

Plot, character and setting

SECTION

4

Impressions of Ruth

Objective: To explore a character from other characters' points of view.

What you need: Copies of *The Silver Sword*, photocopiable page 15.

Cross-curricular link: History.

What to do

- Complete this activity after reading the whole book.
- Discuss with the class their ideas about Ruth's character and personality. Questions you could ask to stimulate their responses include: *Ruth looks after Bronia and Jan – does she ever moan or complain about this? What acts of kindness or generosity does Ruth perform for others? How does Ruth respond to figures of authority? How does Ruth react to danger?* Ask them to support their ideas with reference to the text.
- Invite the children to skim-read through the text and find examples of how the following characters in the story respond to Ruth, and what

their impressions of her are. Other characters include: the lieutenant in Chapter 9; Ivan, the Russian sentry in Chapters 9 and 10; and Mark, the British officer, in Chapter 15.

- Provide the children with photocopiable page 15 and ask them to write down words and phrases used in the text to describe Ruth from the viewpoint of the characters.
- Collate the children's findings and compare the impressions these characters have of Ruth with the children's own impressions as discussed at the beginning of the activity.

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Ask them to add another character from the story, for example Herr Wolff or the Burgomaster.

For younger/less confident learners: Ask the children to write notes of key words or phrases about Ruth from one character's viewpoint, sharing the three characters among the group.

What happened when...?

Objective: To recall and sequence the events of the story, to explain and understand cause and effect.

What you need: Copies of *The Silver Sword*, photocopiable page 16.

Cross-curricular link: History.

What to do

- This activity should be run when the children have read the whole book.
- Before the children do the activity independently in their groups, ask them a few cause-and-effect questions from the beginning of the story, such as: *What happened when Joseph Balicki turned a picture of Hitler to the wall?* Ask them to scan the text to find the answer.
- Provide the groups with sets of the cards on photocopiable page 16 and give a set to each group, face downwards.
- Invite one child to pick a card and read the

card to another child, beginning with the words, *What happened when...?* The other child describes what happened immediately after as a result of the event on the card.

- Continue round the group until all the cards have been used and everyone has had a turn at asking and answering.
- Finally, ask the group to collaborate to put the cards into the sequence of events in the story.

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Ask the children to put two events next to each other that were not sequential in the story and to explore/make up what might link those two events.

For younger/less confident learners: Let the children refer to the story to find the answers to the questions.

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