

Other Characters

Record below all important quotations and events to do with the other characters (such as Bruno's father; Bruno's mother; Gretel; Lieutenant Kotler; Pavel etc)

The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas

by
John Boyne

Name:.....

Class:

Chapter 1

After reading the chapter carefully, answer the following questions. You will need to look back through the text to find the answers.

1. Find some words or phrases from the first chapter which show:
 - Bruno's father doesn't have time for Bruno;
 - Bruno's father is considered very important at work;
 - Bruno doesn't like his sister very much;
 - Bruno's mother does not want to leave Berlin;
 - Bruno's mother does not like Bruno's father's new job.
2. Describe what we learn about the house in Berlin.
3. Which other characters do we read about and what information do we learn?

Shmuel

Record below all important quotations and events you do with Shmuel

Bruno

Record below all important quotations and events to do with Bruno

Chapter 2

1. Describe the new house and what Bruno thinks of it (his first impressions).
2. Look at the description of Bruno (page 12). How does the author show the abundance (that there is a lot) of food?
3. Write a similar description for one of the following shops: computer games; bikes; sports; computers; one of your choice.
4. What do we learn about the maids and waiter at the house? What might this suggest to the reader?
5. Find the phrases which suggest Bruno is afraid of his father.
6. Describe the soldier that Bruno and Maria see in the house. What are their reactions to him? What do you think of him?

Chapter 3

1. Write down three things we learn about Gretel in Chapter 3.
2. Why do you think the author shows Gretel arranging dolls?
3. What do the children decide is the reason for the name 'Out-With'?
4. The soldiers standing outside the house are described as, 'looking nervously up at the house'; why do you think they do this?
5. The author doesn't describe Gretel's reaction to what she sees out of the window until the next chapter; why do you think this is?

Chapter 20

1. Why does Bruno's mother stay at Out-With for several months more and why does she then suddenly return to Berlin?
2. What is Gretel's reaction to Bruno's disappearance? Does it surprise you? Give reasons for your decision.
3. Why does Bruno's father fall to the ground when he realises what probably happened to Bruno? Do you have any sympathy (feel sorry) for him when he works out what happened to his son?
4. 'And that's the end of the story about Bruno and his family. Of course all this happened a long time ago and nothing like that could ever happen again. Not in this day and age.' What do you think of these last few lines of the story? Do you think they are an effective way to end the book?

Chapter 19

1. Why do you think the author writes about the rain at the beginning of the chapter?
2. What is Bruno's reaction when he sees the spare pair of pyjamas? Why might this be seen as ironic?
3. What does Shmuel mean when, looking at Bruno in the pyjamas, he thinks, 'It was almost ... as if they were all exactly the same really.'
4. Write down what Bruno imagined the camp would be like and what it is really like. What does this show us about Bruno?
5. Why do you think Bruno and Shmuel hold hands?
6. Do you think this is an effective way to end the chapter and the story of the boys' friendship?

Chapter 4

1. In your own words describe what the children see out the window in categories of: the garden, the people, beyond the garden. Either create a spider diagram for each feature or draw a table.
2. What is the final thing Bruno notices about the people, in this chapter?
3. What do you find the most striking aspect of the description of what the children see? Explain your choice.
4. Name some of the things the children say and do which show they are bewildered by what they see from the window.
5. What do we learn about Gretel and Bruno, in this chapter?

Chapter 5

1. Why do you think Bruno's mother says, "I didn't mean – ' began Mother before shaking her head and starting again. 'I wasn't trying to suggest – "' when Maria overhears her comments about the Fury?
2. What contrasts does Bruno notice between the train his family board and the one on the other side of the platform? What similarities are there?
3. What impression do you get of Bruno's father when Bruno sees him with the other men in the hallway? Explain your points, using quotations to prove you are right.
4. Look back through the conversation that Bruno has with his father after he tells him that he does not like their new house. Make a list of all the reasons that Bruno gives for wanting to go back to Berlin and the answers that his father gives him. Do you think Bruno is treated fairly or unfairly here? Give reasons for your decision.
5. At the end of the chapter something happens which shows the reader that Bruno does not know anything about the situation he and his family are in. How do you know that he does not understand? What other clues have there been up to this point; make a list.

Chapter 18

1. When Shmuel's father disappears, how do you know that Bruno still does not understand what goes on at Out-With?
2. Why do you think Shmuel doesn't answer Bruno when he asks if he hates Bruno's father?
3. What is Shmuel looking forward to about the plan?
4. The last sentence of the chapter reads, 'All in all, it seemed like a very sensible plan and a good way to say goodbye.' What do you think of the idea?

Chapter 17

1. Besides the argument with Bruno's father, what evidence is there that Bruno's mother is unhappy?
2. Why does Bruno's father summon Bruno and Gretel to his office?
3. How do the children react to the news? Find words or phrases to support your ideas.
4. How does Bruno's father react when Bruno says, 'There are hundreds of children here'?
5. When Bruno's father decides his wife is right, "No, she's right," he said, speaking out loud but not looking at either Gretel or Bruno," who do you think he is speaking to?

Chapter 6

1. Make a list of all the things that Maria has done for Bruno through his life. How do you think Bruno has behaved towards her up until now? Provide evidence for your decision.
2. In your own words, recount what Maria tells Bruno about her past and that of her parents.
3. In what way might her story affect the reader's view of Bruno's father?
4. Find at least one comment that Maria makes which implies Bruno's father has changed.
5. Why do you think John Boyne, the author, has Gretel come into Bruno's room and be rude to Maria at this point?
6. 'Suddenly, and for no reason that he could think of, Bruno felt an overwhelming urge to cry.' After a few minutes Bruno goes outside and runs about. Why do you think Bruno starts to cry and feels the need to escape from the house?

Chapter 7

1. Who is Herr Roller? What do we learn about him from Bruno and from Mother?
2. Why do you think his story is included in the book?
3. How does Bruno feel when he sees Lieutenant Kotler?
4. Find at least one thing that Lieutenant Kotler does or says to Bruno that is condescending.
5. Find the phrases which show that both Bruno and Gretel are embarrassed by Lieutenant Kotler's behaviour towards Pavel.
6. What does Pavel mean when he says, 'Just because a man glances up at the sky at night does not make him an astronomer, you know'?
7. Why does Pavel reply, 'I think I've always been here,' when Bruno asks him how long he's been at Out-With?
8. Why do you think Bruno's mother says, 'If the Commandant asks we'll say that I cleaned Bruno up,'? What does she tell us about Bruno's parents?

Chapter 16

1. Why does the family return to Berlin?
2. We learn that the Fury has sent a wreath. Why do you think Bruno's mother comments that, 'Grandmother would turn in her grave if she knew it was there'?
3. What might be considered ironic about Bruno's father's reaction to his mother's death?
How do we know that Gretel is becoming more aware of the reality of the situation in Germany and at Out-With?
5. What does Gretel find in her hair and what are the consequences (what happens because of it) of what she finds?
6. What does Shmuel say is the difference between him and Bruno now that Bruno has had his hair shaved off?

Chapter 15

1. Make a list of all the reasons Bruno gives for disliking Lieutenant Kotler.
2. What does Lieutenant Kotler's behaviour towards Bruno suggest about him?
3. Why has Shmuel been brought to the house?
4. What do Bruno and Shmuel notice when they compare hands?
5. How does Bruno feel after he denies knowing Shmuel? Find evidence in the text to support your ideas.
6. Why do you think John Boyne has the two boys shake hands at the end of the chapter?

Chapter 8

1. What do we learn about Bruno's grandfather and their past from the first few pages of the chapter? You might want to put the information in a table or create a spider diagram.
2. How does everyone react when Bruno's father appears in his new uniform? How is Grandmother's reaction different to everyone else's?
3. What do you think Bruno's grandmother means when Bruno's grandfather says he was sure their son would come to harm when he joined up, '... when the Great War began,' and she replies, 'He did come to harm, Matthias ... Take a look at him for your evidence, '?
4. Why do you think Mother is desperate for Bruno and Gretel to leave the room and not hear what their grandmother says?
5. As Bruno's grandmother leaves the house in Berlin she shouts to her son that she is ashamed of him. How do you think she would react when she receives Bruno's letter? Write her reply to her grandson.

Chapter 9

1. Which subjects is Herr Liszt particularly interested in?
2. What does Herr Liszt say about storybooks? Why do you think he says it?
3. Re-read the three paragraphs beginning, 'It was as if it were another city entirely ...'. What similarities and differences does Bruno see between the people in the camp and the soldiers?
4. What questions does Bruno ask himself about the people in the camp and the soldiers? Why do you think the author has included them when Bruno does not know the answers?
5. Why do you think John Boyne has Bruno read the plaque on the bench before he goes exploring?

Chapter 14

1. What do we learn about Bruno when he talks to Shmuel, "“You haven't tried living in my house," said Bruno. 'For one thing it doesn't have five floors, only three. How can you live in so small a space as that?'” and that he asks questions about Shmuel's outfit, does not seem to understand that Shmuel was making use of welly and even seems envious that he wears pyjamas all day?
2. Why does Bruno pretend to Gretel that Shmuel is an imaginary friend?
3. What does Bruno tell Gretel about Shmuel and what does he realise as he's telling her?
4. Why is it ironic that Gretel goes to talk to her dolls after laughing at Bruno about his imaginary friend?
5. Write a letter from Bruno to his grandmother telling her all about Shmuel.

Chapter 13

1. What do you think Maria tells Bruno about Pavel? Why do you think he changed from being a doctor to a waiter?
2. What does it show us about Shmuel and Bruno when Shmuel starts to shiver after the conversation about Lieutenant Kotler and Bruno says, "What's the matter?' he asked. 'It's not that cold, is it? You should have brought a jumper, you know.'"
3. Describe Pavel's behavior and appearance at the dinner. What does Bruno notice about him?
4. What does Lieutenant Kotler tell Bruno's family about his father?
5. Why do you think Bruno's father is so interested and reacts the way he does?
6. 'What happened then was both unexpected and extremely unpleasant. Lieutenant Kotler grew very angry with Pavel and no one – not Bruno, not Gretel, not Mother and not even Father – stepped in to stop him doing what he did next, even though none of them could watch. Even though it made Bruno cry and Gretel grow pale.' Why do you think John Boyne doesn't explain exactly what happens?

Chapter 10

1. Write down a description of Shmuel, and describe what Bruno thinks of him when he first sees him.
2. What do the two boys say the other's name sounds like?
3. When the boys talk about which country they're from Bruno says, 'We're superior,' because he has heard his father say it. How does he feel after he has said it and why?
Bruno says, '... you have to know whether the thing you've found is worth finding.' What two examples does he give of a thing worth finding and a thing that is best left alone?
5. Why do you think the author finishes the chapter with Bruno's questions, "Why are there so many people on that side of the fence?' he asked. 'And what are you all doing there?'?"

Chapter 11

1. What does it suggest about Bruno's father when Boyne, the author, writes, 'Father came home one evening in a state of great excitement, which was terribly unlike him, and marched into the living room where Mother, Bruno and Gretel were sitting reading their books'?
2. How does Mother feel about the Fury coming to dinner? Find words or phrases to prove you are right.
3. What rules does Bruno and Gretel's father give them for the evening of the Fury's visit?
4. Describe the Fury and the woman who comes with him. What does Bruno think of them both?
5. How do Bruno's parents behave when the Fury visits and how do they feel about him? Find some words or phrases to prove you are right.
6. What do you think Bruno's parents are talking about when Bruno overhears them after the Fury leaves? How do you think they both feel about what they discuss?

Chapter 12

1. What are the two boys' opinions of the war camps that Shmuel and Bruno's father were talking about?
2. What do we learn about Shmuel's past?
3. At what points in the story does Bruno interrupt Shmuel's story and what does he say?
4. How does this show us that Bruno does not understand what has happened to Shmuel and the other people in the camp?
5. How do we know that Shmuel is starving hungry even though he does not say it?
6. At the end of the chapter how does Boyne show us how different the boys' lives are?