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Diary Entry



THE LIONS' RUN

After reading **Chapter Four** of ***The Lions' Run*** **by Sara Pennypacker**, write a diary entry based on the moment Lucas meets Alice for the first time.

In this scene, Lucas discovers a mysterious girl hiding her horse in an abandoned stable. Both characters are nervous for different reasons, and their first conversation is tense but important. Choose to write as *Lucas* or *Alice*, and describe what you saw, how you felt, and what you were worried about during this surprising meeting.

Dear Diary,

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Diary Entry



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Discussion Questions
Extract 1



THE LIONS' RUN

Extract taken from **Chapter Two** of ***The Lions' Run*** by **Sara Pennypacker**.

were going in the canal, cold and deep below this bridge. He jammed a hand into his pocket to rub the horse chestnuts he kept there for times like these. When he was upset, their smooth surface calmed him. And in his pocket, he found one more chance. "Wait!"

Marcel and Claude turned, as if they couldn't believe their ears. *He was asking for more?*

Lucas pulled out his hand and offered them his fishing lure. Finely painted with iridescent scales and feathered fins, it had been a gift from a retiring teacher who'd taught him to fish. "I won't tell," he promised again.

For an instant, it looked as if it had worked. Marcel grabbed the lure, then nodded to Claude.

Lucas began to thank him, but Claude didn't hand over the sack. He swung it out toward the canal and let go. Then both boys ran off, laughing.

Lucas sprang to the rail. The bag was only partly submerged, the dry burlap darkening fast. He skidded down the bank and pulled it out. Kneeling in the mud, he lifted out six tiny bodies from the stones, wet fur clumped over fragile bones.

Five of them sputtered and mewed and shook beside him.

One body was still. Lucas lifted that one, gray-striped like its mother, and draped it over his fingers. It was impossibly

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light. He dabbed the mud from the kitten's face with the tip of his shirttail, but the kitten didn't stir. He blew at its face, but the kitten didn't stir. He knew then. He knew. Still, he shook the little body softly; still, he pressed on its chest with a single finger, felt the tiny ribs give and not spring back.

At last, he stopped. "I see you," he mumbled because words had to be said, and those were the only ones he could find. "I saw you."

Then he prized a big rock out of the ground and settled the dead kitten into the cavity. He held the rock over the hole—at least the body wouldn't be picked apart by hawks or badgers—but he could not drop it over the grave. He could not leave this little body in this place, alone.

Lucas sat back on his heels. He felt sick, but he swallowed it down and scrubbed at his welling tears. Then he picked out the dead kitten and nestled it back in the sack.

He turned to the other kittens, now squirming away, their tiny claws grasping for anything solid.

He was their solid. It was their bad luck there was no one else.

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Discussion Questions

- Why do you think Lucas chooses to offer his fishing lure to Marcel and Claude? What does this tell us about him?
- Why do Marcel and Claude laugh and run off after throwing the sack into the canal? What might this reveal about their personalities or their view of Lucas?
- Lucas handles the dead kitten so carefully and says, "I see you." What does this reveal about how he feels about life and loss?
- Why do you think the author describes Lucas's actions in such detail during this scene? How does it help us understand his character?
- What does the author mean by "He was their solid"?
- How does the author create tension and emotion in this part of the story?
- What do you think might happen to Lucas and the kittens next?
- How might this experience change Lucas's actions or feelings later in the story?

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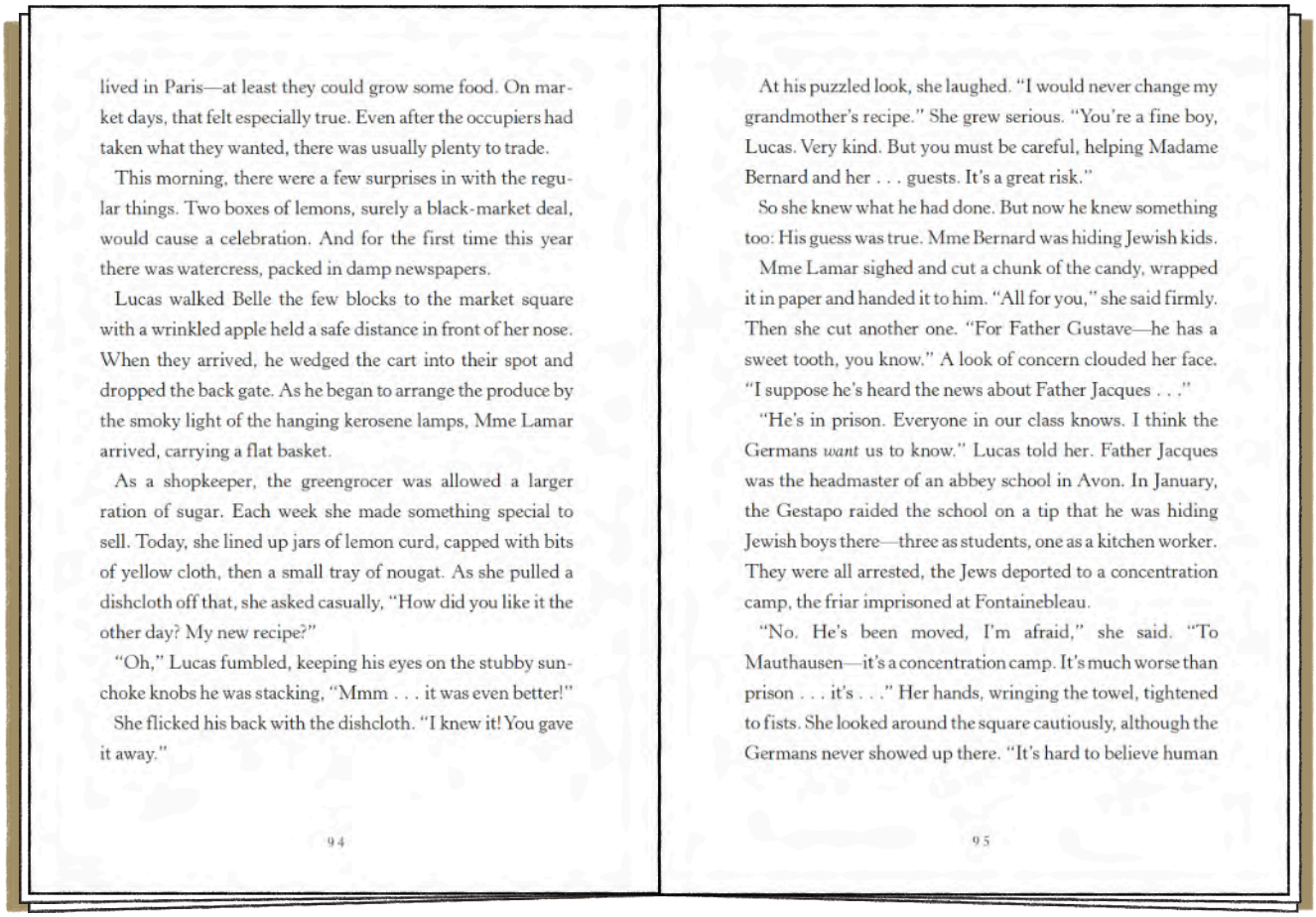
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Discussion Questions
Extract 2



THE LIONS' RUN

Extract taken from **Chapter Twenty-One** of ***The Lions' Run*** by **Sara Pennypacker**.



lived in Paris—at least they could grow some food. On market days, that felt especially true. Even after the occupiers had taken what they wanted, there was usually plenty to trade.

This morning, there were a few surprises in with the regular things. Two boxes of lemons, surely a black-market deal, would cause a celebration. And for the first time this year there was watercress, packed in damp newspapers.

Lucas walked Belle the few blocks to the market square with a wrinkled apple held a safe distance in front of her nose. When they arrived, he wedged the cart into their spot and dropped the back gate. As he began to arrange the produce by the smoky light of the hanging kerosene lamps, Mme Lamar arrived, carrying a flat basket.

As a shopkeeper, the greengrocer was allowed a larger ration of sugar. Each week she made something special to sell. Today, she lined up jars of lemon curd, capped with bits of yellow cloth, then a small tray of nougat. As she pulled a dishcloth off that, she asked casually, "How did you like it the other day? My new recipe?"

"Oh," Lucas fumbled, keeping his eyes on the stubby sunchoke knobs he was stacking, "Mmm . . . it was even better!"

She flicked his back with the dishcloth. "I knew it! You gave it away."

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At his puzzled look, she laughed. "I would never change my grandmother's recipe." She grew serious. "You're a fine boy, Lucas. Very kind. But you must be careful, helping Madame Bernard and her . . . guests. It's a great risk."

So she knew what he had done. But now he knew something too: His guess was true. Mme Bernard was hiding Jewish kids.

Mme Lamar sighed and cut a chunk of the candy, wrapped it in paper and handed it to him. "All for you," she said firmly. Then she cut another one. "For Father Gustave—he has a sweet tooth, you know." A look of concern clouded her face. "I suppose he's heard the news about Father Jacques . . ."

"He's in prison. Everyone in our class knows. I think the Germans *want* us to know." Lucas told her. Father Jacques was the headmaster of an abbey school in Avon. In January, the Gestapo raided the school on a tip that he was hiding Jewish boys there—three as students, one as a kitchen worker. They were all arrested, the Jews deported to a concentration camp, the friar imprisoned at Fontainebleau.

"No. He's been moved, I'm afraid," she said. "To Mauthausen—it's a concentration camp. It's much worse than prison . . . it's . . ." Her hands, wringing the towel, tightened to fists. She looked around the square cautiously, although the Germans never showed up there. "It's hard to believe human

95

Discussion Questions

- How does the extract show the challenges of everyday life under occupation?
- Why do you think ordinary moments, like buying lemons or cutting candy, are included alongside stories of danger and loss?
- Why do you think Lucas continues helping others, even though it is dangerous? What does this reveal about his character?
- Mme Lamar warns Lucas about the risk he is taking. Why might she trust him despite knowing the danger?
- How does this scene explore the theme of courage in the face of danger?
- How do small acts of kindness or care, like the wrapped sweets or helping the kittens, become important in such a dangerous world?
- Why do you think the author includes small sensory details, like the "smoky light of the kerosene lamps" or the wrapped sweets?
- What effect does contrasting ordinary life with news of danger have on the reader, and why might the author have chosen to do this?

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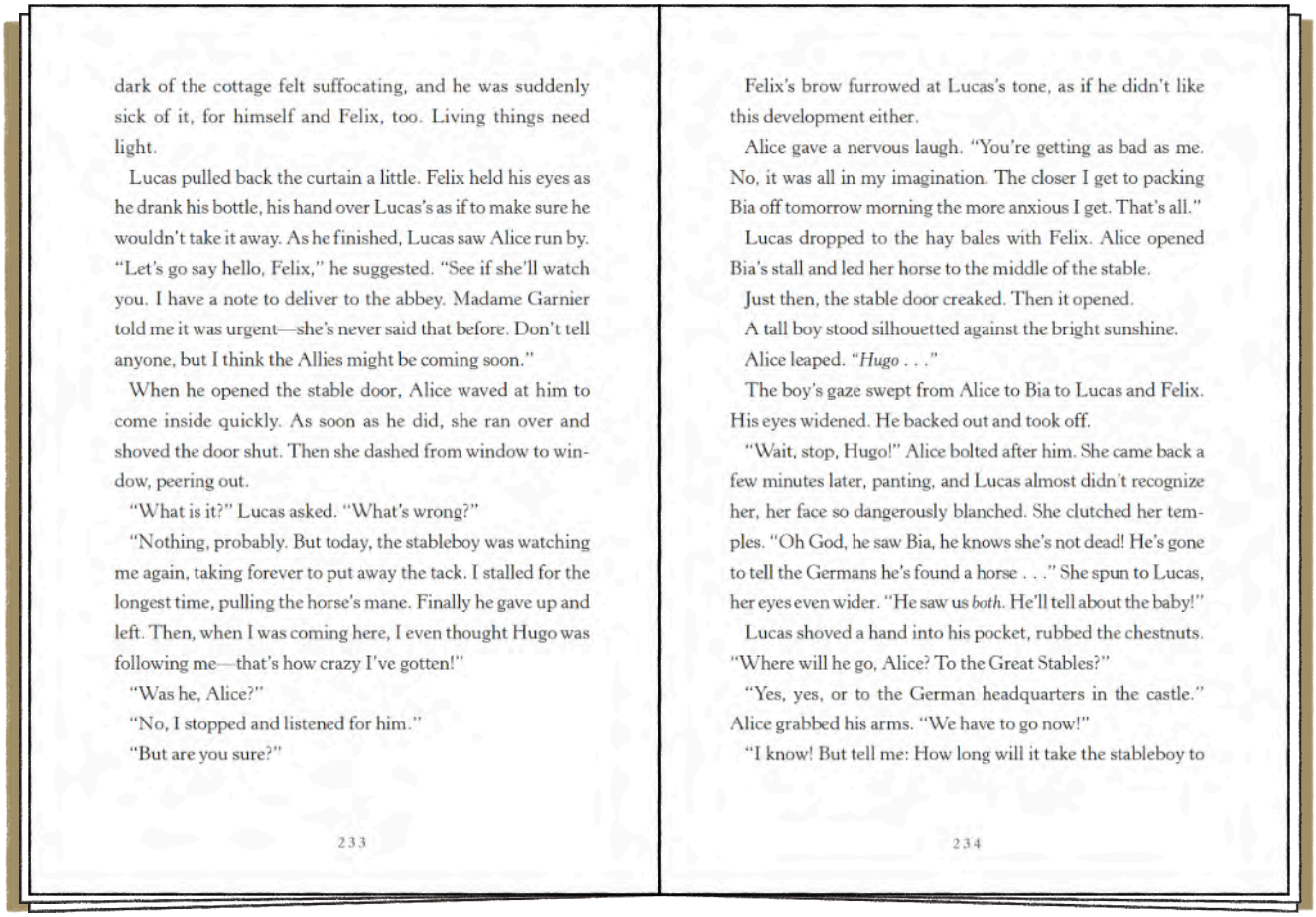
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Discussion Questions
Extract 3



THE LIONS' RUN

Extract taken from **Chapter Fifty-Two** of ***The Lions' Run*** by Sara Pennypacker.



dark of the cottage felt suffocating, and he was suddenly sick of it, for himself and Felix, too. Living things need light.

Lucas pulled back the curtain a little. Felix held his eyes as he drank his bottle, his hand over Lucas's as if to make sure he wouldn't take it away. As he finished, Lucas saw Alice run by. "Let's go say hello, Felix," he suggested. "See if she'll watch you. I have a note to deliver to the abbey. Madame Garnier told me it was urgent—she's never said that before. Don't tell anyone, but I think the Allies might be coming soon."

When he opened the stable door, Alice waved at him to come inside quickly. As soon as he did, she ran over and shoved the door shut. Then she dashed from window to window, peering out.

"What is it?" Lucas asked. "What's wrong?"

"Nothing, probably. But today, the stableboy was watching me again, taking forever to put away the tack. I stalled for the longest time, pulling the horse's mane. Finally he gave up and left. Then, when I was coming here, I even thought Hugo was following me—that's how crazy I've gotten!"

"Was he, Alice?"

"No, I stopped and listened for him."

"But are you sure?"

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Felix's brow furrowed at Lucas's tone, as if he didn't like this development either.

Alice gave a nervous laugh. "You're getting as bad as me. No, it was all in my imagination. The closer I get to packing Bia off tomorrow morning the more anxious I get. That's all."

Lucas dropped to the hay bales with Felix. Alice opened Bia's stall and led her horse to the middle of the stable.

Just then, the stable door creaked. Then it opened.

A tall boy stood silhouetted against the bright sunshine.

Alice leaped. "*Hugo . . .*"

The boy's gaze swept from Alice to Bia to Lucas and Felix. His eyes widened. He backed out and took off.

"Wait, stop, Hugo!" Alice bolted after him. She came back a few minutes later, panting, and Lucas almost didn't recognize her, her face so dangerously blanched. She clutched her temples. "Oh God, he saw Bia, he knows she's not dead! He's gone to tell the Germans he's found a horse . . ." She spun to Lucas, her eyes even wider. "He saw us *both*. He'll tell about the baby!"

Lucas shoved a hand into his pocket, rubbed the chestnuts. "Where will he go, Alice? To the Great Stables?"

"Yes, yes, or to the German headquarters in the castle." Alice grabbed his arms. "We have to go now!"

"I know! But tell me: How long will it take the stableboy to

234

Discussion Questions

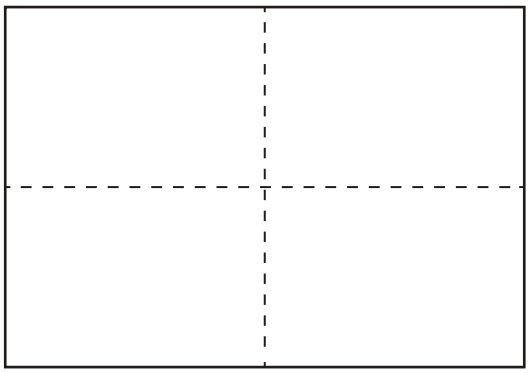
- How does the author use the description of the cottage and stable to make you feel the danger or tension in this scene?
- What words or phrases tell you that Lucas feels trapped or anxious?
- Why do you think Lucas pulls back the curtain for Felix?
- Felix covers Lucas's hand as he drinks. What does this small action tell you about their relationship?
- How does Alice's behaviour show her feelings about the situation with Hugo and Bia?
- How does the author create suspense when Hugo appears at the stable?
- Why do you think Lucas continues helping Felix and Bia, even though it's dangerous? What does this reveal about him?
- What do you think Hugo will do after seeing Bia?

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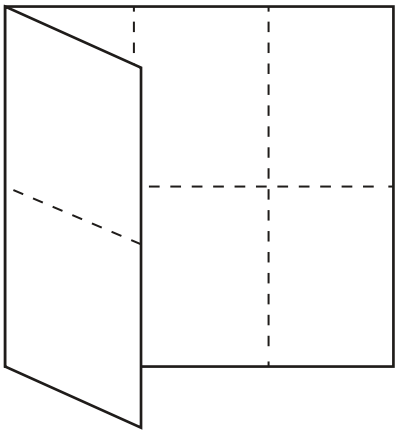
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Glossary

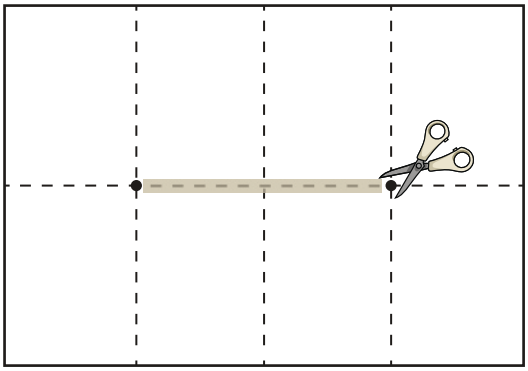
How to fold your minibook.



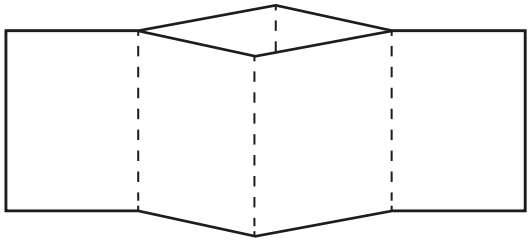
Fold your sheet in half both ways. There are lines on the booklet to help guide you.



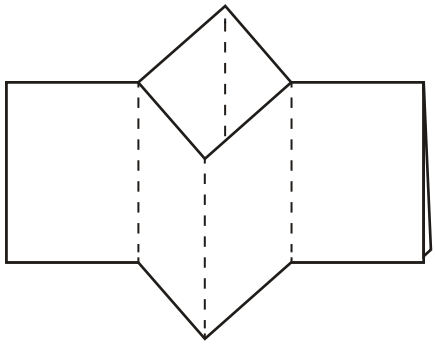
Lay your paper flat again and fold both of the short edges into the centre.



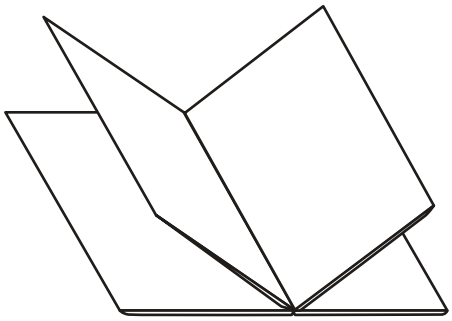
Using scissors, carefully cut along the centre fold.



Fold the paper in half long ways, then pull the cut open.



Push the sides together, closing the gap you have cut.

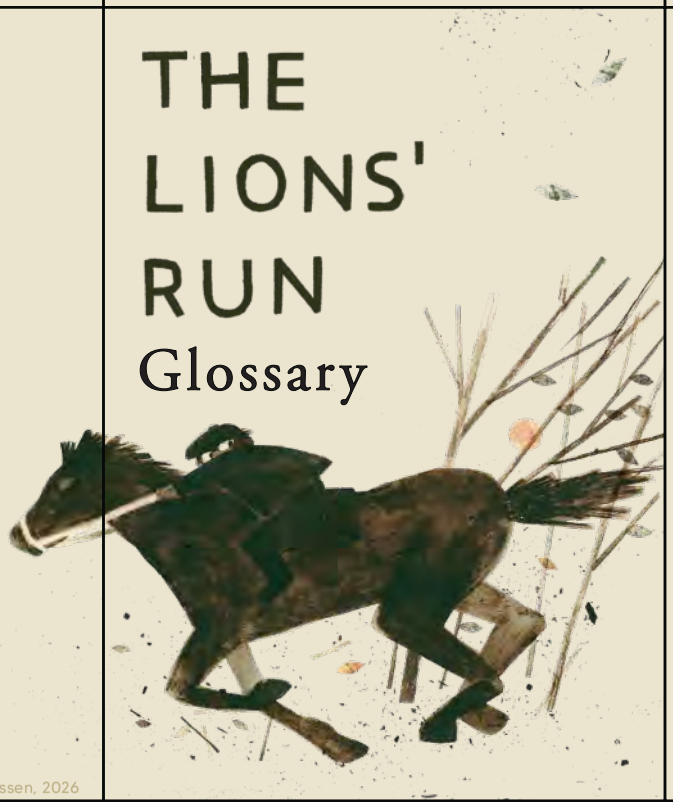


Fold the pages round so the cover is at the front. If you want your book to be extra strong, glue the insides of the pages so it holds it's shape.

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THE LIONS' RUN

Glossary



As you read ***The Lions' Run*** by **Sara Pennypacker**, gather any new or unfamiliar words, look them up in a dictionary and then write a definition in your own words.

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Letter Writing



THE LIONS' RUN

After reading **Chapter Ten** of ***The Lions' Run*** **by Sara Pennypacker**, write a letter to Lucas from the perspective of Mme Garnier.

In this letter, Mme Garnier is thinking back to the frightening moment when the soldiers entered her office and the hidden note slipped from her sleeve. She wants to tell Lucas how worried she was, how brave and quick-thinking he had been, and how grateful she feels for his help.

Write as Mme Garnier, explaining what happened, how she felt at the time, and why Lucas's actions mattered so much. You can also include a gentle warning about being careful and keeping what he saw a secret.

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Letter Writing



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Character Study
Lucas Dubois



THE LIONS' RUN

While reading ***The Lions' Run*** **by Sara Pennypacker**, gather information about the main character, Lucas. You should add to each category as the story develops, and you learn more about him.



What do you know about Lucas?

What is Lucas's relationship with Alice?

How does Lucas change as the story progresses?

How do other people in the story help Lucas develop his personality?

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Wordsearch

THE LIONS' RUN

O	S	T	A	B	L	E	O	O	J	R	T	B
P	I	H	S	D	N	E	I	R	F	P	F	Q
R	E	S	I	S	T	A	N	C	E	E	C	N
N	A	B	B	E	Y	A	L	U	E	U	A	R
E	C	I	O	C	I	U	A	U	T	I	N	O
C	J	A	A	E	I	Y	J	I	C	D	A	B
I	T	U	L	R	R	E	M	P	Y	A	L	S
L	F	V	F	E	M	W	S	I	Q	N	S	N
A	I	E	V	Q	G	F	D	R	W	C	R	E
R	E	A	L	F	B	E	P	C	O	D	A	B
E	R	T	P	I	M	V	C	L	T	H	B	E
B	N	J	S	E	X	R	O	R	F	U	S	L

ABBEY
ALICE
BIA
BRAVERY
CANAL
FELIX
FRIENDSHIP
HORSE
LEBENSBORN
LUCAS
RESISTANCE
STABLE

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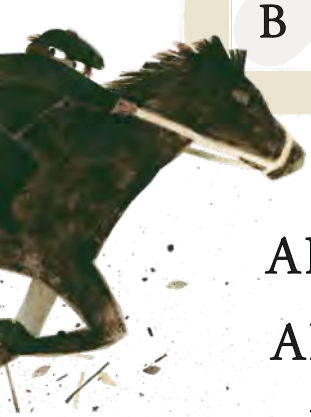
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Wordsearch Answers



THE LIONS' RUN

O	S	T	A	B	L	E	O	O	J	R	T	B
P	I	H	S	D	N	E	I	R	F	P	F	Q
R	E	S	I	S	T	A	N	C	E	E	C	N
N	A	B	B	E	Y	A	L	U	E	U	A	R
E	C	I	O	C	I	U	A	U	T	I	N	O
C	J	A	A	E	I	Y	J	I	C	D	A	B
I	T	U	L	R	R	E	M	P	Y	A	L	S
L	F	V	F	E	M	W	S	I	Q	N	S	N
A	I	E	V	Q	G	F	D	R	W	C	R	E
R	E	A	L	F	B	E	P	C	O	D	A	B
E	R	T	P	I	M	V	C	L	T	H	B	E
B	N	J	S	E	X	R	O	R	F	U	S	L



ABBEY
ALICE
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Newspaper Report



THE LIONS' RUN

After reading ***The Lions' Run*** by **Sara Pennypacker**, write a newspaper report about the incredible story featured in the book.

LIBERATION NUMERO SPECIAL MAI 1944

THE BOY WHO SAVED A BABY ON HORSEBACK

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Setting Description
The Abandoned Stable



THE LIONS' RUN

After reading ***The Lions' Run*** **by Sara Pennypacker**, write a paragraph describing the abandoned stable that Lucas discovers. Think about using your senses to bring the place to life. You might include:

- **Smell:** What can you notice in the air when you step inside?
- **Light and shadow:** Is it bright, dim, or full of shifting shadows?
- **Sounds:** What noises can be heard, or what makes it feel quiet?
- **What makes it feel hidden:** Why might this place be secret or hard to find?

Try to use powerful adjectives and phrases to help the reader imagine the scene clearly.

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Setting Description
The Abandoned Stable



THE LIONS' RUN

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Story Map



THE LIONS' RUN

While reading ***The Lions' Run*** **by Sara Pennypacker**, make notes on the key points of the story.

1. Life at the Abbey and an Unexpected Problem

2. A New Friendship and a Secret Place

3. Deliveries That Reveal More Than Expected

4. A Moment of Quick Thinking

5. Learning the Truth About the People Around Him

6. Making a Safe Hiding Place

7. News That Forces a Difficult Decision

8. A Race Towards Safety

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