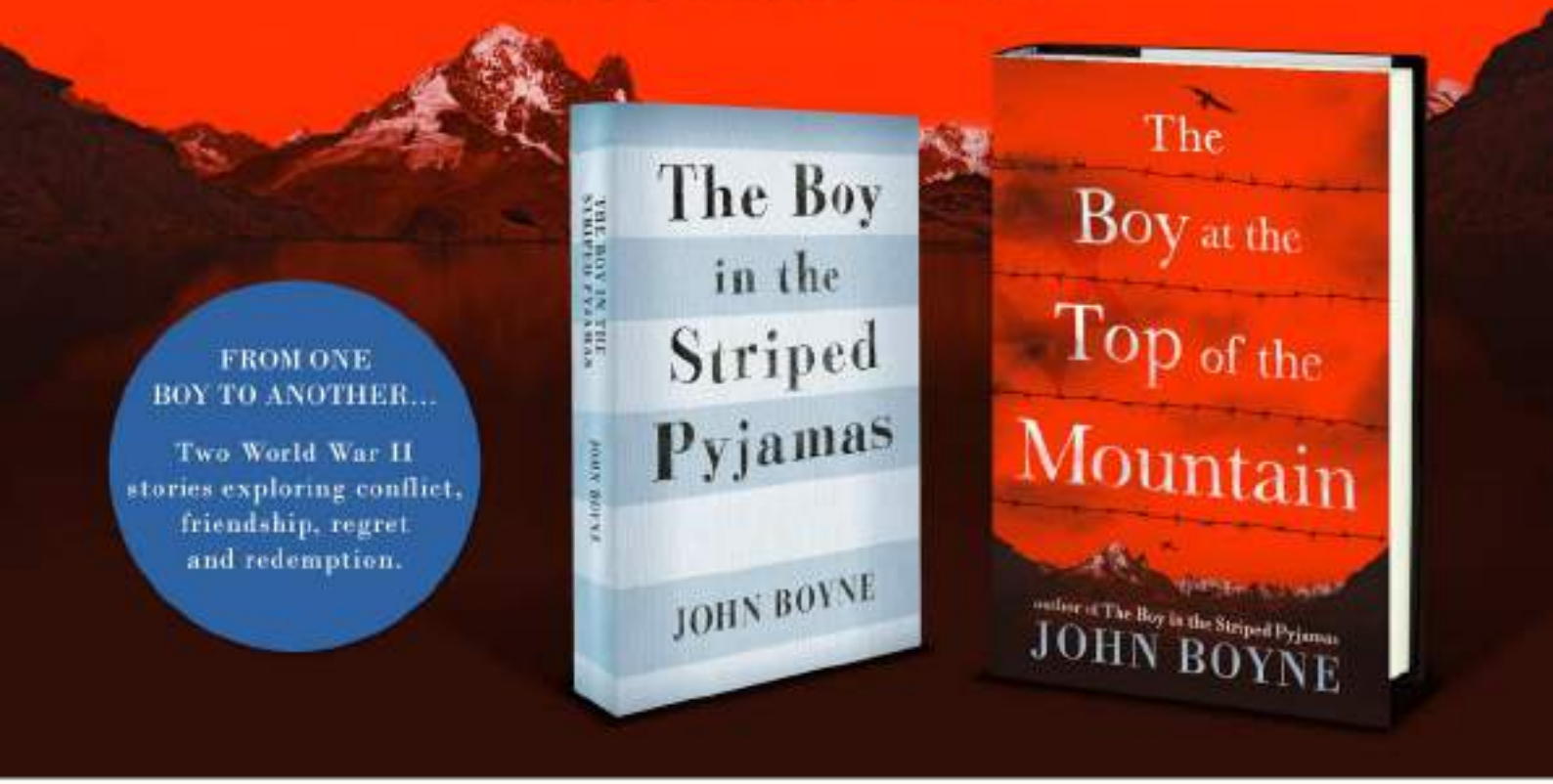
From John Boyne, the voice of wartime childhood

The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas

AND

The Boy at the Top of the Mountain

RESOURCE PACK



FROM ONE BOY TO ANOTHER...

Two World War II stories exploring conflict, friendship, regret and redemption.

Schools

Inspiring you to share stories

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INTRODUCTION

Dear Teachers and Librarians,

This resource pack contains reading, writing and drama lesson and activity ideas to help you share John Boyne's World War II children's novels *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* and *The Boy at the Top of the Mountain*, in your school or library. The lessons and activities in this pack can be shared and explored in sequence or they can be dipped in and out of, making them easy to tailor to the needs of your class, book group or club. The resource pack could be used when studying English or History with readers aged 10-14.

The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas and *The Boy at the Top of the Mountain* each offer a unique perspective on World War II. The stories are rich in history, character and plot. They will provoke discussion and emotion and engage readers with the impact of World War II particularly on children and young people. Covering themes and topics including war, conflict, friendship and redemption, the novels can be explored together or separately.

The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas focuses on the devastating impact of the Holocaust and is suitable for readers aged 10-14. The story follows Bruno, the son of a concentration camp Commandant. After moving from Berlin to 'Out-With' (it is suggested that this is Bruno's name for Auschwitz), Bruno befriends a young boy living on the opposite side of the fence at the end of his garden. The boy is called Shmuel and much to Bruno's confusion, is wearing striped pyjamas. During the novel, readers see Bruno and Shmuel's friendship develop with tragic consequences.

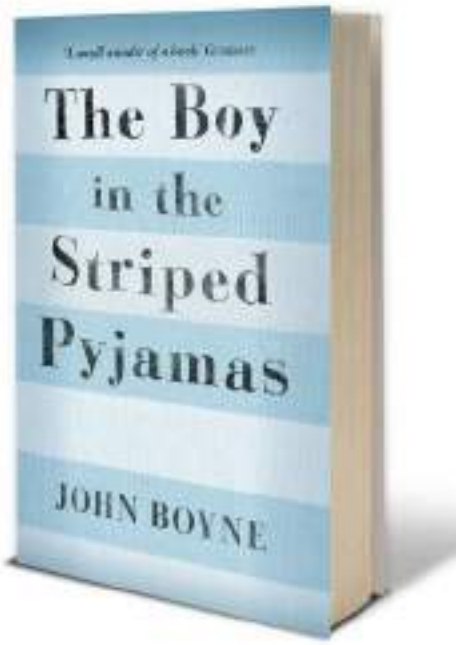
The Boy at the Top of the Mountain explores the power of the Hitler Youth on young people during World War II and is set mainly in Adolf Hitler's mountain retreat - the Berghof. The story could be shared with readers aged 11-14. The main character is Pierrot, a young boy who is sent to live with his aunt after the death of his parents. His aunt lives and works at the Berghof where Pierrot soon meets Adolf Hitler and becomes entranced by him and the Hitler Youth. Pierrot's life takes a dark turn with shocking consequences…

John Boyne's World War II novels are powerful and unforgettable and will provide a rich reading experience for you to share with children and young people.

Penguin Schools

SYNOPSIS

The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas



One day, Bruno arrives home from school to discover that his family's maid, Maria, is packing up his belongings. Bruno learns from his mother that they are leaving their lovely home in Berlin because his father has been given a very important job to do. Bruno is nine-years-old and very fond of his life in 1940's Berlin. He doesn't want to move away and leave his three best friends behind. It is clear that his mother shares his concerns about the move and, despite her own obvious protests about the matter, she has accepted that they '... don't have a choice in this'.

Bruno and his family move to an unfamiliar place called 'Out-With'. Bruno takes an instant dislike to the cold and unfriendly house that they will be living in and asks his mother when they will be returning to their nice home in Berlin. He is told that they are staying at Out-With for the 'foreseeable future'. Bruno is unclear how long that will be and asks his sister, Gretel, if she is any the wiser. Gretel is three years older than Bruno and the pair have a typical sibling rivalry. He refers to her as 'The Hopeless Case' due to her nasty habits (spending too long in the bathroom, for example) and her love of playing with dolls. Gretel believes that the 'foreseeable future' will be a few weeks. Neither of the children are clear on why they have been brought to Out-With or what it means, however Bruno has already become curious of his surroundings, having seen a wire fence and 'other children' through his bedroom window. He shows Gretel what he has seen. They observe that the children are all wearing grey-striped pyjamas.

We learn that Bruno's father works for someone called 'the Fury'. In a flashback, we discover that the Fury came to their Berlin home for dinner one night along with a beautiful blond woman called Eva. Shortly after that visit, Bruno's father is given a new uniform and title. At Out-With, it is clear that he is very important – and there are many soldiers and officers attending him at their home. There is one young officer that Bruno takes an instant dislike to (Lieutenant Kotler) but Gretel quickly becomes infatuated by the officer's good looks.

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As the weeks stretch on, Bruno decides to explore further afield. He follows the fence until he sees a young boy sitting on the other side. The boy is shoeless and wearing grey-striped pyjamas. He also has an armband with a star displayed on it. Curious, Bruno starts talking to the boy, who is called Shmuel. They quickly discover that they share the same birthday. They also discuss their families and where they are from, and agree to meet again. Bruno continues to visit his new friend, often taking him gifts of food. They are both sad that they cannot play together because the fence prevents them from doing so.

At dinner one evening, Bruno witnesses Lieutenant Kotler's anger. One of the servants attending the meal accidentally spills wine on Lieutenant Kotler. The servant is Pavel, an old man who prepares meals and waits on Bruno's family at Out-With. Pavel has always shown kindness to Bruno – so it comes as a shock to the young boy to witness Kotler's furious retaliation for the incident.

Bruno's dislike of Kotler only grows stronger. He decides to make a list of all the reasons why he hates him, which includes his sister's flirting and the fact that the young soldier is always spending time with his mother. One day, he is sent out of the living room so Kotler and his mother can have a private talk. Bruno wanders into the kitchen and is surprised to discover that his new friend Shmuel is there. The boy explains that he has been brought to the house to polish glasses because his fingers are so small. Bruno helps himself to some chicken from the fridge and then, feeling guilty, offers some to Shmuel who protests explaining that it would break the rules. But Bruno is insistent and Shmuel is clearly starving. The boy gobbles down the food quickly, just as Kotler enters. The Lieutenant suspects that Shmuel has been eating and asks him if he has stolen something from the refrigerator. Frightened of the consequences, Shmuel says that Bruno gave him the food and that they are friends. When asked if this is true, Bruno denies knowing Shmuel.

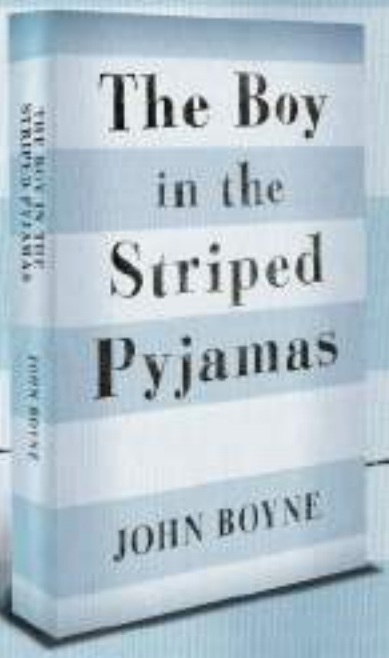
Afterwards, Bruno is overcome with shame at his actions. Nevertheless, the two remain friends and continue to meet at the fence in secret. Despite their numerous conversations, Bruno is still naïve and confused as to why the fence divides them from each other. He asks Gretel about this and discovers that the people on the other side are called Jews and that is the reason why they must be separated. Bruno is confused and wonders what makes them different. Gretel cannot offer a clear answer and simply concludes that there are Jews and Opposites, and she and Bruno are the latter. The conversation is cut short when Gretel discovers a tiny egg in her hair. The children both have lice. As a consequence, Father shaves off Bruno's hair. When Bruno looks in the mirror, he realises that he looks just like Shmuel.

SYNOPSIS

Mother's unhappiness with Out-With is becoming more evident. Following further arguments, Father agrees to let his family return to Berlin without him. Bruno is not as happy as he thought he would be at the news. Most of all, he is sad that he will have to say goodbye to his new friend, Shmuel.

When they next meet, Shmuel is also sad because his father has gone missing. Bruno reveals to his friend that he is leaving soon for Berlin and reflects on the fact that they have never been able to play together. He wants to see what life is like on the other side of the fence. The two boys hatch a plan to have one last adventure together – and also find clues as to what happened to Shmuel's father. Bruno returns to the fence some days later and swaps his clothes with a set of the striped pyjamas. He crawls underneath the fence, and then together they search for Shmuel's father.

While they are exploring, the two children are herded by soldiers into a group of prisoners, who are then marched to a large building. Bruno doesn't know what is happening but finds comfort in the fact that he is with his best friend, Shmuel. The doors to the building are closed and the room goes very dark. Unwittingly, the two boys have been ushered into a gas chamber and there is no escape for them.



The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas

EXTRACT

Chapter One

Bruno Makes a Discovery

One afternoon, when Bruno came home from school, he was surprised to find Maria, the family's maid – who always kept her head bowed and never looked up from the carpet – standing in his bedroom, pulling all his belongings out of the wardrobe and packing them in four large wooden crates, even the things he'd hidden at the back that belonged to him and were nobody else's business.

'What are you doing?' he asked in as polite a tone as he could muster, for although he wasn't happy to come home and find someone going through his possessions, his mother had always told him that he was to treat Maria respectfully and not just imitate the way Father spoke to her. 'You take your hands off my things.'

Maria shook her head and pointed towards the staircase behind him, where Bruno's mother had just appeared. She was a tall woman with long red hair that she bundled into a sort of net behind her head, and she was twisting her hands together nervously as if there was something she didn't want to have to say or something she didn't want to have to believe.

'Mother,' said Bruno, marching towards her, 'what's going on? Why is Maria going through my things?'

'She's packing them,' explained Mother.

'Packing them?' he asked, running quickly through the events of the previous few days to consider whether he'd been particularly naughty or had used those words out loud that he wasn't allowed to use and was being sent away because of it. He couldn't think of anything though. In fact over the last few days he had behaved in a perfectly decent manner to everyone and couldn't remember causing any chaos at all. 'Why?' he asked then. 'What have I done?'

Mother had walked into her own bedroom by then but Lars, the butler, was in there, packing her things too. She sighed and threw her hands in the air in frustration before marching back to the staircase, followed by Bruno, who wasn't going to let the matter drop without an explanation.

'Mother,' he insisted. 'What's going on? Are we moving?'

'Come downstairs with me,' said Mother, leading the way towards the large dining room where the Fury had been to dinner the week before. 'We'll talk down there.'

EXTRACT

Bruno ran downstairs and even passed her out on the staircase so that he was waiting in the dining room when she arrived. He looked at her without saying anything for a moment and thought to himself that she couldn't have applied her make-up correctly that morning because the rims of her eyes were more red than usual, like his own after he'd been causing chaos and got into trouble and ended up crying.

'Now, you don't have to worry, Bruno,' said Mother, sitting down in the chair where the beautiful blonde woman who had come to dinner with the Fury had sat and waved at him when Father closed the doors. 'In fact if anything it's going to be a great adventure.'

'What is?' he asked. 'Am I being sent away?'

'No, not just you,' she said, looking as if she might smile for a moment but thinking better of it. 'We all are. Your father and I, Gretel and you. All four of us.'

Bruno thought about this and frowned. He wasn't particularly bothered if Gretel was being sent away because she was a Hopeless Case and caused nothing but trouble for him. But it seemed a little unfair that they all had to go with her.

'But where?' he asked. 'Where are we going exactly? Why can't we stay here?'

'Your father's job,' explained Mother. 'You know how important it is, don't you?'

'Yes, of course,' said Bruno, nodding his head, because there were always so many visitors to the house – men in fantastic uniforms, women with typewriters that he had to keep his mucky hands off – and they were always very polite to Father and told each other that he was a man to watch and that the Fury had big things in mind for him.

'Well, sometimes when someone is very important,' continued Mother, 'the man who employs him asks him to go somewhere else because there's a very special job that needs doing there.'

'What kind of job?' asked Bruno, because if he was honest with himself – which he always tried to be – he wasn't entirely sure what job Father did.

In school they had talked about their fathers one day and Karl had said that his father was a greengrocer, which Bruno knew to be true because he ran the greengrocer's shop in the centre of town. And Daniel had said that his father was a teacher, which Bruno knew to be true because he taught the big boys who it was always wise to steer clear of. And Martin had said that his father was a chef, which Bruno knew to be true because he sometimes collected Martin from school and when he did he always wore a white smock and a tartan apron, as if he'd just stepped out of his kitchen.

But when they asked Bruno what his father did he opened his mouth to tell them, then realized that he didn't know himself. All he could say was that his father was a man to watch and that the Fury had big things in mind for him. Oh, and that he had a fantastic uniform too.

'It's a very important job,' said Mother, hesitating for a moment. 'A job that needs a very special man to do it. You can understand that, can't you?'

'And we all have to go too?' asked Bruno.

'Of course we do,' said Mother. 'You wouldn't want Father to go to his new job on his own and be lonely there, would you?'

'I suppose not,' said Bruno.

'Father would miss us all terribly if we weren't with him,' she added.

'Who would he miss the most?' asked Bruno. 'Me or Gretel?'

'He would miss you both equally,' said Mother, for she was a great believer in not playing favourites, which Bruno respected, especially since he knew that he was her favourite really.

'But what about our house?' asked Bruno. 'Who's going to take care of it while we're gone?'

Mother sighed and looked around the room as if she might never see it again. It was a very beautiful house and had five floors in total, if you included the basement, where Cook made all

the food and Maria and Lars sat at the table arguing with each other and calling each other names that you weren't supposed to use. And if you added in the little room at the top of the house with the slanted windows where Bruno could see right across Berlin if he stood up on his tiptoes and held onto the frame tightly.

'We have to close up the house for now,' said Mother. 'But we'll come back to it someday.'

'And what about Cook?' asked Bruno. 'And Lars? And Maria? Are they not going to live in it?'

'They're coming with us,' explained Mother. 'But that's enough questions for now. Maybe you should go upstairs and help Maria with your packing.'

Bruno stood up from the seat but didn't go anywhere. There were just a few more questions he needed to put to her before he could allow the matter to be settled.

'And how far away is it?' he asked. 'The new job, I mean. Is it further than a mile away?'

'Oh my,' said Mother with a laugh, although it was a strange kind of laugh because she didn't look happy and turned away from Bruno as if she didn't want him to see her face. 'Yes, Bruno,' she said. 'It's more than a mile away. Quite a lot more than that, in fact.'

Bruno's eyes opened wide and his mouth made the shape of an O. He felt his arms

EXTRACT

stretching out at his sides like they did whenever something surprised him. 'You don't mean we're leaving Berlin?' he asked, gasping for air as he got the words out.

'I'm afraid so,' said Mother, nodding her head sadly. 'Your father's job is—'

'But what about school?' said Bruno, interrupting her, a thing he knew he was not supposed to do but which he felt he would be forgiven for on this occasion. 'And what about Karl and Daniel and Martin? How will they know where I am when we want to do things together?'

'You'll have to say goodbye to your friends for the time being,' said Mother. 'Although I'm sure you'll see them again in time. And don't interrupt your mother when she's talking, please,' she added, for although this was strange and unpleasant news, there was certainly no need for Bruno to break the rules of politeness which he had been taught.

'Say goodbye to them?' he asked, staring at her in surprise. 'Say goodbye to them?' he repeated, spluttering out the words as if his mouth was full of biscuits that he'd munched into tiny pieces but not actually swallowed yet. 'Say goodbye to Karl and Daniel and Martin?' he continued, his voice coming dangerously close to shouting, which was not allowed indoors. 'But they're my three best friends for life!'

'Oh, you'll make other friends,' said Mother,

waving her hand in the air dismissively, as if the making of a boy's three best friends for life was an easy thing.

'But we had plans,' he protested.

'Plans?' asked Mother, raising an eyebrow. 'What sort of plans?'

'Well, that would be telling,' said Bruno, who could not reveal the exact nature of the plans – which included causing a lot of chaos, especially in a few weeks' time when school finished for the summer holidays and they didn't have to spend all their time just making plans but could actually put them into effect instead.

'I'm sorry, Bruno,' said Mother, 'but your plans are just going to have to wait. We don't have a choice in this.'

'But, Mother!'

'Bruno, that's enough,' she said, snapping at him now and standing up to show him that she was serious when she said that was enough. 'Honestly, only last week you were complaining about how much things have changed here recently.'

'Well, I don't like the way we have to turn all the lights off at night now,' he admitted.

'Everyone has to do that,' said Mother. 'It keeps us safe. And who knows, maybe we'll be in less danger if we move away. Now, I need you to go upstairs and help Maria with your packing. We don't have as much time to prepare as I would have liked, thanks to some people.'

Bruno nodded and walked away sadly, knowing that 'some people' was a grown-up's word for 'Father' and one that he wasn't supposed to use himself.

He made his way up the stairs slowly, holding onto the banister with one hand, and wondered whether the new house in the new place where the new job was would have as fine a banister to slide down as this one did. For the banister in this house stretched from the very top floor – just outside the little room where, if he stood on his tiptoes and held onto the frame of the window tightly, he could see right across Berlin – to the ground floor, just in front of the two enormous oak doors. And Bruno liked nothing better than to get on board the banister at the top floor and slide his way through the house, making whooshing sounds as he went.

Down from the top floor to the next one, where Mother and Father's room was, and the large bathroom, and where he wasn't supposed to be in any case.

Down to the next floor, where his own room was, and Gretel's room too, and the smaller bathroom which he was supposed to use more often than he really did.

Down to the ground floor, where you fell off the end of the banister and had to land flat on your two feet or it was five points against you and you had to start all over again.

The banister was the best thing about this house – that and the fact that Grandfather and Grandmother lived so near by – and when he thought about that it made him wonder whether they were coming to the new job too and he presumed that they were because they could hardly be left behind. No one needed Gretel much because she was a Hopeless Case – it would be a lot easier if she stayed to look after the house – but Grandfather and Grandmother? Well, that was an entirely different matter.

Bruno went up the stairs slowly towards his room, but before going inside he looked back down towards the ground floor and saw Mother entering Father's office, which faced the dining room – and was Out Of Bounds At All Times And No Exceptions – and he heard her speaking loudly to him until Father spoke louder than Mother could and that put a stop to their conversation. Then the door of the office closed and Bruno couldn't hear any more so he thought it would be a good idea if he went back to his room and took over the packing from Maria, because otherwise she might pull all his belongings out of the wardrobe without any care or consideration, even the things he'd hidden at the back that belonged to him and were nobody else's business.

READING: INTRODUCING BRUNO AND HIS FAMILY

Aim: To explore an extract to learn about character, similes and themes.

Nine-year old Bruno returns home from school to discover that his maid, Maria, is packing up all his belongings. His mother reveals that the whole family will be moving to a place where there is 'a very special job that needs doing'. Bruno is upset and angry because the place they will be moving to is far away from his nice home and three best friends in Berlin.

ACTIVITY ONE:

* Read the first chapter of *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* (provided in this resource pack) with your students and make a list of the main characters that have been introduced and/or mentioned in the text. (Bruno, Maria, Mother, Father, Gretel).
* In groups, ask students to discuss and then write next to each character what they have learned about them from the text. They should also record their opinions of each character based on what we know about them. To differentiate the task, you could provide quotes from the chapter for your students to explore.
* Invite groups to share their first impressions of the characters.
* Pose the question: through which character's eyes are we seeing the story unfold? What evidence is there in the text to support this view?

ACTIVITY TWO:

In this short extract (p.7) Mother explains to Bruno that he won't be able to see his three best friends for a while:

'You'll have to say goodbye to your friends for the time being,' said Mother. 'Although I'm sure you'll see them again in time. And don't interrupt your mother when she's talking, please,' she added, for although this was strange and unpleasant news, there was certainly no need for Bruno to break the rules of politeness which he had been taught.

'Say goodbye to them?' he asked, staring at her in surprise. 'Say goodbye to them?' he repeated, spluttering out the words as if his mouth was full of biscuits that he'd munched into tiny pieces but not actually swallowed yet. 'Say goodbye to Karl and Daniel and Martin?' he continued, his voice coming dangerously close to shouting, which was not allowed indoors.

'But they're my three best friends for life!'

READING: INTRODUCING BRUNO AND HIS FAMILY

* Begin by exploring what is happening in the extract. What news is Bruno is being given? What is his reaction and how do we know this?
* Explain what a simile is – a description that compares one thing with another thing of a different kind. Challenge the children to find the simile in the extract (...as if his mouth was full of biscuits that he'd munched into tiny pieces but not actually swallowed yet). Do they think it is an effective writing technique – and if so, why?
* Ask the children to think of their own alternative similes to describe how Bruno is feeling at that moment. If you wish, you could extend this work by asking students to complete the worksheet, 'Bruno's feelings'.
* Pose the question – what do we think are the important themes of this extract? (For example, leaving home, friendship, obeying rules etc.). Do these themes help us to identify with Bruno? Ask students to consider the importance of friendship in their own lives. What would it be like to have to say goodbye to your best friends? Perhaps students have had to move home or had a best friend move away, and can talk about their firsthand experiences.
* Based on the themes you have explored, ask students to predict how these might become more important as the story develops. What do they think will happen next?

BRUNO'S FEELINGS

In the first chapter of *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* Bruno learns lots of new things and talks about his home in Berlin.

We found an example of a simile in the text:

'Say goodbye to them?' he repeated, spluttering out the words as if his mouth was full of biscuits that he'd munched into tiny pieces but not actually swallowed yet.

Can you use similes to describe how Bruno might be feeling at other times in this chapter? If you wish, you can use the word and sentence bank to help you with ideas.

1. Bruno comes home from school to find Maria packing up his belongings.

'What are you doing?' he _____

_____

2. Bruno is worried his mother is sending him away because he has been naughty.

'What have I done?' he _____

_____

3. Bruno accepts that he has to say goodbye to his three best friends.

Bruno nodded and walked away sadly. He felt _____

_____

4. Bruno loves the house in Berlin. It has a banister that he likes to slide down.

And Bruno liked nothing better than to get on board the banister at the top floor, and slide his way through the house, making whooshing noises as he went. It made him feel _____

_____

_____

Word and sentence bank

asked *begged* *shouted* *demanded* *choking on the words* *gasping out the words* *barking out the words* *like* *as if*

DRAMA: THE LONELIEST PLACE IN THE WORLD

Aim: To use hot-seating techniques to explore a character's feelings.

Bruno is disappointed to discover that his new home at 'Out-With' is the exact opposite of his home at Berlin. It is small, only has three stories, and is described as standing in 'an empty, desolate place'. Bruno thinks his new home is in 'the loneliest place in the world' and tells his mother that moving to 'Out-With' was a bad idea. Bruno doubts he will find anyone here that he can play with.

ACTIVITY ONE:

- Ask students to recap what they have already learned about Bruno's home in Berlin (see Chapter One).
- Provide students with two columns – one labelled Berlin and one labelled Out-With. Ask them to read the first three pages of Chapter Two. How does the author (and Bruno) describe the new home at Out-With? What key words and phrases are used? Students should record their learning in the Out-With column.
- What does Bruno love about his old home in Berlin? Students should record the relevant words and phrases from the text in the Berlin column. Compare and contrast the two locations, focusing on the language used to describe them to the reader.

ACTIVITY TWO:

- Read Chapter Two together. Make a list of the key events that happen to Bruno in this chapter. For example: Bruno first sees the new house; Bruno confronts his mother; Bruno tries talking to Maria the maid; Bruno sees one of his father's soldiers; Bruno looks out of his bedroom window.
- In pairs, ask students to focus on each event in turn. After re-reading the part of the chapter that describes the event, ask the pairs to make a short list of questions that they would like to ask Bruno – or questions that the text raises. They could record these in speech bubbles.
- One member of each pair can take on the role of Bruno while their partner asks questions from the speech bubbles. The student in role should try and answer the questions as if they were Bruno, considering how he might feel or react to each question.
- Students can then swap, so they get to experience being the interviewer and the character. End the session by inviting confident individuals to share their role-play with the rest of the class. Highlight good examples of where students have explored the character in interesting ways and used the text to help build their role-play.
- End the session by speculating on what Bruno might have seen through his bedroom window. The author purposefully avoids describing what Bruno sees in this chapter. Consider why John Boyne might have chosen this approach. How does the end of the chapter create suspense?

READING: A QUESTION OF LOYALTY

Aim: To explore an extract to learn how an author creates tension and drama.

After meeting with his father and failing to convince him that they should return to Berlin, Bruno is more dejected than ever. Lying on his bed, he discovers that the paint above his head is peeling and cracked, only adding to his misery. He asks Maria for her opinion of their new home – and also her opinion of Father. Maria defends his father who was very kind to her and her mother. This news surprises Bruno. Nevertheless, it is clear that Maria still has strong reservations about the job that Bruno's father is doing at Out-With.

ACTIVITY ONE:

* As you continue to read the book, encourage students to make brief chapter summaries, which will help them to find references from the text to support their learning.

* Before reading Chapter Six, ask students to recap what they already know about Bruno's father. They should be able to surmise that he has a very important job, he is a high-ranking soldier who wears a uniform, he is ambitious and has been recently promoted by the Fury, he is always busy and surrounded by soldiers, and his office is Out Of Bounds At All Times And No Exceptions.

* What opinion have we formed of Bruno's father before meeting him properly for the first time (Chapter Five, p45-54)? Are our opinions influenced by any of the other characters, such as Bruno and his mother? Did the meeting in Chapter Five change our opinion of Bruno's father at all or did it confirm what we already thought of him? Invite students to share and discuss their ideas, making reference to the text.

* Read Chapter Six together before focusing on an extract (see Activity Two).

ACTIVITY TWO:

In this short extract (p.62) Bruno is frustrated that Maria has a different view of his father than his own. Maria looks out of the window and wonders aloud how he could act in the way he is doing:

Bruno bit his lip. He had hoped that Maria would take his side in the campaign to get away from Out-With but he could see where her loyalties really lay. And he had to admit that he was rather proud of his father when he heard that story.

'Well,' he said, unable to think of something clever to say now. 'I suppose that was nice of him.'

'Yes,' said Maria, standing up and walking over towards the window, the one through which Bruno could see all the way to the huts and the people in the distance. 'He was very kind to me then,' she continued quietly, looking through it herself now and watching the people and the soldiers go about their business far away. 'He has a lot of kindness in his soul, truly he does, which makes me wonder…' She drifted off as she watched them and her voice cracked suddenly and she sounded as if she might cry.

'Wonder what?' asked Bruno

'Wonder what he… how he can…'

'How he can what?' insisted Bruno.

The noise of a door slamming came from downstairs and reverberated through the house so loudly – like a gunshot – that Bruno jumped and Maria gave out a small scream.

* Ask students to highlight a word and then a sentence from the extract that stands out for them, perhaps because it represents a powerful use of language, or is meaningful in the context of the story. Next, ask them to record their own personal response to the extract. This could be a word, phrase or sentence. Students should share their choices with a partner, giving reasons for the word and sentence that they chose, and their own personal response to the extract. Explore some of these as a whole class or group.

* Focus on the two characters in the extract, Bruno and Maria. They are discussing Bruno's father. How does the author express these character's internal thoughts through dialogue and description? At one point, Maria stares out of the window. What is the significance of this and how does it relate to Maria's inner conflict over Bruno's father?

* Ask students to reread the extract and consider how the author adds tension and drama to the scene. What powerful words and phrases communicate this? Compare with those that the children chose earlier.

* Revisit the students' earlier opinions of Bruno's father (see Activity One). Does this scene between Bruno and Maria influence and/or change our opinions in any way? Do we have any sympathy for him?

WRITING: DEAR GRANDMOTHER...

Aim: To use empathy to write a letter in the style of a character.

Bruno learns from Gretel that they will be living at Out-With for the 'foreseeable future'. Feeling miserable and alone, Bruno's thoughts turn to his grandparents who he is missing terribly. Bruno decides to write a letter to his grandmother, to tell her about his life at Out-With.

ACTIVITY ONE:

* Using the students' chapter summaries as an aid (see previous activity), work together to list the major events and character moments that have happened to Bruno since he left Berlin. These might include:
    - The house at Out-With (Chapter Three)
    - The men and children beyond the fence (Chapter Four)
    - The train station (Chapter Five)
    - Bruno confronts his father (Chapter Five)
    - Maria and Bruno discuss his father (Chapter Six)
    - Bruno sees Maria in a different light (Chapter Six)
    - Gretel the Hopeless Case (Chapters Four and Six)
    - Kotler and Pavel (Chapter Seven)
    - Grandmother's plays (Chapter Eight)
    - Christmas incident – Grandmother confronts Bruno's father (Chapter Eight)
* Write each character moment on a separate large sheet of paper. Place each on a table with marker pens available. Assign groups to a table and invite them to explore the theme/moment they have been given as Bruno, adding their own comments, thoughts and questions to the paper. Prompt them to refer back to the text where appropriate and also their previous learning (such as the hot-seating activity).
* Rotate groups so that they can visit each table. Groups should read the comments of previous groups, adding to the existing prompts and responses as they build up a picture of Bruno's thoughts and feelings about that moment/character. This rotation will help to add new ideas to each sheet.

WRITING: DEAR GRANDMOTHER...

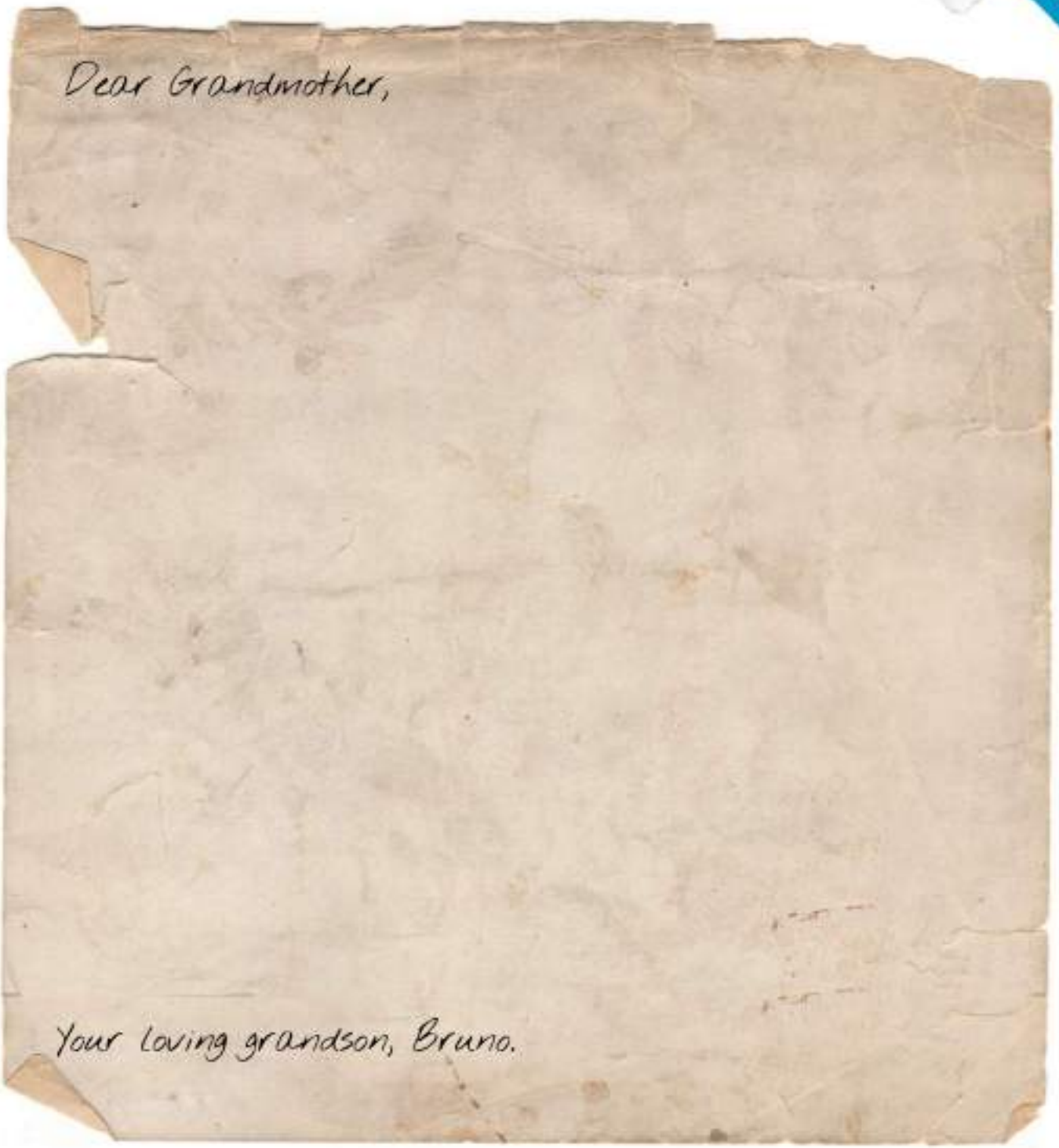
At the end of Chapter 8 (p.93) Bruno decides to write a letter to his Grandmother, who lives in Berlin:

Bruno hadn't seen much of Grandmother after that and hadn't even had a chance to say goodbye to her before they moved to Out-With, but he missed her very much and decided to write her a letter.

ACTIVITY TWO:

* Explain to the students that they are going to write Bruno's letter in the voice of Bruno. Display the sheets from activity one. Talk about the character moments and events that have happened to Bruno, and explore the children's responses to these. Which do they think Bruno might want to talk about in his letter to his grandmother? Which would be the most/least important to him? Explore the students' ideas.
* Students should draft their letters, using the sheets from activity one for reference and ideas. Once they are happy with their draft, they can write out their letter in the style of Bruno. If you wish, students could use the worksheet, 'A letter to Grandmother', which provides helpful names and prompts.
* Invite students to share their letters at the end of the session.

A LETTER TO GRANDMOTHER



Ideas bank

Pavel	*Maria*	*The swing*	*The Christmas play*
Kotler	*Father*	*The train station*	*Father's office*
Gretel	*The Hopeless Case*	*The view through the window*	*The house at Out-With*

READING & RESEARCH: WHAT ARE YOU ALL DOING THERE?

Aim: To find out more about the historical setting of the book.

Bruno decides to go exploring and spots a boy sitting in the dirt on the other side of fence. Intrigued, Bruno decides to talk to the stranger. He learns that the boy is called Shmuel and he is also nine years old. To their astonishment, they also discover that they were both born on the same day. Bruno finds himself wondering what life is like for Shmuel on his side of the fence. Carefully choosing his words, Bruno asks Shmuel to tell him everything.

ACTIVITY ONE:

At the end of Chapter 10 (p.113) Bruno asks Shmuel about life on the other side of the fence:

Bruno thought about it. He wanted to phrase the question just right.

'Why are there so many people on that side of the fence?' he asked. 'And what are you all doing there?'

* In groups, begin by asking children to mind-map what they know (or think they know) about the period that the book is set in. Once they have started to explore their ideas, prompt them to think about the things that they have learned so far from reading the book. Are there any further facts that they could add to their mind-map?
* Next, ask students to think about any questions or puzzles the text or the historical period has raised, that they would like to find the answers to. These could be added around the edge of their mind-map or linked to the themes that they have already identified.
* Ask students to display and present their mind-maps. Compare and contrast the student's thoughts and ideas. Make a list of the questions that have been raised. Can any of these be answered – or do we need to research other sources?

ACTIVITY TWO:

* Look together at photographs and artwork that depict the Holocaust (the following site provides a good source of images: www.theholocaustexplained.org – also see the recommended resources at the end of this pack). If possible, view these on an interactive whiteboard, using a masking template so that only a small part of the image is visible. This will encourage students to focus on what is being shown and prompt them to think about the context of the image.

* Slowly reveal more of the image, discussing new details and features, until the full image is revealed. Compare photographs with artwork (such as a painting). Do both have the same historical value? What can a painting capture that a photograph can't – and vice versa?

* Consider what we can learn from the images – such as the conditions of the camps, daily life in a camp and the clothing worn by the prisoners. Examine your questions from the previous activity and consider what other sources you could use to explore the theme.

ACTIVITY THREE:

* Depending on the age and ability of your students, you could provide access to the internet for students to perform their own research on the Holocaust. Remind them to use the question list from Activity one to help focus their research. It is also recommended that you view and bookmark websites beforehand to ensure that they are age-appropriate. (Recommended sites are provided at the end of this pack.) Alternatively, for younger or less confident students, you could compile resources into a PowerPoint for you to explore together.

* Discuss the facts that you have learned about the Holocaust. Again, revisit the questions that the students raised from Activity One. Are they able to answer these based on their learning?

* End the session by returning to Bruno's questions from the extract. Can the children provide Shmuel's answers? If you wish, students could write these as an extension to the scene.

DRAMA AND WRITING: ACROSS THE DIVIDE...

Aim: To use drama and writing to explore a conversation between two characters.

Lieutenant Kotler joins Bruno's family for dinner. Pavel, who is acting as waiter, is nervous and unusually shaky, and accidently spills a bottle of wine into Kotler's lap. The lieutenant becomes angry and does something unspeakable to Pavel. Bruno is shocked that no one tries to stop him. When he goes to bed, Bruno wonders if what happened at dinner is an example of the type of things that go on at Out-With.

ACTIVITY ONE:

* Read and recap the events of Chapter Thirteen, focusing on the incident with Pavel at dinner, when Kotler loses his temper (p.148-149). Ask the students for their response to this scene. How do the different family members react? When Bruno goes to bed he reflects on what happened. Explore the conclusion he arrives at – [Bruno] would do well to keep his mouth shut and cause no chaos at all – and his views of Pavel and his father.
* Bruno has been opening up to Shmuel in their many conversations across the fence. Explain to the students that they are going to be writing a scene between Bruno and Shmuel, when Bruno decides to tell Shmuel about the incident at dinner. Before they write their scene, they are going to be using role-play to explore this conversation.

ACTIVITY TWO:

Look at an example of a previous conversation between Bruno and Shmuel. In these short extracts from Chapter Thirteen, Bruno asks Shmuel if he knows Pavel. The children then go on to discuss what they want to be when they grow up. These conversations highlight Bruno's innocence and naivety to Shmuel's life on the other side of the fence:

'Who's Maria?' asked Shmuel, not looking up as he gobbled down the food hungrily.
'She's our maid,' explained Bruno. 'She's very nice although Father says she's overpaid. But she was telling me about this man Pavel who chops our vegetables for us and waits on table. I think he lives on your side of the fence.'
Shmuel looked up for a moment and stopped eating. 'On my side?' he asked.
'Yes. Do you know him? He's very old and has a white jacket that he wears when he's serving dinner. You've probably seen him.'
'No,' said Shmuel, shaking his head. 'I don't know him.'
'But you must,' said Bruno irritably, as if Shmuel were being deliberately difficult. 'He's not as tall as some adults and has grey hair and stoops over a little.'
'I don't think you realize just how many people live on this side of the fence,' said Shmuel. 'There are thousands of us.'

'Do you know what you want to be when you grow up?' he asked.
'Yes,' said Shmuel. 'I want to work in a zoo.'
'A zoo?' asked Bruno.
'I like animals,' said Shmuel quietly.
'I'm going to be a soldier,' said Bruno in a determined voice. 'Like Father.'
'I wouldn't like to be a soldier,' said Shmuel.
'I don't mean one like Lieutenant Kotler,' said Bruno quickly. 'Not one who strides around as if he owns the place and laughs with your sister and whispers with your mother. I don't think he's a good soldier at all. I mean one like Father. One of the good soldiers.'
'There aren't any good soldiers,' said Shmuel.

* What do the extracts/conversations tell us about Bruno and Shmuel? They are the same age, but do they act the same? Why might this be the case? Draw the children's attention to the dialogue. Invite two students to read out the dialogue like a play. Notice how Shmuel's dialogue is mostly reactive and short, whereas Bruno leads the conversations and his thoughts tumble out of him in lengthier sections, almost as though he is thinking aloud.
* Ask the children to draw up a list of success criteria for writing a conversation between Bruno and Shmuel. What have they learned from the extracts that they can use in their own writing?

ACTIVITY THREE:

* Challenge students to act out the imagined scene when Bruno visits Shmuel and tells him about the dinner incident. Prompt them to think about how the conversation might start (will Bruno be taking food to Shmuel like he normally does?), how the topic might be raised, and how Shmuel might react to mention of the incident and Lieutenant Kotler. Bruno uses these conversations to explore and sort through his own thoughts. What might these be? Perhaps he is still questioning his father for not intervening and wondering if he still wants to become a soldier.

* Let the students explore the conversations in their pairs. They can then swap roles so that they can experience both sides of the conversation. Freeze conversations mid-point and ask students to talk about how their character might be feeling at that moment. What thoughts are going through their heads? Does their body language communicate these thoughts? Then restart the action and let the children continue. Highlight good examples for the students to watch and comment on.

ACTIVITY FOUR:

* Recap the students' role-plays and discuss those that represented good interpretations of the two characters. You may wish to revisit your earlier success criteria (see Activity Two) and add to this with any new ideas the children may have.

* Based on their learning, the children can go on to write their conversation between Bruno and Shmuel. Less confident writers may wish to use the worksheet ('Friends at the Fence') to draft out their ideas, before adapting these into a finished piece of writing. Prompt students to revisit the text extracts for help with layout and technique.

* End the session by inviting students to read out their finished conversations. Evaluate these using the success criteria you agreed earlier.

FRIENDS AT THE FENCE

BRUNO

SHMUEL

DRAMA: A QUESTION OF LOYALTY

Aim: To use drama to explore a character's feelings and decisions.

Bruno is surprised to discover Shmuel working in the kitchen. Shmuel explains that Lieutenant Kotler has asked him to clean the glasses because his fingers are so small. Bruno offers Shmuel some of the chicken he is eating. Shmuel is scared of accepting the gift because it is against the rules. Confused by his friend's behavior, Bruno proceeds to put some of the chicken into Shmuel's hand. Just as the starving boy starts to eat the chicken, Lieutenant Kotler enters the kitchen and immediately accuses Shmuel of stealing from the refrigerator. Shmuel is frightened and pleads to Kotler that Bruno gave him the chicken because they are friends. Kotler demands to know if this is true and Bruno, frightened by the consequences of his actions, denies knowing his friend.

ACTIVITY ONE:

* Read Chapter Fifteen together, focusing on the scene in the kitchen when Bruno denies his friend (p.170-172). Ask students to respond to the scene:
  - Why did Bruno offer Shmuel the chicken?
  - Should Shmuel have eaten the chicken?
  - What do we already know about Kotler? Are the children right to be frightened of him?
  - How do we feel about Bruno's actions and decisions in this scene?
  - How would we feel if we were Shmuel?

* Set up a 'conscience alley' to explore Bruno's decision. Ask students to create two lines facing each other, each line taking an opposing viewpoint (he was right to deny his friend; he was wrong to deny his friend). One student (acting as Bruno) is then asked to walk slowly between the two lines as each side voices their opinions, statements and arguments. (The following YouTube video provides a demonstration of the conscience alley drama technique: **www.youtube.com/watch?v=nYxUvNpYXuo**). When the student (as Bruno) reaches the end of the alley they should discuss which viewpoint they felt was the most compelling. What decision would they have made for Bruno?

ACTIVITY TWO:

* In small groups, ask students to use drama to explore the kitchen scene as written. Students should assign group members to play Shmuel, Bruno and Kotler. Remaining members can then act as directors, helping to offer suggestions to the actors – body language, dialogue, positioning etc. You may wish to provide simple props (such as a table and chairs) for the students to incorporate in their drama. Dialogue can be improvised and does not need to follow the text. Let the groups retell the scene in their own way. Prompt them to consider how they can make their scene feel dramatic and tense for an audience.

* Challenge groups to repeat the scene, but this time exploring a different outcome. What might have happened if Bruno had admitted his friendship? Students can explore this in any way they wish, perhaps by introducing other characters to the scene (such as Father or Mother). Invite groups to rehearse and perform their dramas to the rest of the class.

READING: THE JEWS AND OPPOSITES

Aim: To use an extract to explore the characters, themes and symbols in the novel.

The fence divides Bruno from his best friend Shmuel, preventing them from playing together. Frustrated and confused by the fence, Bruno consults his sister Gretel. She tells him that the people on the other side of the fence are Jews and must be kept together with their own kind. Bruno is even more confused and asks his sister what makes the people on his own side of the fence different. Gretel is lost for an explanation and the only answer she can give is that they are 'opposite'.

ACTIVITY ONE:

In this short extract (Chapter Sixteen, p.182-183), Bruno discovers that the people living on the other side of the fence are Jews and wonders what that makes him:

'Jews,' said Bruno, testing the word out. He quite liked the way it sounded.
'Jews,' he repeated. 'All the people over that side of the fence are Jews.'
'Yes, that's right,' said Gretel.
'Are we Jews?'
Gretel opened her mouth wide, as if she had been slapped in the face. 'No, Bruno,' she said. 'No, we most certainly are not. And you shouldn't even say something like that.'
'But why not? What are we then?'
'We're...' began Gretel, but then she had to stop to think about it. 'We're...' she repeated, but she wasn't quite sure what the answer to this question really was.
'Well we're not Jews,' she said finally.
'I know we're not,' said Bruno in frustration. 'I'm asking you, if we're not Jews, what are we instead?'
'We're the opposite,' said Gretel, answering quickly and sounding a lot more satisfied with this answer. 'Yes, that's it, we're the opposite.'

* Read the extract together. Ask students to work individually to annotate or use sticky notes to describe Gretel's feelings/responses at each stage of the conversation. For example, shocked, confused, worried, relieved etc. What evidence is there in the text to help us understand Gretel's feelings about the Jews and her uncertainty about her answers?

* Focus on Bruno in the extract. How would we describe his feelings? What has led up to this scene? Do the students feel that Bruno would consider himself an 'Opposite'? Prompt students to use evidence from the text to support their views.

ACTIVITY TWO:

* Provide groups with an enlarged version of the worksheet 'The Great Divide'. The sheet should be divided down the middle, with one side labelled 'Jews' and one side labelled 'Opposites'. The fence section should have its own space in the middle (see below).

* In their groups, challenge students to think about the criteria for each group – based on what they have read – and the characters from the story that they would put on each side of the fence. Students should write names on separate pieces of paper (or use those provided on the worksheet), discuss these each in turn and then place on their sheet.

* Next, ask them to think about characters who they would consider to not belong to any one group based on the agreed criteria. These can be placed on 'the fence'. For example: Maria is a Jew but she works for Bruno's father and respects him, despite his actions; Mother is appalled by what goes on at Out-With and would probably not deem herself to be an 'Opposite'; Bruno's innocence means he sees no differences at all, and so on.

* Students can add new names to their sheet and/or move existing ones into the categories they think best describe their sympathies/motivations. Ask groups to share their sheets at this point. Discuss differences in opinion and encourage students to draw on their learning and interpretations from the text to support their arguments.

* Finally, ask groups to think about all the other things in the book that might categorize or represent each group. For example, you could prompt students to think about the symbols in the book (such as the Nazi Swastika and the Jewish Star) and other thematic devices, such as the role of uniforms and clothing for example. Also, ask them to consider what words and phrases they could add to describe the 'Jews' and the 'Opposites' in the book? Explore these additions together.

READING: THE JEWS AND OPPOSITES

ACTIVITY THREE:

In this short extract (Chapter Sixteen, p.185), Bruno has his head shaved. When he looks at himself in the mirror it occurs to him that he looks just like his best friend, Shmuel.

Afterwards Bruno looked at himself in the bathroom mirror and he felt sick. His entire head looked misshapen now that he was bald and his eyes looked too big for his face. He was almost scared of his own reflection.

'Don't worry,' Father reassured him. 'It'll grow back. It'll only take a few weeks.'

'It's the filth around here that did it,' said Mother. 'If some people could only see the effect this place is having on us all.'

When he saw himself in the mirror Bruno couldn't help but think how much like Shmuel he looked now, and he wondered whether all the people on that side of the fence had lice as well.

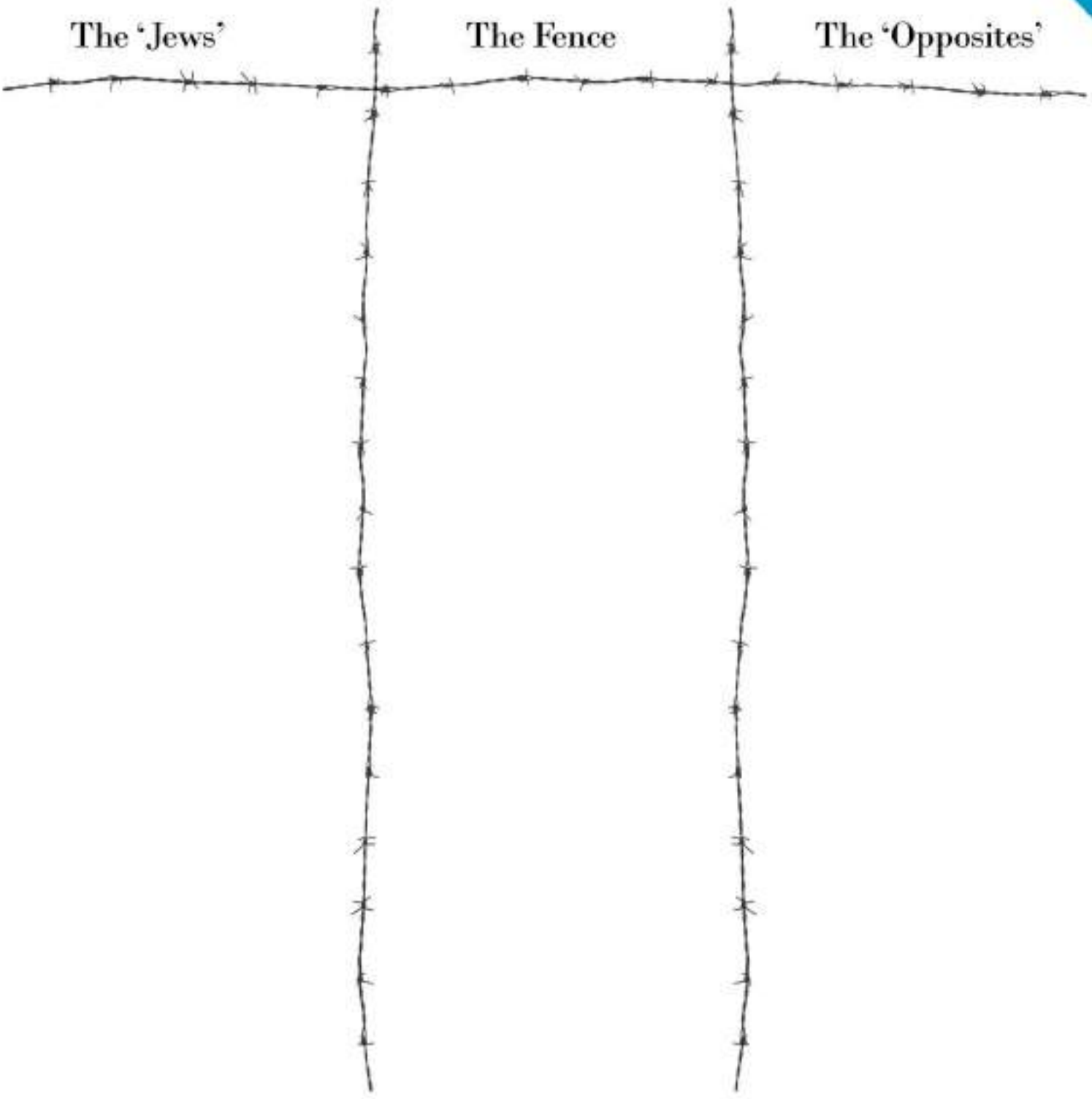
When he saw his friend the next day Shmuel started to laugh at Bruno's appearance, which didn't do a lot for his dwindling self-confidence.

'I look just like you now,' said Bruno sadly, as if this was a terrible thing to admit.

'Only fatter,' admitted Shmuel.

* Read the extract together. It takes place shortly after Bruno's conversation with Gretel about 'Jews' and 'Opposites'. Ask students to discuss the significance of Bruno having his head shaved. What do they think the author is trying to make us think about in this scene? Students should refer to their sheets from Activity Two to support their discussion.

THE GREAT DIVIDE



Bruno	*Mother*	*Pavel*	*Grandmother*
Schmuel	*Father*	*Kotler*	*Grandfather*
Gretel	*Maria*	*Herr Liszt*	*The Fury*

READING: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER

Aim: To explore an extract to learn about the author's voice and the key message of the book.

Bruno is told that he will be returning to Berlin, so he decides to have one last 'great adventure' with his friend, Shmuel. Because of his shaved head, Bruno remembers that he looks just like Shmuel. He suggests that if he had a pair of striped pyjamas he could cross the fence and 'come over on a visit'. Their plan hatched, Bruno sheds his old clothes for a pair of pyjamas and joins Shmuel on the other side of the fence. While searching for evidence of what happened to Shmuel's papa, the two boys are caught up in a mob of prisoners and marched to a building. The two children are innocent to their impending fate...

ACTIVITY ONE:

Read Chapter Nineteen together, then focus on the following short extract (p.212-213) in which Bruno and Shmuel find themselves pushed inside a long and airtight room:

'I'm sorry we didn't find your papa,' said Bruno.

'It's all right,' said Shmuel.

'And I'm sorry we didn't really get to play but when you come to Berlin, that's what we'll do. And I'll introduce you... Oh, what were their names again?' he asked himself, frustrated because they were supposed to be his three best friends for life but they had all vanished from his memory now. He couldn't remember their names and he couldn't picture any of their faces.

'Actually,' he said, looking down at Shmuel, 'it doesn't really matter whether I do or don't. They're not my best friends any more anyway.' He looked down and did something quite out of character for him: he took hold of Shmuel's tiny hand in his and squeezed it tightly.

'You're my best friend, Shmuel,' he said. 'My best friend for life.'

Shmuel may well have opened his mouth to say something back, but Bruno never heard it because at that moment there was a loud gasp from all the marchers who had filled the room, and the door at the front was suddenly closed and a loud metallic sound rang through from the outside.

Bruno raised an eyebrow, unable to understand the sense of all this, but he assumed that it had something to do with keeping the rain out and stopping people from catching colds.

And then the room went very dark and somehow, despite the chaos that followed, Bruno found that he was still holding Shmuel's hand in his own and nothing in the world would have persuaded him to let it go.

* Ask students to write a word or a phrase that describes their response to this extract. Explore these and discuss the different emotions that the extract evoked. Prompt students to reference the text to help explain their responses.

* Focus on Bruno. How has he changed/developed over the course of the story. For example, is it significant that he can't remember the names of his Berlin friends? Also consider how he has stayed the same. What evidence is there for this in the text? (He is still innocent and naïve to what is happening around him.)

* Discuss what is really happening in this scene. How has the author chosen to present this to the reader? From who's viewpoint are we experiencing these dramatic moments? Ask students to pick out the key words that the author uses to describe what is happening. Consider whether the author is right not to expand on the details. Is this an effective technique?

* In groups, ask students to consider the character of Bruno and how his innocence has played a key role throughout the whole of the novel. Why might the author have chosen to centre the story around a nine-year old boy? Do they think Bruno's character was believable? Allow groups time to discuss their opinions before sharing with other groups. Do they ultimately believe the author's choices were the right ones?

ACTIVITY TWO:

* On the title page of the book, the author chooses to describe his story as a fable. Ask students to try and define what a fable is. How does it differ from other types of stories?
* Look together at some examples of fables, or have students research these to share with the class. Reach an understanding that a fable is a story with a moral message. Are there any other elements of fable-writing that could be applied to *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*? For example, fables are 'made up' stories that have imaginary characters and situations. What aspects of the story do they think were invented by the author and which do they believe were based on reality?
* Read the following response by John Boyne, when asked about the fable aspect of his novel:

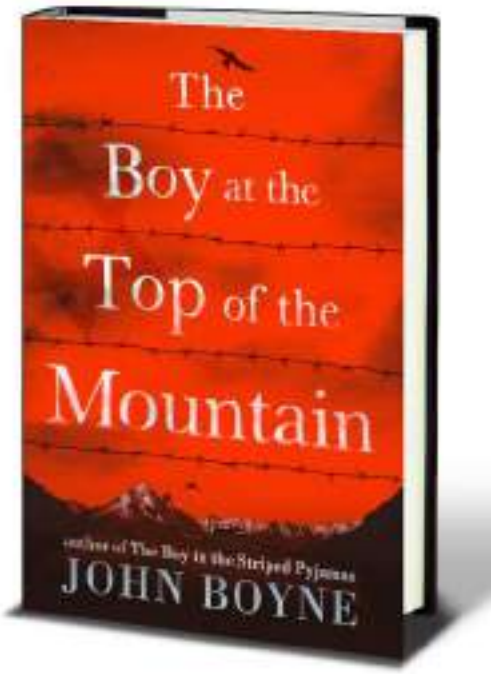
  Considering the serious subject matter of this novel and the fact that I would be taking certain aspects of concentration camp history and changing them slightly in order to serve the story, I felt it was important not to pretend that a story like this was fully based in reality (which was also the reason why I chose never to use the word "Auschwitz" in the novel). My understanding of the term "fable" is a piece of fiction that contains a moral. I hope that the moral at the center of The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas is self-evident to readers.

  (Source: teenreads.com)
* In pairs, ask students to write their own final moral message that they think best sums up the novel.

ACTIVITY THREE:

* Revisit some of the artwork you explored in the history task. What are you all doing there? (For example, the following website features paintings and drawings by prisoners who experienced life in concentration camps: www.theholocaustexplained.org) Talk about how the artists have chosen to capture the life and hardship of the prisoners. Challenge students to create their own piece of art that they think best represents *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*.
* Set up a gallery of the finished artwork to celebrate your students learning journey.

The Boy at the Top of the Mountain



Pierrot is seven-years-old and lives in Paris with his mother. His best friend is called Anshel, who was born deaf and so has taught Pierrot how to sign. Both boys enjoy reading and telling stories. Pierrot often has lots of ideas for stories based on his own experiences, but never the patience to write down the words. Instead, Anshel would often listen to these stories and then write them out for Pierrot to read, insisting that even though he had written them, they were still Pierrot's stories.

Pierrot's father had left three years earlier in the summer of 1933. He fought in the Great War on the side of Germany and, although he survived, Pierrot's mother maintains that 'it was the war that killed him.' Unable to come to terms with what he had experienced, as well as the defeat of the German forces, Pierrot's father had become a drunk, often prone to violent spells. His dogged patriotism was the cause of much conflict in the home, especially as his wife (Pierrot's mother) who was French, was keen to move on from the past. Pierrot was both afraid of his father and also in awe of his bravery and the strength of his beliefs. After his father went missing, they received news several weeks later that he fell beneath a train. Pierrot is determined that one day he will make his father proud of him.

Further tragedy occurs when Pierrot's mother becomes ill and is rushed to hospital. Pierrot visits her over the course of a week and witnesses her deterioration. She passes away, leaving the boy grief-stricken and alone. In the weeks following the funeral, Pierrot goes to live with Anshel and his mother, Madame Bronstein. They are Jewish and Pierrot asks he if can accompany them to temple, but Mme Bronstein is insistent that it isn't a good idea. Pierrot later overhears a conversation between Mme Bronstein and one of her friends, where he learns that he is a gentile and that times are hard right now for Jews in Paris. Mme Bronstein accepts that she does not have the money to support another child so Pierrot will have to be sent away. Pierrot is angered by the news believing that he is being sent away because he is a gentile. Mme Bronstein insists that isn't the case.

SYNOPSIS

Pierrot is sent to an orphanage in Orleans, run by two sisters, Simone and Adele Durand. Bullied by one of the boys, Hugo, and failing to fit in with the other children, Pierrot finds comfort in the exchange of letters with Anshel in Paris, and his new friend Josette. She is older than him and has already been adopted twice but sent back to the orphanage on both occasions for being disruptive. Hugo discovers the two of them together and teases them, leading to a heated confrontation between Josette and Hugo. Josette calls him a 'filthy Jew', which immediately disarms the bully's anger, causing upset. Josette continues to tease him. Pierrot feels confused and torn by the comments, knowing that his best friend is Jewish. Driven to anger, Hugo advances on Josette but Pierrot intercedes, getting a punch to the face for his bravery. Pierrot later learns that Hugo's father was Simon and Adele's brother, who fought in the Great War. Like Pierrot's father, Jacques had never recovered from the experience and had finally died in prison, leaving the sisters to look after Hugo.

Pierrot is surprised when he receives a letter that is not from his friend, Anshel. The letter has come from Austria and is from Pierrot's Aunt Beatrix, his father's sister. Having heard of the boy's plight from Mme Bronstein, Beatrix has requested that Pierrot goes to stay with her in Austria. Once again, Pierrot is packing his bags and heading towards an uncertain future.

Pierrot takes three train journeys to reach his destination. On his first journey he witnesses prejudice against an elderly Jewish man who takes the only available seat on the carriage next to a German woman. She protests and gets the conductor, who orders the man to stand in the corridor. Pierrot is confused by this, failing to understand why the elderly man does not deserve a seat on the train.

After changing onto a train to Munich, Pierrot finds himself sitting with a group of older boys who are blond haired and wearing uniforms with armbands displaying a hooked cross (swastika). Their leader is called Kotler (a character who appears in The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas) who steals Pierrot's sandwiches. Pierrot decides not to make an issue of it as he is fearful of the boys and their air of authority.

Pierrot finally arrives in Salzburg and is met by his Aunt Beatrix, who is described as 'a rather beautiful woman with long red hair'. Exhausted from his travels, Pierrot remembers little of the final stages of his journey, having fallen asleep on the backseat of their chauffeur-driven car. He awakes in his new home, uncertain of his unfamiliar surroundings. He discovers from one of the maids, Herta, that his old clothes have been

incinerated and he will be receiving new ones. He is also told that his new home is called the Berghof. Pierrot immediately sets about exploring. Stepping out of the front door, he is surprised to find two soldiers stationed guard on the doorstep. Despite his attempts to draw a reaction from them, the soldiers ignore him, leaving Pierrot to turn his attention to his breathtaking surroundings. His new home is on a mountain, within a collection of other mountains with huge peaks that rise up into the clouds. He immediately thinks about his friend Anshel and the next letter he will write, and ponders the address he will use: Pierrot Fischer, The Top of the Mountain, Somewhere near Salzburg.

Pierrot discovers that his Aunt Beatrix is the housekeeper at the Berghof and carries some authority. The master of the house visits infrequently, but it must always be kept clean and spotless, and be ready for his arrival. Beatrix takes Pierrot into town to get him more suitable clothing. Pierrot learns that the chauffeur is called Ernst, who clearly has a close friendship/bond with Beatrix. While on the journey, Pierrot is urged to forget about his past and his French roots, and to consider himself German. It is also suggested that he changes his name to Pieter, the German version of Pierrot. When they arrive in town, Ernst leaves them to attend a secretive meeting. Pierrot is warned by his Aunt not to mention anything about this meeting with anyone else.

A few weeks later, Pierrot learns that the master and mistress are coming to visit and the house staff is busy with preparations. Beatrix confronts Pierrot about a letter that has arrived for him, from Anshel. She tells Pierrot that he must forget his friend and never write to him again, or it could get him into a lot of trouble. 'A letter from a Jewish boy would not go down well here.' Pierrot disobeys her and continues to write to Anshel, using their secret name signs to disguise their identities.

Trying to keep out of the way of the busy maids, Pierrot finds himself in the library. He studies the many books on the shelves and then a large map of Europe spread out on the desk. So fascinated by the map, he doesn't hear the commotion and the arrival of the master and his mistress. Only when he becomes aware of someone standing behind him, does he suddenly look round – recognizing the master himself. Pierrot immediately snaps to attention, performing the salute he has practiced many times since arriving. In a loud voice, he hails the master – 'Heil Hitler!'.

A year passes and Pierrot is not writing letters to his friend as frequently as he used to. Instead, he finds himself enjoying the freedom of the outdoors and playing with Herr Hitler's dog, Blondi, on the occasions when the master visits. He has grown closer to

Hitler over the intervening months, which has not gone unnoticed by Beatrix. On one such visit, Hitler calls Pierrot into his office and offers him a gift – a uniform which will make him a member of the Hitlerjugend (Hitler Youth). Pierrot is both anxious and excited by the gift. When he dons the uniform he feels a sense of authority and wonders what it would be like to wield such power over others.

This sense of authority starts to show in the boy's behavior and the way he treats the maids in the house. Beatrix confronts him, concerned with the amount of time he is spending with the master. In a telling conversation, Pierrot talks down to his aunt, his words filled with patriotism for the Fatherland and how Germany has been robbed of its rightful glory. He even refers to his father as weak and hopes that his own actions will restore pride in his family. The boy's words reduce Beatrix to tears, as she witnesses the transformation that is occurring.

The first year of the war is drawing to a close and Christmas is fast approaching. Pierrot's last letter from his friend, Anshel, talks about how Paris is no longer safe for him and his mother. He also enquires why Pierrot hasn't replied to his last two letters. Pierrot crumples up the letter and tosses it into the fire.

Pierrot overhears a conversation between his Aunt Beatrix and the chauffeur Ernst that hints at some kind of plot. It is clear that they wish to put an end to the Fuhrer. On a visit to the town, Pierrot is suspicious of Ernst's behavior and witnesses a meeting between him and another man, in which Ernst is given a bottle of medicine and a syringe. He is shown how to inject the medicine into a cake.

On Christmas Eve, the master hosts a small party for the staff at the Berghof. For the final course, a cake is brought in and Ernst insists that Hitler tries the first piece. Pierrot suspects that the cake is poisoned and speaks up, demanding that Ernst eats the first cake slice instead. Ernst protests and then tries to flee before being caught by the guards and put under arrest.

Under interrogation, Pierrot reveals that his Aunt was also in on the plot. He is sent to bed, but cannot sleep. When he hears boots crunching on the gravel outside, he goes to his window and looks out. He witnesses Ernst's execution. His aunt is dragged out next to receive the same treatment. As the second bullet rings out, Pierrot reminds himself that she was a traitor and his act was justified. He now considers himself a Pieter and not a Pierrot.

SYNOPSIS

It is 1942 and Pieter is now thirteen. He wields his authority with abandon around the house, threatening the cook and ordering that the most recent letter from Anshel is burnt immediately. He also sits in on meetings and takes notes for the master, which includes plans for a concentration camp.

Two years have passed, and Pieter is proud of his privileged position but there is something else he keenly desires, a local girl in the town called Katrina who has been friends with at school. He visits her father's shop to buy some fountain pen nibs. Pieter feels clumsy and awkward in her presence, but finds the courage to ask her if she would accompany him to a party at the Berghof to celebrate Eva Braun's birthday. It is clear that Katrina does not share Pieter's patriotism or anti-Semitic views. She adamantly refuses but her father intervenes and insists that they will attend the party.

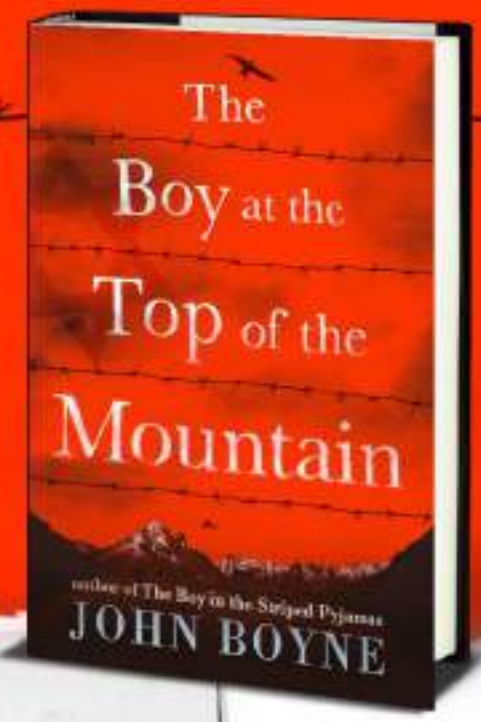
At the party, Pieter finds Katrina scrutinizing one of the paintings. She describes it as ghastly, which alarms Pieter as it was painted by the master. He ushers her into his bedroom and closes the door, warning her that she shouldn't say such things. Once alone, Pieter is overcome with desire and starts to make amorous advances. Katrina asks him to stop, but he persists – which forces her to push away. This angers Pieter who is used to getting his own way. He pins her to the wall and kisses her again, realizing that he has the power to do whatever he wants. However, a blow to the head knocks him to the ground. One of the maids, Emma, has come to Katrina's recuse and threatens Pieter to leave her alone. He agrees, his anger turning to shame at what he has done. After asking them to leave, he lays down on his bed and cries.

Pieter is now sixteen and has been made a junior soldier. It is 1945 and the war has been raging throughout Europe. No longer naïve, Pieter understands what is happening to the Jews and the reasons why he was told not to correspond with Anshel. He finds himself alone on the mountain – the last of the servants having departed and the master, now a shadow of his former self, no longer visiting. Even Katrina and her father have disappeared, their shop now boarded up. Now alone, he has become a ghost that haunts the mountain, tortured by regret at what he has been party to. Uncertain what to do, he reads the papers for news of the war and learns that the allies have arrived in Germany and Hitler is dead. American soldiers arrive at the Berghof. Pieter tries to hide from them but is captured – and taken to a prison camp.

When he is finally released, Pieter has nowhere to go and becomes a drifter, moving from place to place. He finally arrives back in Paris and, by chance, discovers that Anshel Bronstein has become a published author. He seeks out Anshel and the two of them meet for the first time since they were boys. Pieter signs to his friend that he has a story to tell – and just like old times, Anshel promises to write his story for him.

The Boy at the Top of the Mountain

EXTRACT



Chapter One

Three Red Spots on a Handkerchief

Although Pierrot Fischer's father didn't die in the Great War, his mother Émilie always maintained it was the war that killed him.

Pierrot wasn't the only seven year old in Paris to live with just one parent. The boy who sat in front of him at school hadn't laid eyes on his mother in the four years since she'd run off with an encyclopaedia salesman, while the classroom bully, who called Pierrot 'Le Petit' because he was so small, had a room above his grandparents' tobacco shop on the Avenue de la Motte-Picquet, where he spent most of his time dropping water balloons from the upstairs window onto the heads of passers-by below and then insisting that it had nothing to do with him.

And in an apartment on the ground floor of his own building on the nearby Avenue Charles-Floquet, Pierrot's best friend, Anshel Bronstein, lived alone with his mother, Mme Bronstein, his father having drowned two years earlier during an unsuccessful attempt to swim the English Channel.

3

EXTRACT

Having been born only weeks apart, Pierrot and Anshel had grown up practically as brothers, one mother taking care of both babies when the other needed a nap. But unlike a lot of brothers they never argued. Anshel had been born deaf, so the boys had developed a sign language early on, communicating easily, and expressing through nimble fingers everything they needed to say. They even created special symbols for each other to use instead of their names. Anshel gave Pierrot the sign of the dog, as he considered his friend to be both kind and loyal, while Pierrot adopted the sign of the fox for Anshel, who everyone said was the smartest boy in their class. When they used these names, their hands looked like this:

They spent most of their time together, kicking a football around in the Champ de Mars and reading the same books. So close was their friendship that Pierrot was the only person Anshel allowed to read the stories he wrote in his bedroom at night. Not even Mme Bronstein knew that her son wanted to be a writer.

This one's good, Pierrot would sign, his fingers fluttering in the air as he handed back a bundle of pages. *I liked the bit about the horse and the part where the gold is discovered hidden in*

the coffin. This one's not so good, he would continue, handing back a second sheaf. *But that's because your handwriting is so terrible that I wasn't able to read some parts . . . And this one*, he would add, waving a third pile in the air as if he was at a parade. *This one doesn't make any sense at all. I'd throw this one in the bin if I were you.*

It's experimental, signed Anshel, who didn't mind criticism but could sometimes be a little defensive about the stories his friend enjoyed the least.

No, signed Pierrot, shaking his head. *It just doesn't make any sense. You should never let anyone read this one. They'll think you've lost your marbles.*

Pierrot too liked the idea of writing stories, but he could never sit still long enough to put the words down on the page. Instead, he sat on a chair opposite his friend and just started signing, making things up or describing some escapade that he had got up to in school, and Anshel would watch carefully before transcribing them for him later.

So did I write this? Pierrot asked when he was finally given the pages and read through them.

No, I wrote it, Anshel replied, shaking his head. *But it's your story.*

Emilie, Pierrot's mother, rarely talked about his father any more, although the boy still thought of him constantly. Wilhelm Fischer had lived with his wife and son until three years earlier, but left Paris in the summer of 1933, a few months after his son's fourth birthday. Pierrot remembered his father as a tall man who would mimic the sounds of a horse as he carried the boy on his broad shoulders through the streets, breaking into an occasional gallop that always

made Pierrot scream with delight. He taught his son German, to remind him of his ancestry, and did his best to help him learn simple songs on the piano, although Pierrot knew he would never be as accomplished as his father. Papa played folk songs that brought tears to the eyes of visitors, particularly when he sang along in that soft but powerful voice that spoke of memory and regret. If his musical skills were not great, Pierrot made up for this with his skill at languages, he could flit between speaking German to his father and French to his mother with no difficulty whatsoever. His party trick was singing *La Marseillaise* in German and then *Das Deutschlandlied* in French, a skill that sometimes made dinner guests uncomfortable.

'I don't want you doing that any more, Pierrot,' Maman told him one evening after his performance had caused a mild disagreement with some neighbours. 'Learn something else if you want to show off. Juggling, Magic tricks. Standing on your head. Anything that doesn't involve singing in German.'

'What's wrong with German?' asked Pierrot.

'Yes, Emilie,' said Papa from the armchair in the corner, where he had spent the evening drinking too much wine, something that always left him brooding over the bad experiences that haunted him. 'What's wrong with German?'

'Haven't you had enough, Wilhelm?' she asked, her hands pressed firmly to her hips as she turned to look at him.

'Enough of what? Enough of your friends insulting my country?'

'They weren't insulting it,' she said. 'They just find it difficult to forget the war, that's all. Particularly those who lost loved ones in the trenches.'

'And yet they don't mind coming into my home, eating my food and drinking my wine.'

Papa waited until Maman had returned to the kitchen before summoning Pierrot over and placing an arm round his waist. 'Someday we will take back what's ours,' he said, looking the boy directly in the eye. 'And when we do, remember whose side you're on. You may have been born in France and you may live in Paris, but you're German through and through, just like me. Don't forget that, Pierrot.'

WRITING: A LITTLE LESS FRENCH, A LITTLE MORE GERMAN

Aim: To use empathy to write a letter in the style of a character.

Following the death of his parents, Pierrot becomes an orphan and is accepted into an orphanage in Orleans. During his time at the orphanage, he exchanges many letters with his best friend Anshel, who represents a vital link to home and his childhood.

Then one day, he receives a letter from a stranger – his Aunt Beatrix who lives in Austria. On hearing of Pierrot's plight, Beatrix wants him to join her in Austria where she works as a housekeeper. On arriving in Austria, Pierrot soon learns that he will have to say goodbye to his old life including his friendship with Anshel.

ACTIVITY ONE: Discuss, Revisit and Predict

If you have a copy of the book, read up to the following extract in Chapter Nine (p.91). If you don't have a copy of the book, you can use the extract below and the extract from the book provided earlier in this resource pack.

'It's a letter,' she said, her tone growing stern.

'A letter for me?'

'Yes.'

Pierrot stared at it in surprise. He couldn't think who might have written it.

'It's from your friend, Anshel,' said Beatrix.

'How do you know?'

'I opened it, of course.'

Pierrot frowned. 'You opened my letter?' he asked.

'And a good thing that I did,' said Beatrix. 'Believe me when I tell you that I am only looking out for your best interests.'

He reached forward to take it and, sure enough, the envelope had been sliced open at the top and its contents taken out and examined.

'You need to write back,' continued Beatrix. 'Today, preferably. And tell him never to write to you again.'

Pierrot looked up at her in amazement. 'But why would I do that?' he asked.

'I know it must seem strange,' she replied. 'But letters from this… this Anshel boy could get you into more trouble than you realize. You and me. It wouldn't matter if his name was Franz or Heinrich or Martin. But Anshel?' She shook her head. 'A letter from a Jewish boy would not go down well here.'

WRITING: A LITTLE LESS FRENCH, A LITTLE MORE GERMAN

Focus on the extract and read it together. Ask students to discuss why Beatrix is concerned about the letter. What reasons does she highlight to explain this concern?

Why might Anshel being Jewish be a problem? If you have a copy of the book, you may wish to revisit some of the views/treatment of Jews that has already occurred in the book, such as Josette's confrontation with Hugo at the orphanage (p.38-39), and the old Jewish man being told to move on the train (p.48-49). Or you could look at the treatment of the Jews in *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*. Do we think that Pierrot understands the significance of his aunt's warning?

What does Pierrot think of Anshel? Ask students to describe their friendship. (p.84, Pierrot tells the chauffeur Ernst that 'He's my best friend. I've known him since I was born. He's practically my brother.') Do they think Pierrot will obey his aunt and tell Anshel never to write to him again – or will be disobey her? What might the repercussions be of each decision?

ACTIVITY TWO: Exploring Pierrot's changing relationships

Tell students they are going to be writing Pierrot's next letter to Anshel. Before they begin to draft their letters, they are going to be exploring Pierrot's character and recapping the events that have happened to him by creating a character box. For this, pairs or groups could be given a shoe-box or other container or they could use a piece of paper to draw a box and then illustrate and write what they'd like to be put inside it. Explain that they are going to fill their box with all the things that make Pierrot who he is up to this point in the story.

They will need to revisit the text and think about the following:

- The key events that have happened to Pierrot. (These could be written on square cards.)
- Important words or lines of dialogue that are important to his character. (These could be written in speech bubbles)
- Thoughts and emotions that Pierrot may have experienced at different moments. (These could be written in thought bubbles, with a brief sentence description of the cause of that feeling/emotion)

* Allow time for students to complete their character boxes, filling them with speech and thought bubbles, and event cards that summarize his character to date. If you wish, pairs/groups could swap their boxes with others, to explore different ideas and responses.
* Ask groups to share their learning. Work together to make a whole-class display/mind map of the information that the students have provided. Highlight the key moments in the book that have had a memorable impact on Pierrot and may shape the person he is at this very moment in the novel. As Pierrot sits down to write his letter, what emotions and thoughts might he have about his new situation? Ask students to explore these, using the display and their character boxes to help with ideas.

WRITING: A LITTLE LESS FRENCH, A LITTLE MORE GERMAN

ACTIVITY THREE: Letting writing

Students should draft their letters to Anshel. Prompt them to think about:

- Aunt Beatrix's warning. Will they tell Anshel never to write back?
- Aunt Beatrix opens and reads the letters. Should Pierrot be careful about what he says? Perhaps he and Anshel could use their own code or hint at things without saying them outright.
- Anshel and Pierrot shared many letters when he was in the orphanage (page 71), so Anshel will already know about many of the events at the orphanage. However, Pierrot may want to compare his new home on the mountain with his past experiences at the orphanage. Will he miss Josette, for example – or even Hugo for that matter?
- Since arriving at the mountain, Pierrot has been gradually made aware that his old life is unacceptable. His clothes from Paris have been incinerated, he has been told to consider a new name (Pieter) and he has been told not to mention he has a friend called Anshel Bronstein. Will his frustrations or worries spill out onto the page? Anshel is his only remaining link to his past in Paris.

* Also remind students to refer to their character boxes and the whole-class display for ideas for their letter. If students have previously completed the letter-writing task for *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* (see Dear Grandmother…), they could revisit these – comparing the two characters and what they have in common (both are writing about a new home and an uncertain situation). This may also generate further ideas for adapting and embellishing their Pierrot letters.

* Students can share their completed letters at the end of the session. Talk about different approaches to the letter-writing and invite students to explain their choices. Which letters do they think were the most effective at capturing the character of Pierrot?

READING AND DRAMA: FOR THE FATHERLAND

Aim: To explore character and dialogue through reading and drama.

Pierrot finally meets the master of the house – the Führer himself, Adolf Hitler. While these visits are short and infrequent, the Führer decides to take Pierrot under his wing. For a lonely and impressionable boy, the attention is welcomed. Over time, Pierrot starts to see the world differently, influenced by the patriotic words of the Führer, who acts as a reminder of Pierrot's own father who fought bravely in the Great War.

ACTIVITY ONE: Exploring how Pierrot changed

Revisit the following extract from Chapter Eight (p.117), when the Führer hands Pierrot a gift:

Pierrot's fingers started to undo the string that held the package together. It had been a long time since he'd received a present and it was rather exciting to get one now.

'This is very kind of you,' he said.

'Just open it,' replied the Führer.

The strings came loose, the brown paper parted and Pierrot reached inside to remove what lay inside. Inside was a pair of black short trousers, a light brown shirt, some shoes, a dark blue tunic, a black neckerchief and a soft brown cap. A patch featuring a white bolt of lightning against a black background was sewn onto the left shirt sleeve.

Pierrot stared at the package's contents with a mixture of anxiety and desire. He remembered the boys on the train wearing clothes similar to this, with different designs but equal authority; how they had bullied him, and how Rottenführer Kotler had stolen his sandwiches. He wasn't sure that this was the type of person he wanted to be. But then again, those boys had been afraid of nothing. And he also liked the idea of belonging to something.

'These are very special clothes indeed,' said the Führer.

* Ask students to read the extract and then highlight words in the text that describe Pierrot's feelings as he opens and then reveals the present. Discuss his emotional journey in this scene, from his initial excitement to anxiety and desire, to a need to feel part of something.
* Explore the idea of the uniform. What does it mean for Pierrot? Prompt students to think about his past and his relationship with his father. Is there a special significance to him receiving this gift from the Führer? Focus on the line, 'And he also liked the idea of belonging to something.' What will he now belong to by accepting this gift?
* If you have a copy of the book, remind students of the conversation about uniforms between Pierrot, Beatrix and the chauffeur, Ernst (Chapter Six, p.77). Ernst comments that a person who wears a uniform '… believes he can do anything he likes.' Ask students to discuss in pairs why the author chose to include this conversation. What impact will the Führer's gift have on Pierrot as the story develops? How might this affect his relationships with other characters, such as Beatrix, Anshel, Ernst and the Führer? Explore these ideas as a whole class.

ACTIVITY TWO: Bringing Pierrot to life

Students will be exploring the following short extract from Chapter Nine (p.128), when a concerned Aunt Beatrix confronts Pierrot about his new beliefs:

Beatrix sat down on the bed and patted the quilt, inviting him to sit next to her. 'What kind of things does the Führer talk to you about?' she asked.

'It's rather complicated,' he replied. 'It has to do with history and politics, and the Führer says that the female brain-'

'Try me. I'll do my best to keep up.'

'We talk about how we have been robbed,' he said.

'We? Who is this we? You and I? You and him?'

'All of us. The German people.'

'Of course. You're German now. I forgot.'

'My father's birth right is my own,' replied Pierrot defensively.

'And what have we been robbed of exactly?'

'Our land. Our pride. The Jews stole it from us. They're taking over the world, you see. After the Great War-'

'But, Pieter,' she said, 'you must remember that we lost the Great War.'

'Please don't interrupt me when I'm speaking, Aunt Beatrix,' said Pierrot with a sigh. 'It shows a lack of respect on your part. Of course I remember that we lost, but you in turn must accept that we suffered indignities afterwards that were designed to humiliate us. The Allies could not be content with a victory, they wanted the German people on their knees as retribution. Our country was filled with cowards who gave in to our enemies too easily. We will not make that mistake again.'

'And your father?' asked Beatrix, looking him directly in the eye. 'Was he one of those cowards?'

'The worst of all. For he allowed weakness to vanquish his spirit. But I am not like him. I am strong. I will restore pride to the name of Fisher.' He stopped and stared at his aunt. 'What's the matter?' he asked. 'Why are you crying?'

* Provide pairs of students with the dialogue from the extract presented as a play script, with no stage directions. For example:
Beatrix: What kind of things does the Führer talk about?
Pierrot: It's rather complicated. It has to do with history and politics, and the Führer says that the female brain-
Beatrix: Try me. I'll do my best to keep up.

* Ask students to read through the scene together before planning their own performance. They will need to consider how the lines will be spoken and how the two characters might be reacting to each other's words. Students should also think about the positioning and movement of the two characters during the scene and how these could be used to help portray drama and emotion.

* Invite students to share their performances. Talk about different interpretations of the characters and dialogue. Prompt them to discuss the significance of this scene in the context of the book so far.

ACTIVITY THREE: Questioning Pierrot's choices

* Students should read the extract from Chapter Nine (p.128) and compare with their own performances and interpretations from the previous activity. Discuss how the author has created emotion in this scene. There is very little narrative description; instead the feelings of the characters are portrayed through their spoken words. Do the students feel this is an effective technique?

* Consider how Pierrot has changed as a result of the Führer's influence. Ask students to imagine that Pierrot's father and mother have watched this scene unfold. What would they say to Pierrot if they could? In the same pairs as the previous activity, challenge students to explore each of these characters. The performance could be delivered as two separate monologues or could be performed as a conversation between the two characters, discussing their son. If you wish, you may want to create short character profiles beforehand, to recap what we already know about Pierrot's father and mother.

* Invite students to share their performances. Discuss the different responses. Explore the idea of conscience, our inner sense of right and wrong. Do the students feel that how Pierrot is acting is right? Does he? Recap some of the key moments from the children's performances. Do the father and mother, and the advice/responses they gave, represent the conflict of emotions at the heart of Pierrot?

ABOUT JOHN BOYNE

John Boyne was born in Ireland in 1971. He is the author of nine novels for adults and four for younger readers, including the international bestselling *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* which has sold more than six million copies worldwide.
His novels are published in over 45 languages.
He is married and lives in Dublin.

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www.johnboyne.com

MORE WAR STORIES BY JOHN BOYNE

Stay Where You Are and then Leave

The day the First World War broke out, Alfie Summerfield's father promised he wouldn't go away to fight - but he broke that promise the following day. Four years later, Alfie doesn't know where his father might be, other than that he's away on a special, secret mission.

Watch John Boyne talk about his World War II stories and read an extract from *The Boy at the Top of the Mountain* at-

www.bit.ly/1iLgysX

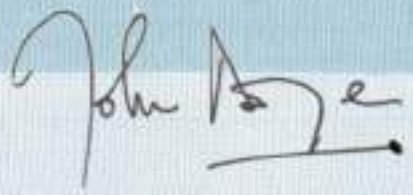
www.bit.ly/1PNtKIC

FROM ONE BOY TO ANOTHER....

Dear reader,

It's almost ten years since I published my first novel for young readers. THE BOY IN THE STRIPED PYJAMAS, a book which changed my life in so many ways. I hope it would find an audience but never expected readers to take it so much to their hearts.

I'm returning to the Second World War with THE BOY AT THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN, a novel which explores how easy it is to become brainwashed. I've always been intrigued by how the German nation was so easily corrupted by the magnetism and power of Adolf Hitler and I've attempted a study of this in microcosm. Taking nine year-old Pierrot, an orphan who begins the novel as a very decent boy but soon becomes something very different, as my central character.



FURTHER READING

Websites:

www.teenreads.com/authors/john-boyne/news/interview-090906
The Teen Reads website features an interview with John Boyne, in which he talks about the themes of the book and the decisions that he made to tell his story.

www.theholocaustexplained.org
The Holocaust Explained website is aimed at 11-16 years. It provides an excellent source of information, should you wish to create your own resources for younger students. The site also features extensive galleries of photographs and artwork.

www.het.org.uk
The Holocaust Educational Trust has free downladable lesson plans, classroom resources and guidance documents for teaching the holocaust. (The resources are free but you will need to register with the site to access them.)

www.holocausthistory.net/start.htm
The Holocaust History website provides age-friendly resources to help students find out more about the holocaust. The site feaures photographs, documents, video footage and real-life accounts.

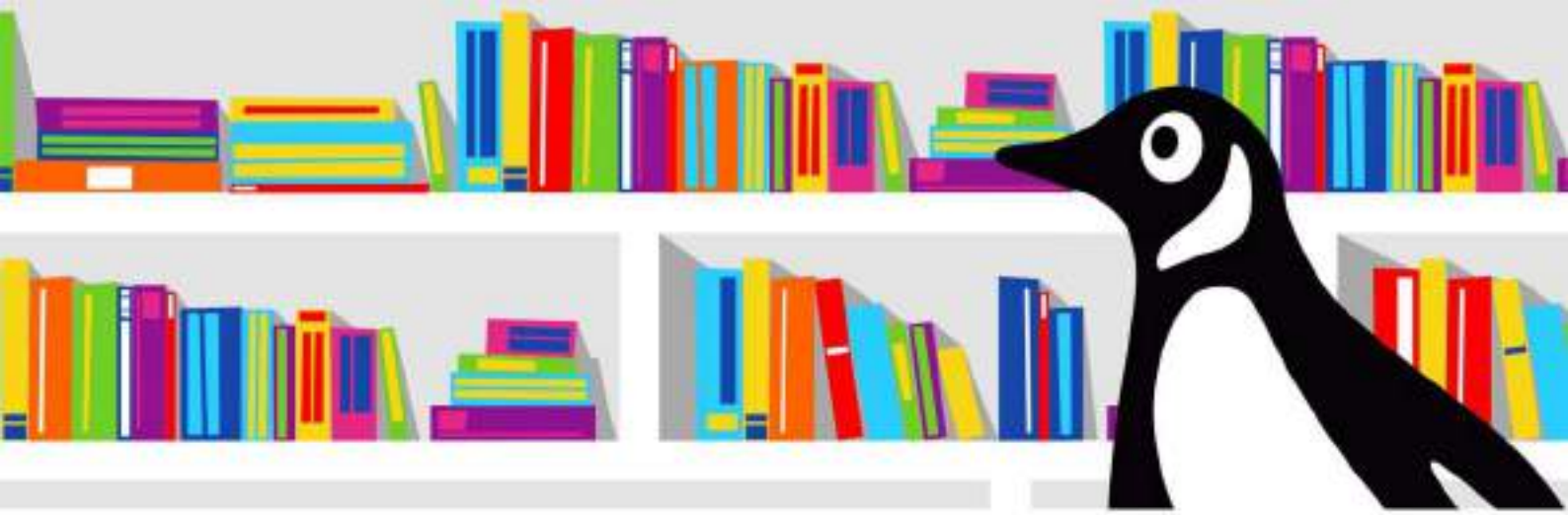
www.sfi.usc.edu/survivorexhibit/vhfmain.htm
The Shoah Visual History Foundation website has an excellent visual presentation on the holocaust, featuring the stories of four survivors who recount their experiences.

www.annefrank.org/
The Anne Frank Museum website features an informative section on Anne Frank, using text, photographs and extracts from her diary to explore what life was like for Jews during World War II.

www.resources.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/Homework/war/index.htm
The Woodlands Junior School website provides a helpful overview of World War II, including a timeline and images.

Books:

***The Diary of a Young Girl*, by Anne Frank, Puffin, 2007**
The world famous account of her family's attempt to flee the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands and hide in an Amsterdam warehouse. An excellent resource that provides a different perspective on the events of World War II and can be used to imagine Shmuel's possible experiences in Krakow.



Schools

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Puffin Virtually Live is a series of free online shows aimed at school pupils aged 7-11. The shows celebrate the world's biggest and most loved children's authors, illustrators and stories including the annual Roald Dahl Day show. Puffin Virtually Live aims to engage and excite school pupils about reading, books and authors and inspire them to write and draw their own stories. It is an ideal resource to share in the classroom or library and can be watched as a class, in a group or as part of a whole school activity.

Register for the next Puffin Virtually Live show or watch previous shows on demand at
www.bit.ly/PuffinVirtuallyLive

These resources were brought to you by Penguin Schools and Michael J. Ward. Michael is a former senior editor of Child Education magazine, and is now a freelance writer and editor with over 14 years publishing experience in the education sector.