



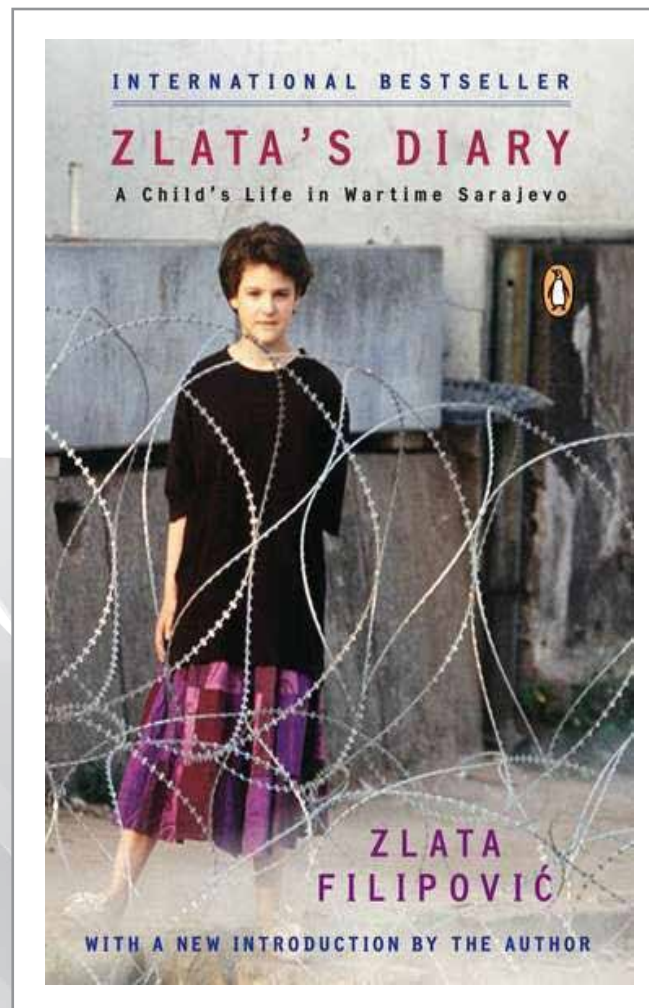
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 6-8

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo

Zlata Filipovic



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo

Zlata Filipovic

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!

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Skills and Strategies

Vocabulary

Definition, application,
vocabulary games

Listening/Speaking

Class discussion,
interviewing

Thinking

Research, critical thinking,
personal interpretation

Literary Elements

Character analysis, literary
analysis, metaphors

Comprehension

Predictions, analysis,
applications

Cross Curricular

Drama, illustrations,
mobile, music, math,
geography

Writing

Creative writing, diary
entries, compare/contrast,
letter, persuasive, play,
speech

Summary

Zlata Filipović is a happy young girl who lives in Sarajevo. Her life is a good one filled with family and friends. However, when war breaks out in her hometown, her happy life is shattered. Through Zlata's entries into "Mimmy," her diary, we are able to learn of the atrocities through which she has lived. She describes times without food, water, and electricity. We are given an in-depth look at war through the eyes of a young student.

About the Author

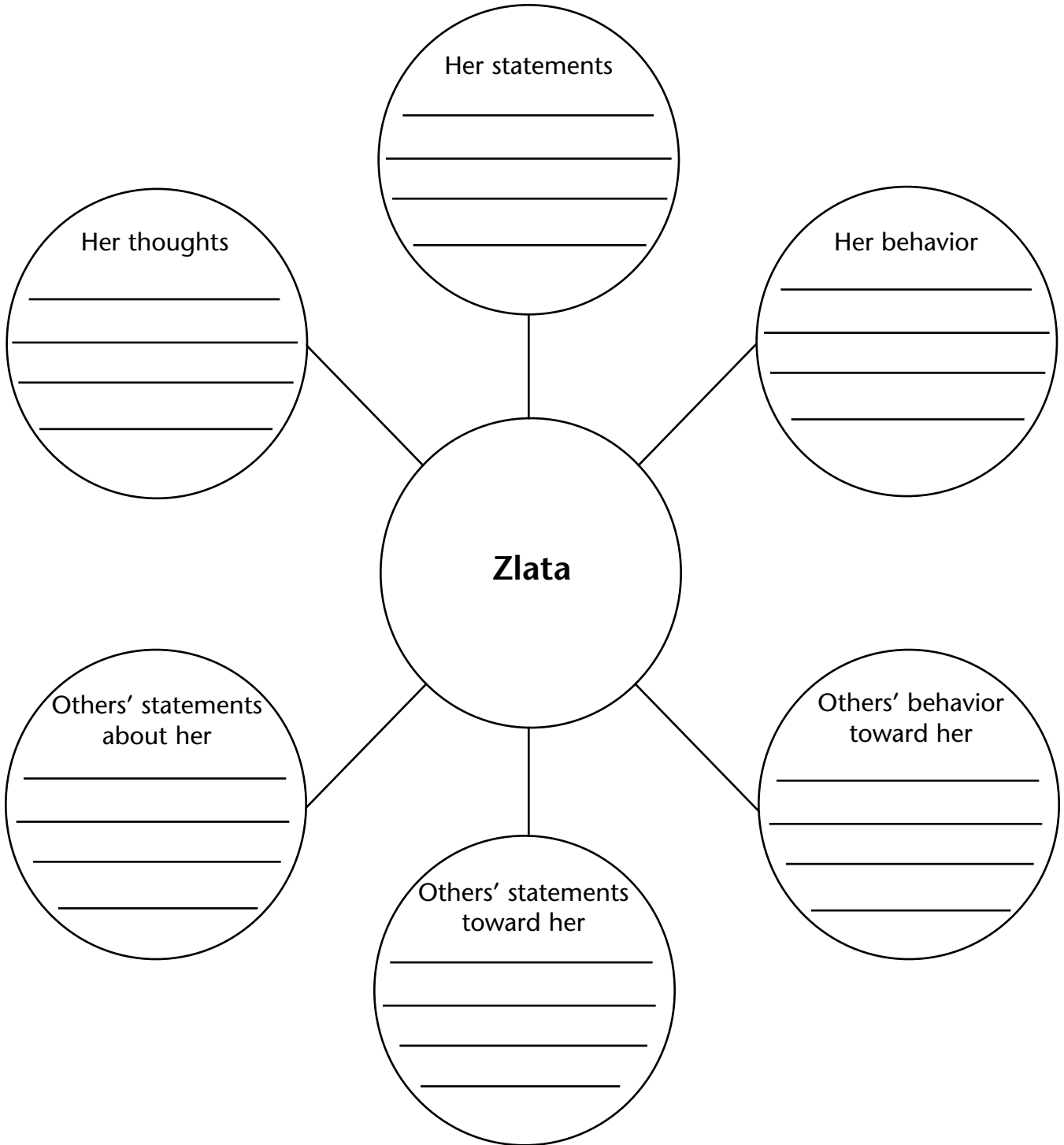
Zlata Filipović was a resident of Sarajevo where she lived with her mother and father. She celebrates her eleventh birthday at the beginning of the diary and shortly after her thirteenth birthday, she and her family are allowed to leave for Paris. Zlata and her family now reside in Ireland. Her book has been published throughout the world.

Initiating Activities

1. Explain to the students that they will be reading the diary of a young girl from war-torn Sarajevo. Ask the students to keep a diary that describes the events of their lives. Encourage them to write in the diary in response to what they learn from Zlata.
2. Ask the students to consider what it would be like if their life was turned upside down. As a class, come up with some expectations that they have for hearing about life in wartime. Compare these expectations to the information given in the text.
3. Ask the students to write about the importance of each one of the following ideas:
family freedom basic needs fear war
4. Many different countries and places are mentioned throughout the story. As a class, create a large map that can be displayed while studying the book. Locate all of the places mentioned on the map. This will help the students to visualize the locations.
5. Ask the students to respond to each of the following statements. Collect their comments and save them during the unit. Ask the students to respond to the statements again after reading the text. Return the original papers, and ask the students to explain any differences.
 - Children in other countries have different lives.
 - War always involves two active parties.
 - If there is no shooting, there is no war.
 - War is a necessary evil.
 - The main result of war is that it is dangerous to go out into the streets.
 - If you keep to yourself, you are basically unaffected by a war.
 - Everyone deserves a peaceful childhood.
 - Once you leave the war behind, you can go on with your regular life.
 - Money is the solution to difficulties during war.
 - Only those directly involved in battle are ever injured or killed during a war.
6. Ask students to fill in the Prediction Chart (pages 5-6 of this guide) as they read the book.

Attribute Web

Directions: Create an attribute web for Zlata that gives information about her character. Cite specific passages and page numbers from the book to support your ideas.



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13. What does Zlata mean when she writes, “We’re learning to steel ourselves, this war is teaching us, and we’re slowly suppressing everything that hurts us”? (*They are becoming stronger. Nothing that happens can affect them anymore. They expect the worst and are therefore prepared for it.*)
 14. What do you do when times are difficult? Do you close yourself up so that you do not feel pain? Why or why not? (*Answers will vary.*)
 15. **Prediction:** What is Zlata going to be like once this is all over? How would her personality change after such an ordeal? (*Answers will vary.*)

Supplementary Activities

1. Character Analysis: Ask the students to reread Zlata’s entry on June 1, 1993. How is this entry different from most of the others? What would cause Zlata’s mood to change so suddenly? Ask the students to consider how they might change under unusual circumstances.
2. Research: Ask the students to research the Muslim religious holidays Bairam and Kurban-Bairam. They should find out how and when these holidays started and what traditions surround them.
3. Metaphors: In Zlata’s message read at the promotion she uses a metaphor to describe her life. She talks of lovely shores and a forced swimmer. Have students create a metaphor for Zlata’s life and one for their own life.

August 27—Epilogue, Pages 169-197

Vocabulary

lodgers (169)	demolished (170)	enriched (170)	trove (171)
deteriorating (173)	obligations (173)	archive (175)	truces (177)
rationed (179)	illuminates (197)		

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it that everyone is leaving Sarajevo except Zlata and her family? Why do they decide to stay? (*Answers will vary.*)
2. What is the result of the “kids’ little games,” according to Zlata? (*Zlata says that 15,000 are dead in Sarajevo, 3,000 of them children, and 50,000 are permanent invalids.*)
3. Do you agree with Zlata that it is worse to lose mail delivery than water and electricity? Why? (*Answers will vary.*)
4. In your own words, can you describe what it would be like to look out of the windows and see so many people in wheelchairs and on crutches due to the war? Imagine knowing that there are not any places to bury the dead. How would you feel? (*Answers will vary.*)
5. Why does Daddy call their food “German” food? (*All of the food was bought with Duetsch Marks.*)

-
6. Zlata often wonders if they are alone in their situation. She doesn't think that anyone else thinks about them. Is she correct? Do you ever think of all the people who live in horrible conditions? Do you wonder what you can do to help them? Is Zlata really alone? *(Answers will vary.)*
 7. What do you think kept the personnel carrier from coming to get Zlata and her family on December 8, 1993? *(Answers will vary.)*
 8. Why is it hard for Zlata to leave Sarajevo when she had been wishing to leave for nearly two years? *(She had to leave so many loved ones behind that she would probably never see again.)*
 9. How would you feel if you had to leave everyone behind except for your mother and father? What if you were leaving them behind in horrible conditions like those in Sarajevo? *(Answers will vary.)*
 10. How would you explain Zlata's elation at seeing the lights of Paris? *(She is thrilled to see evidence of electricity.)*
 11. Why does Zlata mention that until some of the lights of Paris shine on Sarajevo they will not completely be her lights? *(She cannot fully enjoy them knowing that her loved ones in Sarajevo are still in the dark.)*
 12. How could you convince Zlata to enjoy her new freedom and luxuries? *(Answers will vary.)*
 13. Is there anything more Zlata could have done to help her friends in Sarajevo? Do you think she should have felt guilty about leaving? *(Answers will vary.)*
 14. Have you ever had to move? How did you feel about leaving behind all of your friends? Can you relate to Zlata? *(Answers will vary.)*
 15. **Prediction:** Imagine what Zlata's life is like now. How is it different? How has she changed? *(Answers will vary.)*

Supplementary Activities

1. Math: Ask the students to total up the number of people who have been killed or injured in the war in Sarajevo. Find a state or country that the students can relate to that is the same size as Sarajevo. Further, students can compare the fatality numbers from other wars to the numbers Zlata has given us.
2. Research: Ask the students to find out about other countries where people are living like Zlata. Ask them to consider how we can all live so differently in the same world.
3. Role-Playing: Have the class pretend that they have a brief opportunity to describe conditions in Sarajevo as Zlata would at a press conference. They should write a short speech expressing their opinions on the situation and a unique point of view on what it is like to live in the midst of war.