Title: The Survival Game

Author: Tim Wynne Jones

Burl Crow has had enough of living with his father and runs away. After days of walking, he finds himself in the woods and befriends an old musician in an old cottage at a place called Ghost Lake. He makes a life for himself and then gets a job when the musician dies on his travels. He gets a job with the woman who delivers the food by plane, and eventually she convinces him to go back and look for the musician’s family. On the way back he gets spotted by his Dad and finds him again, and he accidentally sets Ghost Lake on fire, to the point that at the end it is ‘burnt to a crisp’. He goes away with his Dad and finds his Grandmother and a couple of her friends on the train. There he gets talking and tells her and a few other people all about what happened and in the end, he goes back to his old teachers’ house because they told him years ago that he would be always welcome.

It covers themes of love, loyalty and hate.

Burl, the main character, is narrating the story.

The book is set in America, mainly in a secluded spot called Ghost Lake.

The story is told in the past.

Time is used well. There are memories of Burl’s childhood.

The books strengths are that it is fast paced but quite short and there aren’t too many long, descriptive passages.

All in all, 7/10.