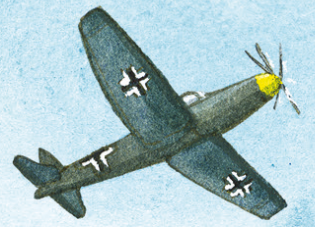


Helen
Peters



Teaching
Resource
Pack

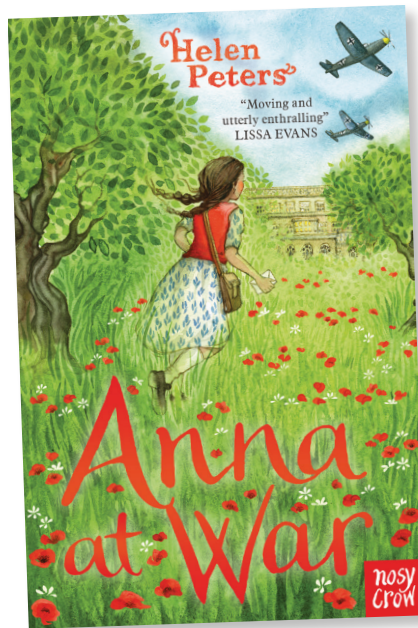
Anna
at War

Follow Anna's journey in this moving wartime adventure



“A complete game changer in children's historical fiction.”

**SCOTT EVANS,
THE READER
TEACHER**



“Moving and utterly enthralling”

LISSA EVANS

As life for German Jews becomes increasingly dangerous, Anna's parents put her on one of the last trains leaving for England. But the war follows her to Kent, and soon Anna finds herself caught up in a web of betrayal and secrecy. How can she prove whose side she's on when she can't tell anyone the truth? But actions speak louder than words, and Anna has a dangerous plan...

Anna at War is suitable for teaching to children aged 8+. Use this pack to explore important themes from the book including WWII, the Kindertransport, leaving home, family, separation and empathy.

Helen Peters grew up on an old-fashioned farm in Sussex, surrounded by family, animals and mud. She spent most of her childhood reading stories and putting on plays in a tumbledown shed that she and her friends turned into a theatre. After university, she became an English and Drama teacher. Helen lives with her husband and children in Brighton, and she can hardly believe that she now gets to call herself a writer. Her debut novel, *The Secret Hen House Theatre* was shortlisted for the Waterstones Children's Book Prize. She is also the author of *The Farm Beneath the Water*, *Evie's Ghost* and the Jasmine Green series for younger readers.



Anna at War

#AnnaAtWar

Contents



Lesson 1: Kindertransport (Chapter 7)

Objectives: Create a suitcase that reflects your identity; choose personal objects to take on an unexpected journey; present an object using sensory description.

Subjects: Reading: Inference, Descriptive Writing, Art, Design and Technology, PSHE

Lesson 2: The Journey Begins (Chapter 8)

Objectives: Empathise with Anna's conflicting feelings when she leaves her parents; write and perform Anna's inner monologue during a key scene; identify Anna's key relationships in the story; explore themes of family and separation.

Subjects: Reading: Inference, Writing In Role, Drama, Speaking and Listening, History, PSHE

Lesson 3: War on the Playground (Chapter 20)

Objectives: Identify different opinions about the War; analyse how the author builds tension in an extract; understand why empathy is important; show empathy with a character in the story.

Subjects: Reading: Retrieval and Inference, Drama, Speaking and Listening, PSHE

Lesson 4: Hitler and Churchill (Chapter 45)

Objectives: Create a chronological timeline of key events in WWII; draw a picture of a character based on description in the text; conduct an interview between two characters; create Granny's 'Second World War' files; write a newspaper article.

Subjects: History, Art, Design and Technology, Reading: Comprehension and Inference, Writing to Inform, Drama

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Lesson One:

Kindertransport



Extract 1 (chapter 7, p. 35-36)

Children travelling on the Kindertransport were allowed to take one small suitcase each. We all had to carry our own cases, so they couldn't be too heavy. We weren't allowed to take anything valuable out of the country, and only ten marks each in money.

Mama paid Frau Heinkel to make new dresses for me, some in my size and some bigger, in case I grew quickly. They were lovely dresses. Mama embroidered my name in all of them. I tried to imagine myself wearing them in England.

I didn't even know which part of Britain my foster family lived in. Would I be walking by the River Thames in London wearing that wool dress, gazing up at Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament? Or would I be high up in the Scottish mountains?

Maybe they lived by the sea. I had never seen the sea, but now I would be crossing it to get to England. Every day I traced the journey on the map in my children's atlas. Across Germany to the Dutch border, then through Holland to the English Channel, and over the sea to the port of Harwich, on the east coast of England. And from there to an unknown family.

At night, I lay in bed trying to imagine every possible type of family, so I would be prepared for whoever I ended up with. I imagined old parents and young ones; city families and country families; rich and poor; good-looking and ugly; parents with babies and parents with teenagers; families with one child and families with ten.

What if they weren't nice to me? What if they were mean, cruel people?

But they wouldn't be, would they? If they had offered to take in a refugee child, they must be good and kind.

Once my clothes and shoes were packed, there wasn't much room for anything else.

"Just one toy and one book, I'm afraid," said Mama. "When we come to join you, we can bring some more. And we'll pack up everything else carefully and leave it with friends until we get back."

It wasn't hard to decide which toy to take. There was no way I could have left Alfred behind. He had shared my bed for my whole life. Having him with me would be almost like travelling with a friend.

It was horrible to have to leave all the others behind though. Even though a lot of my toys were too young for me now, I didn't want to be parted from them. Papa said the foster family would probably have things I could play with, but that wasn't really the point. And anyway, what if they didn't want me playing with their things?

But I didn't say that aloud.

Lesson One:

Kindertransport



Discussion Questions:

- What do you think the ‘Kindertransport’ is, judging from the context in which it is used here?
- Why do you think Mama embroiders Anna’s name on all of her dresses?
- What are Anna’s concerns about her new family? Pick out at least two.
- How can you tell that Anna is nervous or anxious in the extract?
- Why does Anna decide not to say what she is thinking about ‘aloud’?

Activity 1: My Suitcase

Subjects: PSHE, Art, Design & Technology

- What is identity? Why is identity important? Consider your own identity – how do you show it by the things you wear or the objects that you carry around with you?
- At the beginning of *Anna at War*, Anna is told by her parents that she must get her suitcase and start packing for an unexpected journey on the Kindertransport to England. Put yourself in Anna’s shoes. Use the template on the following page to create a suitcase that reflects your identity. Consider the following things:
 1. What colours will you use and why?
 2. What images will you use and why?
 3. Will your suitcase have any additional features, like a lock, a badge or some patches to reflect your personality?
- What do you learn about your identity in completing this exercise? Is anyone willing to share their suitcase with the class?

Activity 2: Time to Pack

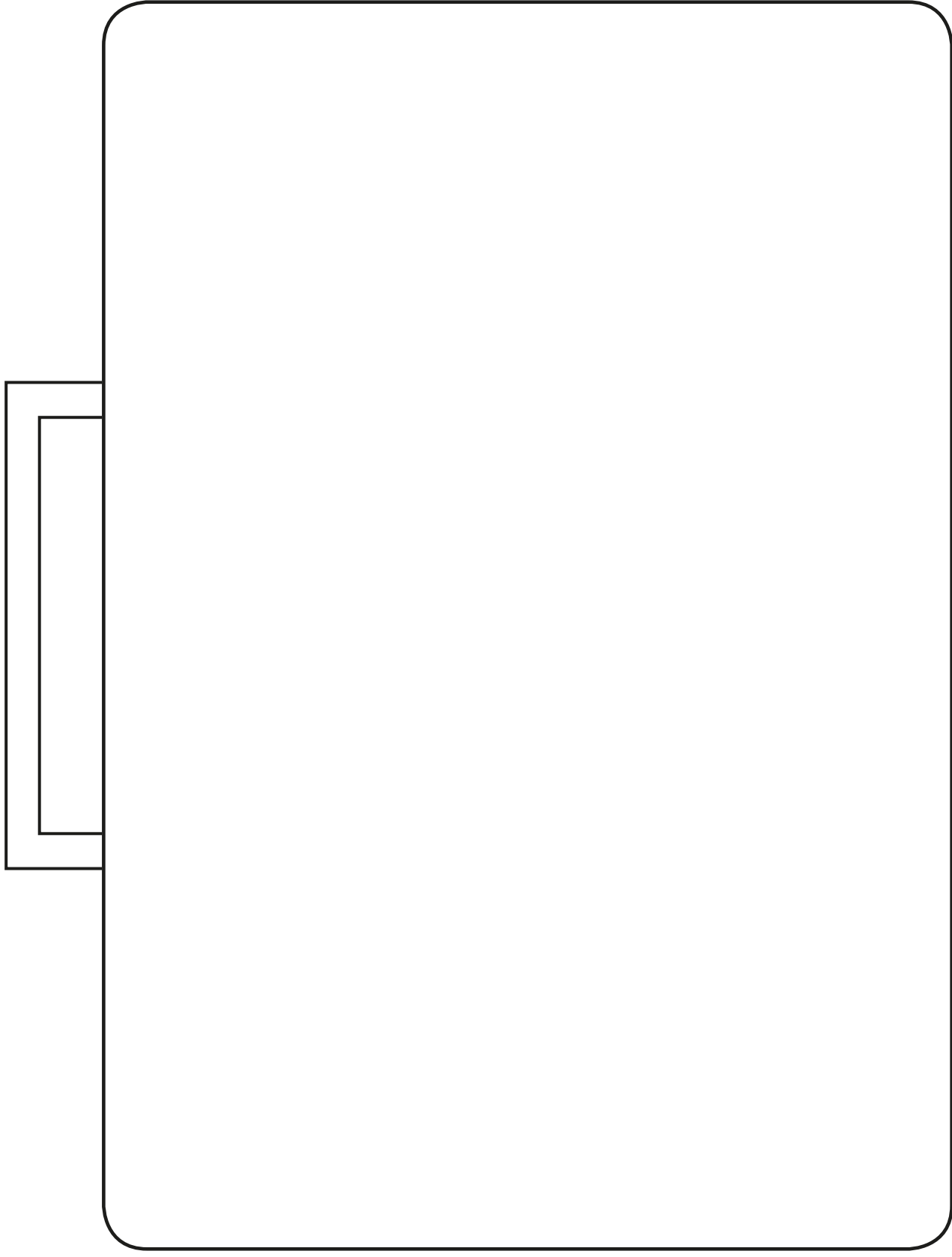
Subjects: PSHE, Speaking and Listening, Descriptive Writing

- Make a list of things that you’d want to take with you if you were going on an unexpected trip. Put two things under each of the categories: Toys, Books, Clothes, Extras
- Choose one of the objects that you’ve decided to bring with you. Answer the following questions about your object:
 1. What does your object look like? (Think about colour, shape and texture).
 2. What does your object feel like to touch?
 3. What would your object smell like?
 4. What would your object sound like if it was touched or moved?
 5. What would your object taste like if it were something you could eat?
- Read out your sentences as one paragraph. Can the rest of the class guess what your object is?

Anna at War

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My Suitcase



Lesson Two: The Journey Begins



Extract 2 (chapter 8, p. 40-42)

We had to line up on the platform. My parents stood in line with me, still gripping my hands. A kind-looking man who wasn't in uniform started calling out our names.

I waited and waited. Almost all the children were on the train now. Had there been some terrible mistake? Maybe I wasn't on the list after all.

I was sure my parents were having the same worry, because they stopped talking and just stared, as rigid as statues, at the man calling out the names. I was so tense I could hardly breathe.

I realised, to my surprise, that I would be devastated if I couldn't leave on this train. I had to get to England. I had to find jobs for my parents so they could get out too.

"Anna Schlesinger?" the man called.

I felt dizzy with relief. Dragging my parents behind me, I went to the table where the man was sitting. A lady hung a cardboard label with a number on it on a piece of string around my neck. Another lady tied a label with the same number to my suitcase.

"You can get on the train now," she said.

Now I was worried I'd start crying. I bit my cheeks. I didn't dare look my parents in the eye. They were gripping my hands even more tightly than before.

Together, we walked towards the train. As we were about to board it, an SS officer stepped in front of us.

"No adults on the train!" he barked.

Mama pulled me into her coat and hugged me fiercely. Then Papa did the same. His rough wool coat felt scratchy against my face. My cheek was crushed against the top button. He lifted me up and kissed me, and Mama put her arms around both of us, and she stood on tiptoe and kissed me too. Then Papa put me down and handed me my suitcase. He kissed me again and said, "You'd better get on the train."

"We'll see you soon, darling," said Mama. "Be a good, helpful girl to your foster parents. We'll all be together again soon."

"You must be my brave, cheerful daughter," said Papa. "And we'll come and join you, as soon as we've got everything sorted out."

As I was about to climb the steps, Mama clutched my hand again.

"Try to be happy," she said. "Always be kind. And make the most of every opportunity you get. Fill your head with good things. And remember, we'll be thinking of you and sending our love to you every moment of every day."

I nodded, but I couldn't speak for the lump in my throat, and I didn't dare look at them in case it made me cry.

A man called, "Everybody on the train now!"

I wriggled my hand out of Mama's grip and climbed up the steps.

Anna at War

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Lesson Two:

The Journey Begins



Discussion Questions:

- What is the effect of the word ‘gripping’ in the first sentence: ‘My parents stood in line with me, still gripping my hands’? Where else is this word used in the extract?
- Why do you think the characters are described as being ‘as rigid as statues’?
- What conflicting feelings does Anna have in the extract? List at least three.
- Why do you think the author uses the word ‘barked’ to describe how the SS Officer speaks?
- Can you relate to what Anna feels in this extract? Can you give examples of when you have felt like she feels here?

Activity 1: In Anna’s shoes

Subjects: History, PSHE, Reading: Inference, Drama, Speaking and Listening, Writing In Role

- In World War II, Jewish children were sent to countries like England to keep them safe from the Nazis. Anna is one of these children. In the extract, she is about to embark on her journey via the ‘Kindertransport’ (German for ‘children’s transport’). Put yourself in Anna’s shoes. Imagine arriving at a scene like this. How would you feel? Write down at least five emotions and list them in order from 1–5 (1 being the emotion you’d feel the most and 5 being the emotion you’d feel the least).
- Re-read the extract and make a note of the places where Anna doesn’t say what she truly feels. In groups of four, perform the scene; one of you should be in role as Anna, one in role as Anna’s Papa and one in role as Anna’s Mama. The fourth person in the group should perform Anna’s inner monologue (what she is really thinking) at crucial moments in the scene.
- Imagine that you are Anna in the train station, about to begin your journey to an unknown place. Write a short diary entry explaining how you really feel.

Activity 2: Family Jigsaw

Subjects: PSHE

- In pairs consider the question: how would you feel if you were separated from your friends and family?
- Who are the people that Anna cares the most about? Complete Anna’s Family Jigsaw using the jigsaw pieces on the following page.
- Create your own jigsaw. It can be as big or as small as you like. Remember to include all of the important people in your life, whether family or friends, neighbours (or even teachers!).
- Imagine you’ve been taken out of your jigsaw and placed in a faraway location. You’re allowed to write a letter to one person. Put your jigsaw pieces in order of which person you would write to first. Explain to your partner why you made your decision.

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Anna's Jigsaw



<p>Name:</p> <p>Relationship to Anna:</p> <p>Feelings:</p>	<p>Name:</p> <p>Relationship to Anna:</p> <p>Feelings:</p>
<p>Name:</p> <p>Relationship to Anna:</p> <p>Feelings:</p>	<p>Name:</p> <p>Relationship to Anna:</p> <p>Feelings:</p>

Lesson Three: War on the Playground



Extract 3 (chapter 20, p. 101-103)

The children in the lower juniors were very interested in me. At morning break, when we were all given a little bottle of tepid milk to drink in the playground, they crowded round me, asking questions.

“How old are you? Aren’t you too old for our class?”

“Margaret says you’re German. Are you?”

“Why did you come to England? I thought the Germans hated the English.”

“Say something in German.”

That was a very popular suggestion. Several of the others begged me to say something in German. When I obliged, and told them my name and where I came from, they were enthralled.

“It sounds so funny! What does it mean?”

“Say it again.”

“Say some more German. Teach us to count to ten.”

So I taught them the German numbers up to ten, which they found hilarious.

“Aren’t you going to drink your milk?” asked a boy called Alfie, who had said nothing up to this point.

The bottle was warm from sitting in the classroom all morning, and the milk had a thick layer of cream on the top. I wasn’t keen on milk at the best of times, and creamy lukewarm milk was the worst. I handed it gratefully to Alfie, who took it with delight.

“Did you ever see Hitler?” asked Janet.

I shook my head.

“Hitler’s crazy,” said Stanley. “My mum says he’s a madman and he won’t stop until he’s conquered the world.”

“Well, he won’t conquer the world, will he?” said Barbara. “Because we’re going to smash him to pieces.”

“Sidney’s really good at Hitler,” said Janet. “Do Hitler, Sidney.”

Excited faces turned to Sidney.

“Oh, yes, do old Hitler, Sid!”

“Go on, Sidney, show her your Hitler!”

Sidney spat on his hand and slicked down the front of his hair. Then he put one finger under his nose for a moustache and started goose-stepping around the playground, screaming and ranting in a stream of nonsense words. The other children were laughing and egging him on, but my stomach was squirming and I found myself darting frightened glances around the playground.

Lesson Three: War on the Playground



Extract 3 continued:

Don't be ridiculous, I told myself. It's all right to mock Hitler here. Nobody will mind.

A crowd had gathered round Sidney. I was filled with envy as I looked at their laughing faces. How wonderful it would be to see Hitler as a figure of fun.

"What's wrong with you, German girl?"

My stomach clenched. There was an edge to the question. I looked to see who had spoken.

"Don't you like people making fun of Hitler? Are you on his side then?"

It was a short, stocky boy from Molly's class. He had a freckled face and curly brown hair. He took a step towards me.

"My dad says the only good German is a dead German," he said.

I felt sick.

"Shut up, Billy," said Molly. "You know nothing."

"I know my dad's out in France, fighting the Germans. So what have you got one of them living in your house for? She's probably a spy."

Nancy gave a scornful laugh. "A spy? Don't be daft. She's twelve."

"Exactly. No one would ever suspect her. I bet she's been sent over specially by Hitler."

"I hate Hitler," I said.

"Well, you would say that, wouldn't you?"

The bell rang for the end of break and everyone filed back into the building. I walked inside with the others. But I felt as though I was six years old again, in the playground of my school in Germany.

Lesson Three:

War on the Playground



Discussion Questions:

- What is the effect of all the different questions listed at the beginning of the extract? How does it make you feel? How do you think it makes Anna feel?
- Can you find any examples of where the children are copying what they have heard adults say?
- Why do you think Anna's stomach is 'squirming' when she hears the other children mocking Hitler?
- Why is Anna 'filled with envy' at one point in the extract?
- Can you find examples of Billy using aggressive language towards Anna? How does Billy make Anna feel?

Activity 1: Opinions

Subjects: Reading: Retrieval, Drama, Speaking and Listening, PSHE

- Identify all of the different opinions, demands and questions that are levelled at Anna in the extract. Compare your list with a classmate; have you spotted everything?
- Plot a line graph showing the different moments of tension in the extract. Label the 'X axis' with the amount of 'tension', and the 'Y axis' with the different 'opinions' or 'questions' that are put forward by the children. Compare graphs with your classmates; do you see similar trends?
- As a class, act out what happens in the scene. Nominate one person at a time to play Anna. The person playing Anna should walk around the classroom while everyone else shouts out the conflicting opinions, demands and questions from the extract. How does the person playing Anna feel during the exercise? How does everyone else feel?
- Can you relate to what happens to Anna in this scene? Is your school playground similar to this?

Activity 2: Showing Empathy

Subjects: Reading: Retrieval and Inference, PSHE

- Which characters show empathy to Anna in the extract, if any?
- Use the diagram on the following page to show the things that you would say and do if you were able to help Anna in the extract. How could you make her feel valued, respected, and listened to?
- If you can think of more than four ways in either category, add in your own arrows with even more ideas.

Anna at War

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Showing Empathy



What would you say?

What would you do?

Lesson Four: Hitler and Churchill



Extract 4 (Taken from chapter 45, p. 252-254)

He reached into his backpack and slowly drew something out.

A rifle.

He raised the rifle and pointed the barrel out of the window, aiming it into the yard below.

“No!”

He swung round, pulling the gun back through the window. As he saw me, panic and disbelief flashed across his face. My heart hammered horribly, but there was one clear thought in my head. I had to keep him talking. I had to stop him shooting anybody.

“I went to the barn to bring you food, but you’d gone.” I said. My voice came out high and strained. I took a breath.

“I was worried in case you’d been caught. So I went to the field and I saw you in the hedge and I decided to follow you in case you needed any help to get away. With your leg being bad and everything.”

How stupid that sounded.

“My ankle is much better,” he said. His face was strained and tense. “You must go home. I need to go to my mother’s house alone.”

I saw an opportunity. I gave him a broad, friendly smile. “But you’re going in the wrong direction. Whitstable is the other way. Come on. I’ll show you. I’ll take you to the bus stop.”

A flash of anger passed across his face. He seemed to be fighting to keep his features under control.

“There is something I need to do here first,” he said. “You go home now.”

My heart thudded against my ribs. I forced another smile.

“That’s all right. I’ll wait.”

“I said you must leave,” he spat, not bothering to conceal his impatience any more. “That is an order.”

I was shaking now.

“I’m not leaving,” I said.

He looked at me for a moment. Then he picked up his rifle and raised the barrel until it was pointed directly at me.

“Then I shall have to shoot you.”

He smiled a horrible smile. “But first I should thank you and your friends for giving me such valuable information. If it were not for you, I should not know that Winston Churchill is coming to this very place today.”

Lesson Four: Hitler and Churchill



Extract 4 continued:

I was shaking all over. I tried to focus on his face and not the barrel of his gun.

“And what is the first thing that Mr Churchill does when he arrives at an army camp?” he said. “You know that, little girl? Shall I tell you?”

Through the overwhelming fear that flooded me, one clear thought rose to the surface. As long as he’s talking, I thought, as long as he keeps talking to me, then he won’t shoot me.

“I will tell you what is the first thing he does,” he said. “He inspects the troops. Why do you think all those soldiers are lined up out there, in the yard, practising their drills? It is so that the great Mr Churchill can ride up in his big shiny open car and inspect them. And when he arrives in this yard, what do you think I shall do then, little girl?”

I was cold all over. I knew exactly what he was planning to do.

He laughed. “You know, don’t you? Yes, of course you do. The great British Prime Minister will be shot dead, for the glory of the Führer and the honour of the Third Reich.”

All of a sudden, I felt strangely calm and logical.

“If you’re waiting here to shoot Mr Churchill,” I said, “then you can’t shoot me first. There are hundreds of soldiers only a few metres away from us. They would all hear the gunshot, and you would be caught immediately. And then you would never get your chance to kill him.”

“Attention!!”

The command was bellowed out. A thousand boots stamped in unison, and then there was silence. A huge, echoing silence, as though everybody was waiting for something to fill it.

The man lowered his gun. But he didn’t look defeated. Far from it. There was a malicious gleam in his eye and a chilling smile playing at the corners of his mouth.

Lesson Four: Hitler and Churchill



Discussion Questions:

- How does the author build tension in the extract? Pick out key words and phrases.
- What are Anna's feelings in the extract? List at least three different feelings.
- At what point does Anna start to get angry in the extract?
- What does the man plan to do to Winston Churchill? What are his motivations?
- How does the author make the reader dislike the man? Pick out key pieces of description in the text.

Activity 1: WWII

Subjects: History, Art, Design and Technology, Reading: Comprehension and Inference, Drama

- Research and define some important words that are used throughout the book: Evacuee, Kindertransport, Nazi, Führer, Third Reich, SS soldier.
- In groups of four, carry out some research into Adolf Hitler and Winston Churchill. Use the following categories to structure your research: 'About', 'Early Life', 'Political Views' and 'Role in the War'. Create a chronological timeline of events in WWII that included these two important political figures. Use different colours to show the actions/influence of each person.
- Read Chapter 47, when Anna meets Winston Churchill. Focus on the description of Churchill and use it to draw what you think he looks like. Then, consider what Winston Churchill would have been like in real life. Create a mind-map of your ideas using the following headings: appearance, voice, language, body language, and facial expressions.
- Imagine that you're Anna, meeting Churchill for the first time. Write a list of questions that you would like to ask him.
- In pairs, conduct an interview between Anna and Churchill. Try to use elements of each character's personality when you ask or answer questions. What would Churchill say about Hitler and the Nazi occupation?

Lesson Four: Hitler and Churchill



Activity 2: Granny's Second World War Files

Subjects: History, Art, Design and Technology, Writing to Inform

- In Chapter 1, Granny explains that MI5 (the Secret Service) are planning to release her Second World War Files. Now that you've read more of the story, discuss in pairs what you think might be included in these files. Write a list with your partner. Think about including photographs, letters, documents and maps.
- In pairs, create Granny's Second World War Files. Include as much classified information as possible. Share your files with others in the class.
- Write a newspaper article about Anna's experience of the War – focusing on how she becomes a hero in her new home. Include a headline and an image or photograph. Read your newspaper articles aloud to your classmates – or you could even mount some of them to create a classroom display.

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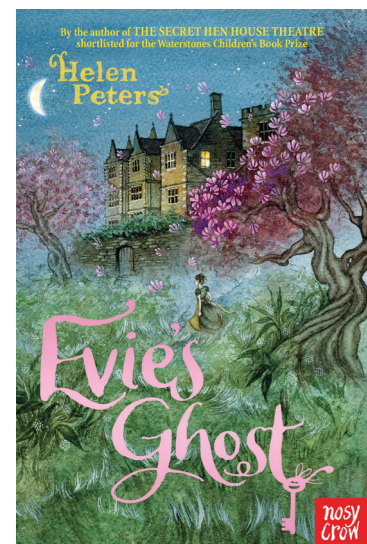
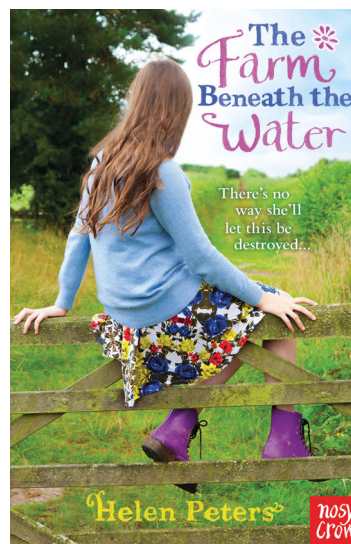
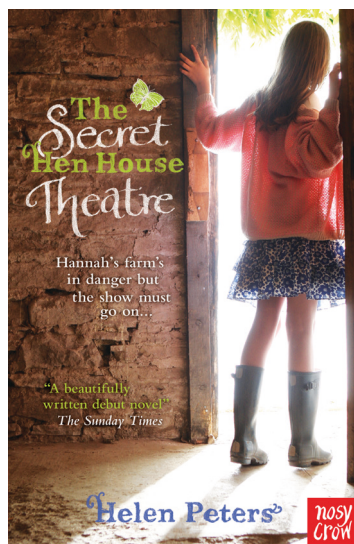


Thank you for using this resource pack!

We hope you enjoyed reading about Anna's journey from Nazi Germany to England and that you have learnt lots along the way.

We would love to see your work! Share it with us
@NosyCrowBooks #AnnaAtWar

Don't miss the rest of Helen Peters' moving adventures!



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www.nosycrow.com/activity-sheets

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