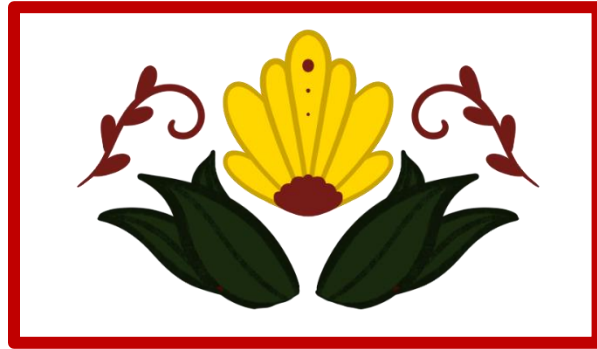


**Discussion Questions for
Classrooms & Homeschools**
Three Colors of Courage



1. Have you read any of the five novels Adriana reads? If so, how did that help you follow the story?
2. What does Adriana learn from each of the novels she reads?
 - To Kill a Mockingbird*
 - Animal Farm*
 - Sense and Sensibility*
 - Les Misérables*
 - A Christmas Carol*
3. Adriana expected 1989 to be an uneventful year (page 8). Timotei expected history to be made in 1989 (page 5). How did they have such different expectations?
4. How did the demise of Communist regimes in neighboring countries affect the people of Romania? What about the attempt to secure freedom in Tiananmen Square in China?
5. How did life in Bucharest become more difficult under the Austerity Policy (chapter 13)?

6. What was the significance of the Soviet Union's new programs: *glasnost*—meaning openness—and *perestroika*—restructuring?
7. How was Adriana affected by gaslighting—a form of *zersetzung*? Why was this an effective weapon of the secret police?
8. The revolution began 15 December 1989 in Timișoara and ended 22 December 1989 in Bucharest. How do you think the people were able to be victorious over the military and the secret police?
9. Do you think Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu received a fair trial? Why or why not?
10. In the last chapter (pages 305-306), each of the characters states what they hope for most with their newfound freedom. List some of the areas where they wished to see change.

ANSWERS for Classrooms & Homeschools
Three Colors of Courage

11. Have you read any of the five novels Adriana reads? If so, how did that help you follow the story?

12. What does Adriana learn from each of the novels she reads?

a) *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Adriana is inspired by Atticus Finch. She frequently quotes him saying that courage is when you know you can't win, but you try anyway, and you never give up trying.

b) *Animal Farm*

Adriana learns that Romania is like the animal farm, with people brainwashed to go along with one and only one way of thinking, echoing the refrain that Ceaușescu is always right.

c) *Sense and Sensibility*

Adriana wasn't being sensible about her on-again, off-again feelings for Alex. Elinor Dashwood teaches her not to let her heart rule her judgment.

d) *Les Misérables*

Adriana is impressed by the bishop's gift of grace and how it transformed Jean Valjean. The students' fearless fight for abstract ideals emboldens her in Romania's coming battle.

e) *A Christmas Carol*

Adriana thinks about the ghosts in Romania's past and present. She realizes the people have the power to change the course of their future, just as Ebenezer Scrooge did.

13. Adriana expected 1989 to be an uneventful year (page 8). Timotei expected history to be made in 1989 (page 5). How did they have such different expectations?

Timotei had the advantage of hearing news over Radio Free Europe. Also, Adriana's expectation was more of a hope.

14. How did the demise of Communist regimes in neighboring countries affect the people of Romania? What about the attempt to secure freedom in Tiananmen Square in China?

When first Poland, then Hungary, East Germany, Bulgaria, and Czechoslovakia became democracies, Romanians began to think it was possible even for their country to become free. When the Chinese students demonstrated in June 1989, Romanian students were in awe of their bravery.

15. How did life in Bucharest become more difficult under the Austerity Policy (chapter 13)?

Food became more scarce, the nightly water hour shrunk, and the government was stingier with the heat. The only thing that seemed to increase was the number of soldiers patrolling the streets.

16. What was the significance of the Soviet Union's new programs: *glasnost*—meaning openness—and *perestroika*—restructuring?

When even Gorbachev instituted political and economic changes across his vast country, it seemed that no country in the Eastern Bloc could remain the way it was.

17. How was Adriana affected by gaslighting—a form of *zersetzung*? Why was this an effective weapon of the secret police?

Adriana thought she was going crazy when photos and brooches went missing, and slipper baskets and book bags disappeared from one spot and reappeared in another. The secret police's psychological harassment included tapping phone lines, placing mysterious calls, installing bugs, and making unnecessary deliveries. The subjects would stop trusting themselves and feel defeated.

18. The revolution began 15 December 1989 in Timișoara and ended 22 December 1989 in Bucharest. How do you think unarmed people were able to be victorious over the military and the secret police?

There is no logical explanation for it. A lot of factors came together for it to happen. People were finally fed up enough that they were willing to take a stand. The fall of Communism across Eastern Europe caused Romanians to think it was their turn. The courage of the people in Timișoara emboldened the people in Bucharest. The people would not have won the victory if the army hadn't turned on the secret police.

19. Do you think Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu received a fair trial? Why or why not?

Not very fair, but it was much more humane than the way they'd treated their own people.

20. In the last chapter (pages 305-306), each of the characters states what they hope for most with their newfound freedom. List some of the areas where they wished to see change occur.

Freedom of speech, to hear news of the outside world, to not have someone always listening and watching, to be free to travel to other countries, to have a better life (food, water, electricity, and heat), freedom to choose what to study, to care for disabled relatives, freedom of worship, and the return of the monarchy to their country.

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