SCENARIO

It's your third time out as a trip leader and you're taking a bunch of beginners up an easy trail to Mosquito Lake. Your group is moving a little slower than you'd like, but the weather is fair and the wildflowers are out; you figure it'll be OK to cook dinner in the dark if you have to.

Suddenly, black clouds begin to pour over a ridge to the west, and within minutes a summer storm is bearing down on you. The first drops of rain are so big they kick up dust on the trail. Lightning forks behind the peaks above and the crash of thunder is so loud and near, you know the storm centre will be on top of you in minutes.

You've just started up a long exposed ridge. If you continue up, the danger of being hit by lightning could be significant, and even if it isn't, the chance that someone will panic in a storm this big is very real. But if you head down into the forest below, you'll never make it to the lake before dark; you'll have to camp lower, and you're not sure of the water supply there.

Up until know there has been no need for anyone to 'lead' on this easy, well-travelled trail. But now things have changed. This is Ben's first trip into the mountains. He is clearly getting more worried with each flash of lightning (Graham, J., *Outdoor Leadership: Technique, Common Sense & Self-Confidence*, The Mountaineers [pp. 15–16]).

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