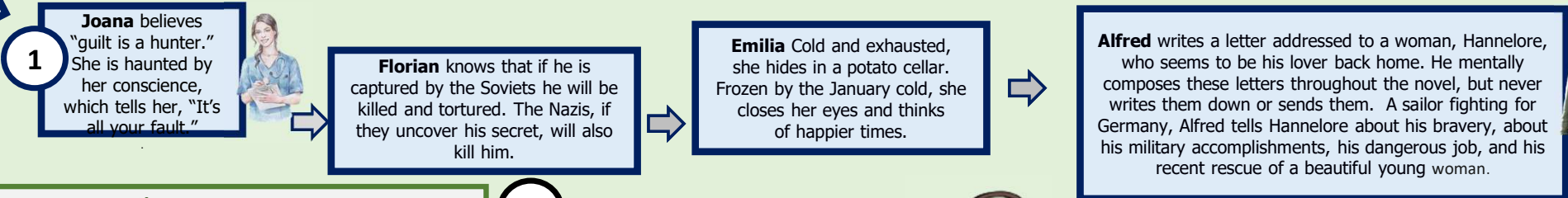


Year 7 English: Salt to the Sea- Ruta Sepetys

Plot Overview



2 Characters

Joana: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated Loyal Guilt-ridden Trusting 	Florian: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stubborn Selfish Caring Kind 	Emilia: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feels ashamed Secretive Vulnerable Untrusting 	Alfred Frick: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrogant Psychopathic Obsessive Selfish
Eva: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thoughtless Offensive Exceptionally rude Selfish 	Ingrid: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blind Sensitive Protective Selfless 	Heinz 'Shoe Poet' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attentive Life saver Compassionate Thoughtful 	Klaus 'The Wandering Boy' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vulnerable Innocent Scared Loyal

3 GENRE: Historical Fiction (BASED ON REAL-LIFE EVENTS)

Time and place:
Takes place at the end of the Second World War, which involved many of the world's nations, but was primarily fought between the Axis (Germany, Italy, and Japan) and Allies (the United States, Soviet Union, United Kingdom, China, and others)

Setting:
Salt to the Sea looks specifically at far Eastern Europe, and the (former) nation of East Prussia, the territory of which is now split between Russia, Poland, and Lithuania.

Character:
The story is told from four points of view: Joana is a Lithuanian refugee who was allowed to resettle in Germany; Emilia is a teenager who escaped the genocide that wiped out many of her fellow ethnic Poles; Alfred is a delusional Nazi soldier working on the Wilhelm Gustloff.

Historical Context:
The book explores a real-life event on board a ship called the Wilhelm Gustloff. The story of this particular ship was not as widely publicized as other famous ships, like Titanic or Lusitania, were.

Key Historical Terms:
- **Amber Room** A real room, in the Catherine Palace near the city of Leningrad. It was made entirely of amber, precious stones, and precious metals. In 1941, Nazis stole it from the Soviet Union.
- **Hitler Youth:** The youth division of the German Nazi Party, instilling in its members the philosophy and doctrines of Hitler and the Nazi Party.
- **East Prussia** A province within the larger Free State of Prussia. East Prussia was partitioned and absorbed by Poland and Lithuania.



5 The Purpose and Function of DIALOGUE

Dialogue is used for 2 main reasons:

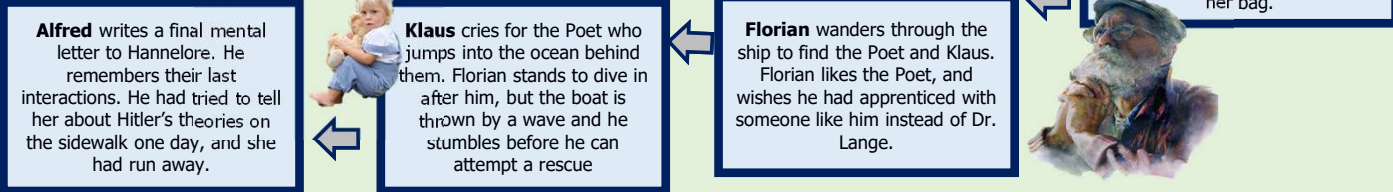
- To reveal something about a character's motives, personality or feeling.**
Let's be honest the most important thing readers need to know about any character is what they want: Perhaps they want to achieve something; understand themselves/ the world better or maybe even redeem themselves and be better people. This can all be revealed through dialogue.
To reveal something about a character's motives, personality or feeling- An example:
"Of course it's for the best," said Eva "A deserter and a Pole.? I'm sorry, but they'll be dead on the road in a day."
The use of dialogue reveals Eva's selfishness and bigotry, she argues against letting Florian and Emilia tag along. Eva's own wellbeing is more important to her than helping protect two strangers. Although Emilia has done nothing wrong, Eva uses the fact that Nazis are actively targeting people like her as a reason to leave her behind.
- To move the action of the plot forward**
Through dialogue characters are able to provide new information, increase tension or reveal a new conflict/problem to be solved.
To move the action of the plot forward- An example:
"Eva pulled me aside.
"You're right- Polish. Her name is Emilia. She's fifteen, from Lwow. But she has not papers."
The use of dialogue here allows us to understand that they have a problem. If any of the soldiers found out Emilia's true identity, they would all be in trouble for trying to protect her. At this point in the war, a person's papers are essential to their safety and survival. German checkpoints along the road require individuals to show their papers. Failure to do so would be a death sentence.

4 Commonly Confused Homophones

Their
There

These two homophones are the most frequently confused, yet they are two easy to remember. Their, to do with people, has an 'i' in it which could easily be turned into a person. There, to do with place. Has an 'r' in it which could easily be turned into a signpost.

For example: 'Their path of destruction lay far and wide.'
'You'll receive further instruction once you get there.'



6

Themes

Willpower and Fate.

During World War II, the fate of many Europeans was determined by their race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, and health. The Nazi party labelled many groups as "unworthy of life," and these groups were rounded up, imprisoned, and, in many cases, killed. The characters in *Salt to the Sea* have managed to survive many atrocities. Through their perseverance, they demonstrate the power of the will and of hope.

Storytelling and fantasy.

Salt to the Sea illustrates the horrors of war. Whether escaping genocide at the hands of the Nazi party, escaping death at the hands of roving Soviet gangs, or surviving beatings by soldiers, many of the characters in the novel develop techniques to take a break, or dissociate, from their traumatic or stressful realities. These sometimes take the form of invented fantasy worlds which the characters superimpose atop the upsetting real world, helping them cope with their traumas. They also include folklore and nursery rhymes that connect characters to a happier time, or the memories of which are soothing and comforting. The power of fantasy and storytelling helps characters face unbearable situations.

Family and community vs. Selfishness

As millions of refugees evacuated Poland, Prussia, Lithuania, and the surrounding countries, bonds of family and community were broken and reformed. The refugees at the centre of the novel (Joana, Florian, Ingrid, Emilia, Eva, the Poet, and Klaus) have either been separated from their families by distance or by death. They form new bonds with each other, partially out of necessity, but also out of love.

7

The Function and Purpose of SYMBOLISM

Symbolism helps readers to visualise complex ideas and track their development easily. They often communicate big ideas in an efficient and artistic way. Symbols usually suggest the growth and changes within a character over the course of the story. Symbolic meaning is often given to simple/ordinary objects (usually of important/sentimental value) or colours which have a far deeper meaning or significance within the novel. For example, they may link to abstract emotions/traits/ideas (greed/guilt/freedom/love.) or they may be linked/ representative of time (past memories or future ambitions/goals.



8

Cyclical Structure:

The story returns to the original sentences and expands on them further.

'Shame is a Hunter.'

'Shame is a hunter. My shames was all around me now.'

'Fate is a hunter. Its barrel pressed against my head.'

'Fate is a hunter.'

'Guilt is a hunter. I was its hostage.'

'Guilt is a Hunter.'



Storks and birds:

Emilia often remembers her childhood and the storks that would nest near her house in Poland. Storks happier times, she longs for symbolise the family and home she has been robbed of.



Shoes:

The Shoe Poet, who earned a living as a shoemaker, could tell everything about a person from their shoes. Shoes become symbolic of an individuals true self and the secrets/hurts they hide.



Emilia's Hair Wreath:

Emilia remembers a tradition she took part in where young girls made wreaths to float down the river, carrying a candle. Whoever caught the wreath would be the girl's future husband. Emilia's got stuck, caught fire and sank.



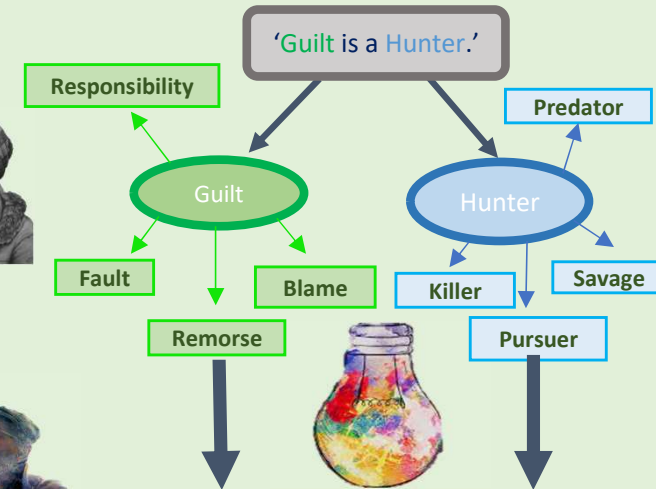
The Amber Swan:

Florian has stolen a rare & precious amber swan as revenge against Hitler for the death of his father (killed for attempting to assassinate Hitler). The swan symbolises endless cycle of revenge which never brings peace.

9

The Function and Purpose of Metaphors

Metaphors help a writer create powerful images by comparing 2 ideas or objects we would not usually place side by side. Metaphors help the writer to compare personal or imaginary experiences in terms that most readers will be able to relate to. By thinking about each item/idea separately we are then able to place them side by side and consider what qualities they share and how they are connected. The writer is making us see the world or a concept in a unique, new or surprising way. Let's look at an example from the novel.



When Joana writes that she is hunted by guilt, she means that guilt is with her always, and although she does her best to escape it, she cannot. Although Joana managed to escape her native Lithuania and repatriate to Germany, many of her relatives remained behind, and were captured or killed by the Soviet army. Joana feels it was unfair that she was lucky enough to survive and escape, while her loved ones could not. She also feels responsible for her family's capture, though these details are only revealed later in the novel.