**Expert Pack: Smokejumpers (HS)**

Lexile Range: 1130–1410

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| **Topic/ Subject: Smokejumpers** |
| **Text/ Resources:**  Articles   1. “Death-Wish Jobs: Smokejumpers Meld Sky Diving, Firefighting” 2. “An Epic Fire Season is Coming. These Firefighters are Ready.”   Image/ Slideshow  1. **“**How Smokejumpers prepare for wildlife season”  Other   * 1. “Firefighters Embody Skill” (Letter to Editor)   2. “Vulgar yet Valiant” (Book Review)   3. “Hell’s Fires Burn in the Northern Rockies” (Essay) |
| **Rationale and Suggested Sequence for Reading:**  This text set begins with **“**How Smokejumpers prepare for wildlife season,” vivid images and captions that capture the attention of the reader, and provide an overview of what students will be studying throughout this text set: smokejumping. Although “Death-Wish Jobs: Smokejumpers Meld Sky Diving, Firefighting” has a particularly high Lexile level, it also has the supports of detailed examples, vivid images, and clear descriptions of the exact job, role, and preparation needed for smokejumpers to be successful. After the opportunity for scholars to get a broad understanding of the career of smokejumping through the series of photographs with images in the first text of this set, students should be successful in reading about the deeper complexities of smokejumping in the second one. The third text, “An Epic Fire Season is Coming. These Firefighters are Ready,” will continue to support the understandings outlined in the previous text, but talks more about the hardships associated with the costs of fighting fires. Students will be able to make connections between texts that they have read, weigh the pros and cons of this unique profession, and begin to think critically about a question that is brought to the forefront in “Firefighters Embody Skill.” This text is a letter to the editor; though students will not have access to the article that the writer refers to in the letter, they will have the chance to think about the question, “Is smokejumping a skilled or unskilled trade, and why?” Following this critical thinking, students read a short review of a memoir of a smokejumper; the conclusion is  interesting and may challenge what they have previously assumed. Although smokejumpers work hard, they are not always upstanding gentlemen, as is explained in “Vulgar yet Valiant.” Finally, this text set is completed with a personal essay that records the challenges of other roles that work closely with smokejumpers. “Hell’s Fires Burn in the Northern Rockies” is told from the point of view of a pilot who is also exhausted from the long and arduous fire season. |
| **The Common Core Shifts for ELA/Literacy**   1. Regular practice with *complex* text and its academic language 2. Reading, writing and speaking grounded in *evidence* from text, both literary and informational 3. Building *knowledge* through content-rich nonfiction |
| **College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading Literary and/or Informational Texts**   1. *Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it*; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text. 2. *Determine central ideas or themes of a text* and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas. 3. *Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently* |
| **Annotated Bibliography**  **1290L “How Smokejumpers prepare for wildlife season”**  Author: Matt Mills McKnight  Genre: Photographs with captions  Length: 13 images and captions  Synopsis: The job of a smokejumper is a dangerous one, but these photographs of the profession helps readers to understand that people do not go into this field with a death-wish; rather they work hard and train to be as safe as possible while fighting fires from the earth and sky.  Citation:McKnight, M. M. (Jan. 21, 2016). “How Smokejumpers prepare for wildlife season.”Retrieved on Dec. 14, 2016 from <http://www.hcn.org/articles/how-smokejumpers-prepare-for-wildlfire-season>. High Country News. United States.  Recommended Student Activities:Rolling Knowledge, Fabulous Five, Picture of Knowledge  Note: *this text is also used in the other text set for ES/MS grades referring to smokejumpers.*  **1400L** “**Death-Wish Jobs: Smokejumpers Meld Sky Diving, Firefighting”**  Author: Matthew Shechmeister  Genre: Nonfiction Article  Length: 16 pages  Synopsis: This article describes what the dangers a smokejumper may go through. It mentions the  difficult training they go through along with why some people are not impressed by their work.  Citation: Shechmeister, M. (March 22, 2010). “Death-Wish Jobs: Smokejumpers Meld Sky Diving, Firefighting.”Retrieved Dec. 14, 2016 from <https://www.wired.com/2010/09/smokejumpers/>. WIRED.com. Recommended Student Activities: Rolling Knowledge, Fabulous Five, Quiz Maker, Wonderings **1130L** **An Epic Fire Season is Coming. These Firefighters are Ready**.  Author: Danielle Venton  Genre: Nonfiction Article  Length: 8 pages  Synopsis: The work of wildfire fighters, including smokejumpers is getting more challenging; there are not enough funds, and more fires than ever. Smokejumpers must be experts at many things, and be prepared to hold one of the hardest and most dangerous jobs around. Smokejumpers drop with enough food and water for three days. They are campers, first aid experts, and engineers.  Citation: Venton, D. (June 2, 2015). “An Epic Fire Season is Coming. These Firefighters are Ready.” Retrieved December 15, 2016 from <https://www.wired.com/2015/06/fire-season-prep/>. WIRED.com.  Recommended Student Activities: Rolling Knowledge, Fabulous Five, Wonderings  **1370L “Firefighters Embody Skill”**  Author: Brian Hensley  Genre: Letter to the Editor  Length: 1 page  Synopsis: In this brief letter to the editor, the writer urges the author to rethink a statement that claims that firefighters are “unskilled.”  Citation: Hensley, B. (Dec. 8, 1998). “Firefighters Embody Skill.”Retrieved on Dec. 14, 2016 from <http://www.hcn.org/issues/120/3839/print_view> Letter to the Editor. High Country News. United States.  Recommended Student Activities: Rolling Knowledge, Fabulous Five, Wonderings  **1410L “Vulgar yet Valiant”**  Author: Matt Jenkins  Genre: Book Summary/ Review  Length: 1 page  Synopsis: Although most people have an idealized view of smokejumping as a profession, a memoir written by a 27-year veteran in the field exposes the crass and harsh nature of the men that are willing to do this grueling work.  Link to text: <http://www.hcn.org/issues/182/5906/print_view>  Recommended Student Activities: Rolling Knowledge, Fabulous Five, A Picture of Knowledge  **1360L “Hell’s Fires Burn in the Northern Rockies”**  Author: Wendy Beye  Genre: Essay  Length: 3 pages  Synopsis: A fire-spotter, someone who flies in planes to help firefighters best come up with a strategy to combat a fire, explains her exhaustion and the hard work of all of her fellow fire-fighters as they combat a particularly challenging fire season.  Citation: Beye, W. (Sept. 29, 2003). “Hell’s Fires Burn in the Northern Rockies.” Retrieved on Dec. 14, 2016 from <http://www.hcn.org/issues/259/14283/print_view>. High Country News. United States.  Recommended Student Activities: Rolling Knowledge, Fabulous Five, Quiz Maker, A Picture of Knowledge |

**Supports for Struggling Students**

By design, the **gradation of complexity** within each Expert Pack is a technique that provides struggling readers the opportunity to read more complex texts. Listed below are other measures of support that can be used when necessary.

* Provide a brief **student-friendly glossary** of some of the academic vocabulary (tier 2) and domain vocabulary (tier 3) essential to understanding the text
* Download the Wordsmyth widget to classroom computers/tablets for students to access student-friendly definitions for unknown words: <http://www.wordsmyth.net/?mode=widget>
* Provide brief **student-friendly explanations** of essential background knowledge not easily learned from the text
* Include **pictures or videos** related to the topic within and in addition to the set of resources in the pack
* Select a small number of texts to **read aloud** with some discussion about vocabulary work and background knowledge
* Provide **audio recordings** of the texts being read by a strong reader (teacher, parent, etc.)
* **Chunk the text** and provide brief questions for each chunk of text to be answered *before* students go on to the next chunk of text
* Pre-reading activities that focus on the **structure and graphic elements** of the text
* Provide **volunteer helpers** from the school community during independent reading time
* Use Expert Packs as the **resources for Guided Reading** with a small group of students

Why Text Sets Support English Language Learners

Those acquiring English as a second language have to learn many words in English to catch up with their English-only peers. Vocabulary builds at a much quicker pace when reading a set of connected texts. Text sets are an adaptable resource perfect for building knowledge and vocabulary. Student use of text sets can vary in terms of independence or teacher supports based on the individual needs of the students in the room. Activities found within the text set resources reflect several best practices for English Language Learner instruction including:

* Providing brief, engaging texts that provide a high volume of reading on a topic.
* Providing web based resources and/or videos that are tied to the content of the texts students are reading.
* Providing opportunities for students to learn new vocabulary through the use of student-friendly definitions in resource-specific glossaries.
* Allowing for options to reinforce newly learned vocabulary and/or content through graphic organizers.
* Providing opportunities for students to reinforce new vocabulary through multi-modal activities including written work, group discussion, viewing visual content, and reading texts that feature the vocabulary.

Teachers of ELLs may use the protocols on the following pages to provide additional support to students who are struggling to access the content within text sets because they are new to English.

ELL Text Set Protocol Grades 3-12

The goal of text sets is to help students build knowledge through a volume of independent reading, and it is important that educators provide scaffolds to allow English Language Learners to be successful in engaging meaningfully with the texts, even as students are still developing English language skills. The protocol below can be used for teaching with text set resources as a full class. Students can also be trained on the protocol so that they can utilize text sets in small groups or partnerships as a resource for independent or reciprocal reading and study.

Please note that this protocol includes options for teachers. Individual decisions should be made considering the needs of the students and the demands of the content, keeping in mind that the goal of each scaffold is to allow students to meaningfully access the text and move toward independent, knowledge-building reading.

**Step one: Build knowledge and vocabulary.**

Introduce students to the overall topic/content of the text set, including knowledge demands needed to engage in the content, and domain-specific vocabulary necessary for comprehension. This should be done prior to engaging with the texts themselves; time allotted to this activity should reflect student needs (anywhere from 5 minutes prior to reading, to a full day’s lesson is appropriate).

*Options for this step include:*

* Engage students in reading and discussing auxiliary texts (of lesser complexity) and resources (illustrations, photographs, video clips) on the topic of the text set.
* Pre-teach a few key content-specific terms prior to students engaging with a text set. (Ideas for text-focused vocabulary instruction can be found [here](https://achievethecore.org/content/upload/Selecting%20and%20Using%20Academic%20Vocabulary%20in%20Instruction.pdf).)
* Provide the student-friendly glossary included in the text set prior to reading each text.
* When possible, allow students to read texts in their home language about the topic under study.

**Step two: Read text orally.**

Focusing on one resource at a time, allow students to listen to a fluent read of the resource, while following along with their own copy of the text.

*Options for this step include:*

* Have a fluent reader model the first read of a text or resource.
* Have students engage in a buddy/partner read.
* Use recordings of the text to provide additional opportunities to hear expert reading.

**Step three: Engage in group discussion about the content.**

Allow students time in partnerships or small groups to discuss the content of the resource.

*Options for this step include:*

* + Allow for discussion/conversation (in the students’ home language if possible) with a small group of students reading the same text set prior to writing or provide heterogeneous language groupings to talk about content and discuss what students are learning.
  + Have students refer to the student-friendly glossary included with each text set to identify meanings for new vocabulary necessary for comprehension.

**Step four: Write about what was read.**

*Options for this step include:*

* Use the “Rolling Knowledge Journal” and/or “Rolling Vocabulary Journal” as a shared writing routine/ graphic organizer to help to scaffold the writing process and capture student knowledge over time.
* Provide students with several supports to help students engage in writing/drawing about what they read:
  + Use mentor texts about which students can pattern their writing.
  + Allow them to write collaboratively.
  + Show students visual resources as prompts, etc.
  + Provide language supports such as strategically chosen sentence starters.

**Repeat steps one through four with each resource in the text set as appropriate.**

**Expert Pack: Smokejumpers**

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| **Learning Worth Remembering**  **Cumulative Activities –** The following activities should be completed and updated after reading each resource in the set. The purpose of these activities is to capture knowledge building from one resource to the next, and to provide a holistic snapshot of central ideas of the content covered in the expert pack. *It is recommended that students are* ***required*** *to complete one of the Cumulative Activities (Rolling Knowledge Journal or Rolling Vocabulary) for this Expert Pack.* |

**1. Rolling Knowledge Journal**

* Read each selection in the set, one at a time.
* After you read *each* resource, stop and think what the big learning was. What did you learn that was new *and important* about the topic from *this* resource? Write or list what you learned from the text.
* Then write or list how this new resource added to what you learned from the last resource(s).

**Sample Response:**

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| **Title** | **Write or List** | |
| **New and important learning about the topic** | **How does this resource add to what I learned already?** |
| “How Smokejumpers prepare for Wildlife Season” | The images make a vivid argument that smokejumping is challenging, dangerous, and rewarding. Some jobs are less-than-glamourous, like doing the laundry, while others, like parachuting seem ideal. |  |
| “Death-Wish Jobs: Smokejumpers Meld Sky Diving, Firefighting” | People that become smokejumpers are not just adventure seekers or people who are not concerned about their life; the hard work and dedication it takes to train for this job, and the dangers that are required to perform in this job mean that people that do it have to love fighting fires and believe in what they are doing. | In addition to fighting fires and knowing how to parachute, people that become smokejumpers must go through a training that prepares them to break bones, be stuck in the wilderness, and perhaps most importantly they need to be able to form a comradery with the other smokejumpers and trust them. They need to be engineers and medics on the ground and support one another. |
| **“**An Epic Fire Season is Coming. These Firefighters are Ready.” | There are more and more forest fires each year; scientists believe that this is due to global warming and deforestation. Although some measures have been proposed through Congress to help reduce the numbers, smokejumpers need to continue to prepare for the worst. | The glamorous side of being a smokejumper ends as soon as they get on the scene of a real wildfire; and they need to be prepared because more wildfires mean more time in dangerous situations, and more opportunities to get seriously injured. |
| **“**Firefighters Embody Skill” | Not everyone thinks of firefighting as a “skilled” job, but one reader responded to a newspaper to argue that smokejumping is particularly challenging and needs lots of training. | Although the profession sounds cool, and many people like to learn about it, it might deserve more respect; it seems like a lot of hard work, and some people are saying that it is unskilled work that pays a lot of money. |
| “Vulgar yet Valiant” | Although we can learn about the hardships and conditions of smokejumpers and their valiant attempts to save people and homes from wildfires, it is rare to hear the reality of these (mostly) men that work in this profession. They are often vulgar and crass, and they need that hard edge to be able to fight fires in this capacity. | Perhaps some of the reason that people might think of smokejumpers as unskilled is because they know about their vulgar and crass language and attitudes. If smokejumpers are people that you “can’t trust with your daughters” but you have to be able to trust them with your life and home. This does bring up some unwarranted questions about what skills they have to do their job as firefighters. |
| Hell’s Fires Burn in the Northern Rockies (Essay) | A fire-spotter, someone who flies in planes to help firefighters best come up with a strategy to combat a fire, explains her exhaustion and the hard work of all of her fellow fire-fighters as they combat a particularly challenging fire season. | Fighting wildfires is hard not just for smokejumpers, but for the rest of the people on the ground (like hotshots) and in the air (like this fire spotter). The work is exhausting and dangerous, and regardless, it should be acknowledged that it is skilled work that not just anyone could accomplish. |

**2. Rolling Vocabulary: “Fabulous Five”**

* Read each resource then determine the (up to) 5 words from each text that most exemplify the central idea of the text.
* Next use your 5 words to write about the most important idea of the text. You should have as many sentences as you do words.
* Continue this activity with EACH selection in the Expert Pack.
* After reading all the selections in the Expert Pack, go back and review your words.
* Now select the “Fabulous Five” words from ALL the word lists.
* Use the “Fabulous Five” words to summarize the most important learning from this Expert Pack

**Sample Response**

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| **Title:** | **Five Vocabulary Words & Sentences** |
| “How Smokejumpers prepare for Wildlife Season” | Words: mechanized pulley, simulator, live jump, harsh, parachute canopy   1. Simulators are used to prepare smokejumpers for what they will do in their day-today work. 2. After practicing, smokejumpers are ready for live jumps when there’s a fire to put out. 3. Smokejumpers practice what it might really be like before they are put into the harsh conditions of an actual forest fire. 4. One way smokejumpers train in simulators is by using a mechanized pulley; this device lets them feel like they are actually jumping out of a plane and hitting the ground. 5. A parachute canopy is the fabric at the top of a parachute that helps break your fall when you drop to the ground. |
| **“**Death-Wish Jobs: Smokejumpers Meld Sky Diving, Firefighting” | Words: exhaustion, igniting, deployed, pivot, rivalries  1. Fighting fires is exhausting work, but all fire-workers need to be deployed to combat some of the wildfires that are breaking out in the west. 2. Wildfires are igniting at a faster pace than in past years; many think this is because of global warming. 3. As a smokejumper, you may be deployed to different areas to help put out fires. 4. To be a strong smokejumper, you need to be able to pivot, or maneuver quickly to be able to land safely without breaking any bones. 5. On a team of smokejumpers there can be no rivalries; everyone must work together and support each other to ensure the safety of the team. |
| **“**An Epic Fire Season is Coming. These Firefighters are Ready.” | Words:flame retardant, self-sufficient, suppression, elite, comradery.   1. Flame retardant gear for a smokejumper needs to be specially made for the profession to protect them from wildfires. 2. Smokejumpers must learn to be self-sufficient because they will not always have other people near them when they are deployed into a wildfire. 3. They must also have a strong comradery with their fellow-smokejumpers to work better as a team. 4. It takes an elite and highly trained group of smokejumpers and other firefighters to work in this profession. 5. Their main goal is to suppress a wildfire that is out of control. |
| **“**Firefighters Embody Skill” | Words:economist, unskilled labor, condescending, attest, competence   1. The writer used the fact that the article was written by an economist, someone who works with money, not fires, to discredit smokejumpers. 2. Smokejumpers are highly trained and not unskilled labor. 3. It feels condescending when someone judges your work without understanding what it takes to do the job. 4. Only someone who has been through the job of fighting a wildfire can attest to the skill and competence it takes to be a smokejumper. 5. This job is for someone with a lot of competence since it is not an easy job to do. |
| **“**Vulgar yet Valiant” | Words:hectic, hazards, irreverent, uncouth, crass   1. Smokejumpers need to expect that their work will be hectic, or unpredictable and chaotic. 2. Hazards for a smokejumper go beyond just wildfires, they also have to be prepared to land hard after parachuting from great distances. 3. Although the role of a smokejumper needs to be appreciated, some smokejumpers are irreverent to niceties. 4. Occasionally you will hear smokejumpers use crass or inappropriate language. 5. The language that can be heard on a wildfire by the smokejumpers could be called uncouth; it is not appropriate or acceptable. |
| **“**Hell’s Fires Burn in the Northern Rockies” | Words**:**  commandeered, ferocity, incinerated, depleted, suppression equipment   1. All the firefighters in the state, and even from other states needed to be commandeered to put out a wildfire. 2. Some fires burn uncontrollably and with ferocity. 3. The entire forest was incinerated because of the wildfire. 4. The resources needed to fight wildfires are being depleted quickly because there are more fires, but no additional funding. 5. Suppression equipment is only part of what you need to fight a fire; you also need skill, physical ability, and exhaustingly hard work. |

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| **Fabulous Five** | Words: exhaustion, rivalries, ferocity, incinerated, comradery  After putting out an uncontrollable fire, smokejumpers can find themselves tired to the point of **exhaustion**. Some fires can be with such **ferocity** that once the fire is put out everything in their path can be completely **incinerated**. It is times like those that smokejumpers need to practice **comradery** in order to help each other get through those tough times and put aside any **rivalries** between them. |

**Student Copy**

**1. Rolling Knowledge Journal**

* Read each selection in the set, one at a time.
* After you read *each* resource, stop and think what the big learning was. What did you learn that was new *and important* about the topic from *this* resource? Write or list what you learned from the text.
* Then write or list how this new resource added to what you learned from the last resource(s).

**Sample Response**

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| **Title** | **Write or List** | |
| **New and important learning about the topic** | **How does this resource add to what I learned already?** |
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**2. Rolling Vocabulary: “Sensational Six”**

* Read each resource then determine the 6 words from each text that most exemplify the central idea of the text.
* Next use your 6 words to write about the most important idea of the text. You should have as many sentences as you do words.
* Continue this activity with EACH selection in the Expert Pack.
* After reading all the selections in the Expert Pack, go back and review your words.
* Now select the “Sensational Six” words from ALL the word lists.
* Use the “Sensational Six” words to summarize the most important learning from this Expert Pack.

**Sample Response**

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| **Title:** | **Six Vocabulary Words & Sentences** |
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| **Sensational Six** | Words: |

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| **Learning Worth Remembering**  **Singular Activities** – the following activities can be assigned for each resource in the set. The purpose of these activities is to check for understanding, capture knowledge gained, and provide variety of ways for students to interact with each individual resource. Students may complete some or none of the suggested singular activities for each text. Singular activities should be assigned at the discretion of the teacher. |

**1. Quiz Maker –** recommended for:

“Death-Wish Jobs: Smokejumpers Meld Sky Diving, Firefighting”

“Hell’s Fires Burn in the Northern Rockies”

* Make a list of questions that would make sure that another student understood the information.
* Your classmates should be able to find the answer to the question from the resource.
* Include answers for each question.
* Include where you can find the answer in the resource.

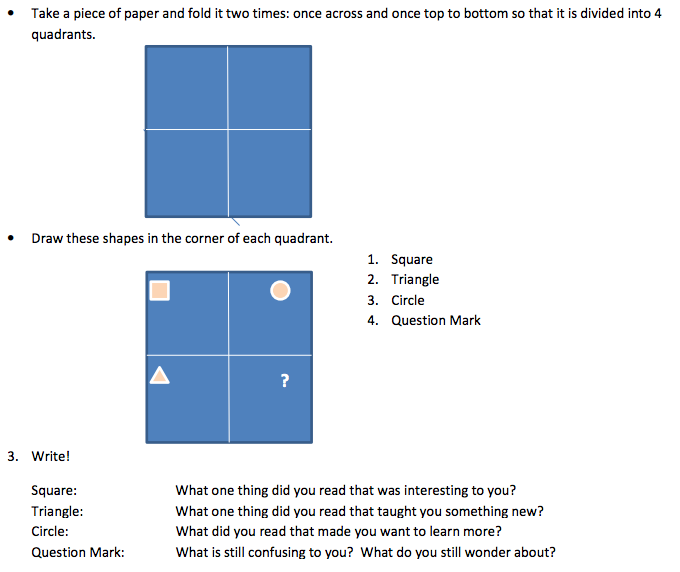
|  |  |
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| **Question** | **Answer** |
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| 2. |  |
| 3. |  |
| 4. |  |

**2. A Picture of Knowledge** – recommended for:

**“**How Smokejumpers prepare for wildlife season”

**“**Vulgar yet Valiant”

**“**Hell’s Fires Burn in the Northern Rockies”

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**3. Wonderings –** Recommended for:

“Death-Wish Jobs: Smokejumpers Meld Sky Diving, Firefighting”

“An Epic Fire Season is Coming. These Firefighters are Ready.”

**“**Firefighters Embody Skill”

On the left, track things you don’t understand from the article as you read. On the right, list some things you still wonder about (or wonder now) about this topic.

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| I’m a little confused about: | This made me wonder: |
| On the left, track things you don’t understand from the article.  **I am confused about or do not understand….** | On the right side, list some things you still wonder (or wonder now) about this topic.  **I wonder or would like to learn more about….** |

**Expert Pack: Smokejumpers**

Expert Pack Glossary

**“How Smokejumpers prepare for wildlife season”**

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| *Word* | *Student-Friendly Definition* |
| simulator | A machine that is used to “simulate” or create a similar, but controlled experience that resembles the real thing. |
| live jump | An actual jump out of an airplane with a parachute; unlike the simulated, or practice jumps that happen to train for smokejumping |
| harsh | Unpleasantly rough or jarring to the senses |
| parachute canopy | The large cloth portion of the parachute that is attached to cords, and ultimately the jumper. The cloth (canopy) catches air to slow the descent of a smokejumper and allow for a slowed and safe landing. |

**“Death-Wish Jobs: Smokejumpers Meld Sky Diving, Firefighting”**

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| *Word* | *Student-Friendly Definition* |
| incinerate | To be destroyed by burning |
| igniting | Catching fire or to cause to catch fire |
| retardant | A fabric that is not susceptible to fire; something that prevents or inhibits the outbreak of fire |
| “The Mutilator” | The nickname for a simulator that is used by smokejumpers to train to learn to jump from an airplane safely. This nickname describes how challenging and harsh the simulation can be for rookie smokejumpers. |
| “shake ‘n bake” | This is a term used by some smokejumpers to talk about the flame-retardant blankets that are given to firefighters. The nickname describes the concern of smokejumpers that if they were to use this device to protect themselves from a wildfire, they would “bake,” or be incinerated. |

**“An Epic Fire Season is Coming. These Firefighters are Ready.”**

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| *Word* | *Student-Friendly Definition* |
| elite | A select part of a group that is superior to the rest |
| femur | The bone that makes up the upper thigh; the longest bone in the body |
| pedal pulse | This term refers to a specific place on the ankle where smokejumpers are trained to check for a pulse |
| self-sufficient | Needing to outside help to meet your basic needs and survive on your own |
| comradery | The spirit of friendship and community in a group |

**“Firefighters Embody Skill”**

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| *Word* | *Student-Friendly Definition* |
| unskilled labor | A segment of the workforce associated with limited skills |
| condescending | Looking down on someone or speaking about them with a sarcastic tone |
| attest | To prove or declare to be true |
| competence | Qualified or well prepared to do something |

**“Vulgar yet Valiant”**

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| *Word* | *Student-Friendly Definition* |
| high-adrenaline | Adrenaline is a hormone that's released in response to stressful situations. Many people report that they have more energy and feel less pain when their adrenaline is pumping, or they have high adrenaline. |
| edging-out | To push someone away or discourage someone from doing something |
| vulgar | To be unrefined or unsophisticated, usually also using inappropriate language freely |
| valiant | Refers to a hero or describes a determined effort |

**“Hell’s Fires Burn in the Northern Rockies”**

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| *Word* | *Student-Friendly Definition* |
| once-verdant slopes | Verdant means that something is green with plant life and foliage. Once-verdant means that it no longer is green, while slopes refer to hills or mountains. |
| depleted | Something that's been used up |

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