

Before Reading

TALKING ABOUT THE COVER

- What are the two things shown in the cover picture? (*a Christmas decoration and some barbed wire*)
- What does a Christmas decoration suggest? What happens at Christmas? (*Celebrations, happy times; families get together, enjoy themselves*)
- What is barbed wire used for? (*Fences, places you can't get into or out of, prisons, border posts*)
- Put the two ideas together. What do you get?

BEFORE READING ACTIVITIES (PAGE 44)

ACTIVITY 1 BEFORE READING

- 1 Prague is the capital of the Czech Republic, and was formerly the capital of Czechoslovakia.
- 2 Open answers. Encourage students to consider the differences between the former communist state of Czechoslovakia and the new Czech and Slovak Republics. They may need to do this in their own language, but encourage them to make sentences in English if possible.

ACTIVITY 2 BEFORE READING

Open answers. Encourage students to make sentences such as:

- People eat a big dinner.
- People like to be with their family.
- There is special music at Christmas.
- People give presents to their family and friends.
- Children enjoy Christmas.
- Christmas is a holiday for many people.

ACTIVITY 3 BEFORE READING

1 Yes 2 No 3 No 4 Yes 5 Yes

ACTIVITY 4 BEFORE READING

- 1 F Jan was born in Prague.
- 2 F Jan's father lives in Oxford with his son.
- 3 F Josef never talks about his wife.
- 4 T
- 5 F Carol plays the harp.
- 6 T

ACTIVITY 5 BEFORE READING

Open answers. Encourage speculation. Students will find when they read the story that 1 and 2 are both true.

While Reading

CHAPTER 1

It is *night*. This is Czechoslovakia and the year is 1957. Across the fields is the *Austrian* border. In a house, a man and a woman are talking. The woman holds a baby *boy* in her arms. She puts on a *white* coat and a *white* hat. They leave the house and walk *quickly* out of the village. The man says goodbye and the woman begins to run. The baby opens his eyes and *begins to cry*. At the trees, the woman turns *right* and soon she is at the *road*. She *doesn't see* a black car but the men in the car *see* her.

CHAPTERS 2 AND 3 WHILE READING

- 1 Carol
- 2 Jan
- 3 Josef
- 4 Carol
- 5 a man / Jan
- 6 the bus driver
- 7 Mr Rinaldi

BEFORE READING CHAPTER 4

Encourage speculation. The 'yes' answer is 3, but do not tell students now. Let them check their guesses when they read the chapter.

CHAPTERS 4 AND 5 WHILE READING

- 1 *How . . .?* She was tired; her head hurt.
- 2 *Why . . .?* Because she thought that Jan was in Prague, but he was in Oxford.
- 3 *Why . . .?* Because of his concerts.
- 4 *Why . . .?* Because she thought that Pavel was her husband, Jan.
- 5 *What . . .?* Beautiful red flowers.
- 6 *What . . .?* 'Two men, but only one face.'

CHAPTERS 6 AND 7 WHILE READING

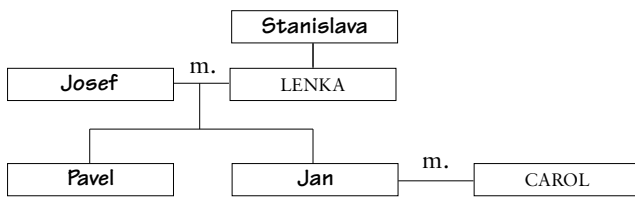
The correct order of sentences is 4, 5, 2, 3, 1.

Possible answers:

- 4 Stanislava said Pavel was dead because *she didn't want to lose him*.
- 5 Stanislava told Pavel that his mother died *on December 25 in hospital*.
- 2 Pavel changed his name because *he was angry with his father*.
- 3 Pavel found that he had a father, a brother, *and a sister*.
- 1 Carol played in the concert and her family *had free tickets*.

After Reading

ACTIVITY 1 AFTER READING



Possible sentences:

- Josef is Pavel's father / Jan's father / was Lenka's husband.
- Lenka was Jan's mother / Pavel's mother / Stanislava's daughter / Josef's wife.
- Jan is Josef's son / Lenka's son / Carol's husband / Pavel's brother.
- Pavel is Josef's wife / Lenka's son / Jan's brother.
- Carol is Jan's wife.
- Stanislava was Lenka's mother / Pavel's grandmother / Jan's grandmother.

ACTIVITY 2 AFTER READING

- 1+9 Josef and Lenka got married *and* had two sons, Jan and Pavel.
- 2+11 Josef and Lenka wanted to change things in Czechoslovakia *because* people were not free or happy.
- 3+10 Josef and Lenka couldn't stay in Czechoslovakia *because* it was dangerous.
- 4+8 Josef carried Jan across the border on 24th December *and* after that they went to England.
- 5+12 Lenka tried to cross the border with Pavel on 25th December *but* the guards shot her.
- 6+7 Stanislava didn't want to lose Pavel *so* she told Josef that his wife and son were dead.

ACTIVITY 3 AFTER READING

- 3 RINALDI: Hello? Mr Vlach? This is Mr Rinaldi, from the orchestra.
- 10 JAN: Yes. What is it? Is something wrong?
- 4 RINALDI: Yes, I'm afraid I have some bad news for you.
- 2 JAN: Carol! It's Carol, isn't it? Tell me, quickly!
- 8 RINALDI: Yes, it's Carol. She's in hospital, but she's going to be all right, Mr Vlach, I promise you.
- 5 JAN: In hospital? But why? Is she ill?
- 7 RINALDI: She had a little accident in the street yesterday.
- 1 JAN: An accident? What happened?
- 9 RINALDI: She ran in front of a bus and the bus hit her.
- 6 JAN: Oh, no! I must come at once. I'm going to catch the next plane to Prague. Please tell her that I'm coming.

ACTIVITY 4 AFTER READING

The picture goes on page 23.

- 1 It is Carol and she is in the hospital because she was in an accident in the street.
- 2 Because she thinks she can see her husband.
- 3 Because he saw the accident and he wants to know if the woman is all right.

Lines from the text on page 23 would make suitable captions, for example:

'Jan!' she shouted, 'Jan!'

ACTIVITY 5 AFTER READING

I write to *tell* you, Josef, that your wife is *dead*. On Christmas night the *guards* shot her on the road at the *border*. She carried Pavel – your *baby* son and my grandson – on *her* back, but the guards *didn't* shoot him. Your wife is *dead* *but* your son is *alive*. Your 'friends' brought *him* to me yesterday.

You have Jan and a *new* life in England. And I *have* baby Pavel. But my *daughter* is dead. I want Pavel to *stay* here with me. Don't *write* to me, and don't come *back* to Prague. It is *dangerous*. Pavel is all right *with* me.

Stanislava

ACTIVITY 6 AFTER READING

Open answers. Encourage discussion.