



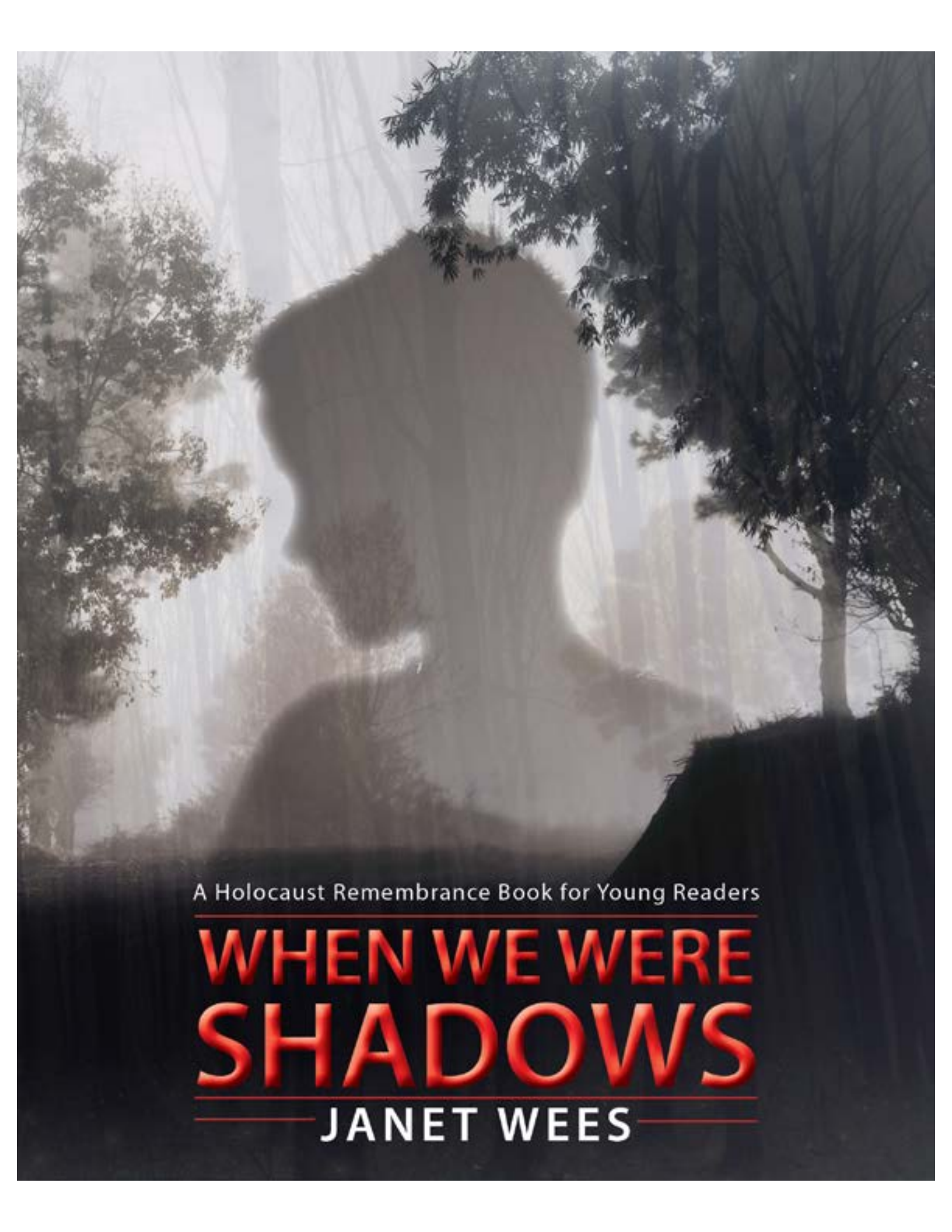
TEACHER'S GUIDE

BY JANET WEES

A Holocaust Remembrance Book for Young Readers

**WHEN WE WERE
SHADOWS**

JANET WEES



A Holocaust Remembrance Book for Young Readers

**WHEN WE WERE
SHADOWS**

JANET WEES

When We Were Shadows

by Janet Wees

Teacher's Guide

Second Story Press

A. Story Summary

When We Were Shadows is a story about the experiences of a young Jewish boy named Walter and his family during the Holocaust. They were German Jews, but in 1937, Walter's parents decided to immigrate to the Netherlands with him, his sister Hannah, and their grandmother. However, when the Nazis invaded the Netherlands in 1940, Walter's family—and all other Dutch Jews—experienced the prohibitions and restrictions imposed by the invaders. As they watched their Jewish friends and neighbours disappear and heard rumours of concentration camps and death camps, Walter's parents decided to leave their home to save their lives. The book recounts the family's journey of having to run from one hiding place to another to avoid being caught by the Nazis.

Although we rarely see them or know their names, the Dutch Underground is clearly the hero of the story. We see how effectively this complex network of people kept countless Jews alive until the war was over. In the book, we also meet the many people that Walter and his family must live with and depend upon, and we learn that there are many stories of heroism during the Holocaust. Most of all, the story chronicles the growth of Walter, the protagonist, through both his letter writing and first person account of the events. As well as being a story about the Holocaust and its impact on the country, *When We Were Shadows* is also the story of Walter's emotional journey from the age of five to fourteen.

When We Were Shadows is a work of fiction for young readers, ages nine to twelve years old. The author, Janet Wees, based the novel on a well-known Dutch story of survival during the Holocaust. In fact, she wrote the book in collaboration with Ze'ev Baar, a Dutch Holocaust survivor, on whom the character of Walter is patterned. The authenticity of the story is heightened by photographs from Ze'ev's personal experience, as well as archival photos from the Second World War. Important themes that are explored in the story include The Impact of War, Family Separation, and Loss of Childhood. The novel has 160 pages.

B. Pre-reading, Listening, and Speaking Activities



Activity 1: Learning About the Holocaust and Understanding the Vocabulary of *When We Were Shadows*: Cloze Exercise

Before reading the book, it would be useful for students to research background information on the Holocaust. There are many online resources available for students of all grades. Choose two or three documents for your students to read.

Then, have them complete the cloze exercise below, where they will find and use vocabulary key to their understanding of the story. As students work through the cloze exercise, you can also create a word wall where students add the cloze sentence and a definition of each key word.

Directions:

You have read some information about the Holocaust and World War II, which is important to understanding the story. Here are some words that you need to know to appreciate the story. Use each word below to fill in the blanks in the sentences that follow. Use each word only one time.

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Hitler | 9. Deportation |
| 2. Prohibitions | 10. Europe |
| 3. Jews | 11. Underground |
| 4. Invasion | 12. Concentration |
| 5. Germany | 13. Transfer |
| 6. Anti-Semitic | 14. Liberation |
| 7. Invaded | 15. Separate |
| 8. Allies | 16. Restrictions |

1. In 1933, the German people elected a new leader named Adolf _____.
2. He was a very evil man who blamed many problems that his country, _____, was having on different groups of people. But most of all, he blamed all of the country's problems on _____.
3. Very soon after he was elected, the government passed many _____ laws that made life very difficult for Jewish people in Germany.
4. Beginning in 1939, Hitler's army _____ many countries in _____, and the first one was Poland.
5. The _____ of the Netherlands, or Holland, was in 1940. When that happened, the German army passed laws that, among other things, stopped Jewish children from going to school and regulated what time Jews needed to be home at night. These laws outlined _____ and _____.
6. Also, in all of the countries that Germany invaded, the Nazi army ordered the _____ of Jews away from their homes to prisons called _____ camps.
7. From 1939 to 1945, several countries—including Britain, the United States, and Canada—used their armies to fight the Nazi invasion of Europe. Those countries were called the _____.
8. In many of the Nazi-occupied countries, the citizens of those countries organized activities to resist their enemies and protect Jews from being caught and deported. In each country, that organized group of citizens was called the _____.
9. That dedicated group of citizens worked very hard to move or _____ Jews from their homes to various hiding places. Sometimes, they also had to _____ older or sick members of a family for their own safety.
10. After 1944, the armies of Britain, Canada, the United States, and other countries defeated the German army in each of the occupied countries. The day that they drove their enemies out of each country was called the _____.



Activity 2: Creating a Holocaust Fact Sheet

Another option for students in higher grades is to research the Holocaust and create a fact sheet based on that research.

Below is an assignment that can be used to evaluate students individually, or as a non-evaluated exercise that will help them to appreciate the book. You can also have students work together in groups of four or five, and encourage each group member to work on one specific subtopic.

Whether they are working alone or as part of a group, encourage your students to read and complete the assignment using point-form notes written in their own words. If you haven't done so already, speak to students about the pitfalls of plagiarism and explain that it is unacceptable in schoolwork.

Directions:

- a. Using a search engine and websites approved by your teacher, find two documents about the Holocaust. Make sure that you can read them easily and that they are not longer than two or three pages.
- b. You are going to create a fact sheet on the Holocaust using the subtopics below. Use this sheet for your rough work. Then, use your rough notes to create the assignment that you will hand in for marking. You may handwrite your assignment, write it out on a computer and give me a hard copy, or email it to me.
- c. Create the fact sheet using point-form notes. Complete sentences are not necessary.
- d. Please make notes using your own words. Do not copy many words from the web pages. Instead, read the information and make your own notes in your own writing style.
- e. Research and then include two or three pictures or photographs that will make your fact sheet more interesting.
- f. Your assignment will be marked for correct details, point-form style, neatness, and correct spelling and grammar.

Here are the headings you need to use:

1. Who were Adolf Hitler and the Nazis? (8–10 facts)
2. What were the Anti-Semitic Laws in Germany? (8–10 facts)
3. What was life like for Jews in Nazi-occupied countries? (8–10 facts)
4. What was the Underground? What did they do for Jews in occupied countries? (8–10 facts)



Activity 3: Being in Hiding: Discussion: What Would You Do?

Before reading the book, discuss with your students their thoughts and feelings about what it would be like to be a child in hiding. In a multicultural classroom, it's very possible that you have students who have emigrated from war-torn countries. They themselves may have experienced being in hiding or on the run.

Before doing this activity and starting the book, inform those students who have emigrated from war-torn countries about the subject of the novel. Give them the option of opting out of this discussion if they choose. However, if they wish, give those students the choice of being the experts in their groups on being in hiding. If possible, place one of your "experts" in your discussion groups so that they can provide everyone else with authentic information and experiences about the topic.

Directions:

- a. Organize yourselves into groups of four.
- b. Discuss each of the questions below. Make sure that each group member has the chance to make a contribution.
- c. Group members should make their own notes to answer the questions.
- d. You will have 30 minutes to do the activity. Then, we will take up the questions as a class. Each group will be asked to answer one or more of the questions. Choose one or more of your group members to speak for your group on specific questions.

Here are your discussion questions:

- 1. Have you or any members of your family ever lived in a country where a war broke out? If you can, please describe when and where that happened.

- 2. How would you feel if you needed to leave your home quickly, in secret, and without telling any friends or neighbours? Do you think that you would be able to do that? Why or why not?

3. What would you miss the most if you had to leave your home quickly? Make a list.

4. Imagine that you had a knapsack about the same size as the one that many students use for their schoolwork. If you had to move from your home to a hiding place quickly, what would you put in that knapsack to take with you?

5. If you and your family had to leave your home quickly, what important items or objects would you have to leave behind? Who might your parents trust to keep those items safe? What else do you think they might do to keep them safe?

6. If you needed to leave your home, you would also have to leave your school. How would you keep up with your schoolwork? How would your parents help you to do that? Keep in mind that wherever you are going, you may not be able to use a computer or any other electronic device. What would you do?

7. Sometimes people live in countries that are at war, or where certain religious or cultural groups are treated very badly and are often in danger. These people need to be in hiding and to keep moving to different hiding places over months or years. How do you think you would feel if you had to do that? List these feelings and the reasons for them.

C. Reading and Writing Activities



Activity 4: Reading Comprehension Questions

These questions can be used to check your students' understanding of the story. They review details of plot, characterization, theme, and setting. Students should also give their opinions and feelings about characters and situations, and predict outcomes. It is important to have students interact and talk about their learning in class discussions and not just in a test format.

Assign these questions for written work, class and group discussions, evaluated assignments, and class tests.

Prologue: May 8, 1995 (pages 1–2)

1. Some stories have a prologue before the story begins. What is a good definition of the term “prologue?”
2. What is the reason for writing a prologue for this story?
3. Who has written this prologue? Who is Jenny? What is her relationship to the storyteller?
4. What does the storyteller tell us about his personality?
5. How is he able to write this book?
6. Why do you think the storyteller calls his story a “gift” to Jenny?

Chapter One: The Leaving (pages 3–9)

7. How many people are in this family? What are their names?
8. Why are Mama and Hannah crying, and why are all of them dressing in layers?
9. Why is Hannah upset but Walter is excited?
10. What are four clues that the family is in a dangerous situation?
11. What is another name for the Netherlands? Where is that country?
12. Why is Hannah angry with her parents?

Chapter Two: Invasion (pages 10–16)

13. What does it mean when one country invades another one?
14. Why can't Oma escape together with the other family members?
15. Why does Walter's mother take him out of the school he started in when he was seven? Do you think she made the right decision? Why or why not?

16. Why are the Jews of Holland ordered to move away from the city?
17. On page 14, Walter said, "On the inside though, I felt like I was being stretched into an older boy before my time." What does he mean?
18. Explain Papa's plan to keep the family safe.
19. Who agrees to keep Papa's shop open?
20. Papa is afraid that the family will be deported if the Nazis find out they are Jewish. What does it mean to be deported in this situation?

Chapter Three: Settling in to a New Home (pages 17–20)

21. How is the family's home in Nunspeet different from their home in the city?
22. What is Walter's "tunnel?" What does he enjoy doing there? Why do you think kids enjoy having secret places like this?
23. Why doesn't Papa tell anyone that he and his family are Jewish?

Chapter Four: New Adventures (pages 21–23)

24. How does Henk act when Walter tells him his secret? Is Henk a good friend? Why or why not?

Chapter Five: No More School (pages 24–26)

25. How does Hannah act when Jewish children aren't allowed to go to school anymore? How would you feel and act if you were in the same situation? Give reasons for your feelings and actions.
26. Do you think that Walter enjoys doing farm work? Why or why not?

Chapter Six: Stressful Times (pages 27–30)

27. What is osteomyelitis? If you're not sure, do some research and find a short definition. How does this illness change Hannah physically and in other ways?
28. How is one of the local policemen trying to help Papa?
29. On page 30, why does Walter say that he and Hannah “were in the dark twice over?”

Chapter Seven: Life Before Hiding (pages 31–35)

30. Describe how Walter keeps himself busy even though he isn't going to school.
31. How do we know that Walter and Henk's lives are changed by war?

Chapter Eight: The Hiding Begins (pages 36–40)

32. Why does the Underground take Hannah away from the family? In your opinion, did they make the right decision? Why or why not?
33. What proof do we have that Walter's relationship with Hannah is closer than it was before?
34. What are several clues that the situation for the Jews in the Netherlands is becoming more dangerous and that it is affecting Walter badly?
35. What are several ways that Papa shows his intelligence when the family goes to the empty house?
36. How are Walter's letters to Oma helping him? How would they also help his grandmother?

Chapter Nine: Whispers (pages 41–43)

37. What would happen to the policeman if the Nazis caught him helping a Jewish family?

38. Their new home is a caravan. What is a caravan? If you're not sure, research the word. Find a picture and print it out. What is a more modern word that we use to describe this vehicle?
39. What are three big things that the family can't do or have in the caravan?
40. What does Walter wish his parents would understand about him?

Chapter Ten: In Harm's Way (pages 44–51)

41. How is the family's new hiding place in Epe different from their other ones?
42. Describe what happens after the family has been in the house for two nights.
43. Who comes to rescue them from the farm? Where do they run to next?
44. How does Walter feel about the Nazis? Why does he feel this way?

Chapter Eleven: Living in the Forest (pages 52–56)

45. On page 52, Walter describes himself and the other Jews who are running as "broken by our experiences." What does he mean?
46. What information does he learn that would make Walter very scared about being caught by the Nazis?
47. What does the chief forester and his assistant do to help the Jews who are running?
48. Describe the plan that Papa and the other men have to stay in the forest instead of always hiding in different places. What do you think of that plan?

Chapter Twelve: The Hidden Village (pages 57–67)

49. How do we know that Walter is beginning to feel like an adult?
50. How do the builders of the village make sure they remain hidden?

51. What are the different nationalities of the villagers?
52. On page 67, at the end of the letter, Walter signs it, then adds, "feeling safer at last." Why would he feel that way? Give several reasons.

Chapter Thirteen: Daily Life in the Village (pages 68–71)

53. How do people in nearby villages help the "onderduikers" to survive?
54. In his letters to Oma, why doesn't Walter name any people or places?
55. Read the last three lines of the letter on page 71. What is Walter's mood or feeling? Why does he feel this way?

Chapter Fourteen: Letter to Hannah (pages 72–75)

56. Why do you think Walter decides to write a letter to Hannah even though she won't receive it?
57. What quality of the ant and beetle armies does Walter admire?
58. Why don't some people in the village want to talk to others?
59. Why do you think Alfred, the deserter, has nightmares?
60. What lessons about people and life are Walter learning in this situation?
61. In the last paragraph of this letter, Walter describes his feelings for Hannah. What does his description show about Walter's character?

Chapter Fifteen: Changes (pages 76–78)

62. What is David, the English pilot, going to do for Papa when he returns to England?
63. How do we know that Walter has a good imagination?

64. Why does Mama want Walter to write his life story? Do you agree with her reason? Why or why not?
65. Why does Mama like to tell stories about what happened in the past?

Chapter Sixteen: Winter in the Forest (pages 79–81)

66. Why is it hard for the villagers to survive in the winter?
67. How do memories of the past make Walter feel?
68. What is rationing? Why do the villagers need to ration food?
69. Read the last paragraph on page 80 and the first one on page 81. How do you think you would cope with the conditions described in these paragraphs?

Chapter Seventeen: The Empty Bunk – Farewell from Alfred (pages 82–84)

70. Look ahead to page 84. Who wrote this letter to Walter? Why do you think he wrote it?
71. Explain how Alfred gets to the Hidden Village.
72. Why do you think Alfred moves out of the village?
73. What does Alfred's letter to Walter show about their relationship?

Chapter Eighteen: Heroes (pages 85–87)

74. Why doesn't Walter bother making friends with new people who come to the village?
75. Read Walter's story of the two brothers on bicycles. Why does Walter think they are heroes?

Chapter Nineteen: Perpetual State of Waiting (pages 88–92)

76. What is the meaning of the word “perpetual?” Can you think of a synonym for that word? What does the title of the chapter tell you about the plot?
77. Read Kazimir’s story of survival on pages 89 and 90. What are some words that we could use to describe his character or personality? Why would you choose these words?
78. Why would Walter say that he wants to kill all the Nazis? Do you understand how he feels? Why or why not?
79. What is Kazimir’s special talent that he is teaching Walter?
80. Why do the villagers quarrel?
81. On page 92, Walter says, “I felt like an empty shell.” What does he mean by that?

Chapter Twenty: Letter to Mr. von Baumhauer (pages 93–95)

82. Who is Mr. von Baumhauer? Why do you think Walter writes a letter to him?
83. Why do you think Walter writes letters to different people as he gets older?
84. What feelings does Walter express in this letter? Why does he have these feelings?
85. What does he include with the letter? Why do you think he includes it?
86. Walter is now twelve years old. What are some ways that he is different from other kids his age? Why is he different from them?

Chapter Twenty-One: Opa Bakker and Tante Cor (pages 96–98)

87. Opa and Tante mean aunt and uncle in the Dutch language. Are Opa Bakker and Tante Cor Walter’s real aunt and uncle? Why do you think they visit everyone in the village?

88. Why does Walter admire them?
89. Do you know people who are not family members, but who treat you like family? If you do, describe them and your relationship with them. Why do they seem like family to you?

Chapter Twenty-Two: Attack! (pages 99–104)

90. What does Papa tell Walter to do if the village is attacked? What do you think of his advice?
91. What part of the attack seems most frightening to you? Why?
92. Why do Mama, Papa, Walter, and the other surviving villagers need to find another place to live?
93. How are the writing style, tone, and details in this letter different from earlier letters that Walter had written? Why do you think they are different?

Chapter Twenty-Three: Aftermath (pages 105–112)

94. On page 106, Mama says that the place where they are hiding “might be a ‘safe’ barn.” What does she mean?
95. Where are the men on bicycles taking the family?
96. Why does the family need to have new identities?
97. Why are the Jewish refugees homeless?
98. What advice does the man on the bicycle give Papa? Why?

Chapter Twenty-Four: The Whispering Stops (pages 113–117)

99. How is Walter feeling on the farm compared to his other hiding places? Why is he feeling this way?

100. The farmer doesn't seem very friendly to Walter and his parents. Why not? Why do you think he is letting them stay on the farm?
101. How does Mama surprise everyone in the Sunday room?
102. What does the farmer say to them about their food? Do you think he was being cruel or honest? Give a reason for your opinion.
103. Why is Walter worried about his parents speaking to the farmer and his family?
104. Why doesn't the farmer seem sympathetic or sorry about the family's experiences?

Chapter Twenty-Five: Making the Best of a Bad Situation (pages 118–120)

105. Why does Walter see many homeless people walking on the road?
106. Why is there a food shortage in the whole country?
107. Why do you think the butcher who took over Papa's shop has not sent them any money for a long time? Give some possible reasons.

Chapter Twenty-Six: Learning About the Attack (pages 121–124)

108. The Underground says that the SS attacked the Hidden Village. Who are the SS? If you aren't sure, do some research to find out about them.
109. How did Alfred behave heroically?
110. What happened to the 100 villagers who survived the attack?
111. Read all of Walter's questions in the last paragraph on page 124. How do you think he is feeling?

Chapter Twenty-Seven: Hiding in Plain View (pages 125–129)

112. "Hiding in plain view" or "hiding in plain sight" is a well-known expression. What do you think it means?

113. Why does Mama panic when the farmer's wife asks her to play Christmas songs on the harmonium? Why would it be important for Walter to teach her those songs?
114. Why do Papa and Walter hide when they see a woman Papa recognizes? What is Papa afraid of?
115. Why doesn't Papa need to be afraid of her?
116. How is the woman going to help them?
117. What news gives them hope that the war will be over soon?
118. On page 129, Walter says that "there's still fear in my heart." What is he afraid of?

Chapter Twenty-Eight: On the Run Again (pages 130–133)

119. Why does the family need to leave the farm two days before Christmas?
120. Why does Papa think it is better that they don't say goodbye to the farmer and his wife?
121. The family walks to Angela's house. Who is Angela?
122. Do you think the family prefers to live in the farmhouse or in Angela's house? Give your opinion and list all of your reasons.

Chapter Twenty-Nine: Momentary Respite (pages 134–135)

123. What do they discover about Oma at the end of the war?
124. How does Angela deliver messages and Walter's letters?
125. How does she get enough food to feed everyone?
126. Why do Walter and Papa stay inside the house most of the time?

Chapter Thirty: The Enchanted Farmhouse (pages 136–137)

127. What proof do we have that Dutch people have very little food?

Chapter Thirty-One: On the Move Again (pages 138–139)

128. Why does it become too dangerous to stay in Angela's house?
129. Where is the Underground taking the family next?

Chapter Thirty-Two: Hannah Joins the Journey (pages 140–144)

130. On page 141, Hannah says that “she felt like she was on a teeter-totter all the time.” What does she mean? Why does she feel this way?
131. Explain how they are going to get to their new hiding place. Why are they continuing to travel this way?
132. What danger does Walter face as he is crossing the bridge in the stranger's wagon?

Chapter Thirty-Three: The Beginning of the End (pages 145–148)

133. How long do they need to live in their last hiding place? Why do they live there for such a short time?
134. What are Walter's fears? Can you understand why he has these fears? Why or why not?
135. What else is being hidden in the house where they stay for a week?
136. Who is Fritz?
137. Why does the family need to separate and hide in different places?
138. Read the last paragraph on page 148. How is Walter feeling as he asks these questions?

Chapter Thirty-Four: Last Letter to Oma (pages 149–152)

139. How does Matthijs show that he has a good sense of humour?
140. What is Walter's identity in this hiding place?
141. Walter's hiding place is a boarding house for adults. What is a boarding house? If you're not sure, research the meaning of the term.
142. Why would he be afraid of one of the tenants in the house?
143. How is Walter's education continuing in this hiding place?
144. Why can we describe Walter's thoughts and dreams as being both negative and positive? Why would he have both kinds of dreams?

Chapter Thirty-Five: Liberation (pages 153–157)

145. Why does Walter appreciate the last family that he hides with?
146. Who is Janneke and what important job does she have?
147. Why does the Nazi officer disappear from the boarding house?
148. How do the Dutch people react when they know they are liberated? Look at the pictures on pages 156 and 157 to help you understand liberation better.
149. Why do you think Walter begins to cry? Would you have cried too? Why or why not?
150. Who introduces himself to Walter? Why is that person especially memorable and important to him?

Epilogue: May 8, 1995 (pages 158–160)

151. Some non-fiction books that are true stories have epilogues. Why would an author of a book like this want to write an epilogue?

152. Why do you think Walter and his family stay in their hiding places until May 8, 1945?
153. What does Walter's teacher say to him when he can't do a math problem? What do you think of Walter's answer? Give a reason for your opinion.
154. How has Hannah changed while they were apart?
155. Who else rejoins the family?
156. How has the butcher behaved while they were in hiding?
157. How did Walter's experiences on farms help him to decide on his career as an adult?
158. What is a kibbutz? If you're not sure, research it online. Why do you think Walter would have felt comfortable and happy working there?
159. Walter and his family never meet the members of the Underground. Would you have wanted to meet any members of the Underground? Why or why not?
160. What happened to Opa Bakker, who helped so many people in the Hidden Village?
161. What trip would Walter like to plan with his granddaughter? If Walter were your grandfather, would you like to go on a trip like that with him? Why or why not?



Activity 5: Understanding Vocabulary in Context: Multiple Choice: Choose the Correct Synonym or Word Meaning

Understanding vocabulary in context is a key skill that allows readers to build their vocabulary by understanding the meaning of a word in context, rather than from the dictionary. If students are reluctant to give up their dictionaries, emphasize that when they use a dictionary to find word meanings, the dictionary gives them more than one meaning. Therefore, they end up guessing the meaning.

Below is an exercise that can be assigned either while or after reading the book. It is a multiple-choice exercise that asks students to choose the correct synonym or definition for the underlined word in each sentence.

Directions:

- a. Below are some sentences from the story. Each sentence has underlined words.
 - b. Under each sentence are three choices. Circle the most correct or best synonym or meaning of the underlined word.
 - c. Please do not use a dictionary. Instead, guess the meaning of the word from the way it is used in the sentence.
-
1. At the time, I didn't know the huge significance of our move because my parents sheltered me. **(page 5)**

Significance means

- a. Trouble
- b. Problem
- c. Importance

Sheltered means

- a. Taught
- b. Protected
- c. Hurt

2. I heard these as signs of dread in the adults around me. **(page 10)**

Dread means

- a. Fear
- b. Happiness
- c. Adventure

3. As the butcher turned to leave, my mother gave him a box filled with our silver heirlooms, porcelain ornaments, and photo albums all wrapped in sheets. **(pages 15–16)**

Heirlooms means

- a. Items people use every day
- b. Important items that you have strong feelings about
- c. Items that you own that cost a lot of money

4. It is risky to say too much. (page 21)

Risky means

- a. Dangerous
- b. Safe
- c. Difficult

5. These mysteries kept me intrigued. (page 28)

Intrigued means

- a. Disappointed
- b. Afraid
- c. Curious

6. She'll be in an isolation ward so other workers won't bother her. (page 36)

Isolation means

- a. Being with a big group of people
- b. Being alone or with a small group of people, and kept away from large groups
- c. Allowed to be with as many people as you want

7. Water couldn't be boiled because smoke coming from the chimney would be suspicious; the house was supposed to be empty. (page 46)

Suspicious means

- a. Doubting that a situation is true
- b. Careful about a situation
- c. Careless about a situation

8. After five days in the forest, someone came to relocate us. (page 52)

Relocate means

- a. To live in the same place where you have lived
- b. To move to a different place
- c. To live in different places

9. From a distance you can't see them. The camouflage is excellent. (page 58)

Camouflage means

- a. People or objects hidden from plain sight
- b. People or objects that are easy for others to see
- c. Not able to hide people or objects

10. I try to mimic their determination, but there's always the nagging fear that no matter how many barriers I face, I may not find my way around them. (page 73)

To mimic means

- a. To show
- b. To copy
- c. To hide

Barriers mean

- a. Difficult problems
- b. Easy problems
- c. Impossible problems

11. We rationed our food because it was difficult for the townspeople to come with their bicycles in the deep snow. (page 80)

Rationed means

- a. Ate as much food as they wanted
- b. Gave people small amounts of food so that their food would last longer
- c. Allowed people to steal food from each other without punishment

12. He'd been injured and needed a place to recuperate. (page 85)

To recuperate means

- a. To get well again after being injured or sick
- b. To be sick for a long time
- c. To get sick very suddenly

13. Living my life in a perpetual state of waiting made me sad and lonely. **(page 92)**

Perpetual means

- a. Temporary; happening for a short time
- b. Something that never happened
- c. Always; happening for a long time

14. You want to battle the evil that has consumed our country. **(page 95)**

Consumed means

- a. Eaten
- b. Occupied
- c. Thrown away

15. Breathing a sigh of relief, I wished for darkness so I could take off my gag, stretch my muscles, and whisper to my family. **(page 106)**

Relief means

- a. Feeling relaxed after being very stressed
- b. Feeling stressed all of the time
- c. Feeling happy sometimes

16. We attacked that meal like ravenous dogs. **(page 108)**

Ravenous means

- a. Very dirty
- b. Very hungry
- c. Very tired

17. Their homes have been looted, we just discovered, and their possessions sent to Germany. **(page 110)**

Looted means

- a. Broken into and many things stolen
- b. Burned down
- c. Occupied by other people

18. Many Dutch people have left the cities, because they've been devastated by bombs. **(page 118)**

Devastated means

- a. Helped
- b. Hurt
- c. Destroyed

19. This just added to the scarcity of food. **(page 119)**

Scarcity means

- a. Not enough; lack of
- b. Enough
- c. Too much

20. The same woman on the bicycle rode past us with a piece of paper in her hand to give to Papa, but he wouldn't acknowledge her. **(pages 126–127)**

Acknowledge means

- a. Talk to
- b. Admit that he knew
- c. Help

21. "If the Underground information was compromised, the Nazis will discover our true identities and harm will come, not only to us, but to the farmer as well," Papa said. **(page 131)**

Compromised means

- a. Kept secret from most people
- b. Kept secret from one person
- c. Told to people who could put them in danger

22. But of course, the morning we arrived we all had a bath because of the novelty, and the hot water helped our chilled bones. **(page 133)**

Novelty means

- a. A new experience, or one that you haven't had for a long time
- b. Something that you do all the time
- c. Trying something that you have never done before

23. The South had been liberated before Christmas, and we in the North were hoping that we'd be liberated soon. **(page 135)**

Liberated means

- a. To be a prisoner
- b. To become free, after being a prisoner or having very little freedom
- c. To always be free to do everything you want

24. Papa was ecstatic when he heard this news, but didn't tell Mama and me. **(page 139)**

Ecstatic means

- a. Satisfied
- b. Unhappy
- c. Very happy

25. After a heartfelt but hurried reunion, the four of us were taken to an empty row house on the edge of the city. **(page 146)**

Reunion means

- a. Meeting new people that you've never met before
- b. Meeting important people for the first time
- c. Meeting people that you love and care about after you haven't seen them for a long time

Activities 6 and 7: A Closer Look at Walter's Letters

In modern life, letter writing can be considered a lost art. Very few people take the time and effort to write long, detailed letters to communicate thoughts and feelings. However, in the novel, Walter's letters—first to his grandmother and then to others—communicate the experiences of the family in hiding in great detail, and his thoughts and feelings about those experiences.

If you feel it's necessary, you may wish to provide your students with an introduction to letter writing before assigning these activities. There are many grade-appropriate resources on letter writing available online.

These activities can be used as group work or individual assignments, or as evaluated class work.



Activity 6: Looking at Walter's First Letter

Directions:

- a. Reread Chapter 4: New Adventures (pages 21–23), which is Walter's first letter in the novel.
- b. Then, answer the questions below, which ask you to give information about the letter and your opinions about it. Write short but complete sentences.

1. How old is Walter when he writes this letter? _____

2. Why is Walter writing the letter?

3. In your opinion, what is the most important idea that he communicates in the letter? Why does he tell this to his grandmother?

4. What are some important ideas about friendship and trust that Walter writes about? Do you agree with him?



Activity 7: Looking at One of Walter's Last Letters

Directions:

- a. Reread Chapter Twenty-Two: Attack! (pages 99–104).
- b. Answer the questions below using complete sentences.
- c. Please use your own words to answer. Do not copy Walter's words from his letter.

1. How old is Walter when he writes this letter? _____

2. According to Walter, how is letter writing helpful to him as well as the person he's writing to?

3. Describe the event that Walter is writing about.

4. What feelings are Walter expressing in the letter?

5. In your opinion, how has Walter's letter writing improved since he started to write letters? List three or four specific differences in his writing.

Activities 8 and 9: Creating an Outline for a Character Paragraph and Paragraph Writing

The first step in teaching your students good paragraph writing is showing them how to brainstorm and outline the ideas that they will then use to write a paragraph.

Activity 8 is a worksheet that requires them to create an outline for a character paragraph. The instructions ask them to create a chart, but you could also use a web, scaffolding, or any other graphic organizer that you prefer.

Before your students complete Activity 9 on paragraph writing, you may wish to review paragraph structure. There are many grade-appropriate exercises available online. Remind them of your expectations regarding paragraph writing and editing.



Activity 8: Making an Outline for a Character Paragraph

Directions:

- a. Create a group with three other classmates.
- b. You are going to work together to complete a chart outline that you will later use to write a paragraph.
- c. Please make sure that all group members have a chance to offer their ideas.
- d. Here is the question you need to answer:

**Walter spends several years on the run and in hiding with his parents.
What are three ways that his character or personality changes during that time?**

- e. Now, please fill out this chart with your ideas:

Changes in Walter's personality	Evidence from the story



Activity 9: Writing a Character Paragraph

Directions:

- a. Use the outline that you created in your group to write your own paragraph to answer the question in Activity 8.
- b. When you write your paragraph, remember to include these parts:
 1. An interesting title (a few words, mostly beginning with capital letters)
 2. A topic sentence (first sentence), which introduces your subject or topic
 3. A body (4–6 sentences), where you write your main ideas and details to prove them
 4. A concluding sentence (last sentence), which summarizes your topic and perhaps gives an opinion about it
- c. Before handing in your paragraph, make sure to read it over to check and improve your ideas, spelling, grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary.
- d. Your paragraph will be marked for ideas, organization, and good writing style.

D. Extension/Enrichment Activities



Activity 10: Guest Speaker on the Underground

If possible, invite a guest speaker who would be able to speak to your students on the experience of being in hiding or on the run during the Holocaust, or on the role of the Underground in one of the Nazi-occupied countries.

Contact your local Jewish Community Centre, Holocaust Education Centre, or synagogue to arrange for a speaker.

Additional YouTube videos on the Dutch resistance are also available: Hidden Heroes, parts 1, 2, and 3.

Part 1: <https://youtu.be/uhDnPcPSwUw>

Part 2: <https://youtu.be/IYwJe4RvS8g>

Part 3: <https://youtu.be/zNNUDkrQw2I>



Activity 11: Journaling

If you use journaling in your classroom, here is a list of questions that you can use to check your students' comprehension of the story, and their feelings and opinions about it. Your students can write their answers in personal journals, or on a class website or blog.

- a. Walter and his parents live in many different places during the years they are in hiding. In your opinion, what would be the hardest part of having to move to, and live in, so many different places?
- b. Was Walter's childhood similar to, or different than, yours? What are several ways in which they were similar or different?
- c. Henk was one of Walter's very few close friends during his time in hiding. Do you think it would be easy or difficult to have close friends if you were in Walter's situation? Give your opinion and reasons to support it.
- d. If you could have been a member of the Dutch Underground, what kind of work would you have wanted to do to help people in hiding?
- e. Walter survived his challenging childhood experiences and became a grandfather. How would his childhood experiences have affected or changed him as an adult?
- f. Do you think that Walter's parents did a good job helping him to survive their time in hiding? Give your opinion and reasons to support it.
- g. Walter and his sister Hannah didn't see each other for several years because they hid in different places. Do you have brothers and sisters? Do you think that it would be easy to have their relationship as brother and sister once they were reunited? Give your opinion and reasons to support it.
- h. Do you think the author chose a good title for the story? Give your opinion and reasons to support it.

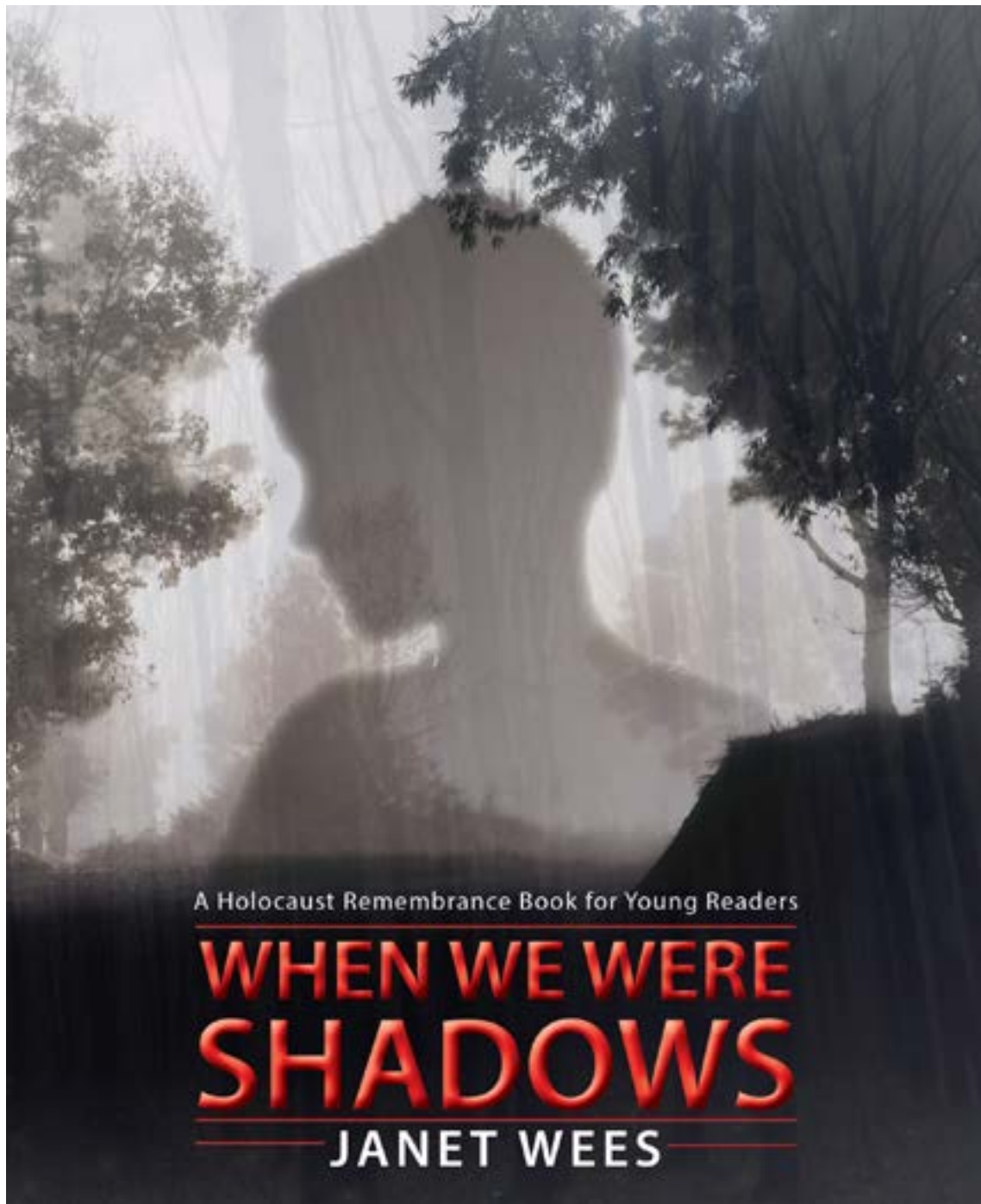


Activity 12: Creating Art: Depicting One of the Hiding Places

To differentiate instruction, have your students work in pairs, groups, or individually to create a piece of art depicting one of the family's hiding places. The artwork can be two- or three-dimensional, and students can use any media available.

After their artwork is completed, have your students write a short description of their artwork that includes their reasons for choosing that particular place.

The artwork could then be used as a bulletin board display in your classroom.



To learn more about Second Story Press and see other titles, visit: <https://secondstorypress.ca/>