

## WAS IT WORTH IT?

By Chris Moore

Dan was a handsome senior at his high school. There was one thing that Dan liked more than girls and that was skiing. If you wanted to find Dan during the ski season, he would be up on the slopes daily. His goal was to become the best "hot dogger" ever. To reach this goal, he practiced continually.

After graduation, Dan had the opportunity to go back East to teach "hot dogging" at one of the famous ski resorts. This was the opportunity he had been waiting for all of his life. He weighed the pros and cons, but because his mind was already set to go, the cons lost.

The East was an exciting place for Dan. By then, Dan had the usual skier's tan and you know what that does to a girl! Dan was immediately a hit at the resort. Why not? He was young, handsome and very daring.

Dan had to keep up his image, so the stunts that he would try on the slopes became more daring and more risky. One day, as Dan was skiing in his usual devil-may-care manner, he somehow miscalculated one of his jumps and landed in such a way that it broke his back.

For months, Dan lay in a hospital bed in pain while the doctors hoped that they could spare his life. After many operations and much financial burden, the doctors stated that Dan would live but would be paralyzed for life. He would not be able to move from the waist down.

Dan was devastated and sank into a deep depression. He had to readjust his whole life. His home had to be reconstructed to suit his wheelchair and needs. He would need help dressing, getting out of the wheelchair, even going to the bathroom, showering, etc. This was most humiliating for Dan who always prided himself on being independent. His social life came to an abrupt halt as Dan couldn't drive a car either. He was alone and lonely.

Dan pulled through this depressive period. He pursued another hobby that he always had an interest in. It wasn't exactly what Dan wanted out of life, but it was something that he could do.

Dan often thinks about the accident and has decided that the risk of "hot dogging" was one that he had to take. Someone once told him, "If you don't stick your neck out, you'll never get ahead in life!" Was it worth it?

(Based on a true story.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**WAS IT WORTH IT?**

1. What category of risk is hot dogging? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you think Dan made the right decision? \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

3. In what part of the story did Dan use poor judgment? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. If you wanted to become a "hot dogger", how could you lessen the risk to your health? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you agree with the quote at the end of the story? \_\_\_\_\_

Why? or Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

6. List some other risk-taking behaviors that teens sometimes become involved in and what some of the consequences might be:

RISK-TAKING BEHAVIORS

POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES

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7. Put a Yes or No after each behavior to show whether it is worth the risk or not.