

# I SURVIVED

## BOOK CLUB

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### I Survived The Nazi Invasion, 1944



# CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS AND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT

(SUITABLE FOR NOVEL AND GRAPHIC NOVEL VERSIONS)

### CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS:

1. Max risks his life to get the raspberries. Why are the raspberries so important? Include the reasons listed in the book, and think of at least one other reason why Max might want the raspberries so badly.

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2. When Max thinks about the last time Hannah came to the house, he remembers Hannah and Papa fighting about leaving Esties. She tells Papa she's leaving but doesn't tell him where she's going. What might this tell you about Hannah? How is she different from Papa in this scene? What factors does Papa have to take into consideration when deciding whether or not to leave?

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3. Zena says "We beat the Nazis" when she and Max are hiding in the field. What does she mean? Does Max agree with her? How does he feel after she says this?

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4. What does Max quickly realize about the farmer, Jablonski? What do you think this means to him? How does this help Max hang onto hope?

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5. The author includes a story from the bible at the moment when Max is trying to understand how the partisans could possibly take on the Nazis. What is the story, and how does it help Max understand?

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

6. Walking through the forest makes Max think about playing hide-and-seek in the woods with Papa. As he walks, he wants to yell from the treetops, "I'm here, Papa!" Why is he imagining this? What do you think Max wishes would happen?

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7. Describe the different emotions Max feels when he is trapped in the ditch underneath the tree. What does he feel at first? How do his feelings change, and why?

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8. When Max saves Martin and Zena from the Nazi soldiers by throwing the rock, what does he notice about one of the soldiers? Who does the soldier remind him of? What do they have in common? What does this help Max to realize?

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9. After Max is shot, he starts to drift away. What pulls him back toward life? What does this say about Max?

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10. What is Esties like after the war? How does Max describe it? What does he mean? How do his feelings about Esties help him leave Poland?

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

**ESSAY ASSIGNMENT:** Answer the questions on the organizer on the next page to help you brainstorm a two-paragraph essay with a concluding statement about Max and Zena's relationship. Then use your answers to write your short essay.

### TWO-PARAGRAPH ESSAY ORGANIZER FOR *I SURVIVED THE NAZI INVASION, 1944*

**First, answer the questions below to brainstorm ideas for your first paragraph, which will be your introduction:**

What kind of relationship do Max and Zena have? How would you describe it?

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**Then, choose two pieces of evidence for your second paragraph:**

What two events or moments in the book support your ideas about Max and Zena's relationship?

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Next, answer the question below to help you write a concluding statement for the end of your second paragraph.**

How do you think Max and Zena's relationship helped them survive the war?

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**Now, write your essay on the back of this page or on a computer using your answers above.**

## ANSWERS

### CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS:

1. Max risks his life for the raspberries so he and Zena can eat them and trade them for potatoes. He might also want them because he and Zena haven't had anything delicious to eat in a long time, which makes the raspberries special.
2. There is something about where Hannah is going that she doesn't even want her brother (Papa) to know. She seems braver than Papa in this scene because she is taking action and leaving. Papa has to take his children's safety into consideration.
3. When Zena says "We beat the Nazis," she means they scored a victory by escaping a Nazi soldier. Max agrees and feels good for a moment, but that feeling fades when he realizes he has no idea what they're going to do or where they're going to go.
4. Max quickly realizes that the farmer, Jablonski, wants to help Max and Zena by hiding them in his barn. This is a big risk for Jablonski—people who get caught hiding Jews get shot—and it means a lot to Max that the farmer is willing to take that risk. Knowing that not everyone has been infected by the Nazis' hate probably helps Max hang onto hope.
5. The story is about David, a Jewish boy who was a shepherd. The Jewish people were at war with the Philistines, who had a terrifying, huge warrior named Goliath. David didn't have a sword or armor like Goliath, but he figured out a way to defeat Goliath with a slingshot. As Max thinks about this story, he realizes that the partisans taking on the Nazis are like David standing up to Goliath.
6. Max is probably imagining this because he wishes that he were playing hide-and-seek with Papa instead of running from the Nazis, and also that Papa would come and find him, like he did when they played together.
7. When Max is trapped in the ditch under the tree, he feels hopeless at first—the tree is enormous and he doesn't think he can move it. For a moment, he thinks about giving up. But then he hears a voice in his head—his own—telling him to get up. He becomes determined not to let the Nazis beat him without a fight.
8. Max notices that one of the soldiers is young, probably only a few years older than Max. The soldier reminds Max of his older friends at school. Max sees that there's no hatred in soldier's eyes, and that he's just as scared and confused as Max is. This helps Max realize that some people on the other side of the conflict are caught in a net of evil, just like Max is.
9. As Max starts to drift away, he hears Zena calling his name and feels her gripping his hand. This pulls him back toward life. Max loves his sister and doesn't want to leave her behind.
10. After the war, nearly every Jewish person in Esties is gone, their lives stolen by the Nazis. Esties seems haunted to Max, as if there are ghosts everywhere. This sadness helps Max leave Poland and look ahead to his future in America.

**ESSAY ASSIGNMENT:** Answers will vary.