

Focus Question:

How does the historical setting of the story affect Reggie and his family?

Book Summary

Text Type: Fiction/Historical

Reggie is a thirteen-year-old boy who has become one of many young British evacuees sent from London to the countryside during World War II. Reggie makes a daring move during this dangerous time and finds himself at the epicenter of a bombing. *The Blitz* provides valuable insight about the realities of World War II in London through a relatable and historically accurate story. The book can also be used to teach students about character point of view and correctly retelling a story.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Retell to understand text
- ☐ Identify character point of view
- ☐ Describe information provided by illustrations
- ☐ Recognize and use quotation marks
- ☐ Identify and use synonyms and antonyms

Materials

- ☐ Book: *The Blitz* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Character point of view, quotation marks, synonyms and antonyms 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: *air raid* (n.), *evacuees* (n.), *Luftwaffe* (n.), *obliterated* (v.), *Royal Air Force* (n.), *telegram* (n.)

Enrichment: *barrage balloons* (n.), *chaperone* (n.), *flak* (n.), *gingerly* (adv.), *intercept* (v.), *lieutenant* (n.), *loo* (n.), *Nazis* (n.), *POW* (n.), *squadron* (n.), *surreal* (adj.), *warden* (n.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *accurate* (adj.), *approach* (v.), *indicate* (v.), *label* (n.), *report* (n.), *shift* (v.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- Write *World War II* on the board to create an idea web. Have students work in small groups to discuss their prior knowledge of World War II. Discuss with the class their knowledge and insights on this topic. Record the information in the idea web.
- Write *The Blitz* on the board. Explain that this word comes from a German word that means lightning war and was used by the British to describe a period of time when heavy bombing occurred in Britain during World War II. Explain that during the war the Germans often focused their bombing on industrialized areas in order to maximize the damage. Locate both Germany and England on a map.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *The Blitz*. 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, illustrator's name).

Introduce the Reading Strategy: Retell

Explain to students that one way to understand and remember what they are reading is to stop now and then while reading to retell in their mind what is happening in the story. Point out that when someone is retelling something he or she explains the details of what happened in order. Explain that people retell as part of their daily lives, such as recounting what they did over summer break. Ask students to share other examples of when people might give a retelling. Model retelling by recounting what you did yesterday. Point out that the details of the retelling must be given in correct order. Have students turn to a partner and practice retelling by explaining what they did after school the previous day.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Story elements: Identify character point of view

- Explain to students that one way to understand a story is by identifying who is telling the story, which is called *character point of view*. Point out that there are two common points of view from which a story is told: first person and third person. Write these words on the board.
- Remind students that in a first-person story, the narrator is one of the characters and is telling the story to the reader. Explain that certain words in the story can be clues to help the reader identify the point of view. For example, explain that in a first-person story, the author will use pronouns such as *I*, *my*, and *me* when referring to him- or herself.
- Explain to students that in a third-person story the narrator is not a character in the story, but is an observer who is describing the events in the story to the reader. Explain that the words used throughout the story to identify this type of point of view are the pronouns *he*, *she*, *her*, and *him* when referring to characters. Write the words *third-person limited point of view* and *third-person omniscient point of view* on the board. Explain that in a third-person limited story the narrator knows the thoughts and feelings of only one character, while in a third-person omniscient story the narrator knows the thoughts and feelings of all of the characters. Discuss how third-person omniscient stories give authors the flexibility and freedom to focus on any character at any time during the story.
- Share some passages with the class that are in different points of view. Have students work in groups to determine the point of view for each one. Call on groups to share with the rest of the class the point of view they chose and their reasoning.

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 pages 19 and 20. 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 Reggie and the bombing on London. 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.

- *Why is Reggie being sent away from London?* (level 1) page 3
- *What causes Reggie’s mom to send him to his grandparents’ house?* (level 2) pages 4–5
- *How does Reggie feel about his dad being missing in action?* (level 1) page 5
- *How does Reggie return to London without the chaperones knowing?* (level 2) pages 8–9
- *In what ways does Mr. Bibby help Reggie?* (level 2) pages 11–13
- *Do you think Reggie made a wise decision to return to London? Why or why not?* (level 3) multiple pages
- *What can you tell about Reggie’s character on the basis of his actions in the story?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Illustrations

Explain that illustrations in a story provide important information for the reader. Point out that illustrations often tell the reader many things that are not written by the author. Read page 18 aloud as students follow along. Invite students to answer the following questions in small groups: *What does this illustration tell you about Reggie and his mother that is not written in the story? Why do you think the author included this illustration? How does this illustration help give the story a historical context?* Invite volunteers to share their discussions with the class. Repeat this process with several other illustrations in the story.

Skill Review

- Model for students how you retell the events in the story using specific details from the text. Point out that a retelling includes only the most important information and that this information is given in the correct order. Have students turn to a partner to practice retelling what they have read thus far.
- Model how to determine the character point of view.

Think-aloud: *I know that one way to better understand the plot of a story is to analyze from which point of view the story is being told. The first thing I notice in this story is that the characters are all referred to with the pronouns he, she, they, and so on, and that the pronouns I and me are used only when the characters are speaking. Therefore, I know*

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

this story is being told from the third-person point of view. My next step is to determine whether this story is third-person limited or third-person omniscient. To do this, I need to look at the characters. I know the main character is Reggie. If this story is third-person limited, then Reggie will be the only character who shares his thoughts and feelings with the reader. If the story is third-person omniscient, I will know the thoughts and feelings of all of the characters. I need to carefully read and analyze the author's writing in order to determine this.

- Have students work with a partner to reread passages from the text and determine the character point of view. Invite volunteers to share their answers with the class, including specific passages from the text that led them to the answer.
- Model how to complete the [character-point-of-view worksheet](#). Have students discuss how changing the point of view would change the overall feeling of the story.

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:

Story elements: Identify character point of view

Review the character-point-of-view worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class how they rewrote their scene and how this changed the overall feeling of the story.

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 will vary. Sample: *The historical setting of the story affects Reggie and his family in many ways, including the separation the family has incurred, the constant fear they live in, and the destruction of their home.*)

Comprehension Checks

- [Book quiz](#)
- [Retelling rubric](#)

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Quotation marks

- Write the following sentence on the board: *"Huge favor to ask, Clive," Reggie said, still writing.* Read the sentence aloud and ask students who is speaking and what he is saying. Circle the quotation marks and explain that they are placed before and after the words said by the character. Point to the comma, and explain that the comma is placed inside the second set of quotation marks.
- Write the following sentence on the board: *The man chuckled and said, "Good luck with that, lad!"* Have students explain how this sentence differs from the first. Point out that the quotation marks are still around the speaker's words, but that the comma is now before the spoken words, and the punctuation at the end of the sentence is inside the quotation marks.
- **Check for understanding:** Choose several sentences from the story that include quotation marks, and record them on the board without the quotation marks or correct punctuation. Invite volunteers to the board to add the quotation marks and punctuation as needed.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [quotation marks worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Synonyms and antonyms

- Write the following sentence on the board: *Reggie and Mr. Bibby darted from street to street till they reached Bounds Green Station.* Underline the word *darted* and ask students to suggest a word that means almost the same thing (*scamper, hurry, sprint*, and so on). Review or explain that a word that means the same or almost the same as another word is called a *synonym*. Ask students to suggest words that mean the opposite of *darted* (*walk, shuffle, halted*, and so on). Review or explain that a word that means the opposite of another word is called an *antonym*.
- Give students a thesaurus. Ask them to find the word *darted* to confirm the synonyms and antonyms.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work in groups to reread pages 4 through 8 and locate six adjectives. Then, have students create synonyms and antonyms for each word. Have groups share their findings with the class.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [synonym-and-antonym worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Connections

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