

I SURVIVED

BOOK CLUB

Name: _____

I Survived The Battle of D-Day, 1944



CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS AND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT

CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS:

1. Why is the soccer ball so important to Paul? Why does he decide to sell it? When he gets turned down, how does thinking about Mr. Leon inspire him to try harder?

2. The Madeleines Paul works so hard to get for his mother are crushed. How does this affect him? What does he realize in this moment, and why is it important?



3. Why is Paul afraid to help the paratrooper? Why do you think he does it anyway?

4. How does Paul's friendship with Gerard help him help Victor?

5. Why is Paul surprised when he learns that his mother is in the resistance? How does this knowledge affect him?

CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS AND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT *(CONTINUED)*

6. What are *Nebelwerfers*? How are they part of the mission that the resistance is helping Victor with in Le Roc? Why is the mission so important?

7. What is the chain of events that leads to Paul being on his own on the cliffs when the D-Day invasion starts?

8. The legend of the dragon comes into play at the end of the story in a cool way. Who does the "dragon" turn out to be? What message might the author be trying to send about hope?

9. Why was D-Day so important to ending World War II?

10. How did the author's visit to Normandy help her write this book?

ESSAY ASSIGNMENT: Answer the organizer questions on the next page to help you brainstorm a short personal essay about the following statement: You can find courage inside a heart pounding with fear. (Remember that being courageous and brave **does not** mean that you aren't afraid—in fact, we are brave and courageous **only** when we overcome our fear.) Then use the information from your organizer to write your essay.

CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS AND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT *(CONTINUED)*

PERSONAL ESSAY ORGANIZER FOR *I SURVIVED THE BATTLE OF D-DAY, 1944*

First, answer the questions below to brainstorm ideas for your first paragraph:

When in your life have you been afraid? List three different examples.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How did you handle each of these situations?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

List any moments of bravery or courage you had during these situations. This could be an action you took, words you said, or something you felt or thought.

Now write your essay on the back of this page or on a computer using your answers above. In the first paragraph, write about one of the situations you listed above, explaining what happened and why you were afraid. In the second paragraph, write about a moment of courage you had in the situation. In your concluding sentence, explain what you learned about yourself from this experience.

ANSWERS

CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS:

1. The soccer ball is important to Paul because he and his friend Gerard used to play together all the time, until the Nazis took Gerard and his family away. Paul wants to sell the ball so he can make money to buy his mother a birthday present. After getting turned down by the leatherworker at the market, he thinks about Mr. Leon risking his life for the resistance and realizes he can try harder to sell the ball.
2. Paul is angry and upset when the Madeleines are crushed. But he realizes that what he's really feeling is helpless. He feels like there's no way to fight back against the Nazis. This is an important realization because it sets him on the path to looking for ways to fight back.
3. Paul is afraid to help the paratrooper because he knows that people who help Allied soldiers are taken away by the Nazis, or worse. But he probably decides to help the paratrooper because he knows it's the right thing to do, and because he wants to fight back against the Nazis.
4. Paul and Gerard explored every inch of Le Roc and knew all the fields, paths, and hedgerows. Because of this knowledge, Paul is able to help Victor escape from the Nazis by leading him to Castle Le Roc.
5. He is surprised because he thinks of his mother as "quiet, gentle Maman," not as a messenger for the resistance. Knowing his mother is working for the resistance makes him want to do it, too.
6. *Nebelwerfers* are powerful cannons with six barrels that can shoot one hundred rockets and kill one thousand people in just minutes. The resistance is helping Victor destroy the *Nebelwerfers*. It's important that they destroy these weapons before the Allied soldiers land on beach in the D-Day invasion.
7. The resistance learns that the weapons are on the cliffs, but they don't know how to get there because the roads are blocked, and the Nazis have posted guards everywhere. Paul knows a secret route, but he can't make a map—he can only lead people there. He and Mr. Leon go together and put the C-3 in the *Nebelwerfers*, but after the explosions start, a plane falls from the sky and he and Mr. Leon get separated.
8. The legend is that the dragon in the castle's tower protects the people of Le Roc during war. But at the end of the book, the "dragon" that comes to help Maman and Paul is Ellie, the carrier pigeon and resistance fighter. The author uses Ellie as a symbol of hope by having Ellie swoop in when it seems like all is lost.
9. D-Day was a huge step toward winning the war. The Allies broke through the Nazis' defenses. As a result, in the following weeks and months, they were able to get troops, weapons, tanks, and supplies into Europe. This allowed them to free most of France.
10. The author's visit to Normandy not only inspired her, but it also gave her ideas about key elements of the book like the castle, paratroopers caught in trees, and carrier pigeons.

ESSAY ASSIGNMENT: Answers will vary.