

Focus Question:

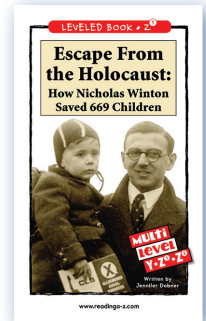
Who was Nicholas Winton, and why is he considered a hero?

Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational

Nicholas Winton was a remarkable and humble man. He saved the lives of hundreds of children threatened under the shadow of Hitler's growing power at the onset of World War II. *Escape from the Holocaust* provides a detailed account of Winton's heroic actions and the many lives he saved. The book can also be used to teach students how to determine an author's purpose for writing and the use of simple adjectives.

The book and lesson are also available for levels Y and Z2.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Summarize to understand text
- ☐ Determine author's purpose for writing a text
- ☐ Describe information provided in the table of contents
- ☐ Recognize and use adjectives
- ☐ Identify and use content vocabulary words

Materials

- ☐ Book: *Escape From the Holocaust* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Author's purpose, adjectives, content vocabulary worksheets
- ☐ Discussion cards
- ☐ Book quiz
- ☐ Retelling rubric

Vocabulary

Boldface vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on VocabularyA-Z.com.

• Words to Know

Story critical: *atrocious* (adj.), *concentration camps* (n.), *Holocaust* (n.), *Jewish* (adj.), *refugees* (n.), *spirited* (v.)

Enrichment: *anguished* (adj.), *generation* (n.), *Hebrew* (adj.), *inferior* (adj.), *keepsakes* (n.), *perished* (v.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *control* (n.), *event* (n.), *experience* (n.), *plan* (n.), *process* (n.), *remember* (v.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- Show students a map of the world and locate Germany and the Czech Republic. Ask students to share anything they know about this part of the world. Then ask them to share any significant historical events they know about that happened in these countries.
- Write the word *Holocaust* on the board and read it aloud to students. Have them share what they know about the Holocaust. Explain that the Holocaust was an event in history that took place in this part of the world in which people of a particular religion were killed on the basis of their heritage. Point out that during this time, there were people who risked their own lives to save the lives of others. Explain that they will be reading a book about a man named Nicholas Winton, who helped save many children during the Holocaust. Have students share why someone who acted in this way could be considered a hero.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *Escape from the Holocaust*. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what type of book it is (genre, text type, and so on) and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name).
- Preview the table of contents on page 3. Remind students that the table of contents provides an overview of the book. Ask students what they expect to read about in the book, on the basis of what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

Introduce the Reading Strategy: Summarize

- Explain to students that one way to understand a text is to summarize the information. Readers can write a summary, or brief overview, of the key ideas of each section to understand and remember what

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

they have read. A summary will typically answer the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*.

- Create a chart on the board with the headings *Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where*, and *Why*. Read pages 4–6 with students. Have them discuss with a partner what should be written under each heading on the chart. Invite volunteers to share with the class and record their answers on the board. Encourage students to ask and answer these questions as they read, using the chart as a guide.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Author's purpose

- Explain to students that authors have a purpose, or reason, for what they write. Write the words *inform*, *entertain*, and *persuade* on the board. Explain to students that to *inform* means to provide information about the topic, to *entertain* means to amuse the reader, and to *persuade* means to convince the reader to act or feel a certain way. Point out that within a text, readers can often find evidence for more than one of these.
- Have students think about a book they are familiar with. Have them discuss with a partner the author's main purpose for writing that book. Have students share their rationale.
- Have students turn to page 4 and read the first paragraph with a partner. Ask students what they think the author's purpose is on the basis of the introduction. Explain that they need to find evidence from that page to support their choice. Invite students to share their thoughts with the class.

Vocabulary

Have students turn to the "Words to Know" box on the copyright page. Discuss each word with students. Then, have students turn to the glossary on page 24. Explain that the glossary provides definitions for the vocabulary words in the book. Point out the use of each content word and academic vocabulary word in the book, and then use each word in a different model sentence. Have students work in groups to create posters for these words. Have them include on each poster the word and its part of speech, the definition, the word in an example sentence, and a picture illustrating the meaning of the word.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about Nicholas Winton. Write the Focus Question on the board. Invite students to look for evidence in the book to support their answer to the question.
- Have students make a small question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. These can be addressed in a future discussion.

During Reading

Text-Dependent Questions

As students read the book, monitor their understanding with the following questions. Encourage students to support their answers by citing evidence from the book.

- *Who is Vera Gissing? Why did the author include her story in this book?* (level 2) pages 4, 5, and 6
- *Why did Nicholas Winton initially go to Prague?* (level 1) page 7
- *Who was Hitler, and what was his plan in Europe?* (level 2) pages 8–12
- *What did Winton find when he visited the refugee camps in Czechoslovakia?* (level 1) page 12
- *What was the process of Winton getting the Czech children into new homes?* (level 2) pages 13–15
- *In what ways is Nicholas Winton a modern-day knight?* (level 3) multiple pages
- *Why do you think Winton never shared his story of saving the Czech children?* (level 3) multiple pages
- *How does the saying "Save one life, save the world," relate to the actions of Nicholas Winton?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Table of contents

Explain that the table of contents helps readers identify key topics in the text in the order they are presented. Have students read the table of contents on page 3. Explain that it provides readers with an outline of the topics they will read about and the order in which they will be presented. Ask students the following questions: *Which section do you think will give information on the build-up to World War II? Which section do you think will provide insight into Winton's personal experience of saving the Czech children?* Inform students that they can also use the table of contents to identify sections to summarize, which helps them better understand the text. Then, have students stop to summarize after each section they read.

Skill Review

- Lead a discussion with students to determine the author's purpose for writing this book. Guide students to an understanding that the author's purpose is to inform readers. Write *author's purpose is to inform* on the board. Ask students to cite examples from the text that support this idea.
- Model evaluating details to determine the author's purpose.

Think-aloud: *I know the author's purpose is to inform readers. On pages 4 through 6, the author introduces readers to Vera Gissing, a woman who was saved by Nicholas Winton as a child. The author includes historical facts and information about her experience to help readers better understand the events of this time. On pages 8 through 11, the author also includes historical information about Hitler and his plans in Europe. These historical facts*

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

inform readers about the context of the Holocaust. The text continues to provide information, rather than amuse or persuade readers.

- Model how to complete the **author's purpose worksheet**. Have students identify details from the book and circle them. Then, have students discuss the details with a partner and determine the author's purpose for the book.

After Reading

Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Skill Review

Graphic Organizer: **Author's purpose**

Review the author's purpose worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class the details they chose.

Comprehension Extension

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided for extension activities.

Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers should include the following information: *Nicholas Winton was a British citizen who became involved in helping people whose lives were being threatened before and during the Holocaust. Winton is considered a hero because he arranged for hundreds of Czech children to safely escape and be received in loving homes in the United Kingdom and in Sweden.*)

Comprehension Checks

- **Book quiz**
- **Retelling rubric**

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: **Adjectives**

- Have students look at the cover of the book. Ask them to come up with a list of words that describe the people. Have volunteers share the words they came up with and write the words on the board.
- Point out that the words they just listed are called **adjectives**. Explain that **adjectives** are words that describe nouns and pronouns and that an adjective tells *which one, how many, or what kind*.

- Write the following sentence on the board: *Some aid groups were trying to help Jews find new homes, but Winton noticed that the focus was on old or sick people.* Have students work with a partner to identify all of the adjectives in the sentence and whether each adjective answers the questions *which one, how many, or what kind*. Invite students to share their findings with the class.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students reread page 10 with a partner to circle all of the adjectives. Then have them identify whether each adjective answers *which one, how many, or what kind*. Invite students to share their findings with the class.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **adjectives worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: **Content vocabulary**

- Explain to students that understanding the vocabulary in a book helps readers gain a deeper understanding of the text. Discuss difficult words from the text. Encourage students to use context clues to help them determine the meaning of these words. Guide them to the boldface words in the text that have definitions in the glossary.
- Have students complete the *Predicted Meaning* column of the **content vocabulary worksheet**. Then have them make a checkmark in the column if each definition matched their predicted definition. If not, have students write the correct definition in the *Revised Meaning* column. Have students turn to a partner and use each content vocabulary word in a complete sentence.
- Have students turn over the content vocabulary worksheet and write three sentences using three of the vocabulary words. Invite them to erase the vocabulary words in each sentence and exchange papers with a partner. Have students fill in the missing word in each sentence. Invite volunteers to share their sentences with the class.

Connections

- See the back of the book for cross-curricular extension ideas.