

The War That Saved My Life



By

Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

A Novel Study
by Joel Michel Reed

The War That Saved My Life

By Kimberly Brubaker Bradley



Table of Contents

Suggestions and Expectations	3
List of Skills	4
Synopsis / Author Biography	5
Student Checklist	6
Reproducible Student Booklet	7
Answer Key	63

About the author: Joel Reed has over 70 published novel studies and is the author of four novels. For information on his work and literature, please visit www.reednovelstudies.com

Copyright © 2016 Joel Reed
Revisions Completed in 2025
All rights reserved by author.
Permission to copy for single classroom use only.
Electronic distribution limited to single classroom use only.
Not for public display.

The War That Saved My Life

By Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

Suggestions and Expectations

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each section of the novel study focuses on one or two chapters of *The War That Saved My Life* and is comprised of five of the following different activities:

- Before You Read
- Vocabulary Building
- Comprehension Questions
- Language Activities
- Extension Activities

Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities included in this curriculum unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. The *Reading Standards for Literature*, makes reference to:

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases. . . including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters ... respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story . . . **and many others.**

A principal expectation of the unit is that students will develop their skills in reading, writing, listening and oral communication, as well as in reasoning and critical thinking. Students will also be expected to provide clear answers to questions and well-constructed explanations. It is critical as well that students be able to relate events and the feelings of characters to their own lives and experiences and describe their own interpretation of a particular passage.

A strength of the unit is that students can work on the activities at their own pace. Every activity need not be completed by all students. A **portfolio cover** is included (p.7) so that students may organize their work and keep it all in one place. A **Student Checklist** is also included (p.6) so that a record of completed work may be recorded.

Themes which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include growing up, overcoming violence, respect for authority, abuse, facing difficult circumstances.

The War That Saved My Life

By Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homonyms
3. Identifying/creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *anagrams*
7. Use of singular/plural nouns
8. Listing compound words
9. Identifying parts of speech
10. Determining alphabetical order
11. Identify *personification*
12. Identify/create *similes*

Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Complete a story pyramid
4. Identify *cliffhangers*
5. Identify the climax of the novel
6. Identify foreshadowing

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Casting a feature film
3. Relating personal experiences
4. Complete a character comparison

Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Complete research projects
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Write about personal feelings
6. Write a book review
7. Complete an Observation Sheet
8. Complete a KWS Chart

Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Create a comic strip

The War That Saved My Life

By Kimberly Brubaker Bradley



Synopsis

Ten-year-old Ada has never left her one-room apartment. Her mother is too humiliated by Ada's twisted foot to let her outside. So when her little brother, Jamie, is shipped out of London to escape the war, Ada doesn't waste a minute – She sneaks out to join him.

So begins a new adventure for Ada, and for Susan Smith, the woman who is forced to take the two kids in. As Ada teaches herself to ride a pony, learns to read, and watches for German spies, she begins to trust Susan – and Susan begins to love Ada and Jamie. But in the end, will their bond be enough to hold them together through wartime? Or will Ada and her brother fall back into the cruel hands of their mother?

A complete synopsis and other helpful reviews can be found on the following website:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_War_That_Saved_My_Life

(Warning: Website contains plot spoilers)

Author Biography

Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

Kimberly Brubaker Bradley (www.kimberlybrubakerbradley.com), a longtime Anglophile, first became interested in World War II evacuees when her mother read *Bedknobs and Broomsticks* out loud at bedtime. Her historical fiction has garnered great acclaim: *Jefferson's Sons* received four starred reviews, *Ruthie's Gift* was a *Publishers Weekly* Flying Start, and *For Freedom* was an IRA Teachers' Choice and Bank Street College Best Book of the Year. Ms. Bradley lives with her family in Bristol, Tennessee.



Biography courtesy of the publisher: *Dial Books For Young Readers*

The War That Saved My Life



By Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

Name: _____

The War That Saved My Life

By Kimberly Brubaker Bradley



Chapters 1-4



Before you read the chapter:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. Think back on some of your favorite characters from past novels you have read or movies you’ve seen. What do you think makes for an especially interesting **protagonist**?



Vocabulary:

Synonyms are words that means the same (or nearly the same) as another word, and **antonyms** are words that means the opposite of another word. Your task is to write two different antonyms and two different synonyms for each of the words listed in the chart below.

Word	Synonyms	Antonyms
Abuse		
Friend		
Strong		
Tender		

Necessary		
Faithful		
Fascinating		

Questions



1. Briefly describe the setting of our story as Chapter One begins.

2. Briefly describe how Mam treated Ada and Jamie differently.

3. Why do you think Mam had such a hard time accepting Ada's disability?

4. Put yourself in Ada's shoes. How would you feel being a prisoner in your own home?

5. Why did Mam punish Ada when Jamie was caught stealing?

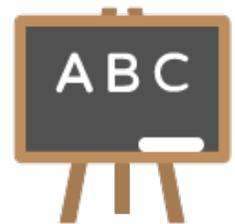
6. Why did Mam want Ada to stay at home, rather than send her away to the country?

7. Why did Stephen White believe that Ada had a mental disability?

Language Activities



A. There are many writers that enjoy using **alliteration** – a literary device is where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Here's an example of an alliteration: “**g**rouching, **g**rouching, **g**rumbling, **g**ripping about something or other.”



Using your imagination, create your own examples of **alliteration** from the following topics. Each example must contain a minimum of three words.

The sounds of war.	
The sights of the countryside.	
Alliteration from your own imagination.	

B. Anagrams

An **anagram** is a word that is formed by changing the order of the letters of another word. For example, the letters in the word **LEADING** can also form the word **DEALING**. Follow these directions to form the anagrams:



Using the word in the left-hand column move [all of] the letters around in any order to form brand new words. Find as many new words as possible for each word.

Word	Anagrams
War	
Deliver	
Aspired	
Reigns	
Derail	
Palest	
Least	

C. Self Reflection

Take a few minutes to answer the following questions on the topic of *self reflection*.

How would you describe your own character and actions toward others?
What would you consider to be your biggest strength?
What would you consider to be your biggest weakness or flaw?

Extension Activity

Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A storyboard can tell the story of only one scene – or the entire novel.



Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events described in the first section of our novel. You may wish to practice your drawings before you begin.

1	2
3	4
5	6