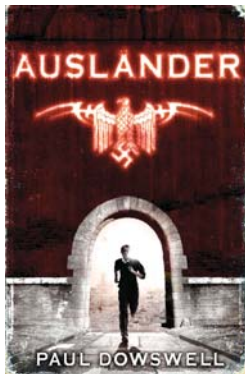


The Reading Agency Reading Guide to: Ausländer by Paul Dowsell

This great guide will help you present a title to a reading group. There are ideas to trigger in-depth discussion and information about some exciting online resources. There are six guides in total, one for each of the 2009 shortlisted titles.



Title: Ausländer

Format [eg: pb/hb]: hb

Pgs: 304

Publisher: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

Price: £10.99

ISBN: 978-0747589099



About the author:

Paul grew up in Chester and went to Goldsmith's College in London to read History. After 15 years in London, he moved to Wolverhampton, where he now lives with his wife and daughter.

He worked in publishing for over twenty years. He went freelance in 1999 after eight years with Usborne, where he was a senior editor.

History is Paul's specialist subject. He has written over 60 books for UK publishers.

Obscure fact:

Paul plays guitar in a variety of bands in the pubs and clubs of the West Midlands.

What's it about?:

Peter lives with his parents on a farm in the Polish countryside, but when Germany invades, and his parents are killed in a car accident, Peter is sent to an orphanage in Warsaw.

Peter has German blood and his blond hair and blue eyes make him stand out as the very epitome of Aryan youth. He is spared the wretched fate of many of the other boys, adopted by a Professor Kaltenbach and taken to live with his family in Berlin.

At first, life in Berlin proves a relief to Peter; he joins the Hitler Youth and avidly listens to the war reports of Germany's prowess on the battlefields. However, Peter becomes troubled by the activities of the Nazis and soon he is forming his own ideas about what is going on around him. Peter falls in love with Anna, and together, they risk their lives to protect those who are persecuted.

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Talk about:

1. Paul Dowsell is a professional historian who has written several books on the Second World War. He uses instances from eyewitness accounts and photographs in the novel. Do you think these authentic details make the storytelling more powerful and compelling? If so, in what way?
2. Discuss the incidents of trust and betrayal in the novel. Do they occur in the way we expect them to?
3. The novel shows how an essentially nice boy can so nearly be corrupted by evil. Despite being desperate to fit in, Peter eventually turns away from the Hitler Youth and Nazism. Why do you think that is?
4. Discuss the relationship between Peter and Anna. How do you think it changes Peter?

Read more:

- Battle Fleet
Bloomsbury, 2007
- Powder Monkey
Bloomsbury, 2005
- Prison Ship
Bloomsbury, 2006

Online:

To find out more about the Booktrust Teenage Prize, why not visit www.bookheads.org.uk. If you'd like your reading group to be featured on the bookheads blog please email kathleen.keaney@readingagency.org.uk

www.groupthing.org is an online community around words and creativity. Young people can set up their own groups and start taking part for free. www.groupthing.org will be running features and competitions on this year's prize. Why not get the young people in your library or school to join a group, or start their own!

More links:

- www.pauldowsell.co.uk
- www.bloomsbury.com/childrens/authors/details.aspx?tpid=2563

Contacts:

Booktrust is an independent charity dedicated to encouraging people of all ages and cultures to engage with books and the written word.

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The Reading Agency is an independent charity which inspires more people to read more.

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