MARI'S HOPE

Book Three
The Norwegian Resistance Trilogy
by Sandy Brehl

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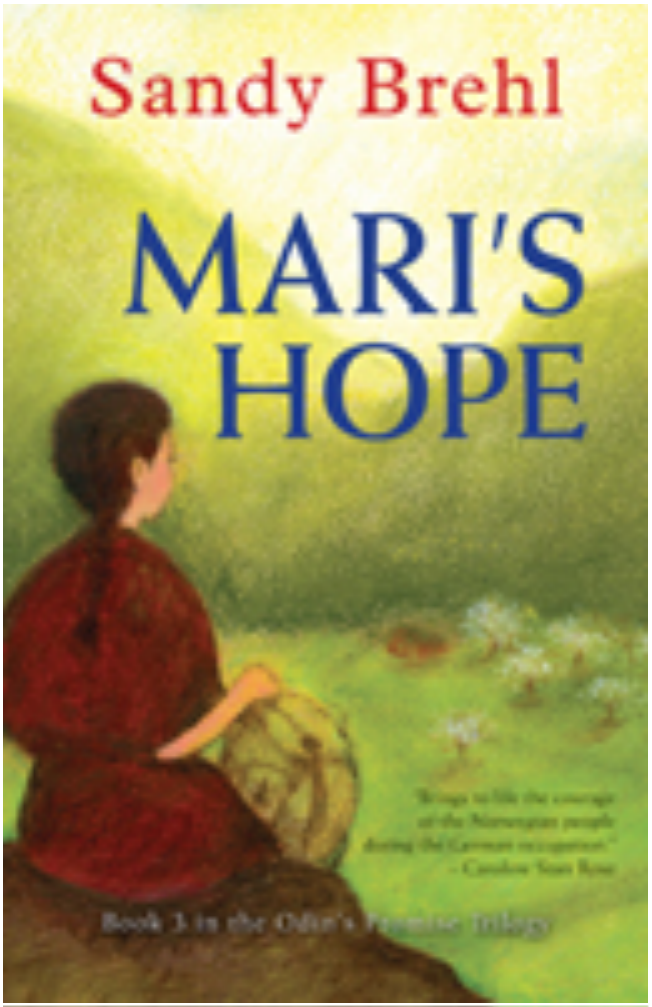
TEACHING GUIDE

Historical Novel

Ages 10 and older

Grades 4-8 and above

ISBN:



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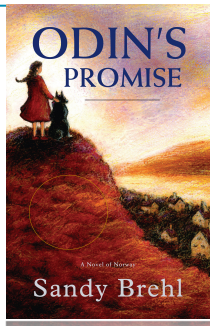

Sequel to: ODIN'S PROMISE 2014

Second in trilogy: BJORN'S GIFT 2016

MARI'S HOPE delivers the dramatic conclusion to the trilogy begun with ***ODIN'S PROMISE***, awarded the 2014 Midwest Book Award for Children's Fiction, and ***BJORN'S GIFT*** (2016)

In *Mari's Hope*, set in a small village in occupied Norway in the final years of World War II, young Mari has become a valued helper to the village doctor. She faces greater risks and guards more secrets in her role in her family's efforts in the local resistance, despite ever-present dangers, especially from the snooping German soldier called Goatman, and from her one-time school friend, now a German collaborator. As the German war efforts falter, pressure on the occupying forces increases. Efforts by occupying forces to hold Norway firmly in their grip escalate. Mari and other freedom-loving Norwegians will do their best to thwart German plans.

Praise for the series…

"…Determined to honor her family and her country, Mari doesn't know who she can trust. Readers will find themselves cheering for Mari as she confronts danger, assists in escapes and stays true to herself despite the risks."

-Author Angela Cerrito

"***Bjorn's Gift*** brings to life the courage of the Norwegian people during the Nazi occupation. …doesn't shy away from showing the complex ways individuals respond to hardship and beautifully expresses the strength and hope family provides in the midst of difficulty."

-Author Caroline Starr Rose,

"***Mari's Hope*** transports readers to the cold landscape of wartime Norway, as a brave young heroine faces the cruel reality of oppression to join the resistance and do whatever it takes it save her family and her country."

-Author Michelle Houts

"If you love books with strong, but quiet heroines, little known aspects of World War II, or character-driven historicals, you will love this series."

-Author and blogger, Jenni Enzor

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***MARI'S HOPE* is for ages ten and older, Grades 4-8 (and up).**

Flesch-Kincaid analysis lists the discussion questions at 6.0 grade level.

Text analysis of samples provide a Lexile level of 830.

A note from the author:

The levels noted and target ages reflect the historic content, language complexity, and issues confronting characters and should be considered suggestions, not rules. All activities, questions, vocabulary, and other guide materials should be adapted to best suit readers' needs and interests. I welcome questions and reactions from readers and teachers via email: **sandy@sandybrehl.com**. *I hope you enjoy MARI'S HOPE!*

Sandy Brehl

All three novels in the trilogy explore these THEMES:

- **Friendship**
- **Family**
- **War and Resistance**
- **Writing**
- **Sacrifice and Survival**
- **Secrets**
- **Dictatorship**
- **Persecution of Jews**

MARI'S HOPE offers opportunities to consider carefully the nature and importance of :

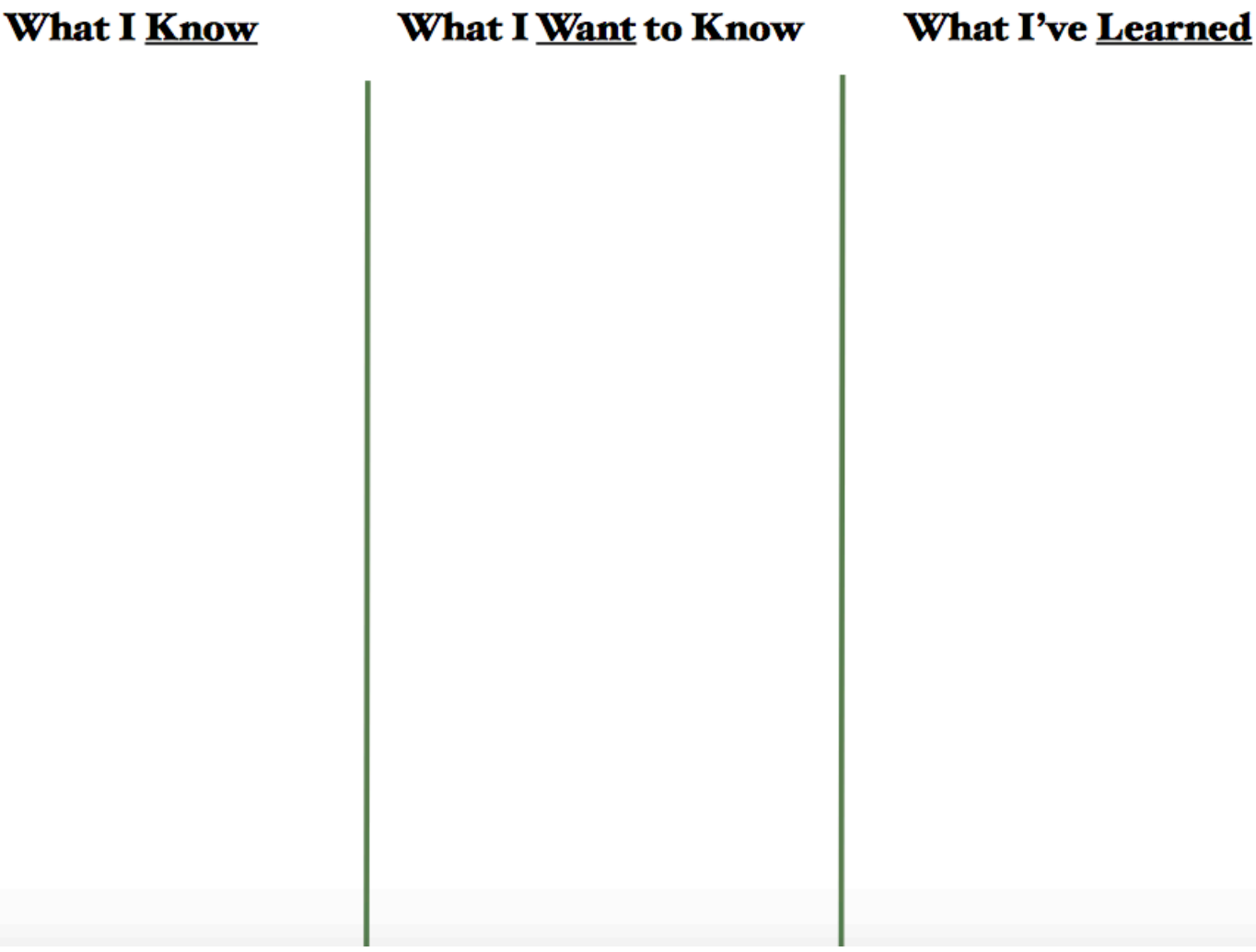
- **Hope**
- **Safety**
- **Surprise**
- **Healing**

Before You Begin: Accessing Prior Knowledge

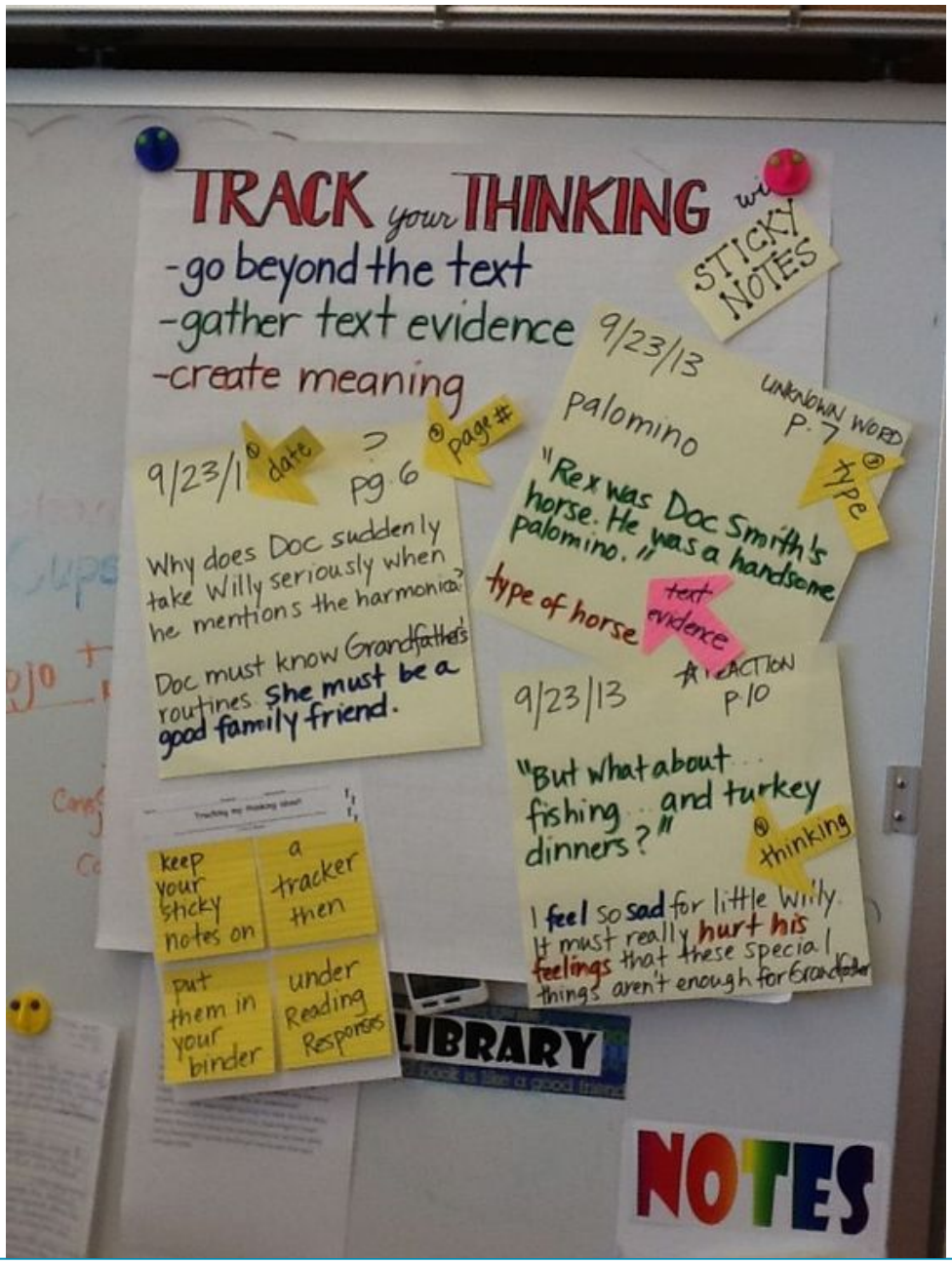
- Have you read *Odin's Promise* and *Bjorn's Gift*? If so, take a moment to list in your mind or in a notebook your favorite scene or scenes. Please share with a partner or the rest of the class.
- If you read the earlier books, describe Mari as a character in *Odin's Promise*, and then discuss how she changes in *Bjorn's Gift*. What key events change her?
- If you haven't read *Odin's Promise* or *Bjorn's Gift*, write a few notes about what you know about World War II. Do you know where Norway is? Did you know that Norway was occupied by Nazis? What do you think that was like? What other books about Europe during WWII have you read? For students who did read *Odin's Promise* and *Bjorn's Gift*, share what you learned about occupied Norway.
- Explore a map of Norway and Europe to consider and discuss why it was so important to Germany to control that country but not Sweden.

One option is to generate ideas about the previous books and make predictions by filling in a **K-W-L chart** during a class discussion. You could generate a few of these with the following topics: *Odin's Promise, Bjorn's Gift*, and World War II. Each topic you choose will have its own chart. (Keep in mind, the "Know" is often labeled WHAT I THINK I KNOW… to allow for correcting misconceptions.)

Because prior "knowledge" can often reveal "knowing" things that are not actual facts, or are partial truths, the first column should be monitored by readers throughout the process to modify, based on new learning.



An alternative organizing strategy is a **THINKING TRACKER** chart. Sticky notes (one color) are used to state what is KNOWN before reading begins. Different color sticky notes can be used to list questions before reading. A third color is used WHILE READING to gather information to support, contradict, or clarify/expand those initial FACTS. Notes are rearranged on the chart as reading proceeds to indicate relationships, conflicts, cause/effect, using a third color of sticky notes to make the connections and show relationships. Notes can include page numbers and dates of discovery while reading.
This is a "messier" process (see sample), but subjects like history and war are ALWAYS messy and require constant readjustments to thinking.



Figurative Language Exercise

Simile: a comparison between two unlike things using the words *like* or *as*

Metaphor: an implied comparison between two unlike things

Read the following examples of figurative language from the novel.

1. Explain the type of figurative language, simile or metaphor, telling what two unlike things are being compared.

2. Tell how the use of figurative language adds to the scene, character, or action.

"But I live like an actress, wearing a false face to mask my true feelings. I guard my words, never straying from the script, designed to protect us from traitors." (p. 46)

"In the end her mother dropped it in a steaming cup of tea, added a dribble of milk, and sipped it as if it were the mead of Valhalla." (p. 57)

"Mari's head swiveled like a weather vane in a storm as she tried to follow and memorize everything Hanna pointed out: the hospital, the post office, Nazi headquarters." (p. 75)

"The young girl's bouncing and bobbing calmed, but she rattled off her news like an auctioneer." (p. 76)

"She couldn't rid herself of a murky blackness lurking in the margins of her heart, casting shadows over everything she did, even a lovely picnic like this." (p.83)

"As if shedding a chrysalis, a pretty young woman emerged, unburned and smiling broadly." (p. 200)

"This Jul season was like a boat trip on choppy seas." (p. 216)

"Word spread like lightning that peace had arrived." (p. 223)

"Windows were scrubbed and thrown open to let the fresh breeze of freedom blow in." (p. 226)

Key VOCABULARY

February 1943 (Chapters 1-5)
luminous (p. 7)
complied (p. 12)
triangulation (p. 20)
invalid (p. 27)
summon (p. 28)

March 1943 (Chapters 6-9)
infuriates (p. 39)
senile (p. 39)
confrontation (p. 47)
aromatic (p. 52)
exertion (p. 52)
distraught (p. 61)

April-May 1943 (Chapters 10-12)
diagnosis (p. 69)
ascended (p. 70)
panoramic (p.70)
stoic (p. 71)
convoy (p. 71)
fortified (p. 72)
ominous (p. 73)
timid (p. 75)
infractions (p. 77)
allotments (p. 77)

Summer 1943 (Chapters 13-18)
garbled (p. 87)
censors (p. 95)
expedition (p. 96)
bravado (P.96)
foolhardy (p. 98)
protest (p.98)
sage (p. 98)
defiant (p. 99)
grimaced (p. 103)
confiscate (p. 108)
synchronized (p. 109)

November-December 1943 (Chapters 19-23)
venerable (p. 122)
apprentice (p. 122)
poise (p. 125)
vulnerable (p. 126)
exploit (p. 126)
competent (p. 127)
hoarding (p. 129)
restrain (p. 131)
intercepted (p. 131)
scoured (p. 132)
replenished (p. 132)
congenial (p. 134)
sullen (p. 134)
quarantines (p. 134).tedious (p. 136)
ravine (p. 138)
laxatives (p. 139)
stoked (p. 143)
eloquent (p. 147)
stealth (p. 147)

January-March 1944 (Chapters 24-28)
incubate (p. 154)
bask (p. 157)
deflect (p. 157)
subsided (p. 157)
devised 9p. 158)
dismay (p.160)
shunned (p. 160)
menacingly (p. 161)
retain (p. 168)
unanimous (p. 170)
composure (p. 172)

March-May 1944 (Chapters 29-33)
proposal (p. 178)
implement (p. 178)
devious (p. 180)
subdued (p. 189)
remnants (p. 191)
salvageable (p. 191)
buoyed (p. 196)
dialect (p. 202)
terminology (p. 202)

June-December 1944 (Chapter 34)
concoctions (p. 214)
malnutrition (p. 215)

January-June 1945 (Chapters 35-40)
retaliate (p. 220)
reprisals (p. 220)
directives (p. 223)
resentment (p. 231)
revelation (p. 231)
robust (p. 233)
conceded (p. 236)
ploy (p. 244)

"Reading actual journal entries written by young Norwegian teens was the single most important aspect of research that led to Mari as a character." *Sandy Brehl*
Mari's journal serves many purposes in ***Bjorn's Gift*** and in this concluding novel, ***Mari's Hope.*** As a literary form it allows readers to hear Mari's first-person voice, it allows long passages of time to be condensed, and it reveals very directly what Mari is thinking and feeling.

For the character, Mari, her journals serve multiple purposes, too.
Mari uses her notes to feel closer to her long-missing brother, Bjorn, to record important events and changes in her family and her village, and to sort out her own thoughts and feelings during rare private times. In her notes she writes freely, incorporating detailed facts and secrets, including names. She becomes increasingly aware, though, that her journals put those she most loves in serious danger if they are discovered.

Journal Reflection Options

Option One: Write a Character Journal

Writing and keeping a journal becomes very important to Mari. She writes to document events of the occupation in order to let her brother Bjorn know what she and the family experience during the war.

- Choose one or more character(s) from *Mari's Hope*. Next, write at least three entries from one or more perspectives.

Option Two: Write a Journal Reflection

- Write about a time when you wanted to communicate something important to a family member or friend.
- Write about a time when you had to start something completely new: how did you feel? What changes did you experience?
- Write about a time when you had to keep a secret. Why did you do this? What was it like when you could finally share the information with someone else?

Option Three: Provide both pros and cons about keeping journals during wartime.

- Using a journal-or-diary voice (first person) provide arguments for destroying your journal and not writing any further entries. Also write about WHY the risk, to yourself and to those you love and trust, is worth taking. Include thoughts on how to reduce the risk.

Cross-Curricular Projects

Language Arts: Figurative Language Creative Options

Extend your work with similes and metaphors (on page 7 of this guide) by writing a poem or story inspired by those lines. You may take this creative piece in any directions you choose. The following steps will guide you:

- Use a simile or metaphor from the quotations on page 7 as a first line of your own poem or story.
- Combine words or phrases from the list of similes or metaphors, or from any point in the novel, and piece them together to write a poem. This is called Found Poetry.
- Write a story set in a place referred to in one of the similes or metaphors; for example, write a story with the setting of "choppy seas." Alternatively, you may choose to write a story about a character that emerges from one of the similes or metaphors.

Art: Create Shadow Boxes

Read about artist Joseph Cornell who made art during the time of World War II: http://www.theartstory.org/artist-cornell-joseph.htm

View images of his shadow boxes and create your own from "found" materials. Make the theme of your shadow box one that relates to *Mari's Hope* or the entire trilogy. Include objects, drawn, printed, or cut-out images, color, and other forms of texture, such as things found in nature. Express your idea of the theme by combining unlikely objects, images, colors, and textures next to each other. Write a brief description of your work.

Social Studies: Writing and Visual Activity

Research and write an informational essay on your topic. Include a list of sources and cite direct quotations and paraphrased information that is not common knowledge. Choose from the following ideas, or ask your teacher about thinking of your own social studies-related topic:

- Choose a month or two in the years of *Mari's Hope*. Focus on one geographic area and write how WWII affected daily life for the people of that region. Create a color map of the area. Include key dates of war events if they apply to that area.
- Research and write about the Bergen explosion. Create a timeline of events from the start of the disaster to the point at which restoration of the city began. You may choose to compare and contrast the damage and recovery to a disaster from current events, discussing the impact of technology on communicating news, investigating causes, rescuing and recovering, etc.
- Resistance throughout this trilogy is focused on local groups and independent efforts to counter the effects of German occupation. Within two years of the invasion the Norway government-in-exile in London began to organize a formal military resistance force. That group, MILORG, becomes a part of the story near the end of the novel. Research MILORG in Norway and describe the role of these forces. Include visuals to go with your essay, for example, photographs or other images.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the increase of resistance throughout the novel. Think of examples of ways Mari and other Norwegians use creative ways to resist the Nazi occupation.

2. What were Norwegians told about the deported Jews? Consider Mari's papa's vague responses to her questions about it. What do you think Mari would have done had she known the truth?

3. Discuss the character of Goatman. What is his role in the novel? How does his presence create suspense or tension in the story?

4. In terms of Mari's journal to Bjorn, the novel states, "she began to write more honestly… For her sake as much as for his" (p. 36). What does writing to Bjorn mean to Mari?

5. Mari notes how it is hard to visit patients who are in the mountains during the winter months. Have you even been cut off from communication because of severe weather? How did you feel? What did you do?

6. Discuss Mari's complicated relationship with Leif. How do their interactions change throughout the novel?

7. Think about the idea of surprises in the novel. Note some examples of surprises that occur and connect them to other elements of the novel, such as plot and character development.

8. Discuss how the Nazis transformed Bergen. How would this feel if you lived there?

9. Describe the relationship between Mari and Hannah. How would you characterize it?

10. Review the beginning of Chapter Nineteen. How has church changed during the occupation? What does this symbolize for the community?

11. Review Mari's journal entry to Bjorn in January, 1944 (Chapter Twenty-four). Summarize Mari's way of thinking.

12. Reread pages 158-159. What is the symbolism in this scene?

13. What do you think is the author's purpose in Leif's role in the novel?

14. Why do Mari and others in Norway have some anxiety about an Allied victory?

15. Reread page 224. Discuss the significance of Mari writing in Bestemor's parlor.

16. Describe the changes in Per and Astrid that Mari observes.

17. Analyze the meaning of Doctor Olsen's words: "'Suffering has no scorekeeper'" (p. 239).

Larger Topics for Discussion

Discuss the relationships Mari had with Odin (even as a memory) and other pets in this novel.

What does Mari gain from her relationships with pets?

How do you think you would have felt about your pets if you had been in Mari's place? Explain.

Though Bjorn is not present until the end of the novel, how does his presence influence Mari throughout the book?

Does that change at the end of the novel?

Review the themes of the trilogy (TG page 4) and consider ones directly related to *Mari's Hope*:

- Hope
- Safety
- Surprise
- Healing

Discuss examples of scenes in which these themes are developed.

Message from the author:
The back matter in each of the titles in this trilogy recommends related reading. The Teaching Guides for each book add additional suggestions. Since this book marks the end of WWII and the occupation, Mari seeks answers to her many questions about what happened to her Jewish friends and others. The titles recommended in the back pages of ***MARI'S HOPE*** and others listed below will address some of those questions. Please keep in mind that each and every victim of wartime suffering has an individual story, and no single work can answer for all. What **can** be learned is to prevent it from ever happening again. *Sandy Brehl*

Related Titles

RECOMMENDED FOR READERS with HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Almost Autumn. Kaurin, Marianne. Arthur A. Levine Books (translation). 2016

Behind the Bedroom Wall. Williams, Laura E. Milkweed Editions, 2005

Dancing on the Bridge of Avignon. Ida Vos. HMH Books for Young Readers. 1995

Daniel's Story. Matas, Carol. Scholastic Paperback Edition. 1993

Sarah's Key. de Rosnay, Taatiana. St. Martin's Griffin, 2008

Waiting for Anya. Morpugo, Michael. Puffin Books Reprint.1997

PICTURE BOOKS- FOR ANY AGE:

Hidden: A Child's Story of the Holocaust. Dauvillier, Loic. and Salsedo, Greg. First-Second Books. 2014.

Let the Celebrations Begin. Wild, Margaret. Candlewick. reissued 2014.

(The)Little Ships: Heroic Rescue at Dunkirk. Borden, Louise. Margaret K. McElderry Books. 2003

My Secret Camera: Life in Lodz Ghetto. HMH Books for Young Readers. 2003

One Thousand Tracings: Healing the Wounds of WWII. Judge, Lita. Disney-Hyperion. 2007

(The) Yellow Star: The Legend of King Christian X of Denmark. Vaughn, Marcia. Peachtree Publications, Ltd. 2000