



TEACHING PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE THROUGH LITERARY TEXTS

TASKS WITH A FOCUS ON JOHN BOYNE'S THE BOY IN THE STRIPED PYJAMAS
FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS OF ENGLISH IN YEAR 9 TO YEAR 11

STUDENTS' TASKS

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Introduction

This resource pack contains tasks that aim to facilitate the teaching of pragmatic competence, an area that is universally neglected in second language instructional material such as coursebooks (Bardovi-Harlig, 2017; Tatsuki, 2019). This unfortunate gap can prove detrimental to the overall communicative competence of language learners. For this reason, the tasks adopt an ideation of pragmatic competence as put forward by *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2020) whereby both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competence are given equal importance. For this to materialise, they were designed with the theoretical underpinnings of three key topics in English pragmatics in mind, namely speech acts, cooperation and implicature, and politeness and impoliteness.

The tasks correspond to the characters' direct speech in John Boyne's (2006) *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, a text selected from the 2025 SEC Syllabus for English Literature (MATSEC, 2022). This renders them ideal to teachers and learners operating within schools that choose to take on this text from Year 9 to Year 11, giving the learning experience an added layer of authenticity. The main scope of developing the tasks was to offer flexibility on two levels. Firstly, the underlying language-fiction interface makes them applicable to both the language and literature classrooms. Secondly, they may be easily adapted to other works of fiction. Taking on a "text-based" (Tomlinson, 2013) methodological approach made this possible.

The main purpose of this resource pack is to serve as a repository for teachers in order to make teaching pragmatic competence easily accessible. However, should a teacher wish to incorporate all the tasks as an integral feature of the second language classroom, it is being recommended that a minimum of three to a maximum of five task components per term are taken up. The tasks are graded in nature, starting with more scaffolding and less cognitively demanding tasks which become progressively advanced. They are mostly organised by chapter, their typologies are varied and original in nature, and they require learners to partake in individual noticing tasks and instances of interaction, namely via textual intervention.

This pack is to be considered alongside a companion pack entitled *Teaching Pragmatic Competence Through Literary Texts – Tasks with a Focus on John Boyne's The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas for Secondary School Learners of English in Year 9 to Year 11 – Answer Key and Teacher's Notes*.

Task 1 (Chapter 1)

A. Read the conversation between Bruno and Mother (pp. 3-8). First state **who said** the utterance and **to whom** it was said. Then, use the words in the box on the next page to indicate the **function** of the utterance. One of the language functions is extra.

Utterance	Who said it?	To whom did they say it?	Language function
1. 'Now, you don't have to worry, Bruno.'			
2. 'Am I being sent away?'			
3. 'Yes, of course.'			
4. 'You can understand that, can you?'			
5. 'I suppose not.'			
6. 'But that's enough questions for now.'			

7. 'Maybe you should go upstairs and help Maria with your packing.'			
8. 'I'm afraid so.'			
9. 'And don't interrupt your mother when she's talking, please.'			
10. 'Oh, you'll make other friends.'			
11. 'But we had plans.'			
12. 'But, Mother!'			
13. 'Bruno, that's enough.'			
14. 'We don't have as much time to prepare as I would have liked, thanks to some people.'			

objecting	reassuring	commanding	verifying
protesting	negating	inquiring	suggesting
confirming	admonishing	expressing annoyance	
agreeing	dismissing	announcing	reassuring

B1. Suppose that Mother was **more empathetic** towards Bruno (pp. 7-9).
Underline the words and phrases she would use if this were the case.

<i>Don't make a fuss, Bruno.</i>	<i>Stop complaining, Bruno!</i>	<i>You're overreacting.</i>	<i>I understand, Bruno, but...</i>
<i>I don't want to hear another word about the matter.</i>	<i>I'm sure you'll make plenty of new friends.</i>	<i>You're getting on my nerves!</i>	<i>I believe we'll just have to make the most of things.</i>
<i>You needn't worry about it.</i>	<i>I promise, everything will be fine.</i>	<i>I'm so sorry, Bruno. I'm afraid we don't have a choice.</i>	<i>We're moving house and that's final.</i>

B2. Recreate part of the conversation in dialogue form, making sure that Mother comes across as **more empathetic**. Use the appropriate language from the previous task and the conversation from the novel to guide you.

Bruno: *You don't mean we're leaving Berlin?*

Mother: *I'm afraid so... Your father's job is —*

Bruno: *But what about school? And what about Karl and Daniel and Martin? How will they know where I am when we want to do things together?*

Task 2 (Chapter 2)

A. Before reading Chapter 2, guess who says the following utterances to Bruno. Do you think it is **Mother** or **Maria**? Then, tick (✓) the utterances that are **most direct**.

Utterances	Mother or Maria?	Most direct? (✓)
1. 'Bruno, just do it please!'		
2. 'That's not for me to say, Master Bruno.'		
3. 'If you sort that lot out, you could put them in the chest of drawers over there.'		
4. 'It means that this is where we live now, Bruno' ... 'And that's an end to it.'		
5. 'One of your father's soldiers, I suppose.'		
6. 'We're here, we've arrived, this is our home for the foreseeable future and we just have to make the best of things. Do you understand me?'		
7. 'Bruno, I want you to go upstairs and unpack and I want you to do it now.'		

Task 3 (Chapter 3)

A. Read the title of Chapter 3.

1. Who does it refer to?

2. What does it suggest about people's perception of this person?

B. Which utterances show evidence of Gretel's **dominance** over Bruno (pp. 23-29)? Write **three** of them below.

C1. Re-read the conversation between Bruno and Gretel (pp. 23-29). With a friend, find one **uncooperative** instance in their conversation.

C2. Suppose that Bruno and Gretel's exchange took place in a **more cooperative** manner. With a friend, recreate the dialogue using the role cards below. Before, make sure to go through the speaking skills checklist on the following page.

Student A: You are Bruno. Imagine that you are entering your sister's room with the intention of having a conversation about your current situation. Ask her questions to better understand your new home.

Student B: You are Gretel. Greet your brother and respond to his requests for information appropriately.

After the role-play, use the table below to assess your own speaking skills and your friend's. Assign a mark for each criterion.

4 – Very good; 3 – Good; 2 – Fair; 1 – Poor

Speaking Skills Checklist	Self-assessment	Peer-assessment
I have used the appropriate greetings.		
I have spoken directly.		
I have not spoken out of turn.		
I have not used impoliteness strategies such as sarcasm.		
I did not withhold information and cooperated well.		
I have given relevant and sufficient information.		

C3. Can you recall which features of your exchange made it more agreeable? Write them below.

C4. Do you consider the impolite exchanges between Bruno and Gretel to be appropriate or not? Give a reason for your answer.

Task 4 (Chapter 4)

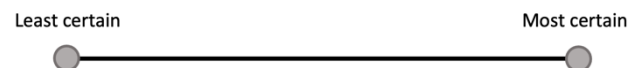
A. In Chapter 4, Bruno and Gretel are not sure of what they are seeing outside their window. Throughout their conversation, they use language to express different levels of **certainty** to make sense of their situation.

Decide on the **level of certainty** that the utterances below present by putting a mark (✕) anywhere along the scale, as appropriate. Remember to refer back to the text (pp. 30-38).

1. 'I'm not sure.'



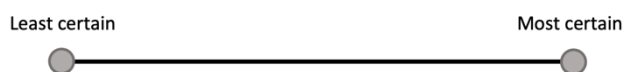
2. 'Perhaps they live in a different part.'



3. 'They must be modern types of houses.'



4. 'This must be the countryside.'



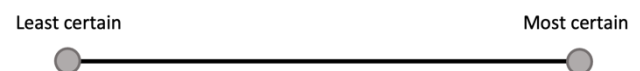
5. 'Perhaps this is our holiday home.'



6. 'I don't think so.'



7. 'That might be so.'



8. 'It must be some sort of rehearsal.'



9. 'The view is decidedly nicer from there.'



10. 'How extraordinary.'



B1. Imagine you are Bruno. In 80-100 words, write a **short letter** to Martin, your friend who still lives in Berlin, explaining what you saw outside your window and how you felt about it.

Hello Martin,

How are you? You wouldn't believe what it's like here at Out-With.

See you soon!

Your best friend,

Bruno

B2. Did you express uncertainty in your letter to Martin? Find evidence of this from your letter.

Task 5 (Chapter 5)

A. Are the following statements about Mother and Maria's short exchange in Chapter 5 (p. 40) **true (T)** or **false (F)**? Give a reason or quote to support your answer.

1. 'Some people' refers to Bruno. _____

2. Mother was startled because she thought that no one was listening. _____

3. Maria felt offended by what she overheard. _____

4. Mother felt embarrassed because she shouldn't have expressed her regret about the Fury. _____

Task 6 (Chapter 6)

- A1. In his conversation with Father, Bruno complains about their current situation (pp. 45-54.). Find an utterance(s) that corresponds with the following features of a **typical protest**.

Aggressive assertion	
Criticism	
Distrust	
Unsolicited advice	

- A2. Consider Bruno's communicative strategies in the previous task. Are they acceptable or not?

Bruno is a young boy, but...

B1. Imagine you are Bruno and that **you decide to pay a visit to Father's superior**, the Fury, to protest about your situation. Create a brief dialogue between yourself and the Fury. Before you do so, consider whether you would use the strategies in (A1) to express your discontent or not, and refer to the useful language below.

Bruno: *Excuse me. Could I have a word with you? It's about our situation at Out-With.*

The Fury: *Why, of course. How can I help you, Bruno?*

Bruno: *Well,* _____

Useful Language for Arguing Politely (as Bruno)			
<i>Sir, I don't believe things should be this way.</i>	<i>I'm sorry, but I disagree with you on this.</i>	<i>That's a valid point, but...</i>	<i>I understand what you mean, but...</i>
<i>Let's agree to disagree.</i>	<i>Fury, I'm not sure I agree with you entirely.</i>	<i>I don't think we share the same opinion.</i>	<i>Sir, I'm afraid I disagree.</i>
<i>I think it's best that...</i>	<i>I beg to differ, Sir.</i>	<i>That's not necessarily true, Sir.</i>	<i>I'm not quite sure about that, Fury.</i>
<i>You may be right, but...</i>	<i>Let me think about that.</i>	<i>I'm not convinced.</i>	<i>How about...?</i>

B2. Take note of how Bruno complains to Gretel and Maria in Chapters 2 and 3. How is the language different from the manner in which you complained to the Fury?

Task 7 (Chapter 7)

A1. In Chapter 7, Bruno and Kotler both make **requests** for a tyre. Find them and write them in the spaces below.

Bruno's Request to Kotler	Kotler's Request to Pavel

A2. Which request is **most polite** and which is **least polite**? Give a reason.

B. Kotler likes to **belittle** Bruno (pp. 72-74). How does he do this physically and verbally?

Physically	
Verbally	

- C. In 80-100 words, write a **diary entry** from Pavel's point of view expressing your dismay at how Kotler has spoken to you.

Date: _____

Dear Diary,

Until tomorrow,

Pavel

Task 8 (Chapter 8)

A. Chapter 8 is entitled 'Why Grandmother Stormed Out'. Predict what happens.

B. Grandmother plays a crucial role in criticising what Father stands for in Chapter 8. Use the grid below to write down **what she really meant**. Remember to refer back to the text.

What Grandmother said	What Grandmother meant
'I wonder if all the performances I made you give as a boy led you to this.'	
'I was merely the blank wall to whom you addressed your words. As usual.'	
'He did come to harm, Matthias,' insisted Grandmother. 'Take a look at him for your evidence.'	
'A patriot indeed!'	<i>Father is hardly a patriot.</i>

C. Do you think Bruno understands the adults' conversation? Give reasons for this and quote an utterance (p. 92) to support your answer.

D. In this chapter, a heated conversation between Grandmother, Grandfather, Father and Mother takes place. Your teacher will put you in groups and assign each group a role card. **Imagine that you are filming the scene, making the changes indicated in your assigned role card.**

Role card: Group A

The director insists that this scene is rewritten so that the argument is **less heated** than in the book. As a group

- determine any possible changes;
- rewrite the dialogue;
- nominate actors and rehearse the rewritten scene.

Role card: Group B

The director insists that this scene is rewritten so that the argument is **more heated** than in the book. As a group

- determine any possible changes;
- rewrite the dialogue;
- nominate actors and rehearse the rewritten scene.

Role card: Group C

The director insists that this scene is rewritten so that Grandmother is **more aggressive** Mother is **more apologetic**. As a group

- determine any possible changes;
- rewrite the dialogue'
- nominate actors and rehearse the rewritten scene.

E. Imagine you are Bruno. In 80-100 words, write a **letter** to Grandmother recounting the events that occurred that day, **as you understood them**. State your feelings.

Dearest Grandmother,

I hope you are well.

Write to me soon!

Your loving grandson,

Bruno

Task 9 (Chapter 11)

A1. Bruno's family is preparing for the arrival of two important guests. Mother and Father have the following exchange:

'Is he coming alone?' asked Mother.

'I forgot to ask,' said Father. 'But I presume he'll be bringing **her** with him.'

'Oh my,' said Mother again, standing up and counting in her head the number of things she had to organize before Thursday, which was only two evenings away. (p. 118)

Who could they be referring to here? What is **your impression** of this person based on Mother's and Father's implied attitudes? What makes it so?

A2. The guests in Chapter 11 speak to Bruno and Gretel in very different ways (pp. 121-123). Re-read the conversations and decide on who said the utterances below. Then, tick the utterances that the children responded **favourably** to.

	Who said it?	✓
1. 'What charming children.'		
2. 'French is a beautiful language and you are very clever to be learning it.'		
3. 'Yes, but why would you want to?'		
4. 'It's so pretty that way.'		
5. 'It was lovely to meet you both.'		
6. 'I like your shoes, Bruno...'		
7. 'And which is which?'		

A3. Does your impression stated in (A1) match the woman's apparent personality? Why?

A4. There seems to be a mismatch between the Fury's and Eva's attitudes towards the children. What could be the reason for this?

B1. Bruno overhears fragments of a conversation between Mother and Father (p. 124). Circle **the functions** of Mother's and Father's utterances. There may be more than one function.

Mother's utterances					
complaining	declaring	commanding	apologising	threatening	imposing

Father's utterances					
complaining	declaring	commanding	apologising	threatening	imposing

B2. Complete the fragmented utterances between Mother and Father in dialogue form with possible words and phrases to make **a coherent and cohesive** conversation. The first utterance has been done for you. Afterwards consider whether your ideas are the same as other students'.

'... to leave Berlin. And for such a place ...' Mother was saying.

'... no choice, at least not if we want to continue...' said Father.

'... as if it's the most natural thing in the world and it's not, it's just not...' said Mother.

'...what would happen is I would be taken away and treated like a...' said Father.

'...expect them to grow up in a place like ...' said Mother.

'... and that's an end to the matter. I don't want to hear another word on the subject...' said Father. (p. 124)

(1) **Mother:** *I can't believe we had to leave Berlin. And for such a place that has been nothing but trouble until now.*

(2) **Father:** _____

(3) **Mother:** _____

(4) **Father:** _____

(5) **Mother:** _____

(6) **Father:** _____

Task 10 (Chapters 10 and 12)

A1. In Chapters 10 and 12, Bruno and Shmuel have one of their first conversations and start to build a friendship. Write **YES** or **NO** next to each criterion.

- i. Bruno and Shmuel are the same age. _____
- ii. Bruno and Shmuel come from the same social and economic background. _____
- iii. Bruno and Shmuel share the same race. _____
- iv. Bruno and Shmuel share the same gender. _____
- v. Bruno and Shmuel have known each other for a long time. _____

A2. Based on the answers above, what degree of **power distance** is present between Bruno and Shmuel? **Circle** the most appropriate answer.

not much / a fair degree of / a lot of power distance

A3. Sometimes, Bruno passes **insensitive comments**. Find at least **four** instances of this and write the utterances below.

A4. Is Bruno being purposefully impolite and insensitive towards Shmuel as their conversation progresses? Give a reason for your answer.

A5. With a friend, act out the following role-play. Go through the checklist below and after the speaking task, rate your own speaking skills.

Student A: Imagine you are Bruno. You met Shmuel for the first time.

Talk to Shmuel and be more considerate.

Student B: Imagine you are Shmuel. Respond accordingly.

4 – Very good; 3 – Good; 2 – Fair; 1 – Poor

Speaking Skills Checklist	1	2	3	4
I did my best to put myself in the character's shoes.				
I have used the appropriate greetings.				
I have refrained from asking invasive questions.				
I have avoided sensitive topics.				
I have spoken clearly, fluently and with confidence.				
I have used correct grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.				

Task 11 (Chapter 13)

A1. In Chapter 13, Bruno **requests** information from Maria about Pavel (p. 135-136). Classify his utterances under the correct column.

Request Strategies		
Attention Grabber (terms of address, etc.)	Core Request (the actual request)	Supportive Moves (before/after the core request)
<i>e.g. Mother... What's going on?</i>	<i>e.g. When can we go back to Berlin?</i>	<i>e.g. I wondered if I could ask you a favour.</i>

A2. Which strategies are there most of? Does this make Bruno's request for information more or less direct?

A3. State possible reasons for Bruno's directness/indirectness.

B1. Read the conversation between Mother, Father and Kotler (p. 144-148).

Underline the correct answer(s). There may be a maximum of two answers.

1. In response to Mother's initial inquiry on his Father, Kotler replies with 'I suppose so ... I don't really know.' Here, Kotler is purposely
 - i. giving inadequate information.
 - ii. giving just enough information.
 - iii. replying with an irrelevant answer.
 - iv. attempting to change the subject.
2. 'Not really,' he replied, shrugging his shoulders dismissively and not turning his head to look at her. 'He left Germany some years ago. Nineteen thirty-eight, I think it was. I haven't seen him since then.' Here, Kotler's language indirectly suggests that
 - i. he is unsure of the exact date.
 - ii. he wishes to stop Mother from being too nosey.
 - iii. he is against divulging personal information.
 - iv. he holds an unfavourable relationship with his father.
3. By asking 'I beg your pardon, Herr Commandant?', Kotler is
 - i. asking Father to repeat because he did not hear him well.
 - ii. asking Father to repeat because he is buying time.
 - iii. asking Father to repeat because he did not understand his question.
 - iv. asking Father to repeat because the question took him by surprise.

4. 'So your father would be ... in his forties, I expect?' Lieutenant Kotler said nothing but continued to eat although he didn't appear to be enjoying his food at all. Here, Kotler is
- i. thinking about his answer.
 - ii. feeling embarrassed.
 - iii. feeling attacked.
 - iv. opting-out of the conversation.
5. 'Strange that he chose not to stay in the Fatherland,' said Father. 'We're not close, my father and I,' said Lieutenant Kotler quickly, looking around the table as if he owed everyone an explanation. 'Really, we haven't spoken in years.' Kotler's comment in response to Father's is
- i. inappropriate.
 - ii. insufficient.
 - iii. irrelevant.
 - iv. ambiguous.
6. 'And what reason did he give, might I ask,' continued Father, 'for leaving Germany at the moment of her greatest glory and her most vital need, when it is incumbent upon all of us to play our part in the national revival? Was he tubercular?' ... 'Did he go to Switzerland to take the air?' explained Father. 'Or did he have a particular reason for leaving Germany? In nineteen thirty-eight,' he added after a moment. Father's questions could imply that
- i. Kotler's father is a Jew.
 - ii. Kotler's father brought up a number of excuses to avoid the war.
 - iii. Kotler's father is a traitor.
 - iv. Kotler's father had fallen ill in nineteen thirty-eight.

7. 'Never mind,' said Father cheerfully. 'Perhaps it is not an appropriate conversation for the dinner table. We can discuss it in more depth at a later time.' Father's attitude implies that

- i. Kotler is in great trouble.
- ii. Father realised that Kotler was feeling ill at ease and wanted to make him feel better.
- iii. Father wishes to discuss the issue in private.
- iv. Father wishes to change the subject.

B2. With a friend, carry out the following role-play. Then rate your speaking skills on the grid below.

Student A: Imagine you are Bruno. State your feelings about the incident between Pavel and Kotler.

Student B: Imagine you are Gretel. Respond accordingly.

4 – Very good; 3 – Good; 2 – Fair; 1 – Poor

Speaking Skills Checklist	Self-assessment	Peer-assessment
I have successfully empathised with a character.		
I have adopted the manner/style in which the character usually speaks.		
I have stayed on-topic.		
I have provided relevant information by reacting to Kotler's impoliteness.		

Task 12 (Chapter 14)

- A1. In Chapter 14, Gretel wants to initiate conversation with Bruno but he was busy reading his book. Rewrite this extract to make it **more polite**. Consider the characters' **utterances** as well as their **actions**.

'What do you want?' asked Bruno. 'That's a nice welcome,' said Gretel. 'I'm reading,' said Bruno.

'What are you reading?' she asked him, and rather than answer he simply turned the cover towards her so she could see for herself. (pp. 152-153)

- A2. Write the **strategies** that Bruno takes up to avoid telling the truth (p. 154). Find an utterance(s) for each strategy to support your answer.

Strategy 1:

Utterance(s):

Strategy 2:

Utterance(s):

Strategy 3:

Utterance(s):

Strategy 4:

Utterance(s):

A3. The box below contains some **impoliteness strategies**. Re-read the conversation between Gretel and Bruno (pp. 152-159) and decide on which strategy best matches the utterance. There is an extra impoliteness strategy in the box.

sarcasm	improper greeting	criticism	dismissal	interruption
insult	condescension	invasive questioning	silencer	threat

Utterance(s)	Impoliteness Strategy
1. 'What do you want?' asked Bruno.	
2. 'I'm reading,' said Bruno.	
3. 'Boring,' she said in a sing-song voice.	
4. 'I told you, I'm trying to read,' he said in a grumpy voice. 'If some people would just let me.'	
5. 'You said there was someone you should be with. Who was it? Tell me! There's no one around here to play with, is there?'	
6. 'He sounds like a barrel of laughs,' said Gretel. 'I wish he was my imaginary friend.'	
7. 'If Father knew you were talking to imaginary friends, you'd be in for it,' said Gretel.	
8. 'An imaginary friend!' she cried. 'Aren't you a little old for an imaginary friend?'	
9. 'Honestly, Bruno, you're a hopeless case.'	

A4. Imagine you are Bruno. In 80-100 words, write a **letter** to Shmuel telling him how you almost told your sister about your secret friendship. Tell him what you did to avoid trouble.

Hi Shmuel,

How's it going? You wouldn't believe what I almost did!

See you very soon.

Your friend,

Bruno

Task 13 (Chapter 15)

- A. The title of Chapter 15 is 'Something He Shouldn't Have Done'. Guess what happens.

- B. In Chapter 15, Mother personally addresses Kotler.

'Oh, Kurt, precious, you're still here,' said Mother, stepping out of the kitchen and coming towards them. 'I have a little free time now if— Oh!' she said, noticing Bruno standing there. 'Bruno! What are you doing here?' (pp. 165-166)

Is her **mode of address** appropriate or not? Give your reasons.

- C. In the brief conversation between Kotler, Bruno and Shmuel, Bruno **evades questions**. Imagine that Bruno directly told the truth. Rewrite the dialogue.

'Do you know this boy?' repeated Kotler in a louder voice. 'Have you been talking to the prisoners?'

'I ... he was here when I came in,' said Bruno. 'He was cleaning glasses.'

'That's not what I asked you,' said Kotler. 'Have you seen him before? Have you talked to him? Why does he say you're his friend?'

Bruno wished he could run away. He hated Lieutenant Kotler, but he was advancing on him now and all Bruno could think of was the afternoon when he had seen him shooting a dog and the evening when Pavel had made him so angry that he—

'Tell me, Bruno!' shouted Kotler, his face growing red. 'I won't ask you a third time.'

'I've never spoken to him,' said Bruno immediately. 'I've never seen him before in my life. I don't know him.' (p. 172)

(1) **Kotler:** *Do you know this boy? Have you been talking to the prisoners?*

(2) **Bruno:** _____

(3) **Kotler:** _____

(4) **Bruno:** _____

(5) **Kotler:** _____

(6) **Bruno:** _____

D. At the end of Chapter 15, Bruno **apologises** to Shmuel (pp. 174-175). For a-b, match the parts of the apology to Bruno's utterances. Utterances c-e are not included in the conversation. Create your own to complete the sequence.

Part of Apology	Bruno's Utterance
a) Expression of apology	
b) Acknowledgement of responsibility	
c) Explanation	
d) Offer of repair	
e) Promise of non-recurrence	

Task 14 (Chapter 16)

A. In Chapter 16, Bruno and Gretel have another conversation (pp. 180-183). What do their **communicative strategies** say about their **characters**? Fill in the grid below with the relevant information, using their conversation to help you.

	Character trait(s)	Supporting utterance(s)
Bruno		
Gretel		

B. Bruno is not satisfied with Gretel's answers about Out-With. Imagine you are Bruno. In 50 words, write a **short note** to Father asking him to explain the situation.

Task 15 (Chapter 17)

A1. In Chapter 17, Mother complains to Father about their life at Out-With.

'It's horrible,' Mother was saying. 'Just horrible. I can't stand it any more.'

'We don't have any choice,' said Father. 'This is our assignment and—'

'No, this is your assignment,' said Mother. 'Your assignment, not ours. You stay if you want to.'

'And what will people think,' asked Father, 'if I permit you and the children to return to Berlin without me? They will ask questions about my commitment to the work here.'

'Work?' shouted Mother. 'You call this work?' (p. 187)

What is the purpose of her complaint? **Underline** three possible answers.

- i. Holding Father accountable
- ii. Requesting repair
- iii. Confronting a problem with the aim of improving the situation
- iv. Venting anger
- v. Initiating conversation
- vi. Expressing the wish to go back to Berlin because Mother misses her family.

A2. How severe is Mother's complaint? **Circle** the **best** answer.

not severe at all / somewhat severe / fairly severe

A3. How does **Father respond** to Mother's complaint? Tick (✓) the statements that are **true** and find an utterance from the text to support them.

i. He shows agreement and reassures Mother. ☐

ii. He refrains from responding. ☐

iii. He challenges Mother by asking questions. ☐

iv. He attempts to justify his actions to Mother. ☐

v. He jokes to trivialise Mother's complaints. ☐

vi. He gives Mother advice about how she could have solved the problem in retrospect. ☐

A4. List **3 possible reasons** for Mother's **sudden disaffection** with Out-With.

B1. In this chapter, Bruno **indirectly** refuses Father's offer of going back home to Berlin. Find two utterances that suggest this.

B2. Rewrite the utterances you found in (B1) to make them **more direct**.

Task 16 (chapter 18)

A1. In Chapter 18, Shmuel expresses his regret with having lost contact with his father. Bruno offers to help.

'I could ask Father if you wanted,' said Bruno cautiously, hoping that Shmuel wouldn't say yes.

'I don't think that would be a good idea,' said Shmuel, which, to Bruno's disappointment, was not a flat-out rejection of the offer.

'Why not?' he asked. 'Father is very knowledgeable about life on that side of the fence.'

'I don't think the soldiers like us,' said Shmuel. 'Well,' he added with something as close to a laugh as he could muster, 'I know they don't like us. They hate us.'

Bruno sat back in surprise. 'I'm sure they don't hate you,' he said.

'They do,' said Shmuel, leaning forward, his eyes narrowing and his lips curling up a little in anger. 'But that's all right because I hate them too. I hate them,' he repeated forcefully.

'You don't hate Father, do you?' asked Bruno.

Shmuel bit his lip and said nothing. He had seen Bruno's father on any number of occasions and couldn't understand how such a man could have a son who was so friendly and kind.

'Anyway,' said Bruno after a suitable pause, not wishing to discuss that topic any further, 'I have something to tell you too.' (pp. 195-196)

Is Bruno's offer **genuine or superficial**? How do you know? Why did he do it?

A2. Imagine that Shmuel took up Bruno's offer of help. Rewrite the dialogue, making sure that Bruno finds **appropriate excuses** to go back on his word.

Bruno: *I could ask father if you wanted.*

Shmuel: *I don't think that would be a good idea.*

Bruno: *You're right, perhaps* _____

Shmuel: _____

Bruno: _____

Shmuel: _____

A3. Shmuel takes on indirect communicative strategies to make Bruno feel bad about going back to Berlin. Write **YES** next to the utterances that serve this function and **NO** next to the utterances that do not.

- i. 'So I won't see you again?' asked Shmuel. _____
- ii. 'I suppose not,' he said sadly. 'I won't have anyone to talk to any more when you're gone,' he added. _____
- iii. 'You wouldn't like it,' said Shmuel. 'Yours is much nicer, he added. _____
- iv. 'Well, you're probably not allowed to come here and talk to me every day either,' said Shmuel. 'But you still do it, don't you?' _____
- v. 'I suppose I'll see you tomorrow to say goodbye then.' _____

Task 17 (Chapter 19 and 20)

- A. In Bruno and Shmuel's conversation in Chapter 19, some utterances are more direct than others. Decide whether the utterances below are **direct or indirect**. Tick (✓) where appropriate. If indirect, state what the characters actually meant.

	Direct	Indirect	What did the character mean?
1. 'Well, turn round,' said Bruno, pointing at his friend as he stood there awkwardly. 'I don't want you watching me.'			
2. 'When was this last washed?' he called out, and Shmuel turned round.			
3. 'I suppose that's what I'm doing, isn't it? Pretending to be a person from the other side of the fence?'			
4. 'A Jew, you mean,' said Shmuel.			
5. 'You'll be recognized otherwise,' said Shmuel. 'You don't have any choice.'			
6. 'I don't think I like it here,' said Bruno after a while.			

7. 'But where should we look?'			
8. 'Does the marching go on for long?'			

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