

Saving Private Ryan

Book key

- 1 Open answers
- 2 a colonel, company, corporal, general, lieutenant, medic, paratrooper, private, sharpshooter, sniper, squad
b artillery, explosive, grenade, machine gun, mine, mortar, shell
- 3 a 1 b 2 c 2 d 1 e 2 f 2 g 2 h 2
- 4 a At low tide they provide cover for foot soldiers moving across the beach.
b Soldiers use it for cover to avoid the machine-gun and rifle coming from the cliffs.
c Soldiers use them for cover on the beach (Miller, for example, with Delancey). They are also a source of extra weapons for the surviving soldiers.
d They are used to blow holes in the wire on top of the sea wall and to explode any mines in the ground near them.
e It shows Miller and his men a safe exit from the beach through the mines.
f Miller sticks a mirror to the tip of his rifle with some gum so that he can see what is over the walls of a trench.
g It provides cover for Jackson so that he can shoot at the enemy gun position on the cliff. Miller and his men use it as cover before their attack on the same enemy position.
- 5 a His hand is shaking.
b The steel crosses are still in place and there are not many shell holes on the beach. This means that the American bombing of the beach prior to the landing has not been successful.
c The weight of the backpack is pulling him down in the water.
d Delancey is dead, so Miller uses his body as cover against German bullets as he walks toward the shore.
e He is deafened by an artillery shell which explodes just behind him.
f Briggs is lighter than expected because the lower half of his body has been blown away.
g There is a good view of the German gun position from behind the rock pile. Jackson is a sharpshooter and can kill the German machine gunner from there while the other soldiers run across open ground.
- h He wants the German machine guns to fire at him while Jackson runs across open ground to the rock pile.
- 6–7 Open answers
- 8 a ✓ b ✗ c ✓ d ✓ e ✗ f ✗ g ✗ h ✗ i ✓
- 9 a Captain McRae is talking to Colonel Wilson in the Pentagon about Mrs. Ryan, who will be receiving news of the deaths of her three sons.
b General Marshall is talking to Colonel Wilson, Captain McRae, and Colonel Dye about the deaths of the three Ryan brothers. (The earlier deaths of the five Sullivan brothers on the same ship made the public very angry.)
c Colonel Dye is talking to General Marshall about the Navy rule that brothers have to be separated. (A similar rule does not exist in the Army.)
d Abraham Lincoln was writing to Mrs. Bixby about the deaths of her five sons (during the American Civil War in the 1860s).
e Wade is talking to the other soldiers in Miller's squad about the reality of war.
f Miller is talking to Horvath about their new job, to find Private Ryan and bring him home. He is explaining why a captain is taking a squad to Neuville.
g Upham is talking to Miller after Miller tells him to join his mission. Upham is worried because he has never been in battle before.
h Miller is telling Horvath to drive the jeep across a field after the German artillery has started firing shells at the road to Neuville.
i Upham is talking to Wade about the book that he is planning to write. He is upset because he expected soldiers at war to be friendly to each other, but the other members of the squad are not friendly to him.
j Miller is explaining to Reiben why they have to find Private Ryan although the orders might not make much sense.
- 10 Open answers
- 11 a Open answers
b He thinks that the Army only wants to save Private Ryan to avoid public anger. (The Army is not really worried about the feelings of the mother or the danger to the men who are sent to find him.)
c Open answers

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12 Open answers

13 a 1 b 8 c 6 d 5 e 2 f 9 g 10 h 4
i 3 j 7

- 14 a He is confused and annoyed because he realizes that Miller has not come to assist him.
b They are excited and hopeful because they believe that the Americans can rescue their children from danger.
c He is surprised and upset.
d Wade is angry with Miller because the captain would not let him look after Caparzo when he was first hit. Reiben is angry because he thinks that Caparzo's death is Private Ryan's fault.
e Ryan is upset and confused because Miller tells him that his brothers are dead and that he is going home. Minutes later Miller tells him that his brothers are safe and that he is not going home. Miller feels bad. He is sorry for the misunderstanding and needlessly upsetting Ryan.
f He feels satisfied because he finally gets some information about where Private Ryan was dropped.
g He feels thoughtful and able to talk a little about his private doubts.
h He feels confused and at first does not know what to do next.
i He feels excited because Michaelson is Ryan's friend and knows where Ryan can be found.

15–16 Open answers

- 17 a Wade / Albert Schweitzer
b Miller / Wade
c Miller
d Reiben / Jackson
e Wade / Jackson
f Miller / Wade / Caparzo
g Jackson / Mellish
h Upham / Reiben
i Mellish / Jackson
j Reiben / Horvath / Miller

- 18 a Reiben. He would prefer to be fighting the Japanese because the Germans look too much like Americans.
b Wade. He thinks that Reiben is the most uneducated person that he has ever met because he thinks that all Germans are stupid.
c All the men apart from Miller. They do not think it is necessary to risk their lives by attacking the radio tower.

- d Mellish. He wishes that the radio tower was being defended by younger soldiers because they would be easier to defeat.
e Wade. He is warning Miller about a second German machine gunner in the grass.
f Wade. He is wounded so badly that he knows he will not survive. He asks Miller for more pills so that he can die without any more suffering.
g Miller. He tears up the photograph of the German prisoner with his parents. He probably does not want to think of his enemy as an ordinary person like him because that would make his job more difficult.
h The German prisoner. He does not want the Americans to kill him.
i Reiben. He is angry because Miller ordered them to attack the radio tower, Wade is dead, and the German prisoner is allowed to go free.
j Upham. He wants the money that the men have won on the bet to go to Caparzo's parents.

19–21 Open answers

- 22 a outside/near (not in)
b defend/protect (not destroy)
c Miller's (not Henderson's)
d Horvath (not Ryan)
e string (not nails)
f Jackson (not Horvath)
g Jackson (not Mellish) or second (not first)
h Trask (not Miller)
i Two (not three) (only Reiben and Upham are in Miller's squad; Trask and Ryan survive, but they are paratroopers, not Rangers.)
j farmer (not doctor)

23 a 8 b 6 c 10 d 5 e 3 f 2 g 9 h 1
i 7 j 4

24–34 Open answers

Discussion activities key

1–17 Open answers

- 18 A parody is written in order to mock or make something look ridiculous. *Oh! What a Lovely War* is a famous parody on the First World War. A parody uses exaggeration in order to make people laugh. Your students will enjoy re-writing scenes from the book using comic exaggeration. A famous parody of the Second World War is the one by Spike Milligan *Adolf Hitler: My Part in his Downfall*.

19–36 Open answers

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Activity worksheets key

- 1 a Mellish/seasick pills/he is pessimistic about leaving France alive
 b Sarge/the soldiers being seasick/he is a cynical, hardened soldier
 c Briggs/the number of soldiers that are going to die/realistic
 d Jackson/the soldiers are about to arrive in France and maybe die/he is a religious man
 e Miller/giving advice to soldiers as they land in France/caring, practical leader
 f Mellish/talking about the German onslaught as they reach the beach/ironic
- 2 a 5 b 4 c 6 d 2 e 7 f 3 g 1
- 3 a F b F c F d T e F
- 4 Possible answers:
 a ... there are pretty girls there (in Caen).
 b ... prepare them for fighting real battles.
 c ... clean uniforms.
 d ... why he had been chosen for the mission to save Private Ryan.
 e ... a public relations mission.
 f ... who can speak French and German.
- 5 a 3 b 7 c 8 d 4 e 2 f 5 g 1 h 6
- 6 a Reiben/The jeep they are travelling in is full. Reiben is wondering how they will have room for Ryan; he thinks Miller may be expecting to lose some of his men.
 b Reiben/Private Ryan (from Iowa) is the farmer.
 c Reiben/Miller has just described Ryan's excellent school report, and the fact that he was awarded the school's Good Citizenship Prize twice.
 d Miller/the squad has just forced its way through the front of the American advance.
 e Upham/Sarge has just pointed out that they are being attacked from both sides by the Germans.
 f Wade/the Germans have just hit the American jeep, but fortunately everyone had got out in good time so nobody is hurt.
- 7 a 3 b 6 c 2 d 5 e 1 f 8 g 7 h 4
- 8 a A Ryan is alive – Ryan survives but the rest of the squad get killed.
 B Ryan is dead – While the squad is making sure, they are killed by Germans.
 C Ryan is wounded – The squad will have to carry him.

- D Ryan has been dead for a long time – The squad takes Ryan's dog tags and escapes quickly.
- b Best – D/Worst – C
- 9 a Miller/Mellish has suggested shooting Reiben, changing his dog tags to Ryan and sending them home to Ryan's mother.
 b Dewindt/He hands Miller a bag of dead soldiers' dog tags so that they can check to see if Ryan is among them.
 c Upham/He is talking about a French couple Miller is trying to communicate with.
 d Michaelson/Private Ryan
 e Miller/He is looking at the village of Ramelle on the map.
- 10 Suggested answers:
 a ... holes in them.
 b ... an area of grass where the bodies of American paratroopers were lying.
 c ... attack the Germans in the field.
 d ... the German machine gun position.
 e ... the bodies of two American paratroopers.
- 11 a F: Shot in the chest.
 b F: He begins to panic.
 c T
 d F: He wants the drugs so that he will die.
 e T
 f F: It's only a small wound.
- 12 Suggested answers:
 a It is destroyed by American bombing.
 b It sounds like a tractor – so it is a normal countryside sound.
 c It is blown up by a huge American gun.
 d He can't understand their expressions and the fact that they are shaking their heads and laughing.
 e Because he helps save their lives.
- 13 a weapons/bridge
 b tank/street
 c church/machine-gun
 d socks/explosives/grease
 e café/bridge

Progress test key

- 1 a ✓ b X c ✓ d X e ✓
 2 a 1 b 3 c 3
 3 a 2 b 5 c 4 d 3 e 1 f 6 g 7

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- 4 a orders
b typewriter
c bunker
d animals
e citizenship
f stripes
g ditch
- 5 a Some buildings were centuries old.
b The parents think this.
c The squad find him heartless.
d He did take it.
e No, his brothers are much younger.
- 6 a 4 b 2 c 1 d 5 e 3
- 7 a Reiben
b Miller
c Reiben (or Mellish)
d Sarge
e Sarge
- 8 a giving a wide smile
b a book for learning from
c previously a café
d a storage building on a farm
e looked at it from above