

**Discussion Questions for
Classrooms & Homeschools**
Two Lights of Hope



1. Have you read any of the five novels Adriana reads? (See the reading list in the front.)
How did that help you follow the story?
2. What does Adriana learn from each of the novels she reads?
Diary of a Young Girl
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer
The Clue in the Diary
Pride and Prejudice
The Hiding Place
3. It's been said that you must understand WWII history to understand Eastern Europe under Communism. What are the similarities of life under Nazi rule and under Communist rule? The differences? Which do you think would have been harder?
4. What do you think Zugravescu meant when he said, on page 284, "Iron Guard, Communists. Right wing, left wing. What's the difference? Power. That's all that counts."
5. What do you think the two lights of hope refer to?

6. When 1989 began, Adriana expected it to be a good year. Do you think she was right or wrong? Why or why not?

7. How did the events in China's Tiananmen Square give Ofelia hope?

8. Choose three of the following policies and discuss how they affect regular citizens:

Collectivization

Systematization

Resettlement

Industrialization

Nationalization

Reeducation

Censorship

Austerity measures

Propaganda

Curfew

Rational Eating Plan to Reduce Obesity

ANSWERS for Classrooms & Homeschools

Two Lights of Hope

1. Have you read any of the five novels Adriana reads? (See the reading list in the front.)
How did that help you follow the story?
2. What does Adriana learn from each of the novels she reads (and the protagonists)?

Diary of a Young Girl

Adriana is awakened to the horrors of the Holocaust.

Adriana and Anne Frank are roughly the same age.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

Ester planted a clue about the numerous cave passages and left an address in NYC. Adriana and Tom Sawyer both do some exploring and both forget their earlier crushes when a new kid comes along.

The Clue in the Diary

Adriana realizes she and Gabi are also girl detectives. They find clues just like Nancy Drew does.

Pride and Prejudice

Elizabeth Bennet helps Adriana see the difference between Alex—proud like Mr. Darcy—and Liviu—unscrupulous like Mr. Wickham. Adriana confronts her own prejudice by seeing Elizabeth's prejudice.

The Hiding Place

Adriana is inspired by people who risk their lives to help others. She identifies with Corrie ten Boom in a small way when she is arrested.

3. It's been said that you must understand WWII history to understand Eastern Europe under Communism. What are the similarities of life under Nazi rule and under Communist rule? The differences? Which do you think would have been harder?
Similarities: Both systems exert complete control over their people and deny them basic freedoms. Differences: Nazis are extreme right fascists; Communists are extreme left socialists. The results feel the same to the everyday citizen.
4. What do you think Zugravescu meant when he said, on page 284, "Iron Guard, Communists. Right wing, left wing. What's the difference? Power. That's all that counts."
He wanted to be on the side of whoever was in power so he could exert control. Basically, he didn't care about right or wrong.

5. What do you think the two lights of hope refer to?

Margareta (Morning Star) and Ester (North Star)

The people who helped Uri when he hid during the Holocaust

Adriana and Talia

6. When 1989 began, Adriana expected it to be a good year. Do you think she was right or wrong? Why or why not?

The revolution will happen in December 1989.

7. How did the events in China's Tiananmen Square give Ofelia hope?

If other people can stand up and speak out, maybe Romanians will.

8. Choose three of the following policies and discuss how they affect regular citizens:

Collectivization The government confiscated crops and animals farmers raised.

Systematization Urban planning. Parts of cities and whole villages were razed to build tall concrete apartment blocks and factories.

Resettlement Villagers were forced to move to apartment blocks in cities to work in factories.

Industrialization Factories and the products they produced were all-important.

Nationalization Nobody could have an apartment with more than three rooms.

If they did, the apartment would be converted to house multiple families.

Only the State could own property.

Reeducation People were stripped of "wrong" ideas and indoctrinated with

Communist ones, such as God doesn't exist, using violent means.

Much of the torture took place in gulags.

Censorship Letters were read and books were banned.

Austerity measures The government controlled the time of day and the amount of water, electricity, heat, and gas that was available to its people.

Propaganda Lies and misleading information about Romania and the world were propagated in the media. The truth was hidden from the people.

Curfew Citizens were not allowed outside without permission after dark.

Rational Eating Plan to Reduce Obesity Food was scarce and only available in season. Certain limited amounts were only available with ration cards.

Documentaries to watch

The Rise and Fall of Ceausescu - Part I and II - with Edward Behr, British newscaster

The King of Communism

The Lost World of Communism - Part III – Romania