



EDUCATION PACK

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CHARACTERS

JOSEPH BALICKI

Joseph is the headmaster of a primary school and the father of Ruth, Edek and Bronia. He is sent to a prison camp by the Nazis, but when he escapes begins a tireless quest to find his wife in Switzerland, believing that his children have died, but leaving a trail for them to follow to find him.

MARGRIT BALICKI

Margrit is the mother of the three children, who is kidnapped by the Nazis. When the children are eventually reunited with her in Switzerland, she adopts Jan as his parents cannot be found.

RUTH BALICKI

Ruth is 17 years old. As the oldest of the Balicki children, she takes responsibility for her siblings and teaches the local children in Warsaw. She, like her siblings, is very brave and decides that they must travel to Switzerland to find their parents. Throughout the book, she disapproves of a lot of Jan's behaviour, and tries to educate him to behave better.

EDEK BALICKI

Edek is the second eldest Balicki child, aged around 13 or 14. When the children are left alone after their parents are taken away, Edek takes responsibility for providing for his sisters but he is caught smuggling and sent to a prison camp. When they find him again, he is ill and weak and finds it difficult to keep up with the other children.

BRONIA BALKICKI

Bronia is 7 years old. She has spent a lot of time being raised by her siblings, and is incredibly artistic. She is forced to grow up quickly and draws images of the war that show her depth of understanding as to what is going on.

JAN

Jan is a cheeky boy who describes himself as a master pickpocket. He has a way with animals and throughout the story, he befriends various different creatures that accompany him about. Jan is the guardian of **THE SILVER SWORD** the small paper knife that belonged to the Balicki Family. It is a symbol of hope that will all find each other one day. He is very brave, and will stand up to anyone, but sometimes this fearless behaviour gets him into trouble as he confronts the wrong people! Jan is taken in by the Balicki children as he informs them where their father is, and as they travel together, Ruth works to improve his behaviour.

Which of the children do you think you are most like?
After seeing the play, think about how each character changes as the story goes on. How do their experiences change them?

SUMMARY

Joseph Balicki returns to his family home in Warsaw from a prison camp. He was a teacher, and after the Nazi invasion of Poland, the school had been forced to hang pictures of Hitler on the walls. Joseph was sent to the camp because he turned one of these pictures around to face the classroom wall, and someone reported him. He escaped in a Nazi uniform to return to his home and children. On his way to Warsaw, Joseph hid in a house and avoided discovery by Nazi officers by hiding up a chimney. After a short while, he continued on to Warsaw.

When he returns home a family friend, Mrs Krause tells Joseph that his wife was taken away by the Gestapo who then blew up his house. His children have not been seen since, and Mrs Krause believes them to be dead.

Joseph visits the ruins of his house and meets a boy, Jan, with a cat and a letter opener – the silver sword! This letter opener used to belong to his wife, Magrit, and his children used to play with it. Joseph allows Jan to keep the silver sword and tells him that if he ever meets the Balicki children, he must tell them that their father is heading to Switzerland to find their mother. Jan helps Joseph to find a train and send him on his way.

The Balicki children had escaped on the night of their mother's kidnap because Edek had fired shots at the Gestapo van. They watched their house being blown up from a nearby rooftop. Since then, they had been living in the cellar of a nearby house. Trying to provide for the family, Edek has got involved with black market traders. His sister Ruth disapproves. Edek is eventually captured by the Nazis as he visits a house that they are searching for black market goods.

After Warsaw is liberated, Edek is still missing. Ruth and Bronia come across Jan, who carries round a wooden box with him, and has a firm friend in a chicken named Jimpy. They discover that Jan has the silver sword and he knows where their father is. A Russian sentry, Ivan becomes a close friend of the girls and provides them with supplies and food. He manages to find out that Edek has escaped from the prison camp and is in a place called Posen. The three young people make their way there and eventually find Edek at a feeding station but he is not well, and has tuberculosis.

The children travel to Berlin on their way to find their parents. While there, Ruth gets a job, and Jan makes friends with a chimpanzee that has escaped from a nearby zoo. As they progress through Germany Jan and Edek are arrested for stealing food from American soldiers' supplies. After a dramatic defence, Jan is imprisoned for a week.

When the children can finally continue on their way they are taken in by a farmer called Kurt and the children begin work on the farm. When a Burgomaster crashes his car outside the house, Edek offers to help him. Bronia gives their identity away when she speaks in Polish, and the Burgomaster announces that they must return to their country.

Kurt helps the children escape in canoes and his dog, Ludvig, who has taken a liking to Jan, follows them. They survive a dangerous journey. But Jan soon realises that the silver sword is missing, and that it must be back at the farm house. He and the dog disappear.

The children come across Joe Wolski, an American GI, who drives the children to try and find Jan. After he jokes about having wild animals in the back of his truck, they discover that in fact Jan and Ludvig are hiding there.

The children continue on and meet a Superintendent who has heard from their father. Kurt had also sent on the silver sword to the Superintendent.

In order to reach Switzerland and their parents, the children must cross lake Constance, but a huge storm capsizes their boat. Edek almost drowns but Jan saves the children, and eventually, they are reunited with their parents who adopt Jan.

Later, the Balicki's are charged with running a Polish House in a children's village in Switzerland. Bronia uses her artistic talents to draw pictures of the war, Edek recovers from his illness and becomes an engineer, Jan gets a cat named Arlo and cares for many sick animals, and Ruth becomes a teacher.

Which scenes from the play really stand out in your mind?

If you were going to make a short play, which events would you think were the most important to keep in.

How would you act out the following scenes to tell the story to people who didn't understand English:

Magrit's kidnap

Finding Edek

Working on the farm

Making friends with the chimpanzee

The storm on the lake

CHILDREN IN WWII



During the Second World War, cities were dangerous places to be. German planes were regularly dropping bombs on big cities, and people would have to black out their windows, hide in shelters, and would sometimes return to their homes having been destroyed. A loud alarm or 'siren' would warn you that an air raid was coming, and you would have to wait underground, or in your own shelter until the siren told you that the bombing had ended and it was safe to come out again.

It was decided that these cities were no place for children, as they were too dangerous, and so children were 'evacuated' to safer areas of the country.

About 800,000 children were sent away from home to the countryside. Some stayed for only a few weeks, but others for the whole of the rest of the war.

Use the internet to read stories about life in the blitz. Collect together adjectives to describe how you would feel if you were in an air raid shelter during an air raid.



Evacuees were sent to places in the countryside to live with 'host families'. Billeting officer would find homes for children to live in. Children who were being evacuated would have a long journey ahead of them. They would catch busses together to the train station and board special trains to take them to the countryside. They would each be given a gas mask, and could carry a small number of their own things. They were told to bring washing things, clean clothes, 'strong walking shoes', and a favourite book.

Look at the size of the children's packages. If you had to pack all of your things into such a small pack, what would you miss taking? As a class, try and decide what would be the most important things to take with you today.



Just like the Balicki children, many evacuees would be put to work on farms in the towns and villages that they moved to.

Imagine you had been evacuated to a countryside farm.

Write a letter home or diary entry. Think about:

What the journey was like

How you feel being separated from your family

What you like or don't like about living on a farm

What you miss about the city you used to live in

What the other children you have travelled with are like. Are you with your friends?

WWII IN POLAND

The Balicki family had a similar experience to British children during the Blitz. But they lived in Warsaw, the capital City of Poland.

The invasion of Poland by the Nazi's is considered to be one of the most important events that caused the Second World War to break out.

SEPTEMBER 1939: THE SEIGE

Hitler invades Poland and Warsaw comes under siege.

Poland is targeted by bombing but holds out for a number of weeks.

25,000 civilians were killed, 12% of buildings destroyed, and food and medical supplies were disrupted.

SEPTEMBER 1939 – JANUARY 1945: NAZI OCCUPATION

The Nazi occupation lasted 1,859 days.

Their strong and brave mayor was sent to a concentration camp.

Universities and secondary schools were shut down by the Nazis.

Culture was restricted.

There was a 'resistance' against the Nazis. They tried to convince people not to buy Nazi newspapers, go to the cinemas to watch Nazi films, or use the casino that gave money to the Nazis.

People would be rounded up and taken to concentration camps or killed in the street.

Jewish people were rounded up into one area known as the Ghetto. This was sealed off in 1940. In the Ghetto, people were starved, and eventually many were sent to concentration camps.

In 1943, after some resistance from within the Ghetto, it was destroyed by the Nazis.

AUGUST – OCTOBER 1944: THE WARSAW UPRISING

After much preparation, the 'home army' of Warsaw began the Warsaw uprising.

The uprising was planned to last for 10 days, but lasted for 63.

The Polish people wanted to liberate themselves, and would not accept help from the Russians, but received airdrops of supplies from the Western Allies for a short time.

Huge numbers of Polish people died in the uprising, and they were eventually beaten by the Germans despite putting up a good fight.

In the final year of occupation, the Germans destroyed most of the city.

The Warsaw uprising is considered one of the most important events in Polish history.

How were the events in Poland similar to those in British cities? And how were they different?

How do you think life would have been different for children?

What would it have been like if the Balicki's had gone back to Warsaw instead of staying in Switzerland?

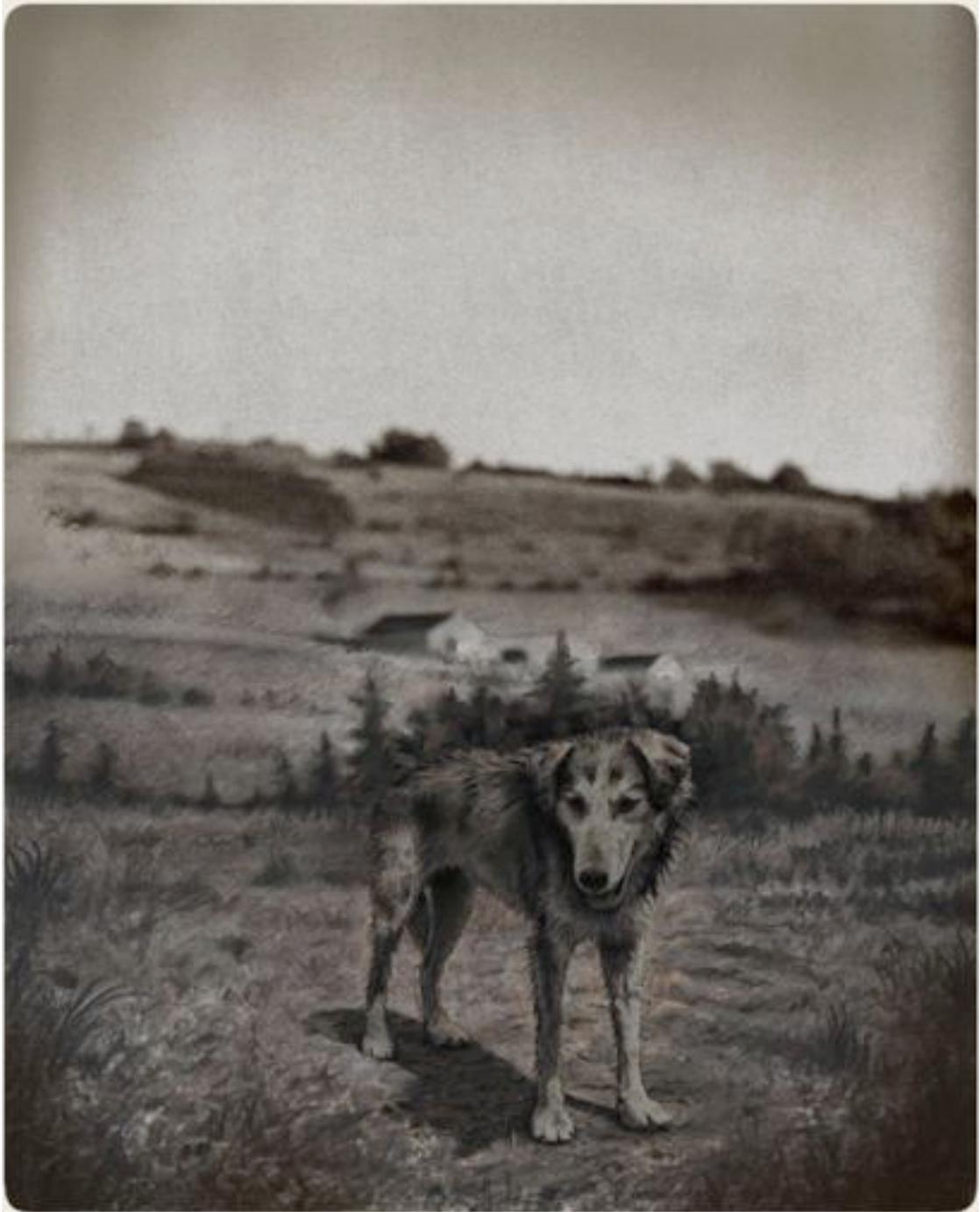
THE ANIMALS

Here are some artist's impressions of Jan's animal companions. Why do you think the artist has chosen to draw the animals in the way that they have?

If you were going to draw the animals, what would you include to tell the story of each animal? Have a go at drawing a picture of your own.









STORYTELLING & ART

One of the key themes of our production is storytelling. Our director Susie McKenna has put together a week's worth of activities for the classroom that will allow your students to explore and experience some of the key scenes from the play.

Tuesday **'There's a place beside the fire'**

Media: Cartridge paper and charcoal.

Using large sheet of paper, create a life size stove and cattle truck interior is drawn.

Onto that image the young people's drawings will be mounted for the final showing on Friday.

We hear lots of different languages as we crowd onto the cattle truck of a train.

People are building a fire in a small stove in the centre of the truck.

The children are huddled in the far corner of the carriage.

Everyone is trying to keep warm.

When the stove is alight people share the little food that they have.

**There's a place beside the fire
for the teller of the tale.**

What story would you tell to get a place beside the fire?

Tell the story in three pictures.

It would be wonderful if some of the young people felt confident enough to tell their story.

All the images will be collected around the stove in our train carriage.

Wednesday

The Princess of the Brazen Mountain.

**Media: Sugar paper in autumnal colours,
Oil pastels.**

Using the leaf template ask the young people to create images to illustrate the story that fit within that shape.

All the pictures will be cut out and become leaves tumbling from our life size tree.

**Bronia loves to hear her favourite story.
She draws pictures to illustrate the story.**

Three magic princesses who have wings have flown down for The Brazen Mountain to bathe in a crystal fountain.

A prince sees them at the fountain drying their silky hair, they have taken off their magic wings to wash in the fountain .

The Prince steals the smallest set of wings.

The two older sisters flew away leaving the youngest Princess behind.

The Prince plans to woo the Princess as he comforts her.

The Princess agrees to marry the Prince.

She marries him with garlands of flowers in her golden hair.

The next day the Princess finds her stolen wings and flies away.

The Prince searches for his bride for seven years.

He finds her at a castle in the snowy mountains and hides to spy on her.

She is weeping because she loved her Prince.

The Prince reveals himself to the sad Princess and they kiss.

Using the oil pastels draw as many pictures as you think you will need to tell the story.

All of your pictures will be collected together and will become autumn leaves on our tree.

Thursday

Daniel and The Lion

Medium: Found objects
Cut paper.
Washing line and pegs.
Lamp and large sheet.

Create a space with the young people.
Using our life size tree in the background place objects around to
make a camp where our children live.
Cut paper to make clothes on a washing line.
Tell the story of Daniel and the Lion
Watch the showcase.
How can we tell the story with the objects in the room.
Introduce the idea of a shadow show.

Friday

Exhibition

This session is to consolidate the work created this week.
Allow the young people to make choices about their work.

Create three distinct areas

There's a place by the fire

Princess of the Brazen Mountain

Daniel and The Lion

ENTER OUR DRAWING COMPETITION

WE ARE OFFERING YOUNG PEOPLE FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY THE OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE THEIR ARTWORK FEATURED IN THIS PROFESSIONAL THEATRE PRODUCTION.

This competition, open to students across Key Stage 2 and 3 (aged 7-14), invites you to capture a moment, or a character, from The Silver Sword as if you were Bronia drawing the world around you.

The winners will have their work featured as part of the set design in the final touring production. Runners up will have their work displayed at their local venue.

Submissions should all be made electronically to silversworddrawingcompetition@selladoor.com and emails should include the name of the artist, their age, the name of their school, and the Silver Sword theatre nearest to you.

The deadline for submissions is Friday 11th September 2015.

Conditions of entry:

The drawing must depict one of the following:

- A character from the story (if this is the case please include the name of the character in your email).
- A picture telling part of the story of “The Princess of the Brazen Mountain” or “Daniel and The Lion” (see page 18).
- One of Jan’s animals (see page 9).

The drawing must not be drawn using modern drawing equipment such as felt tip pens. Materials such as paint, pencil, charcoal and pastels are all welcome.

Entries are limited to one drawing per student.

Winning entries may be asked to provide the original hard copy of their artwork, but all submissions must be scanned in or photographed, and submitted via email.

IDEAS FOR INSPIRING PUPILS

Take your pupils through the stories of *The Princess of the Brazen Mountain* or *Daniel and The Lion*. Perhaps read the relevant passage from Ian Serraillier's book.

Ask your students to storyboard the story, using a series of five images.

Ask each student to choose their favourite of the five images and develop that image into their final entry.

OR

Show your students the images below, taken from wartime Polish literature, and the artist's impressions of Jan's animals featured in this pack.

Ask them to do some research of their own into this sort of artwork, and choose their favourite.

Ask them to draw one of the animals in the style of the Polish image that they have found.

OR

Ask your students to study the text of *The Silver Sword* and locate their two favourite descriptive passages about one of the characters. From these passages, ask your students to create an image to represent each side of the character, or moment from their story.

They should then choose one of the images to develop and submit.

THE STORIES

THE PRINCESS OF THE BRAZEN MOUNTAIN

A prince went walking near a crystal fountain
And spied three maidens bathing there
The girls had flown there from the Brazen Mountain
On magic wings they scythed the air
And as they dried their silken hair
The maidens thought themselves alone
Three pairs of wings lay on a nearby stone
The maidens clothed themselves and sang so sweetly
The prince essayed a little theft
He stole the smallest set of wings discreetly
So when her older sisters left
The youngest found herself bereft
Without her wings she couldn't fly
And so the maiden stayed behind to cry
And all at once the Prince appears
His plan - to woo her, as he wipes away the maiden's tears:

PRINCE: You are the Princess of the Brazen Mountain
The maid that I shall wed
I pray you, don't return to Brazen Mountain
But come with me instead
There's something rare about you
I know I cannot live my life without you
So let us be together; together, ever more

The maid agreed the terms the prince had offered
For she adjudged him kind and fair
And down the aisle she held the hand he proffered
A beauteous bride beyond compare
With garlands in her golden hair
But then next day, amongst his things
She comes across the stolen pair of wings
And all at once she puts them on
Straight to the window; not a backward glance and she is gone
Seven long years he sought her, searching high and low
Until one day when far from home he saw a castle in the snow
He slipped inside unnoticed, and found a place to hide
And, seeing there his maiden fair, he listened as she cried
Oh (she cried) I loved him But I threw it all away
Would that he'd forgive the wrong I did to him that day
He loved me well, that much I know
And my beloved prince, I miss him so
And all at once the prince appears
And rails against those seven lost years
And all at once she sees his face
And hotly weeping, falls into her husband's fond embrace
You are my Princess of the Brazen Mountain
You stole my very heart
I love you, Princess of the Brazen Mountain
And now we'll never part
And now at last I've found you
I only want to throw my arms around you
And we will be together; together, ever more.

DANIEL AND THE LION

Daniel came to Babylon (Babylon Babylon)
Through distant hills he travelled on (where's he gone? Babylon)
People couldn't help noticing
He knew a lot about everything
Daniel even impressed the King of Babylon (mm-hmm)

KING: There's something about this man; a great light shines out of him.
He will run my country.

And Daniel thought to himself:

DANIEL: It's such an honour that the King is giving me
It's also such a big responsibility

He wasn't sure he should accept the Royal accolade
So Daniel did just as he always did and prayed

Oh Daniel Oh oh Daniel Hold on to what's inside
Be brave Be strong You won't go far wrong
Daniel Daniel trust in God, let faith be your guide

So Daniel accepted the King's offer but the other courtiers grew jealous,
He's the Royal favourite (favourite favourite)
The courtiers thought the opposite (liking it? not one bit)
So, motivated by jealousy They plotted, under an olive tree
A plan to make sure there would be an end to it (mm-hmm)

COURTIER 1: I've got it! The King must make a law against Daniel's God. Daniel will
have no choice but to disobey him then.

COURTIERS: Oh great King, you are so wonderful. No-one should pray to anyone but
you.

COURTIER 1: Let's make it legally binding

KING: A great idea! Why didn't I think of that?

Without a second thought he passed a royal decree

KING: No-one's allowed to pray to any God but me
It doesn't matter who you are this law must be obeyed

But Daniel did just as he always did and prayed

Oh Daniel Oh oh Daniel Hold on to what's inside
Be brave Be strong You won't go far wrong
Daniel Daniel trust in God, let faith be your guide
Daniel's in the lions den (Lions Den Lions Den ...)
Will he ever get out again? (tell us when, cry amen ...)

Though Daniel to his faith stayed true
There was nothing the King could do
To stop him being thrown into the lions den (mm-hmm)
The anguished King cried out into the fading light

KING: I hope your God will come to rescue you tonight

And Daniel heard the Lion's roar, And still was not afraid
He simply did just as he always did and prayed

The next day, the King rushed to the lions den, shouting

KING: Daniel Daniel are you saved?

DANIEL: Oh great King, I am alive.
I was brave, I was strong, for I knew I'd done nothing wrong.

For Daniel trusted in his God and God came to his aid
And Daniel humbly knelt in gratitude and prayed

Oh Daniel Oh oh Daniel Hold on to what's inside
Be brave Be strong You've done nothing wrong
We must put our trust in God

For God will provide

1950s POLISH ILLUSTRATIONS



