



Running words: 517

Book Summary

This book describes a girl named Millie Brewster who broke her ankle, so she had to stay with her grandmother while her family went on a hiking trip. Luckily, her grandmother taught her about her great-great-grandmother who was a nurse during World War I and how being brave ran in her family.

Themes

Family, History, Challenge

Features of the Book

- The information contained in illustrations
- Content words for discussion: *brave, hiking, medal, nurse, plaster, soldiers, wounds*
- Phonics and phonemic awareness: consonant blend *br*

Strategies

Two Brave Brewsters introduces and reinforces the following strategies:

- making connections
- visualising
- compare and contrast

Materials

- copies of the BM, pencils

Two Brave Brewsters

by Diana Noonan

Introducing the Text

Begin by asking the students if they have ever been brave. Talk about how bravery comes in different forms. It might be standing up in front of the class and reading a poem, or it might be trying a new sport when you know you're not very good at it and it's difficult for you. Encourage the students to draw on their personal experiences of when and how they were brave.

Reading the Text

Ensure each student has a copy of the text. Make sure that the content words (*brave, hiking, medal, nurse, plaster, soldiers, wounds*) are integrated naturally into the discussion. An understanding of these terms will help the students appreciate the author's purpose. Encourage the students to use the information in the illustrations and text to determine the strategies of making connections, visualising and comparing and contrasting as you work through the book.

Cover

Together, read the book's title and the name of the author. Point to the illustration and say:

- *This illustration shows a scene from long ago during World War I. Why do you think the nurse would have needed to be brave during these times?*

Encourage the students to think about how a nurse would have to care for the wounded and what the equipment in a field hospital would have been like more than 100 years ago. Tell the students that World War I took place between 1914 and 1918. Together, turn to the back cover and point out the illustration of the child holding a medal. Ask:

- *What do you think the medal was for? (Answers may vary, but may include bravery during the war.)*

Read aloud the preview question on the back cover: *What does it mean*

to be brave? Revisit the idea that bravery comes in many different forms and that some soldiers and nurses were brave during World War I despite being scared.

Title Page

Turn to the title page and discuss the illustration with the students. Ask them what they notice about it. (The girl is holding a black and white photograph of a woman in a nurse's uniform.) Help the children make the connection that the woman in the photograph was the same woman from the cover and that the girl must know or be related to this person.

Page 2

Look at the illustration and point out the cast on the girl's leg. Explain that having a broken ankle or leg can stop you from doing certain things. Read the text together to find out what Millie is missing out on (a hiking trip). After reading the text, point out to the students that we now know that Millie is probably one of the Brewsters that the title of the book is referring to.

Page 3

Look at the illustration with students. Talk about how Grandma is holding lots of black and white photographs and how that one photograph has dropped to the floor. Ask:

- *Millie looks upset, so why is Grandma holding the photographs? (to keep Millie busy and amused)*

Together, read the text. Then talk about Grandma encouraging Millie to be brave. Ask the students if anyone has ever said this to them when they have hurt or injured themselves.

Page 4

Point to the black and white photograph of the nurse. Explain to the students that black and white photographs are from long ago and that it is often the people who know about the people that bring the photographs to life. Remind them

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that sometimes stories get lost and people from long ago are forgotten. Read the text together to find out who is in the photograph.

Page 5

Read the text with the students. Ask:

- *What do you think Grandma meant when she said that Gladys was brave because she stayed?* (Answers will vary but may include because you had to be brave to live through caring for the wounded and dying, the poor conditions of the hospitals, the lack of medical supplies and even feeling homesick.)

Page 6

Together, read the text and confirm the students' predictions. Explain to the students that you are going to practise visualising. Tell them that visualising is when you create pictures in your mind about what is going on in the text. Ask the students to close their eyes while you read the text to them again. Ask them to visualise what it would have been like for Gladys working in a field hospital near a battlefield. When you have finished, have some of the students describe what they pictured in their minds. Talk about how people imagine things differently because everyone's imagination is unique.

Page 7

Look at the illustration and read the text with the students. Ask students what qualities helped Gladys be brave and not return home. (Answers will vary but may include determined, kind, caring, confident, resilient, decisive, etc.)

Page 8

Look at the illustration of Grandma and Millie looking at an image from World War I on a computer. Explain how many things from the past we cannot imagine what they were like and that photographs and even moving films give us a glimpse into what they experienced. Read the text

with the students.

Page 9

Point to the photograph of Gladys helping Ronald, who is wounded and walking with the help of a walking stick. Talk about how many of the wounded soldiers who returned home had to be brave as they rebuilt their lives often with life-changing medical conditions, such as missing limbs. Read the text with the students.

Page 10

Point out the illustration and how Ronald is reading to Gladys and that there is a bunch of flowers on the table. Together, read the text to find out what is happening. Say: *Let's read on to find out if Gladys said yes to Ronald's marriage proposal.*

Page 11

Point to Millie's plate in the illustration. Ask the students what the word *Yes* is referring to (Gladys saying yes to Ronald's proposal). Read the text with the students. Say: *Let's read on to find out what Grandma had in her pocket.*

Page 12

Read the text together and enjoy the ending. Talk about how many soldiers and nurses who go to war are often awarded medals for acts of bravery. Ask the students how Millie might have felt now about missing out on the hiking trip (probably that missing out was such a minor thing compared to what Gladys had to do).

Revisiting the Text

- Revisit pages 6 to 9. Use the illustrations and text to help the students compare and contrast a field hospital during World War I with a modern hospital or medical centre near where they live. Write how they are the same and different on chart paper or on the board.
- Point to the *br* letters in the words "*Brave Brewsters*" on the title page. Explain that this is known

as a consonant blend, which is when two or more consonants are blended together, but each sound can be heard in the blend. Demonstrate this by saying the word "*B-r-a-v-e B-r-e-w-s-t-e-r-s*" very slowly. Ask the students if they can hear the different letter sounds. Encourage the students to find some other *br* consonant blends in the book (*broken, breakfast*). Then brainstorm other words that contain the *br* consonant blend: *brown, brush, broom, bread, branch, bride, bricks, bridge*, etc.

Following Up

- Imagine that Gladys is writing home to her family. Write a letter that describes what life is like as a nurse. Use pages 6 to 9 to help you, for example, we can see that the hospital is a tent. Use the Internet to research letters that real-life nurses from World War I wrote to their families back home.
- Give the students copies of the BM for this title.