

# I Was Struck By LIGHTNING!"



1 On a sunny afternoon in 2004, nine-year-old Geoff Banninger was walking to a park in Colorado to see his sister play softball. But before he got to the park, Geoff was struck<sup>1</sup> by lightning.

5 The lightning stopped Geoff's heart and his breathing. It burned his hair and left a burn line from his head to his foot. It blew his glasses off his face and melted<sup>2</sup> them. It even made a hole in the bottom of his shoe. "I woke up about a minute later," says Geoff, "and my mom told me I had been struck by lightning."

10 What is lightning? A lightning strike is the result of a buildup of electrical charges<sup>3</sup> inside a cloud. We usually see lightning during stormy weather. But, as Geoff discovered, it can happen even on a sunny day.

15 Geoff's legs felt strange after he was hit, but he hasn't had any further problems since then. "I'm a lucky guy," he says. But being lucky is not the only way to ensure your safety during a thunderstorm. You can also follow the 30/30 rule: if you see lightning, and then hear thunder less than 30 seconds later, go inside a building. Then wait 30 minutes after the last thunder or lightning before you go back outside.

20 So how likely is it you will be hit by lightning? Fortunately,<sup>4</sup> it's not a common problem. According to the U.S. National Weather Service, your chance of being struck in your lifetime is only 1 in 5,000.

"I woke up about a minute later and my mom told me I had been struck by lightning."

—Geoff Banninger



<sup>1</sup> If you are **struck** by something, it means you have been hit by it.

<sup>2</sup> When something **melts**, it changes from solid to liquid, usually because it has been heated.

<sup>3</sup> An electrical **charge** is an amount of electricity that is held in or carried by something.

<sup>4</sup> If someone or something is **fortunate**, they are lucky.



## □ Reading Comprehension

**A. Multiple Choice.** Choose the best answer for each question.

Detail

1. Which sentence about Geoff Banninger is NOT true?
- The lightning stopped his breathing.
  - The lightning burned his hair.
  - The lightning left a line around his shoe.
  - The lightning stopped his heart.

Inference

2. Which of the following is probably true?
- Geoff remembers being struck by lightning.
  - When Geoff was struck by lightning, his mother was nearby.
  - Geoff's sister saw him get hit.
  - Geoff believes he has a very unlucky life.

Reference

3. In line 14, the word *it* refers to \_\_\_\_\_.
- stormy weather
  - cloudy weather
  - a lightning strike
  - a sunny day

Detail

4. According to the 30/30 rule, you should go inside a building \_\_\_\_\_.
- when thunder and lightning are less than 30 seconds apart
  - at least 30 minutes after the last thunder or lightning
  - when you see lightning, but don't hear thunder
  - any time you hear thunder and see lightning

Main Idea

5. What is the main idea of the last paragraph?
- Most people are never struck by lightning.
  - It's common to be struck by lightning.
  - It's fortunate if you are struck by lightning.
  - Lightning usually strikes in the afternoon or early evening.

**B. Matching.** What is the main idea of each paragraph in the reading?  
Match each heading (a–e) with the correct paragraph.

### Paragraph

1. (from line 1) \_\_\_\_\_
2. (from line 5) \_\_\_\_\_
3. (from line 11) \_\_\_\_\_
4. (from line 15) \_\_\_\_\_
5. (from line 23) \_\_\_\_\_

### Heading

- a. How to Stay Safe During a Thunderstorm
- b. Will You Be Struck by Lightning?
- c. The Day Geoff Banninger Was Struck by Lightning
- d. Why Do We Have Lightning?
- e. What Happened When Geoff Was Struck?

