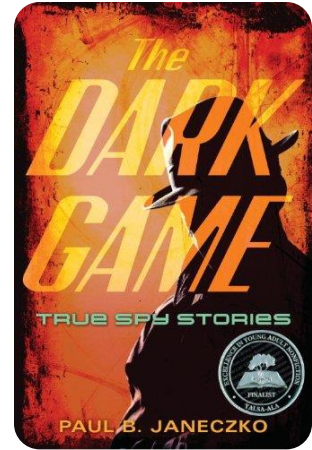


Title: The Dark Game
Author: Paul B. Janeczko
Grade Level: 8th Grade

SUMMARY

At one time or another almost everyone has wondered what it would be like to be a spy. This book is a true account of spying in the US from the Revolutionary War through the end of the twentieth century. It surprises you with fascinating stories and is illustrated with many photographs. Of special interest are accounts of women spies and their lives. The whole family will enjoy learning about espionage in the US by reading this book together.



QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT WHILE READING

VOCABULARY

It's important to make sure that your child has an understanding of key words in the book. Talking about words while reading is a great way for your child to learn new words.

In this book, you might talk about these words:

- espionage operations (pg. 7)
- dead drop (pg. 11)
- Secret Service (pg. 17)
- munitions (pg. 96)
- covert (pg. 85)
- sabotage (pg. 85)
- emancipate (pg. 46)
- surveillance (pg. 186)
- intercontinental (pg. 186)
- encipher (pg. 170)
- intrepid spy (pg. 42)

You will notice that several of these words might have many different meanings. It is interesting to discuss together how they specifically relate to the topic of this book.

KEY IDEAS and THEMES

In addition to words, it's important to talk about key ideas and themes and how they develop over the course of the book. Here are some examples to get you started:

1. According to Janeczko, spying in the US has been around since the beginning of our country. How has it changed over the decades and why has it changed? What is a scout? (page 43) Do we still have need of scouts? Why or why not?
2. When did technology become an important aspect of espionage? What are some of the important successes and failures in the development of technology in spying? Compare the technology in the US to those of other countries.

3. On page 36 we see the beginning of secret messages. How were the first messages sent? What are some of the other interesting ways that messages have been sent over the years? (pages 43,49,60,61-2,104,117-125,180,188 -189,204, 210 -213,228)
4. This book highlights several important spies. What would motivate someone to become a spy? Why would someone like George Washington have a different reason for spying than someone from today? What are the similarities in reasoning that all the spies used to engage in this work? How do spies change their identities to do their work? (For example look at page128-9).
5. *The Dark Game* highlights several important women spies. Compare the work of these women. What characteristics and opportunities do women have that make them good spies? How were their lives the same? Different? For example, compare Harriet Tubman and Virginia Hall. What would motivate a woman to become a spy?
6. Janeczko also discusses some traitors in US history. What would motivate someone to commit treason and turn against his own country? Look at Robert Hanssen (pages 207, 214-227), Benedict Arnold (pages 22-35), and Aldrich Ames (pages 193-207). What characteristics and motivations do they have in common? How are they different?
7. In the introduction to this book, the author makes a prediction about the future of espionage (page 3). According to him, what has forced a difference in the way espionage will look? What do you think? How will the future be different and why?

EXTRA ACTIVITIES

1. Starting with George Washington create an "Espionage Timeline". Be certain to include events, people, innovations, and counter-espionage. Be specific and include dates.
2. Let's get really creative! As a family make your own Spy comic book. First look at some other comics to see how they are organized and what they include.
 - a. Decide on a setting - time and place
 - b. Map out a plot line based on the problem that your spy character must solve - introduction, rising action, turning point, falling action, and conclusion.
 - c. Conflict (problem) - all good stories have a problem that creates the action. Your spy can have both external conflict and internal conflict (personal problems that affect his/her actions)
 - d. Create your spy- name, physical appearance, personality, speech and dialect
 - e. Get the artists in your family busy. Draw the character. Then draw the sections for your comic book based on your plot line.
 - f. Title your comic and make a cover.
3. Choose your favorite spy and do some research about him/ her. Create a resume for the spy.