

Sweet Skies

Robin Scott-Elliot

BOOK TALK CARDS



Spark discussion and foster a reading community with our top picks



ABOUT THE BOOK

Based on true events, this superb historical novel follows a young boy, Otto, who dreams of becoming a pilot while living in a besieged Berlin during the aftermath of World War Two.



OUR THOUGHTS

"It offers an insight on the aftermath of WW2 for ordinary German families, a perspective which is often overlooked."

- **Anna, Schools Team Manager**



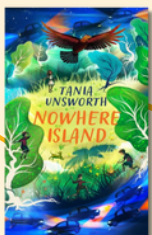
THEMES:

Friendship • WW2 • Honesty
Resilience • Disability • Family

TIME TO TALK

- 1 Consider the lead character of Otto – why do the audience warm to him? What about his character is good or bad?
- 2 How is the theme of family portrayed in the story? In what ways is this concept entirely impacted by the war, and in what ways are there signs that the children's relationships with their families may have already been strained?
- 3 What does the word family mean to you? How does this differ to friends? Compare your class responses with those shown in the book.
- 4 The lead characters have a number of disabilities, none of which are central to the plot. How do the children manage their abilities? Why do you think the author chose not to make these conditions an integral part of the plot?
- 5 How do the adults and the children in the story differ? Are there any common themes to the behaviour of the adults, or to the behaviour of the children? What might the author be suggesting here?
- 6 The context of the story, the aftermath of WWII, is an aspect of the conflict rarely covered in stories. In what way does reading about this aspect help to inform or even alter the opinions you have of this time? You could think about how the different countries were affected, or different groups of people.
- 7 Honesty and recognising the value your words carry is a central theme. Which characters prize this value most? Which find it a more challenging concept and how does this work out for them?
- 8 Consider the male vs the female characters: in what ways do they defy gender stereotypes? Given the historical context, might there be reasons for these differences?

TAKE THE TEXT FURTHER WITH OUR TOP 5 TEXTS TO CONTINUE THE THEME:



Nowhere Island by Tania Unsworth



The Silver Sword by Ian Serraillier



Anna At War by Helen Peters



Bridge To Terabithia by Katherine Paterson



While The Storm Rages by Phil Earle