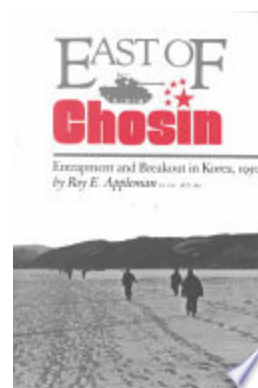




Read2Lead Module
East of Chosin
Entrapment and Breakout in Korea, 1950
by Roy Edgar Appleman



Book Summary from Google Books: “Roy Appleman's *East of Chosin*, first published in 1987, won acclaim from reviewers, readers, and veterans and their families. For the first time, there was one complete and accessible record of what happened to the army troops trapped east of the Chosin Reservoir during the first wintry blast of the Korean War. Based heavily on the author's interviews and correspondence with the survivors, *East of Chosin* provided some of those men with their first clue to the fate of fellow soldiers.

In November of 1950, U.S. forces had pushed deep into North Korea. Unknown to them, Chinese troops well equipped for below zero temperatures and blizzard conditions were pushing south. With the 1st Marine Division on the west side of the frozen Chosin reservoir, the Army's hastily assembled 31st Regimental Combat Team, 3,000 strong, advanced up the east side of the reservoir. Task Force Faith in the extreme northern position caught the surprise Chinese attack. With rifles and vehicles often immobilized in the cold and snow, the task force struggled to retreat through a tortuous mountain gauntlet of enemy fire. With truckloads of dead and wounded trapped along on the road, a few of the 385 survivors trudged across the frozen reservoir to alert the marines to their plight.”

What is Read2Lead?

Read2Lead is a series of book studies published by the Center for Junior Officers, a small Army research center dedicated to empowering junior officers to develop themselves and their teams. Read2Lead modules give junior officers a ready-to-use product that they can integrate into leader professional development programs.

What's in this module?

Every Read2Lead module contains:

- A short summary of the book that you can circulate to prime people for reading
- Advice for running your Read2Lead session
- A series of questions that can be used in multiple sessions, with options for using the questions over different lengths of time
- Additional resources that may be helpful for the facilitator

What do I need to provide to run a Read2Lead program?

First, the time. Read2Lead sessions work best when they're done over multiple sessions, so participants can digest books in small "chunks" instead of trying to cram them in all at once. Make sure you give your participants enough time to read the book and not fake the funk.

Second, the books. Books can be purchased with a government purchase card if they remain in the hands of the unit. Buying books for a Read2Lead session can be a great kickstarter for a battalion or even brigade library. You can also provide the books to Soldiers with the expectation that they pass them along to another Soldier when they are done with them. If you choose this approach, you should ensure you mark the books appropriately per the purchasing regulations and legal guidance of your organization.

Third, the space. Read2Lead sessions should be conducted in spaces where everyone can hear and see one another. Be creative: maybe you do them as hip-pocket training on a range, or at the end of motor stables. Or as a brownbag lunch in a barracks dayroom.

When you run the actual session, think of it as a time for your Soldiers to think outside the box, discuss something beyond the day-to-day concerns of the unit, and improve their communication skills. The questions provided on the subsequent pages are a starting point, but feel free to add or substitute your own to make the session more meaningful for your Soldiers.

East of Chosin 7 Week Program Questions

7 weeks is the optimal timing for this book. It minimizes the number of pages Soldiers have to read every week and breaks the book into meaningful chunks.

Week 1: *Setting the Stage, Preface & Chapters 1-4* (56 pages)

- If you were going to question a superior's judgment, how would you do it? When your judgment is questioned how do you handle it?
- How would you describe the relationship between the 31st RCT Commander (Maclean) and the commanders of subordinate units? Who do you think is at fault for the loss of communications with I&R Platoon?
- What's the importance of communication with higher and adjacent units? Why is it important? Who is responsible to fix it?

Week 2: *The First Night, Chapters 5-6* (65 pages)

- What factors did the personnel composition and training of the 31st RCT play in their mission readiness?
- Do we listen to the advice and counsel of our peers? Why do we sometimes not listen to good counsel?
- Was it right for MG Almond to give LTC Faith a Silver Star? Why did Almond do it? Why do you think LTC Faith threw away the Silver Star? Was he right in his decision?

Week 3: *The Second Night, Chapters 7-10* (44 pages)

- Would you let the enemy POW go? What are the other options?
- Is it ethical for a Chaplain to kill?
- Were Chinese forces oriented on the enemy or on terrain? Why is it important to understand what the enemy is oriented on?

Week 4: *The Third/Fourth Night, Chapters 11-14* (26 pages)

- How do you feel about the 7ID Commander's (MG Barr) visit to TF Faith? Why do you think MG Barr visited TF Faith?
- Should TF Faith take the Wounded with them or leave them behind? What would have done? (pg. 180-181)
- Why do you think the men of 31st RCT kept fighting after 80 hours of combat in sub-zero temperatures? (pg. 194)

Week 5: *Breakout, Chapters 15- 16* (37 pages)

- LTC Faith orders a breakout without coordination or guidance from higher after he realizes the unit has run out of other options. As a subordinate leader of LTC Faith how would you take LTC Faith's breakout brief?
- Is killing an American Soldier to prevent panic or set an example to the other men justified in the right situation? How would you prevent discipline from breaking down?
- What would you do with the Korean refugees fleeing to American lines and away from the CCF advance? What are our obligations to civilians on the battlefield?

Week 6: *Trapped, Chapters 17-21* (71 pages)

- Why do you think Major Robbins calls the Chinese chinks/slant eyes? Does the modern U.S. military still do this? Why/why not? (Note: This question is to drive discussion of the use of language in the dehumanization of enemy combatants)
- What would you say to a group of demoralized Soldiers in an effort to get them to do something that they might deem impossible?
- Why is there so many things unknown about friendly or enemy forces east of Chosin even 70 years later?

Week 7: *Could it have been Prevented, Chapters 22-23* (39 pages)

- At what level of leadership did the operation fail? Was it at the PLT, CO, BN, RCT, DIV, CORPS level? Was it a combination of levels?
- Why does the U.S. military never train to withdraw from the battlefield? Should we ever train to withdraw under pressure?
- What are some important lessons you learned from reading East of Chosin?

East of Chosin 4 Week Program Questions

If you are pressed for time, the smallest number of sessions we recommend is four. Timing and questions for that approach are listed below.

Week 1: *Setting the Stage and the First Night, Preface & Chapters 1-6* (121 pages)

- If you were going to question a superior's judgment, how would you do it? When your judgment is questioned how do you handle it?
- What's the importance of communication with higher and adjacent units? Why is it important? Who is responsible to fix it?
- Do we listen to the advice and counsel of our peers? Why do we sometimes not listen to good counsel?

Week 2: *The Second, Third, and Fourth Nights, Chapters 7-14* (70 pages)

- Would you let the enemy POW go? What are the other options?
- Were Chinese forces oriented on the enemy or on terrain? Why is it important to understand what the enemy is oriented on?
- Why do you think the men of 31st RCT kept fighting after 80 hours of combat in sub-zero temperatures? (pg. 194)

Week 3: *Breakout and Trapped, Chapters 15- 21* (118 pages)

- Is killing an American Soldier to prevent panic or set an example to the other men justified in the right situation? How would you prevent discipline from breaking down?
- What would you do with the Korean refugees fleeing to American lines and away from the CCF advance? What are our obligations to civilians on the battlefield?
- Why do you think Major Robbins calls the Chinese chinks/slant eyes? Does the modern U.S. military still do this? Why/why not? (Note: This question is to drive discussion of the use of language in the dehumanization of enemy combatants)
- What would you say to a group of demoralized Soldiers in an effort to get them to do something that they might deem impossible?

Week 4: *Could it have been Prevented, Chapters 22-23* (39 pages)

- At what level of leadership did the operation fail? Was it at the PLT, CO, BN, RCT, DIV, CORPS level? Was it a combination of levels?
- Why does the U.S. military never train to withdraw from the battlefield? Should we ever train to withdraw under pressure?
- What are some important lessons you learned from reading East of Chosin?