

FACING THE LION
Memoirs of a Young Girl in Nazi Europe
Abridged Edition
By Simone Arnold Liebster

THE BOOK

Facing the Lion tells the story of a young girl living during an age of terror more than half a century ago. Yet the situations and choices she faced reflect the universal human struggle to survive, not only physically, but also morally and spiritually, in a world that continues to be marred by violence, intolerance, and injustice. Simone Arnold Liebster’s story reaches out across generations and cultures, to people everywhere, young and old, who face their own “lions”—ethical dilemmas and challenges—every day.

Simone describes her youth during the terrifying years of the Nazi era. Just as Simone is reaching adolescence, swirling forces of social and political change threaten her world. Her personal childish struggles almost overnight become dangerous, open confrontations with a system bent on conformity. For their refusal to submit, Simone and her parents bear the full brunt of Nazi anger. She finds her cherished beliefs under attack as the Nazis and their supporters tear apart her world piece by piece. Simone’s parents are sent to concentration camps and Simone to a Nazi “reeducation” home. There she is forced to do hard labor and is subjected to cruel indignities for nearly two years.

While making no secret of her frailties and weaknesses, Simone’s story is one of inspiring courage and indomitable hope. From her we learn that ordinary humans, young people included, can find the strength to cling to and act according to their values despite immense negative pressure. We learn that we can be confident of our own ability to face and triumph over the lions in our lives.

THE STUDY GUIDE

This resource enables educators to use *Facing the Lion* to explore crucial issues confronting their students as they cross the threshold from adolescence to adulthood. Young adults are fascinated by explorations into questions of right and wrong behavior, social justice,

the meaning of life, and reconciling the existence of good and evil in the world. Confronting these issues requires higher-order skills in critical and creative thinking, problem solving, self-reflection, and expression. Suggested activities in boxes engage younger readers and help them grasp the context and depth of the text. Journal activities can be used as integrated assessment tools to measure knowledge and comprehension.

Language arts teachers can choose activities designed to help students to:

- identify main and subordinate themes
- use multiple methods to extract meaning from written, oral, and visual texts
- see the breadth and diversity of the human experience through the eyes of others
- strengthen their analytical and persuasive powers

History/Social studies teachers can select activities to enable students to:

- grasp the impact of 20th-century world events on a specific region and population
- explore the actions of individuals and institutions
- integrate the experiences of the past with the present
- examine cultural, religious, and political influences on their own identity

Central themes covered by this study guide include:

- How do we develop an inner sense of right and wrong?
- Once developed, how do we maintain our values, even in the face of pressure?
- How can we use sound reasoning and creative thinking to solve ethical dilemmas?
- How can we balance strong personal convictions with respect for others’ beliefs?

Authentic stories help students formulate and maintain stable identity and prosocial orientation as they learn to accommodate and respect multicultural differences in their communities and their world.

Chapter 1
LIFE BETWEEN CITY AND MOUNTAIN FARM
(pages 3-14)

Simone's story begins in France in June 1933, just as Adolf Hitler and the National Socialist (Nazi) government assume power in Germany. The Arnold family—Simone, her father Adolphe, and her mother Emma, along with the little dog Zita—move from their country home to the city of Mulhouse. This industrial city lies in Alsace, France, a land that had repeatedly seen the ravages of war, as France and Germany struggled for control of the mineral-rich region.

In this first chapter, Simone introduces us to each family member. The entire family is devoutly Catholic and, even as a young girl, Simone is deeply religious. They also have strong political views, being divided between loyalty to the French and loyalty to the Germans.

School begins in October, and Simone makes friends with Andrée, Blanche, Madeleine, and Frida, a poor and sickly girl. Simone becomes aware of injustice and feels angry that even the Christchild seems to favor the rich with better gifts. Sadly, Frida dies of tuberculosis.

Emma Arnold begins reading the Bible and decides to leave the Catholic Church despite the objections of her husband, Adolphe. Soon, however, the Arnolds all begin attending meetings of the Bible Students, or Jehovah's Witnesses. Simone encounters prejudice against Jews, and her parents explain why people unfairly hate Jews. The family realizes that their freedom and their lives may be in danger.

CONCLUSIONS. How does the incident in the fabric store help Simone develop an appreciation for individuality? (p 10) In what way might the ability to think for herself affect her during the Nazi time?

CONNECTIONS TO TODAY. The men in the village make negative (antisemitic) comments about Jews. (p 5) How do you define prejudice? What kind of remarks have you heard that seem like prejudice against religious or nonreligious groups? If you disagree with these views, what could you say in response?

SIMONE AND YOU. Simone feels very sad when she realizes that Frida has died. Have you ever lost a close friend or relative? If so, how

did you deal with your feelings of sadness? If not, how would you comfort someone who has lost a loved one?

CORE VALUES JOURNAL. Simone's schoolmates make fun of her and call her names. Why? Write about a time when you felt out of place or different from those around you. How did others treat you? What could they have done to make you feel comfortable? What did you learn from this experience?

TAKING A CRITICAL STANCE: THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE

Recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. . . . Disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind.

—Preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Simone is keenly aware of the gap between rich and poor, and she tries to remedy the situation in her own way. Throughout history people have had strong opinions about social classes. Some societies, such as India, have well-defined systems of class division. Other societies, such as those in the West, have less formal social classes. Communism held out the prospect of a "classless" society. In your opinion, which arrangement is most desirable? Realistic? Explain.

MY VOCABULARY JOURNAL

1. For each chapter write down three unfamiliar words.
2. Research and note the meaning of each word in your journal. If a word has more than one definition, explain which meaning fits the word as Simone uses it.
3. Write a sentence about Simone's story using each of your words.
4. In a small group, choose one of your words and have your classmates guess the meaning. Read the definition and your sentence.

Chapter 2
THE THREAT OF WAR
(pages 15-19)

Simone and her grandfather discuss the tragedy of war. Aunt Eugenie explains that the struggle for desirable Alsace is like two dogs fighting over a bone. Hitler's armies invade Poland in September 1939. Simone changes schools and starts attending Mittelschule, where she takes advanced classes.

Jehovah's Witnesses are banned in France, and the Witnesses in Alsace go "underground." Adolphe Arnold reasons with Simone about what she should do when faced with pressure to give the "Heil Hitler" salute. In May 1940, Germany invades France.

CONCLUSIONS. Adolphe Arnold knows that the Witnesses in Alsace will soon face the issue of the Heil Hitler salute. He relates a story to help Simone reason on the meaning of the salute. (pp 17-18)

The story of the three Hebrew boys, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, is found in the Bible book of Daniel, chapter 3. Exiled in Babylon, the three young men served in the court of Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar. The king set up a tall image of gold on the plain of Dura and ordered his officials to bow to the image. The young Hebrews told the king that even though God might not save them: "Your gods are not the ones we are serving, and the image of gold that you have set up we will not worship." Nebuchadnezzar had them thrown alive into a fiery furnace. But an angel appeared and rescued them.

- a. In what way is Hitler like Nebuchadnezzar? What do you think is the purpose of forcing the population to say "Heil Hitler"? What effect do you think this saying has on people?
- b. How does Adolphe Arnold define "conscience"? (pp 10, 17) How does the story of the three Hebrew boys relate to the position that Simone and her parents believe they should take toward the Hitler salute?

CONNECTIONS TO TODAY. Simone's grandfather tells her about the effects of hatred. Why is hatred such a destructive emotion? Find an example in this week's newspaper of an action motivated by hatred.

Simone is concerned about a war being fought in her hometown. What do you imagine life is like for a young person growing up in a war zone?

SIMONE AND YOU. The story of the three Hebrews deeply affects the way Simone looks at situations in life. Describe a story you heard as a child that still affects the way you think or act today.

CORE VALUES JOURNAL. The struggle between conscience and conformity will be a recurring theme of Simone's story. Have you ever felt pressured to ignore your core values and to conform instead? How do you deal with this situation? How can you strengthen the internal "voice" of your conscience?

On the other hand, conformity does not always conflict with conscience, and sometimes it is healthy and wise to conform. Explain how you decide whether to conform or not. Give an example.

TAKING A CRITICAL STANCE : CONSCIENCE AND CONFORMITY

People who lived during the Holocaust often faced a conflict between the pressure to conform and the voice of their own conscience. Analyze the meaning of the two words below:

Conform	con/with; form/shape	with + shape
Conscience	con/with; science/knowledge	with + knowledge

Make a chart with yourself at the center. What external influences or people have shaped (conformity) your beliefs positively or negatively? What good or bad experiences have influenced your inner sense of right and wrong (conscience)?

FAR-AND-NEAR TIMELINE

1. Make a timeline of main events in Europe, including Nazi Germany, during World War II.
2. Fill in events that happened in the Arnold family's life.
3. Interview an older family member and add events that happened in your relative's life during the same time period.

Chapter 3
RETURN TO THE REICH
(pages 21-30)

The shadow of Germany is everywhere. Soldiers march in the streets. Jewish stores are plundered. The populace is split over what is happening to the Jews and to their property. Simone's parents consider it to be robbery and feel that Hitler is a representative of the Devil. Simone and her friend H el ene have a frightening encounter with Hitler himself as his motorcade drives through the newly annexed territory. Schirmeck-Vorbruck, an internment camp, is set up in mid-1940 to reeducate stubborn Alsatians. The threat of Schirmeck hangs over Jehovah's Witnesses.

With the start of school, Simone grows apprehensive. Mr. Zipf, the new instructor, declares it a goal to make the students into German citizens. Only German should be spoken. Simone is able to hide behind taller girls in the class, so that she is not seen with her arm down when everyone else gives the Hitler salute. Nazi songs, as well as nationalistic and racist propaganda, pose a challenge to Simone's beliefs. She is facing bigger and weightier decisions with each passing day.

Nazi officials threaten Adolphe the barber for not joining the party, not hanging Hitler's picture in his shop, and not giving the Hitler greeting. Simone demands that her parents let her be baptized as a Witness. Marcel Sutter, a bright young man, becomes a special friend of the Arnold the family.

CONCLUSIONS. What is the purpose of the concentration camp Schirmeck-Vorbruck? Why do you think the Nazis order people not to tell what had happened to them inside the camp?

What groups do the Nazis value and what groups do they look down on? How might they use Darwin's evolutionary theory of "survival of the fittest" to support their view of "superhumans" and "subhumans"?

CONNECTIONS TO TODAY. What qualities do you think make a person "strong" or "weak"? Does society in general have a different standard than you do? Why or why not?

SIMONE AND YOU. Simone's parents feel she is too young to be baptized. Do you ever feel that adults underestimate your ability to act responsibly, to keep commitments, or to stand up for your values?

How do you view yourself when it comes to being able to take a strong stand for doing what you think is right?

CORE VALUES JOURNAL. Simone realizes that it may become difficult to hold on to some of her values. She decides to stick to her beliefs anyway. What strong belief or value of yours may others disagree with strongly? How can you be tolerant of their views while still holding firmly to your own?

TAKING A CRITICAL STANCE: EDUCATION OR INDOCTRINATION

- Write a news article about the German takeover of a school. Then write two letters to the editor, one for and one against the take-over. As an editor write editorial response. Discuss which was the most difficult to write and why.
- What do you think should be the main purpose of education? Under the Nazis, what was the main purpose of education? What methods did the Nazis use to teach their ideas? How would you explain the difference between education and indoctrination?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Keeley, Jennifer. *Life in the Hitler Youth* (The Way People Live series), (San Diego, 2000)

Mann, Erika. *School for Barbarians: Education Under the Nazis*, (New York, 1938).

DEAR DIARY...

Imagine you are Simone. Your world is changing fast, and you decide to keep a diary so that you can keep track of what is happening in your life.

For each chapter you read in *Facing the Lion*, write a page in your diary, describing your feelings, your fears, and your dreams. You can draw pictures or write poems that express your feelings or depict events that you see or experience.

Chapter 4
SUDDEN DANGERS
(pages 31-34)

The Arnolds and Adolphe Koehl attempt a secret rendezvous with Alfred Zinglé, a Witness courier, who smuggles literature across the border. They successfully meet him, but on their return, they are apprehended by German soldiers. The group is escorted at gunpoint and searched thoroughly, except for Simone, who is carrying the forbidden literature in a secret girdle.

The family tries to maintain tranquility. Simone's father helps her with a watercolor painting of three roses. Over the summer vacation, Simone has a chance to visit her grandparents in Bergenbach.

CONCLUSIONS. Simone participates in dangerous underground activity at the age of 11. Why do you think she chooses to do so? Why would her parents allow her to do this? How do you feel about someone of her age being involved in such activity? (pp 32-33)

CONNECTIONS TO TODAY. Name some risks that people commonly take that you feel are foolish. Name some risky or dangerous activities that you feel are worthwhile, even noble. What is the difference?

SIMONE AND YOU. Simone is willing to risk her life to carry religious literature. Name a letter, book, or picture that you value greatly. Would you risk your life to keep or to get this item? Why or why not? What gives a possession personal value, even when it may not be worth a lot of money?

CORE VALUES JOURNAL. Simone's family is facing increasing danger because of their religious beliefs. What uncertainties and pressures do you face in your life? What will you do to stay true to your own values, no matter what happens around you?

TAKING A CRITICAL STANCE: SPIRITUAL RESISTANCE

*We will not be silent. We are your bad
conscience. The White Rose will not leave
you in peace.—White Rose Letters*

In Munich, Germany, a small group of university students calling themselves the "White Rose," printed and distributed anti-Nazi pamphlets urging students to rebel. The young leaders of the movement, Hans Scholl, his sister Sophie, and Christoph Probst, were turned in by a janitor and were beheaded by the Nazis. Executed shortly thereafter was professor of philosophy Kurt Huber, who had guided the movement. In his final defense, he quoted these words of German philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte:

*And thou shalt act as if
On thee and on thy deed
Depended the fate of all Germany,
And thou alone must answer for it.*

- Research the White Rose movement. (See suggested resources below.) Write a one- or two-page summary highlighting the history, motivations, aims, achievements, and fate of the members.
- Like the members of the White Rose, Jehovah's Witnesses risked their lives to print and distribute their pamphlets. Write an essay explaining why you think the Nazis punished resisters so harshly? What is your opinion of White Rose? Do you think this type of resistance is effective? Why or why not?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Benz, Wolfgang. (ed.) *Encyclopedia of German Resistance to the Nazi Movement*, (New York, 1997)

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. *Resistance during the Holocaust*

<http://www.english.upenn.edu/~afilreis/Holocaust/gill-white-rose.html> (University of Pennsylvania)

<http://www.historyplace.com/pointsofview/white-rose1.htm> (By a survivor of the White Rose movement)

<http://fcit.coedu.usf.edu/Holocaust/people/resister.htm> (University of South Florida)

Chapter 5
THE LION STRIKES
(pages 35-48)

Simone returns to school and Mr. Zipf is her teacher once again. Nazi teachings about the “pure race” are part of the program. Simone’s father reasons with Simone about the error of the Nazi version of evolution. On September 4, two Gestapo agents bring the news that they have arrested Adolphe Arnold. A grueling four-hour interrogation begins, during which Simone’s mother is pressured to reveal details about their underground work and names of other Bible Students. The Gestapo leave, threatening to return to arrest both mother and daughter.

Emma Arnold learns that Adolphe Arnold’s salary has been confiscated and his bank account is closed. Emma is denied a working permit. But she and Simone receive help from fellow Witnesses. Meanwhile, the Gestapo agents arrest more and more male Witnesses, and they search Simone’s home. Anxiety about impending arrest drains Simone and her mother of strength. Emma Arnold attempts secretly to send religious material to her husband in Schirmeck.

Like a big brother, Marcel Sutter fills a void in Simone’s life. She takes up piano lessons again and continues her secret religious activities, including even assisting with the translation of banned religious literature. Despite the hardships of separation, family bonds remain strong.

CONCLUSIONS. How is Adolphe Arnold treated at the time of his arrest? What is the purpose of this type of treatment? (p 41) Write a news article for the *Mulhouse Daily Examiner* about Adolphe Arnold’s arrest. Or if you prefer, write an article for an underground resistance paper about his arrest.

CONNECTIONS TO TODAY. The ideology of the Nazis is embodied in the slogan *Race, Blood, and Soil*—the notion that racial purity must be maintained by preventing intermarriage and by continuously struggling for land, or “living space” to keep the pure community together and to keep out contaminating influences. Name examples of modern-day “ethnic cleansing.” What ethnic or national groups are involved? How does this thinking compare to the ideology of the Nazis?

SIMONE AND YOU. Emma Arnold teaches Simone that the enemy is ideology, not people. (p 40) Do you agree? How can ideas make people act humanely or inhumanely? From your personal observations, give an example to support your viewpoint.

CORE VALUES JOURNAL. Simone and her mother meet the tapestry maker, who has taken a job as a prison guard. (p 42) Why did he change jobs? What do you think of his choice and of his present work?

TAKING A CRITICAL STANCE: IDENTIFYING PREJUDICE AND STEREOTYPES

- Read the excerpt from the *Life Sciences—Biology Textbook for High Schools* on pages 176-180. Select four examples from the text of blatant racist thinking. How can the text be used to justify murder of the Jews? The murder of the mentally and physically disabled?
- Hitler expected German and other ‘Aryan races’ to win all the medals at the 1936 Olympic Games held in Berlin, and especially in the sprinting and other track events at which “subhuman” races would lack the needed strength. Find out what happened when African-American runner Jessie Owens won a gold medal. Describe the various reactions observers might have had to his victory.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Blackburn, Gilmer W. *Education in the Third Reich: Race and History in Nazi Textbooks*, (Albany, NY, 1985)

VILLAINS AND HEROES

- 1 Draw a line down the middle of a page, dividing it into two columns
2. Mark one column “Villain” and one column “Hero.” Under these headings, write your definition of a villain and a hero.
2. Underneath write the names of two characters from *Facing the Lion*, one who you think acted like a villain, and one who acted like a hero.
3. As you read about these people, add words to the columns that either describe the person or some action he or she took.
4. When you finish the book, discuss your “hero” and “villain” with your classmates. Did the person stay a “hero” or “villain”? Why or why not? Is a hero always totally good and a villain totally bad?

Chapter 6
ALONE BEFORE THE LION (Part 1)
(pages 49-65)

Simone's father has been incarcerated for a year when the new school term begins. In the schoolyard, Simone gets into trouble for not giving the Hitler salute to a teacher. As punishment, she has to take a letter around to 24 classes. The letter states that an unnamed student refuses to comply with "civic duties," and that this will not be tolerated.

Simone's teacher, Mr. Zipf, invites her and her mother to his home, where he tries to convince Simone that it is foolish to refuse to comply. Two days later she has a confrontation with the principal and the city supervisor in front of the whole class. She is expelled from the school and has to return to Volksschule, which does not offer the advanced classes she enjoyed in Mittelschule.

Mr. Ehrlich, the new principal in Simone's old school, demands that Simone not reveal why she was dismissed from Mittelschule. Furthermore, she is to have no books and is not allowed to participate fully in class. The children torment her ceaselessly, trying to find out why she has left the other school.

Nazi terror continues to saturate the city. There are marches in the street, nighttime arrests, Nazi youth programs, and neighborhood spies. More Witnesses, both men and women, are being arrested.

CONCLUSIONS. Analyze the speeches of Mr. Gasser (p 50), Mr. Zipf (pp 53-55), and the city supervisor (pp 56-57). Rank the speeches in order of persuasiveness. Do they sound more like political or religious speeches? Faced with these authority figures, do you see any alternatives for Simone? What do you think most people would do if faced with this pressure to conform? Why is Simone able to withstand the pressure?

CONNECTIONS TO TODAY. Freedom is the subject of poems, songs, wars, and bumper stickers. People around the world value freedom. How would you define freedom? In what ways would you like more freedom? Is it possible to have total freedom? Describe what schools and families would be like if everyone had total freedom.

SIMONE AND YOU. Simone's mother says that sticking to one's decisions brings peace within oneself. (p 51) Give an example of a situation in which this might be true of a young person facing

decisions today. Later, Simone refers to her pride in a negative sense. (p 61) What is the difference between self-respect and pride?

CORE VALUES JOURNAL. In this chapter Simone is pressured by adults. Mr. Zipf, a respected teacher, uses verbal persuasion, and Mr. Ehrlich, the cruel principal, uses emotional (and later, even physical) bullying to try to get her to compromise her beliefs. Which type of pressure might you find more difficult to resist? Why? If the person is wrong but means well, how would you reply to him or her?

TAKING A CRITICAL STANCE: OBEYING OR CHALLENGING OPPRESSIVE AUTHORITY

Psychologists Stanley Milgram and Philip Zimbardo were startled to find that ordinary people can behave brutally if put in situations in which they are ordered to or expected to be cruel.

- Research their experiments and describe their conclusions. On pages 64-65 Simone describes ways in which people cooperated the Nazi system. How did some people behave under the control of an oppressive government?
- How does Simone's description compare to the two experiments?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Milgram, Stanley. *Obedience to Authority* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974)
<http://www.prisonexp.org> (Slide show and summary of Philip Zimbardo's Stanford Prison Experiment)
<http://www.pineforge.com/newman/2.htm> (Synopses of conformity experiments by psychologists Asch, Latané, and Zimbardo)

MY CONSCIENCE IS TALKING

In this chapter, Simone faces some big decisions. Imagine Simone's conscience, the thoughts and the "voices" she hears—of her parents, her teachers, her friends, and herself—as she tries to decide what to do. Draw these images or words inside Simone's head. Using a highlighter, mark the voices or images that finally help Simone make her decision.

Chapter 6
ALONE BEFORE THE LION (Part 2)
(pages 65-83)

In March 1943, Simone is ordered to undergo a psychiatric test. It turns out to be an interrogation. She endures the difficult test without betraying fellow Witnesses. Simone is summoned to juvenile court. The judge concludes, after reasoning unsuccessfully with Simone, that she has been corrupted by Bible Student teaching and must be reeducated. She will soon be arrested and taken away.

Simone is chosen to participate in a gymnastic gathering with hundreds of students from area schools. At the last moment she realizes that it is a Nazi youth rally and she withdraws. She wonders why her mother did not forbid her participation. Her mother makes clear that this was Simone's decision to make according to her conscience.

The students will attend a youth camp, and each child is told to bring money. Simone decides she will not go. Simone realizes that Marcel is in great danger because he will soon be called up for the military and when he refuses to kill, he will be executed. As they part company for the last time, Marcel's strong faith and calm confidence become a living part of Simone's memory

Simone faces an enraged Mr. Ehrlich when she refuses to go to the youth camp. He makes a whole class suffer, claiming that Simone is responsible. Instead of turning on her, the children urge her to keep resisting Mr. Ehrlich. Simone refuses to do war-related work, and Mr. Ehrlich knocks her unconscious.

Arrests continue, and Witnesses in camps are dying. The remaining Witnesses are determined to remain true to their faith. Simone draws close to her mother and feels her conviction growing stronger.

CONCLUSIONS. Simone's doctor is threatened by the Gestapo and told not to help the Arnolds anymore. He asks Emma Arnold not to come back. Doctors are trained to help people who are hurt or sick. How do you think Dr. Baumann justified his actions in his own mind? What part might doctors have played in Nazi mass murder?

CONNECTIONS TO TODAY. Simone's friend Marcel, like her father, refused to kill and to participate in war. Individuals in many countries are conscientious objectors to war. How do some view

people who refuse to go in the military? Why do some governments object to conscientious objectors? What do you think would have been a proper governmental response to the Witnesses for not joining the military? What if everyone were a conscientious objector?

SIMONE AND YOU. Simone decides not to go to youth camp, concluding that it is "wiser to say no once instead of facing a daily challenge." (p 77) Have you ever been in a situation where saying "no" right away helped you to stick to your decision, or not saying "no" right away made things difficult for you? Describe what happened and state whether or not you would respond in the same way if you had another chance.

CORE VALUES JOURNAL. Simone feels internal pressure— she feels left out—when she declines to attend the Hitler Youth rally with her gymnastics group. Which do you find more difficult to resist: external peer pressure to do what others do, or the internal desire to be "part of the crowd"? Which type of pressure is most likely to come up in your life? How might you strengthen yourself now in order to make it easier to stand firm for your values in the future?

TAKING A CRITICAL STANCE: THE NEED TO BELONG

- Hitler often said, "He alone who owns the youth gains the future." The Hitler Youth became the key means of indoctrinating Germany's youth with Nazi ideas. Membership became mandatory for every qualified German boy and girl, aged 10 to 18. For the boys, Hitler Youth activities focused on physical fitness and pre-military training. German girls in the *Jungmädel* and *Bund deutscher Mädel* learned cooking and nursing. The Hitler Youth often held rallies and parades. Millions of Germans spent their formative adolescent years in the Hitler Youth. Why did many youth find these activities attractive? Are these the same reasons young people join gangs? How is the Hitler Youth similar to gangs?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Keeley, Jennifer. *Life in the Hitler Youth* (San Diego, CA: Lucent Books, 2000).

Lifton, Robert Jay. *Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide*. (New York: Basic Books, 1986).

Chapter 7
INTO THE LION'S DEN (Part 1)
(pages 85-104)

Simone faces Mr. Ehrlich in a final showdown in front of 500 boys and girls. She is made to stand in front of the Nazi flag as it is raised in a solemn ceremony. Simone grips her skirt to keep from lifting her hand. Mr. Ehrlich delivers an inflated speech about the Nazi paradise and rants about how the school will make an example of a rebel who makes herself an enemy of the state! Upon returning home, Simone finds a notice of her arrest. Emma Arnold insists on accompanying her daughter to the reeducation home, which is in Constance, Germany.

After a long train ride, they arrive at the Wessenberg's Reformatory for Girls. Fräulein Lederle, overseer of the reeducation home, explains that the paperwork is not ready, so Simone and her mother have one last evening together. Then the next morning Simone is torn away and is not even allowed to say good-bye to her mother. Her shoes are taken, and she is issued a uniform, a number, and a German name, Maria. The harsh realities of institutional life set in. The children must work in total silence.

Simone is given extra work assignments, including cooking duty on Sundays while all the other children go to church. Physical punishment is a daily occurrence in the Wessenberg home. Simone's heart aches and her spirits sink. She is given the job of cleaning the room of Fräulein Messinger, the teacher. Simone seizes the opportunity to hide a Bible under the teacher's bed, which she can read every day in secret. Then she is given charge of Anna, a very difficult five-year-old.

CONCLUSIONS. What is the purpose of the flag ceremony? What does Mr. Ehrlich mean, "The one who doesn't want to bend has to be broken!" (pp 85-92)

Why do you think Simone's name is changed to Maria and she is assigned a number? (p 92)

Why is Simone not permitted to read the Bible?

Why do the children like to see others punished? What sort of people are they becoming? (pp 100-101)

CONNECTIONS TO TODAY. Simone makes major decisions about her future at age 11. She is separated from her parents and forced into situations that many adults would find unbearable. How do Simone's adolescent years compare with those of young people you know? How do you think Simone's experiences affected her as an adult?

SIMONE AND YOU. Simone receives good advice from her mother. Think of some useful advice you have received and relate what happened when you followed it.

CORE VALUES JOURNAL. When things seem worst for Simone at Wessenberg, she receives a letter from her mother that brings strengthening memories to her mind. Simone describes this as a "key to open [her] heart" and says that this allows her to draw on her own "treasures." Describe a few of the precious memories in your "treasure box." How do each of these memories help to do what you think is right?

TAKING A CRITICAL STANCE: COURAGE AND RESISTANCE

"Courage is never alone, for it has fear as its ever-present companion. An act deserves to be called courageous if, and only if, it is performed in spite of fear."

- Do you agree with this observation about courage? Why or why not? Write your own definition of "courage." Relate an incident in your life that called for you to display courage. If you could relive this incident, would you act differently? How?
- Simone trembled during the flag-raising ceremony but kept her arm down. How might the history of the Nazi period been different if more people had acted courageously despite having been fearful?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Carol Rittner and Sondra Meyers (eds.), *The Courage to Care*, (NY: New York University Press, 1986, p. 149.

Chapter 7
INTO THE LION'S DEN (Part 2)
(pages 104-120)

The Koehls come for a secret visit, but the brief sunshine of their visit turns to darkness as Simone's loneliness overwhelms her. She receives a letter from her mother, encouraging her to view her situation like a school where the lesson is obedience. Simone receives the shocking news of her mother's arrest.

Simone's bed neighbor, Sofie, wants to know why Simone is so different from the other girls. The two of them talk in whispers, breaking the rules about silence. They are caught. Simone tries to explain to Fräulein Lederle that she spoke of a holy subject, but Sofie receives a brutal beating on her hands. Fräulein Lederle threatens Simone but does not punish her.

Fräulein Messinger tries to get Simone to open up and share details about her life in Mulhouse. It becomes clear that she is trying to get information about other Witnesses, probably to inform the Gestapo. But Simone realizes the danger and chooses to talk about country life instead.

In the oppressive environment of the home, Simone's memories of her happy childhood sustain her. In November 1943 Simone is again brought before a judge who reminds her that when she turns 14 she will either become a maid or be sent to a prison or a concentration camp. Simone signs a document certifying her decision to stay a Bible Student. Soon thereafter, her hidden Bible is discovered and taken away. One morning Fräulein Messinger cruelly informs Simone that Marcel Sutter has been executed.

CONCLUSIONS. Under the Nazi system, the education profession became distorted in its aims.

- Compare Fräulein Messinger to Simone's former teachers, Mr. Zipf and Miss Lorenz.
- Why do you think Fräulein Lederle beat Sofie but not Simone? What does this incident say about Fräulein Lederle as a person and the kind of job she had? (p 109-113)

CONNECTIONS TO TODAY. When Sofie is beaten, Simone shows empathy, that is, she feels her pain. Of what value is empathy in today's society? How might empathy help solve problems?

SIMONE AND YOU. When the Koehls visited Simone, she relates that her environment of silence is beginning to affect her. (p 105) In what way? Relate a situation that has had a temporary or permanent effect on your ability to communicate with others.

CORE VALUES JOURNAL. Amid the physical and emotional cruelty at Wessenberg, Simone is overcome with anger at Anna. Do you think that Simone is more angry and frustrated at her situation or the harsh matrons than at Anna? Have you ever been angry with one person but "taken it out" on another person? What things make you react with anger, even against your own values? Why? How can understanding the root of your feelings help you to control your emotions and stay true to your values?

TAKING A CRITICAL STANCE: RESPONSIBILITY AND MARTYRDOM

Simone and her parents, like other Witnesses, are given the opportunity to renounce their beliefs and go free. Look at the Declaration in Appendix #10. Why do you think the Arnolds refuse to sign the Declaration? If you had been in their situation, would you have signed the Declaration? If you feel you would not have signed, how would you alter the text to make it acceptable to sign?

YOURS TRULY

- 1 Read the letters from Simone, her father Adolphe, and her friend Marcel. (Appendix #6-9).
2. Imagine you have been put in a place like Wessenberg because you stood up for what you believed was right.
3. Write a letter to your friend or relative explaining your feelings and the reasons you feel it is important to do the right thing, even if you have to suffer for it.
4. Encourage your relative or friend to do the same.

Chapter 8
HELP CAME EVER SO OFTEN
(pages 121-132)

On a spring evening, Simone commemorates the Memorial of Jesus' death. Fräulein Messinger accuses her of bringing a "Jewish celebration" into the home. Aunt Eugenie comes to visit, bearing gifts for the matrons and news from Simone's parents. The visit leaves Simone depressed once again. On the next visit, Eugenie is permitted to take Simone to a restaurant. When Eugenie comes for her third visit, she is allowed to take Simone on a boat across to Meersburg, where Simone and her mother had spent their last evening together nearly a year before. The visit strengthens Simone and lifts her spirits.

Springtime means a big linen-washing day and their annual hair wash. Besides gardening and caring for daily chores, Simone also cooks fancy meals for the matrons on Sunday. She only has the day off when Eugenie comes to take her for an outing. Fräulein Messinger concludes that the visits to German cultural sites are good for Simone. Fräulein Lederle decides to permit Simone to deliver bill payments. The outings give Simone precious moments of independence.

Aunt Eugenie comes again in September, bringing news about an impending battle between the Allies and the Germans in Alsace. Grandpa has had a stroke, and Simone's father has been moved to Mauthausen, an Austrian camp where workers are being killed by hard labor. As the war intensifies, Aunt Eugenie can no longer visit.

Bombing raids interrupt the sleep of the exhausted girls of Wessenberg. A British spy is apprehended on the property. Dozens of stately oak trees are felled in order to prevent other spies from escaping over the border fence at the end of the property. The older girls, including Simone, have to saw the trees into mounds of firewood.

CONCLUSIONS. Describe how you would feel about yourself if you could wash your hair only once a year. (p 125)

Fräulein Messinger repeats Nazi propaganda about winning the war. Do you think she really believes what she says? When Germany loses, how do you think she might have felt? (p 130)

CONNECTIONS TO TODAY. Find a newspaper or magazine article that has appeared in the past year about the Nazi period. How does the article relate to Simone's story?

SIMONE AND YOU. Aunt Eugenie's first visit leaves Simone extremely depressed, even wishing that her aunt had never come. (p. 122) Relate a time in your life when a well-meaning gesture by someone left you feeling hurt or sad. Would you have preferred not to have received the intended kindness?

CORE VALUES JOURNAL. Friends such as Aunt Eugenie and the Koehls make great sacrifices of time, energy, and money to insure that Simone is strengthened to endure her trials. Besides your parents, what adults stand ready to help you stay true to your values? In your journal, write down what you would say to a supportive adult in your life to ask for help in standing firm for your values. Explain what time, energy, and emotional support you need, as well as specific actions that would help you.

TAKING A CRITICAL STANCE: SUFFERING AND MEANING

Viktor Frankl, a Holocaust survivor and author of the book *Man's Search for Meaning*, believed that suffering can be eased by one's attitude. He wrote:

"We must never forget that we may also find meaning in life even when confronted with a hopeless situation, when facing a fate that cannot be changed. For what then matters is to . . . transform a personal tragedy into a triumph. . . . Suffering ceases to be suffering at the moment it finds a meaning, such as the meaning of a sacrifice."

- How would you rephrase or explain Frankl's statement? Give an example of meaningless suffering and an example of suffering with meaning. How can attitude change a person's perception of hardships?
- What meaning do you think Simone and her parents attach to the suffering they have experienced? How do their attitudes and beliefs help them?

THE ARTIST'S PEN

Choose one of Simone's drawings. Find a piece of music, with or without words, that conveys the mood of the artwork. If possible, bring the recorded music to play for the class. Based on the music, give the drawing a title.

Chapter 9
I KNOW I'M AN ORPHAN
(pages 133-142)

Hard labor, isolation, and fatigue cause Simone's memories to fade little by little. A beautiful sunset brings back memories of her family. There has been no word from her mother or her father. They must be dead, she thinks. She is an orphan—abandoned and alone.

One day while paying bills, Simone finds a memorial to Johannes Hus, a 15th-century Protestant Reformer who had been burned at the stake in that very spot. The martyr's memorial revives Simone's determination to stay loyal. A rich family across the Rhine River offers to give a doll to a Wessenberg girl. Simone goes to retrieve it and takes the doll to see the sights along the river. She warns her doll about the barren environment in Wessenberg where children have forgotten how to play and laugh.

While she is out paying bills another day, Simone loses the butcher's money and reports the loss to the police, who remember that she once turned in a large amount of money she had found. She is relieved that Fräulein Lederle does not punish her for losing the money, which is later found. Intensified bombing and fears of the advancing Allies turn the children into moving shadows, exhausted and numb.

CONCLUSIONS. Surprisingly, Simone says that she has come to view Wessenberg as her “haven” and has decided, secretly, that she wants to stay on there as a maid. Why do you think that her opinion has changed so dramatically? (p 133-134)

To the amusement of many onlookers, 14-year-old Simone has an extended conversation with the large gift doll as she travels back to Wessenberg. (pp 136-137) Although this seems unusual for a teenager, why do you think she does this? How might Simone's pretend conversation have helped her?

Choose and record (if possible) three musical selections that correspond to the mood of particular events while Simone is in the Wessenberg home. Choose a title for the musical collection. Write a brief essay or poem explaining how your choices relate to the events.

CONNECTIONS TO TODAY. Write a news item about the British spy (p 130) for an underground French newspaper, a German radio station, or Associated Press (an international press service).

Many people in the town view Simone with suspicion and presume that since she is a “Wessenberg girl,” she must be dishonest. What emotional response do you have when you encounter people who have been in jail, perhaps prisoners on work-release doing community service projects, or others you may know? How do you feel when people treat you with suspicion?

SIMONE AND YOU. Simone builds a reputation for honesty among those who know her well, and this is beneficial for her in the long run. How do you feel about making a good reputation with adults? Is it something that has value to you? Why or why not? What kind of reputation would you like to have?

CORE VALUES JOURNAL. Simone finds it difficult to be viewed as a dishonest “Wessenberg girl,” especially since she is working so hard to be honest in a very difficult situation. What is it that people don't understand about your situation? Are there challenges to your values that you regularly overcome but hardly ever seem to get “credit” for overcoming? Have you ever done something good because you thought you should, even if no one (or almost no one) else knew about it? What happened? Does your own knowledge of this act strengthen you to stick to your values? Why or why not?

TAKING A CRITICAL STANCE: ROLE MODELS—GOOD OR BAD

- Simone is in a situation where she does not have any role models living close to her. In addition to memories of her family and friends, the martyr Johannes Hus serves as a model example for Simone. (pp 135, 138) Why does Simone relate so closely to Hus? In what ways does young Simone emulate the influential man Hus?
- Who are your role models? Do you have any role models from history? What is it about the life course of your role models that you admire?

Chapter 10
AN UNEXPECTED CHANGE
(pages 143-152)

An air raid in broad daylight again sends the children running to the cellar. Simone suddenly rebels and runs into the open. Fräulein Messinger meets her and tells Simone that her mother has come. Emma Arnold is barely recognizable, and Simone hardly reacts to her until they go to court to secure Simone's release. When she sees her mother boldly fighting for the proper legal papers for Simone's release, she finally realizes that her mother has come. But without the right paperwork, she cannot leave the home. Simone is not sure if her mother's coming is fantasy or reality. Finally they are free to go and are processed by the Red Cross in Switzerland. Simone learns further details about the frail condition of her mother's health by listening to the doctors' questioning.

Simone and her mother make the long trip back home. As the train nears Mulhouse, mother and daughter fall silent, wondering what they will find. At the station by chance they meet Aunt Eugenie, who has been checking for them there every day. The apartment is scarred from the street fighting between French and German soldiers. There is no word from Simone's father.

War has taken its toll on family and friends. Hope of the resurrection sustains Simone and her mother, as Adolphe Arnold is declared "missing," meaning, he is presumed dead. Resuming civilian life is not easy, and it takes time for Emma Arnold to regain her health.

CONNECTIONS TO TODAY. Victims of injustice and oppression sometime clamor for vengeance. How do Alsations get even with Nazi collaborators? What do you think should have been done to those who harmed the Arnold family? What kind of revenge might Simone want to take? (p 150-151)

SIMONE AND YOU. Many religions teach a belief in life after death. Do you think Simone's faith in this belief is typical? Weak? Strong? (pp 151-152) How did her belief affect her actions and outlook? How does your belief about life after death affect your actions and outlook?

CORE VALUES JOURNAL. When Simone thinks her father has died, how does she deal with the pain of not having a final letter from

him? How could you mentally "make up" for the inaction or seeming neglect of a friend or family member?

TAKING A CRITICAL STANCE: CHOICE AND CONSEQUENCES

'I am strongly convinced in my belief that I am acting correctly. Being here, I could still change my mind, but with God this would be disloyalty. All of us here wish to be faithful to God, to his honor. . . . And now, my dear Mother and all my brothers and sisters, today I was told my sentence, and don't be terrified, it is death, and I will be executed tomorrow morning. I have my strength from God.' —*Final letter of Franz Reiter, Austrian Jehovah's Witness beheaded for refusing to perform military service.*

'I never personally hated the Jews . . . the emotion of hatred is foreign to my nature. Nevertheless the reasons behind the extermination program seemed to me right. I did not reflect on it at the time. I had been given an order, and I had to carry it out.'—*Court testimony of Rudolf Höss, Commandant of Auschwitz*

- Compare and contrast the reasons given above for the choices made by each person. When, if ever, does the claim "I was just following orders" justify a criminal act?
- At Auschwitz death camp, an estimated 1.5 million people were murdered. Write an essay about the remarks of Rudolf Höss and the choices he made. Does the fact that he "never personally hated the Jews" make his actions more or less wrong?
- Franz Reiter wrote that his strength came from God. What other sources of moral strength can you think of?

SHOULD I GET OVER IT OR GET EVEN?

Simone and her parents have suffered much injustice at the hands of others. Think of some of the people who treated the Arnolds unfairly. Do you think they should be punished? If so, how? If not, why not? Write an essay from Simone's point of view answering these questions.

Chapter 11
A SHADOW COMES
(pages 153-158)

In June 1945 Adolphe Arnold returns. He is so weak he can barely climb the steps to their home. The reunion is bittersweet, as is a family gathering in Bergenbach a few weeks later. The family does not wish to hear about the Arnolds' suffering. Simone begins to sense the wide gap that has opened between her and her cousin and other young friends. After nearly two years of institutional life, she feels she no longer has anything in common with them.

CONCLUSIONS. Why does Angele speak French and not Alsatian? Why might Angele's speaking French be a problem for Simone? (p 148, 157)

Compare Angele's life with Simone's. (pp 155-158) How did their early adolescent experiences affect them as older teenagers? Who would probably be more likely to talk about her past? Who do you think has the more interesting story?

Contrast Simone's lack of ambition after her release with the ambitions she had before her time in Wessenberg. (p 154, 158)

Simone keenly feels a disparity between herself and her peers. In spite of all that Simone lost during her teen years, what would you say she gained as a person? In spite of all that Angele had during her teens years, what would you say she lacked as a person? (pp 156) Write a one-page letter to each girl helping her to understand the other.

CONNECTIONS TO TODAY. What are some of the difficulties Simone and her parents face in coming together as a family again?

Someone warns Simone about land mines. (p 220) In what countries are land mines a problem? How do the mines affect people in these areas? What might be done to help?

SIMONE AND YOU. Simone talks about not being able to "make up for five years" of lost schooling. (p 158) If you could turn back the clock even one year, would you want to change anything? Do you value time now? How are people who value time different from those who do not?

If you had just met Simone in school and did not know her past experiences, what might you think about her? Have you ever felt that you did not like someone at first but you later found that you liked the person? If so, what did you learn from that experience?

CORE VALUES JOURNAL. When Simone compares herself to others, how does she feel about herself? (p 155, 158) What are the dangers of comparing yourself to someone else? What advice would you give Simone or to a friend who has low self-esteem? How does having high self-esteem help you to stay true to your values? What helps you feel good about yourself?

TAKING A CRITICAL STANCE: CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)*, adopted in December 1989, is the most widely and rapidly ratified human rights treaty in history. Its provisions call for governmental support of the child's right to protection from physical and emotional harm; to grow up in a climate of love, happiness, and understanding; and to basic freedoms.

- Review the articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Choose five articles from the Convention that seem most important to you and write a one-page essay explaining your choices. (For full text see <http://www.unicef.org/crc/crc.htm>.)
- Give specific examples from *Facing the Lion* of three articles of the Convention that the Nazi government violated in its treatment of Simone.
- Write an essay about war from the viewpoint of a young child.

DON'T WISH YOU WERE HERE

Research a war that is being fought right now in the world. Imagine you can e-mail or text message a young person your age who lives in that country. Write an imaginary pen-pal conversation between the two of you. What questions would you ask? What kind of feeling, scenes, and events might your pen pal describe? How can you help your friend cope with his or her situation?

Chapter 12
VENGEANCE OR FORGIVENESS?
(pages 159-166)

It is time for vengeance, but Simone's parents decide not to retaliate against those who caused immense suffering to the family. Simone cannot understand her parents' charity. Her mother even nurses the terminally ill neighbor who had denounced the family to the Gestapo several years before.

Adolphe Arnold's recovery is slow. He suffers from weakness, pain, and terrible nightmares, a result of the unspeakable things he has seen in the camps. Simone learns about the tortures her parents endured and is proud of the loyalty they showed to God. Her father even dared to rebuke the SS when they ridiculed God's name.

Simone begins art school, but she is painfully aware that her life is changed forever, and the gap in her learning makes her shy and diffident.

CONCLUSIONS. What do you think of Emma Arnold's act of reprisal? (p 160) What does she hope to accomplish by just staring at Lehmann? Why does she not report more about Lehmann's wrongs? In your opinion, is it enough? What kind of retribution would have satisfied you?

Why do you think the SS did not hang Adolphe Arnold when he rebuked them? (p 165)

Simone learns after the war that her father was punished every time she refused to give the Hitler salute. Had she known this at the time, do you think she would have acted differently? Why or why not? How did her father feel each time he was called to the camp commander's office? (p 166)

CONNECTIONS TO TODAY. Various groups of people throughout the world seek restitution for wrongs committed against their relatives who lived decades, even centuries, ago. What is the worth of such efforts? What are the difficulties and dilemmas? How do you view efforts to right wrongs by giving money or land to the descendants of the victims?

SIMONE AND YOU. Simone strongly disagrees with her mother's attitude toward Frau Lehmann. (p 160) What might young adults do when they disagree with their parents? What do you do?

While at Wessenberg, Simone was not aware of the fate of millions of Jews. How might her outlook on her own situation have been different had she known what was happening to them at the time?

CORE VALUES JOURNAL. Simone's parents have the chance to retaliate, that is, to get even with the people who had betrayed them to the Gestapo during the war. However, they choose not to do so. Simone has difficulty accepting this but eventually comes to admire her parents' decision to forgive rather than to take revenge. What does it mean to forgive? Which requires more strength, vengeance or forgiveness?

TAKING A CRITICAL STANCE: VENGEANCE OR FORGIVENESS

- Following episodes of collective violence, difficult questions of punishment, apology, reconciliation, and healing arise. A real dilemma for victims of violence is the question of whether to seek vengeance or to extend forgiveness. Are the two mutually exclusive? Who should determine the victims' options? What can be done to prevent an endless cycle of escalating violence, as each side avenges perceived harms?
- Research one of the following cases, supplying basic details of the measures taken. Include your evaluation of whether or not the measures were effective:
 - ❖ The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission
 - ❖ International Criminal Tribunals on the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda
 - ❖ The restitution of Holocaust survivors by Swiss banks and German firms

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Minow, Martha. *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998).
Wiesenthal, Simon. *Sunflower* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976).

Chapter 13
PRECIOUS HOPE and AFTERWORD
(pages 167-171)

Friends come around to offer help, providing a hearing aid for Simone's father. His personality is resurrected. After three years of healing, the family is close-knit and happy again. In 1950, Simone travels to the United States, and she attends the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. She meets Max Liebster, a survivor of the Holocaust. They marry in September 1956 and help each other to cope with their painful memories.

Simone compares her family to a bubbling mountain brook, broken up by a sudden precipice but united again into one peaceful stream.

CONCLUSIONS. Simone did not give her final drawing (p 168) a title. What would you name it? Why?

What do the primary sources in the Appendix (173-186) suggest about the accuracy of Simone's story?

Simone concludes by quoting Marcel Sutter's statement: "Hope is the greatest treasure." Do you think this is an appropriate closing for *Facing the Lion*? Why or why not? Were there times when Simone came close to losing hope? What beliefs and attitudes helped her maintain hope? (p 169)

CONNECTIONS TO TODAY. What recent disasters or tragedies have you heard about in the news? Do you think the victims can recover emotionally from their experience? What do you see in the Arnold family's recovery that might be helpful to people who have suffered?

SIMONE AND YOU. Simone describes her family as a bubbling brook and waterfall. Draw a sketch of your life using water, such as rain, a stream, or a lake. Imagine 50 years from now you are writing about your life. Describe the key persons and events in your life that might be in your future.

CORE VALUES JOURNAL. Simone and her husband, Max, tell their experiences to help people "to value life and to learn from the

lessons of history." Write about a difficult experience in your own life that you might use to impart your positive values to someone else.

CORE VALUES JOURNAL SUMMARY. Marcel Sutter wrote to Simone that "Hope is the greatest treasure." How have Simone's story and your Journal helped you to have hope? When do you think you will need that hope the most in order to stand firm for your values? Take time to review your Journal and reflect on what you have written. How do you think that your Journal of self-discovery will help you to stand up to pressure? Finally, list the things you learned about yourself and describe how this knowledge has changed the way that you will face your "lions" in the future.

DEAR SIMONE...

Write a letter to Simone telling her what her story has meant to you. Ask her questions that you wondered about as you read *Facing the Lion*.

Explain to Simone how you feel about the decisions she made. Tell Simone about a "lion" in your life—a problem from past, present, or future—and how her story may help you to handle the problem or stick to your decision.

FURTHER EXPLORATION. *Everyone's life is a story. Interview someone with an interesting story and write about him or her. You might choose someone who is a close older relative or neighbor, who personally knows or knew a famous person, who made a difference in the community, who did or does something you consider to be difficult, heroic, or courageous, or who saw or experienced an event that you studied about in history or heard about in the news.*