

Mercedes and the Chocolate Pilot

A TRUE STORY OF THE BERLIN AIRLIFT AND THE CANDY THAT DROPPED FROM THE SKY

A RIF GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES

Themes: History, Kindness, Communication

Book Brief: This book shares the amazing true story of an American pilot who dropped mini-parachutes of chocolate for the children of West Berlin during the Berlin Airlift after World War II.

Author:

Margot Theis Raven

Illustrator:

Gijsbert van Frankenhuyzen



TIME TO READ!



Before reading, build background:

Find Berlin, Germany, on a map. If looking online, find a map that shows how Berlin was divided after World War II. Now find Frankfurt,

Germany. Think about the distance American pilots would fly between the two cities. Look up the dates of World War II.

While reading, identify character traits: How does the author describe the characters? How do their

actions give you clues about the type of people they are? What do you have in common with the characters?

After reading, ask questions:

- ◆ How did the children know about the Chocolate Pilot?
- ◆ Why was candy so rare?
- ◆ Why do you think Mercedes's letter caught the pilot's attention?
- ◆ How did the airlift change how some Germans viewed Americans?

RELATED ACTIVITIES

EASY CHOCOLATE "ICE CREAM"

Ingredients: 3 bananas (peeled and frozen), 2 Tbsp. cocoa powder, 1 tsp. vanilla extract

Here's a quick, healthful recipe for chocolate "ice cream." Just blend together frozen bananas, cocoa powder, and vanilla extract, and you'll have a tasty frozen treat! Try experimenting with other flavors by adding peanut butter, coconut, or whatever you have at home.

PLANE OLD FUN!

Go to www.paperplane.org to learn how to make your own plane—paper, of course! If you could be a pilot, where would you fly your plane? How could you use

your plane to help others? Write a short story about what you would do if you had your very own airplane.

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Think of ways to spread kindness in your home, school, or community. You might write a letter to someone you love, greet your teacher with a smile each morning, or collect canned foods for your local food bank.

TECHNOLOGY LINK

Learn more about the Berlin Airlift and watch video interviews with Lt. Halvorsen, the Chocolate Pilot, at: www.spiritoffreedom.org/airlift.html.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

OTHER BOOKS ABOUT THE BERLIN AIRLIFT

- Christmas from Heaven*, Tom Brokaw (2013)
Candy Bomber, Michael O. Tunnell (2010)
Candy Bombers, Robert Elmer (2006)



Reading Is
Fundamental