

**Info gaps, Integrated Skills**



**Desperate Decision**

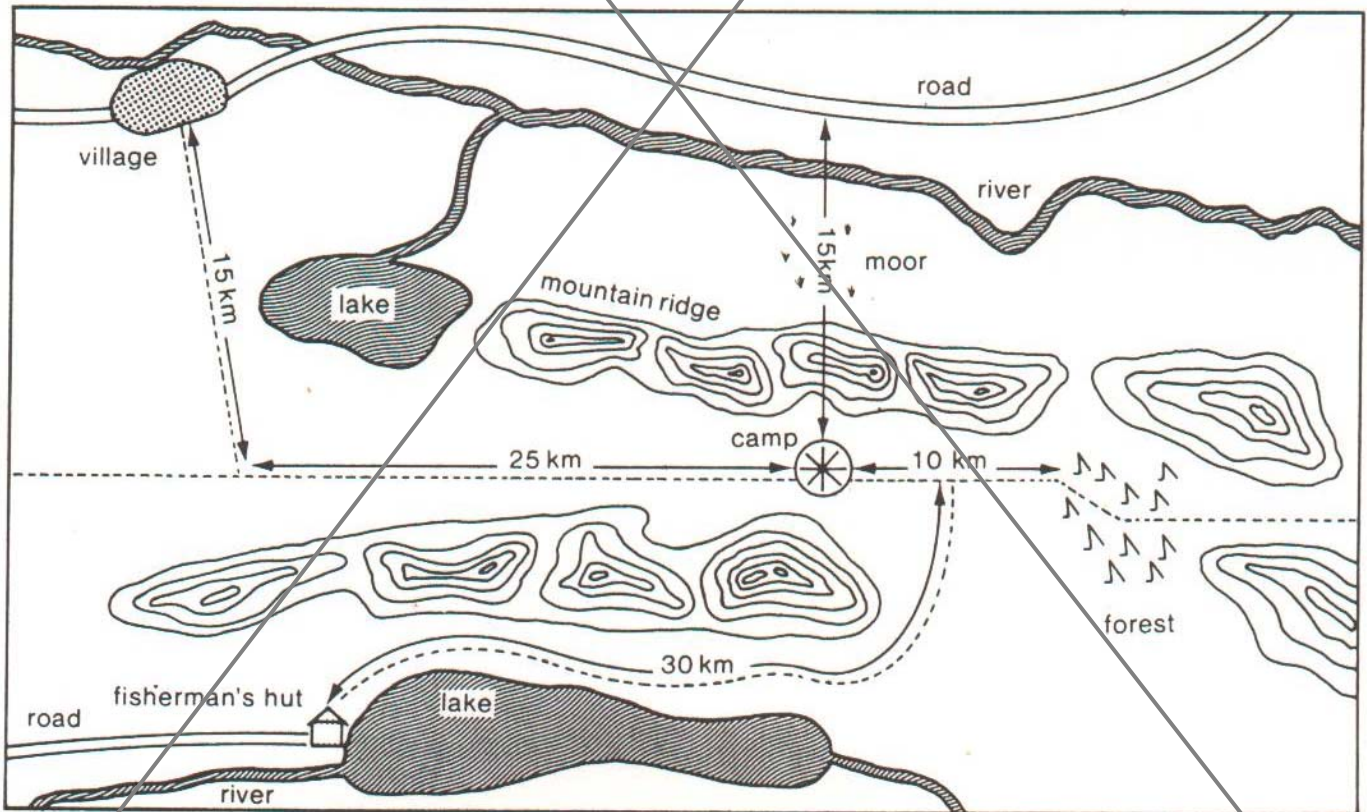
You are Sally Oldfield, a 35-year-old teacher on a hiking trip in the Scottish Highlands with a group of seven pupils: three boys and four girls aged between 13 and 16. You are carrying your own food and tents. You have planned to be out of contact with other people for a whole week and are expected on Sunday at a small village on the Scottish west coast where you will be picked up by a bus.

Today is Thursday. It has been raining steadily since Tuesday night and everyone is wet and cold. You know that you have not come as far as you should have done by this time, and you start feeling anxious about getting to the meeting point on Sunday. During the morning a dense fog starts coming down, and within half an hour the mountains and the path are covered in thick fog. You have to walk by compass now, which slows the group down even further.

At lunchtime two boys and two girls start complaining about stomach pains, diarrhoea and feeling sick. You suspect that some of the water you took from mountain streams may have been contaminated. In the afternoon they feel worse and can only walk very slowly. While climbing down a steep hillside the youngest girl, Rosie, stumbles and falls. She cannot get up. Her leg is broken. You set up a camp and discuss with your group what is to be done.

You are in a valley between two mountain ridges. The nearest road is about 15 kilometres away as the crow flies, but there is no path across the mountains and the moor is beyond them. There is no bridge across the river, and with all the rain of the last few days it may be too deep to wade across.

About 5 kilometres back the way you have come, a relatively easy path turns off which takes you to a lake and a fisherman's hut about 30 kilometres away. However, you do not know whether anybody lives in the hut or whether it has a phone. The next village is about 40 kilometres away. About 10 kilometres back the way you have come, there is a small forest where you could find some firewood. You have enough food till Sunday and there are mountain streams nearby. You also have camping gas cookers and enough gas for three hot drinks and two warm meals a day, but there is no firewood. The only people who can read a map and use a compass, apart from you, are one of the sick boys and Fiona, the oldest girl (she is feeling all right). Rosie is in a lot of pain and needs a doctor soon.



What can you do? Think of all the possible courses of action and decide on the best one. Make notes. Give reasons for your choice.