NOVEL UNITS
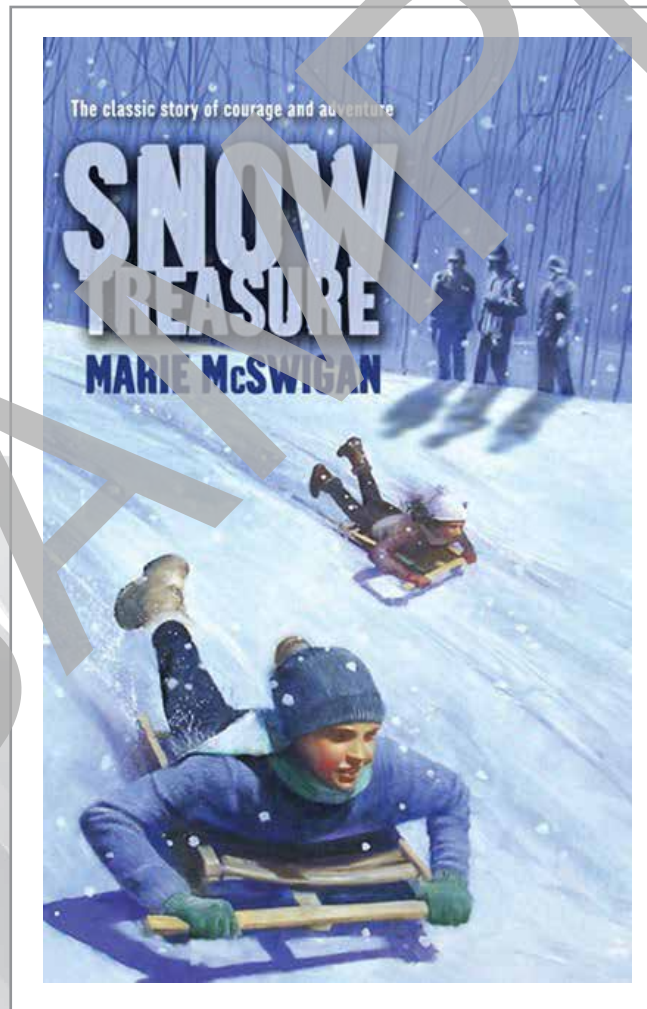
COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Snow Treasure

Marie McSwigan

READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

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TEACHER GUIDE

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

Table of Contents

Skills and Strategies

Thinking
    Brainstorming, mapping,
research, pros and cons

Literary Elements
    Historical fiction genre,
story elements, character
analysis, similes, plot
analysis, point of view,
conflict

Listening/Speaking
    Discussion

Comprehension
    Predicting, sequencing,
comparison/contrast

Writing
    Journaling, dialogue,
expository

Vocabulary
    Context clues, categorizing,
synonyms, word mapping

Summary of *Snow Treasure*

The setting of the novel is Norway in 1940 at the beginning of World War II. The Norwegian citizens need to transport $9,000,000 worth of gold out of their country. This exciting adventure story tells how Peter and his friends fool the enemy and slip past Nazi guards with the gold hidden on their sleds.
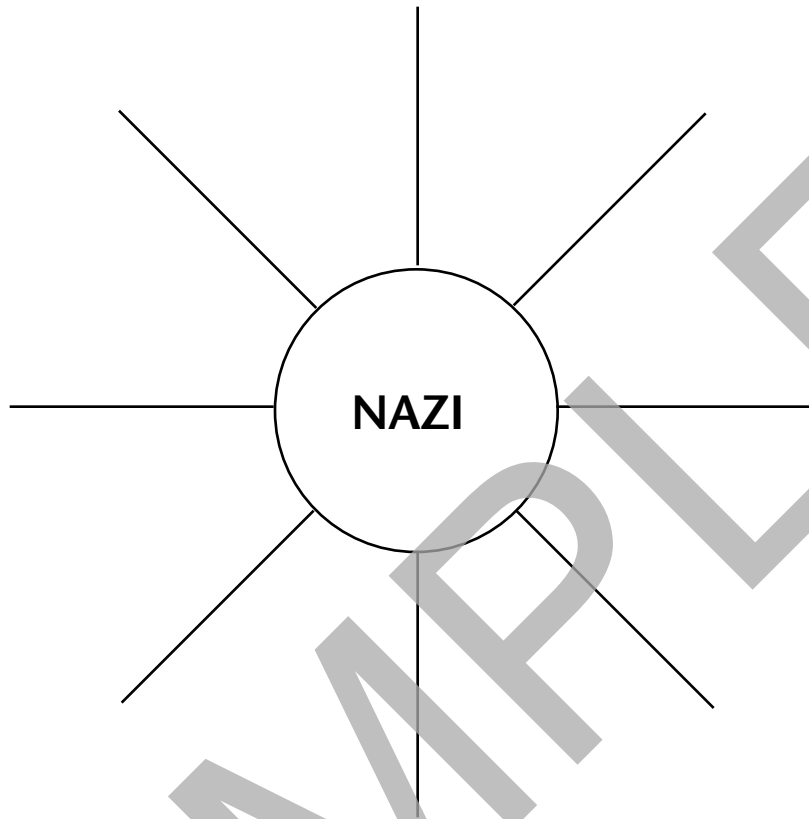
Instructions Prior to Reading

You may wish to choose one or more of the following Pre-reading Discussion Questions. Each is designed to help students draw from their store of background knowledge about the events and themes they will meet in the story they are about to read.

Pre-reading Discussion Questions

1. **On Fear:** What sort of things frighten you? What do you do when you are afraid? Is being afraid the opposite of being brave? When is it smart to be afraid?
2. **Learning New Skills:** Have you ever been faced with an unusual problem which required you to learn some new skill or skills? What was the situation? How did you feel at first? What skills did you lack? How did you learn these skills? How did you feel when the whole thing was over?
3. **Thinking Positively:** Have you ever heard the expression, "The power of positive thinking"? What does it mean? Do you believe in it? If not, why not? If so, when have you seen it work?

Introductory Activities

1. Look at the picture on the cover of the novel. Can you find any clues about the book?
2. Begin a time line showing major dates of World War II and marking each of the ten year points since World War II and the current date.
3. Brainstorm the word "NAZI." (See next page.)
   Brainstorming rules:
   - All ideas count
   - Add details
   - Adapt others' ideas
   - Suggest unusual ideas

NAZI

4. *Snow Treasure* is an example of historical fiction. In historical fiction, the main characters are usually creations of the writer's imagination (although real people may appear or be mentioned in the story). The setting is real—usually a time and place which had historical importance. Help students fill in the chart on the next page, comparing and contrasting historical fiction with history.
5. This story takes place in Norway. Locate Norway and Germany on a map of Europe. Research the geography and climate of these countries.

Recommended Procedure for Reading this Book

This book will be read one section at a time, using DRTA (Directed Reading Thinking Activity) Method. This technique involves reading a section, predicting what will happen next (making good guesses) based on what has already occurred in the story. The students continue to read and everyone verifies the predictions.

Chapter Two - Pages 9-13
Vocabulary

bond (9)   capable (10)   bullion (10)
kroner (10)   retorted (12)

Vocabulary Activity

Use each of the vocabulary words in a sentence. Compare your sentence with a classmate's paper.

Discussion Questions
1. What does the word "bond" mean? *(something that binds or unites)* What could a bond between brothers be?
2. What is Uncle Victor's plan to save the gold? *(page 11, to use the children to get the gold out of the country)*
3. Why did the Nazis want the gold? *(pages 10-12, to pay for the war)*
4. What does it mean to be patriotic?
5. **Prediction:** What are things that could go wrong with Uncle Victor's plan?

Supplementary Activity

Brainstorming: The characters in this story displayed a high degree of patriotism. Brainstorm ways that patriotism can be shown in the following situations.
- The pledge is being recited at a sporting event.
- Litter is thrown out on the highway.
- People do not bother to vote on Election Day.
- People criticize government leaders.
- Young men and women volunteer for the National Guard.

Chapter Three - Pages 14-18
Vocabulary

scheme (14)   navigator (14)   air-raid shelter (16)
relentless (16)   precaution (17)

Discussion Questions
1. Why did Uncle Victor need more than Peter's help to move the gold? *(Page 14, It would be impossible for Peter to carry thirteen tons of gold on his sled.)*
2. Peter tried to figure how long it would take twenty-five boys and girls to carry thirteen tons of gold. A ton equals 2,000 pounds in the U.S. If the average load was 40 pounds, how many trips would it take to carry one ton? 13 tons? Make charts showing average loads of 40 pounds, 50 pounds, 60 pounds and 75 pounds. Make up gold problems for Peter and his friends.
3. Uncle Victor tells Louisa, "It's always well to be prepared." Do you agree with his statement? Why or why not?
4. How are air-raid drills like fire drills? Why are they important?