

# Salt to the Sea

By Ruta Sepetys

## Discuss

Talk through your thoughts.

- **Before reading:** think about what you already know about World War II. Which countries were involved? Who were the major leaders involved? What do you know about what was happening in major countries involved in the war? What do you know about the state of Prussia and its citizens? Conduct research to build upon your knowledge.
- **During reading,** notice the shifts in perspective depending on which character is narrating. How does each character's history affect his or her actions and feelings and the way he/she views the war and various leaders? How and why do perspectives change throughout the novel?

## Create

Make an experience of your own.

- The "Shoe Poet" says to look down at peoples' shoes if you want to learn their stories. Choose one character of the story, and draw or create a model of his or her shoes. Then, analyze the shoes, explaining what each aspect of them tells about the character walking in them and how they changed throughout the novel.
- Conduct research on real passengers aboard the Wilhelm Gustloff. Choose one, and create a scrapbook as if you are that person. Represent that person's life before, during, and after World War II. If you can't find all pieces of information, use research and creativity to fill in the gaps.

## Imagine

Use your imagination to explore.

- Imagine that you're on the Wilhelm Gustloff, and you are able to interview others who have made it aboard. What would you ask, and how do you think they would answer? Use the novel and your own research to guide you.
- After reading the novel and learning more about Prussia and World War II, think of another character who might be on his or her way to the Wilhelm Gustloff. Write his or her story.

