

Hatred versus Kindness

Based on *Pennies for Hitler* by Jackie French

This is a book about *hate*. It is also a book about *kindness*.

'Pennies for Hitler' teaches us about history. However it also teaches us about human nature. While the world has changed greatly in the past seventy years, hatred and kindness can be as contagious today as they were in the time of Nazi Germany.

The horrors of Nazi Germany were beyond belief. Yet perhaps some similarities can be found between Georg's story and another hateful behaviour – the schoolyard bullying that can occur today. In the activity below, identify the parallels between the two situations and draw a line to connect them. Consider all options carefully before you begin, as some are quite similar. Can you think of any other parallels? The first page of this activity can be found on page 45 of the 2013 IPDTL Book Week Publication.

Hate is still contagious, but kindness is equally so. Which will you choose?

'Pennies for Hitler'

Playground Parallel

Section 3:

Georg is taught that certain physical characteristics are a measure of inferiority.
The Rektor has an opportunity to stop the madness of the graduation ceremony but he is too scared.
In the space of minutes, Georg is transformed from a 'perfect Aryan' into a Jew. He is no longer a bystander but is now a target of hatred.
Hitler wouldn't let Jewish refugees out of Germany and the English wouldn't let them in.

Bullying behaviour is unfair because anyone can become a target for any reason. Bullying can happen to anyone.
Bullying behaviour often focuses on certain physical characteristics.
Sometimes targets of bullying are shut out from other friendship groups – which makes further bullying more likely.
Bystanders can make a big difference in stopping hateful behaviours.

Section 4:

Hitler believed that 'Aryans' were superior and that other groups were inferior.
Georg went from being a bystander of hatred to being a target of it. Later, he was happy to hate the Japanese as that made him 'part of the group'.
Alan's letters to Georg are a kindness to Georg, but they are a kindness to Alan's parents too.
When the Peaslakes get to know Georg they love him, even though as a German they're 'supposed' to hate him.

When you label people, it's easy to hate them. When you get to know them it's usually much, much harder.
When you are kind to one person you are also being kind to everyone who cares about that person.
Sometimes people engage in bullying behaviour because they think they're better than others.
Sometimes people engage in bullying behaviours when they have been bullied themselves. We are all capable of engaging in hateful behaviour at times, but if we can recognise it as bullying it becomes easier to resist.