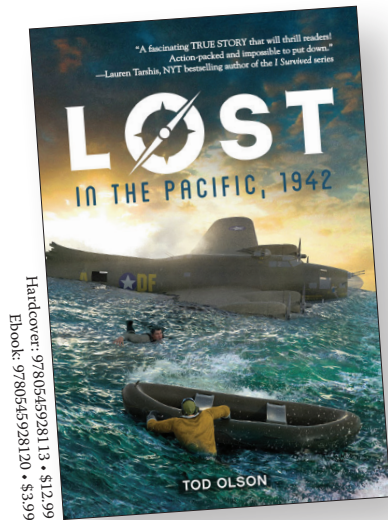


DISCUSSION GUIDE



THE LOST SERIES BY TOD OLSON

The three books in Tod Olson's riveting series bring dramatic true survival stories vividly to life for young readers.

Lost in the Pacific, 1942 tells the incredible story of a plane crash at sea during World War II. Eight men float for weeks in three tiny rafts. Will they all survive?

In *Lost in Outer Space*, three Apollo 13 astronauts float in a crippled spaceship two hundred thousand miles from home. Will they make it back to Earth alive?

Seventeen-year-old Juliane Koepcke survives a plane crash on Christmas Eve, but can she find her way to civilization alone and injured in the largest rainforest in the world? *Lost in the Amazon* details her compelling story.

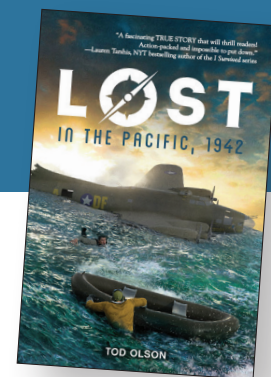
Students in grades 4–8 will find these action-packed books impossible to put down and all the more amazing because the stories are true!

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LOST IN THE PACIFIC, 1942

★ “A riveting, completely engrossing true survival story.”
—*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

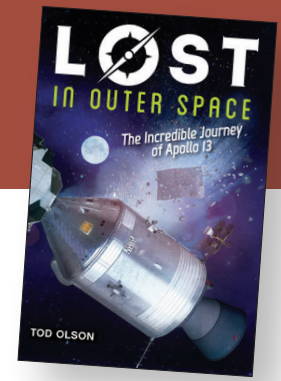


DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ▶ Reread the first page of the prologue. What emotions and expectations does the initial page of the story create in the reader? Why do you think that the author chose to begin this tale of survival with a scene well into the airmen's journey?
- ▶ A collection of photographs of the castaways follows the table of contents. The photo of Eddie Rickenbacker describes him as “the VIP.” Why was Rickenbacker so highly regarded? What other information about Rickenbacker's life outside of the military added to his VIP status?
- ▶ Franklin Roosevelt declared December 7, 1941, as a “date that will live in infamy.” Why is this date significant and how did the president's declaration alter the lives of the American people?
- ▶ Why was Rickenbacker assigned to visit the war zone in the Pacific? Why was it considered important for the Allies to keep the supply route between Australia and the United States open? Refer to the map on pages 26–27 for details.
- ▶ Captain Cherry, his crew, and the passengers began to realize that they had missed Canton Island—their destination for refueling. The reality of their miscalculation caused the airmen to scramble for ways to locate their position. What are some of the strategies the airmen used to locate land or to least notify others that the crew was lost?
- ▶ Plan B came into play when all of the crew's other strategies failed. What was Plan B and how did the airmen prepare for the drastic measure they had to take in order to survive? How did the airmen's choices and instincts shape what happened in the handful of minutes after the plane landed in the Pacific?
- ▶ Once in the three life rafts, the men faced other challenges to their survival. What did Jim Whittaker notice in the water surrounding the life rafts? What dangers accompanied Whittaker's observation?
- ▶ In the chaos surrounding the crew landing the plane in the ocean, many important items did not make it off the plane with the crew. What were the important things left behind and what items were salvaged by crew members and brought to the life rafts?
- ▶ Rickenbacker tried to seize command of the airmen stranded at sea in the life rafts. What directions and incentives did he give the men to help them all survive at sea? How did the other men react to Rickenbacker's leadership style? Do you think Rickenbacker helped the men to survive, or not?
- ▶ What conflict did the men experience on the rafts? How did their disagreements affect their survival?
- ▶ As the men drifted in the vast Pacific Ocean, they wondered if their families knew what had happened and how they were reacting to the men's disappearance. How did Rickenbacker's wife, Adelaide, and the families of the other men cope with the uncertainty of their loved ones' fate?
- ▶ The men faced severe physical challenges while stranded at sea. They were surrounded by water but dehydrated. They were surrounded by fish yet they were starving. What happened to the men's health as the days became weeks at sea? How did the men try to solve the problem of their thirst and hunger?
- ▶ Surviving a plane crash at sea and drifting for weeks without basic supplies makes for a profound experience. Each man interpreted this life-changing experience in his own way. How did each of the surviving airmen make sense of the tragedy at sea after being rescued?
- ▶ In your opinion, what are the lessons that could be learned from this tale of survival during WWII? Think beyond the strategies for survival and focus on the moral and emotional lessons that were exemplified by the men adrift in the three life rafts.

LOST IN OUTER SPACE

The Incredible Journey of Apollo 13



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ▶ The three men aboard Apollo 13 were a mix of seasoned and rookie astronauts. Discuss how the author describes the opening scene in the tiny space capsule and how the attitude between the new and veteran astronauts differed.
- ▶ How was mission commander Jim Lovell's family affected at the beginning of the mission? How did their lives change once the mission was in peril? How much information had Barbara's parents shared with her about the dangers of her father's job, both before and during the mission? Should they have told her more?
- ▶ The crew had named each of the main parts of the ship. They nicknamed the command module Odyssey, which means "a long voyage marked by changes of fortune." How did the nickname foretell what was to come for Apollo 13?
- ▶ What task was astronaut Swigert completing when Lovell uttered the now famous phrase, "Houston, we've had a problem"?
- ▶ The period of the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States greatly affected advances in space exploration. What event by the Soviet Union sparked a greater focus on the part of the United States to establish a presence in space? Why were Americans frightened by the Soviet Union's actions in space?
- ▶ Describe what happened to the crew of Grissom, Chaffee, and White on the test run of liftoff procedures in the first Apollo mission. How did the Apollo 13 astronauts cope with the very dangerous nature of their jobs?
- ▶ Early explorers relied on the stars to navigate their ships to uncharted lands. Modern-day astronauts primarily relied on computers for navigation. How did the experience of the Apollo 13 crew members resemble the travels of early explorers?
- ▶ Once the spacecraft was damaged, the crew of Apollo 13 and the experts at NASA changed the mission from a moon landing to getting the astronauts safely back to Earth. What problems did the astronauts have to solve in order to get back home alive?
- ▶ There were many challenging issues in the cramped LEM—from freezing cold temperatures to a low water supply. What was the problem with carbon dioxide and why was this issue potentially very dangerous for the astronauts?
- ▶ The Apollo 13 crew had been trained to keep emotions in check and to focus on the task at hand. Most astronauts would tell reporters that they didn't have time to be frightened while in space because they were too busy doing their job. Contrast this stoic stance with the families of the astronauts back in Houston. How was Barbara Lovell in particular coping with her dad's uncertain fate?
- ▶ As Apollo 13 rocketed back to Earth and details to ensure a safe reentry were being implemented, support for the returning astronauts came flooding in from all corners of the world. Even the Soviet Union ordered two ships to change course and to head to the splashdown site to help if needed. Given that the United States and the Soviet Union were locked in a Cold War, why do you think that the Soviet Union volunteered to help?

LOST IN THE AMAZON

A Battle for Survival in the Heart of the Rainforest



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ▶ There is always that brief moment in time before a disaster when decisions are made that can affect the outcome of the catastrophe. How does the author use foreshadowing at the beginning of *Lost in the Amazon* to entice the reader and to set the stage for the drama to come?
- ▶ Who was passenger Juliane Koepcke and how did her attitude toward flying and adventure differ in general from the other passengers on LANSA Flight 508? In particular, how was Juliane's attitude different from her mother's?
- ▶ The LANSA flight took its passengers over the Atacama Desert, the driest place on Earth, and then over the Amazon rainforest, which often saw around twenty feet of rainfall a year. Besides the climate, what are some of the other unique features of the Amazon rainforest? Refer to the map on page 15 for information.
- ▶ The Amazon was described by twentieth-century explorer Gene Savoy as having "the power to evoke both fear and wonder in man." Describe some of the early myths built on a sense of fear and wonder about the people and animals of the Amazon rainforest.
- ▶ European explorers in the Amazon often didn't fare well in rainforest expeditions, frequently dying from starvation and disease. How did indigenous people of the Amazon survive in the rainforest?
- ▶ As the LANSA flight passed over the rainforest, they encountered a fierce storm which caused the plane to shake and pitch wildly. As the storm escalated with lightning, the pilot could no longer control the aircraft and the plane crashed. Describe the miraculous way in which Juliane survived the plane's destruction and the descent to the floor of the rainforest strapped in her seat. What injuries did she sustain? What role did the sturdy liana vine play in Juliane's survival?
- ▶ What were the challenges Juliane faced in navigating through the rainforest without tools and proper clothing? What insects and animals of the rainforest posed a danger to her?
- ▶ The disappearance of the LANSA flight affected families and friends of the passengers on board. The news also piqued the interest of others outside of Peru. What was the world's response to the disaster?
- ▶ Juliane slowly made her way through the dangers of the rainforest after the crash, not knowing the fate of the others on the LANSA flight. What gruesome discovery did Juliane make as she followed the flight of several king vultures?
- ▶ How did Juliane's upbringing help her in her struggle to survive in the rainforest?
- ▶ Describe Juliane's relationship with her father. How did his influence help or hurt her after the crash?
- ▶ Like many a traveler and explorer before her, Juliane faced the challenge of starvation. What resources did Juliane have to fight off hunger? What challenges did nature present when Juliane turned to the plant life of the rainforest for food?
- ▶ Juliane's discovery of a boat and a simple shelter changed her ill-fated fortune in the forest. What happened to Juliane after stumbling upon evidence that people might be nearby and a rescue might be close at hand?
- ▶ What is your opinion of Juliane's sentiment that bravery was a word meant for people who deliberately risked their lives?
- ▶ How did the plane crash and Juliane's struggle to survive affect her choices the rest of her life? As an adult, how did she deal with the trauma she experienced as a seventeen-year-old?