

Worth a Thousand Words Writing Activity
Part I

Write for fifteen minutes about one of the images. Who is this person? Where are they? What are they doing? What do they want? Base your story on what the photograph inspires in your imagination.



When you finish writing, share your piece with the class! On the next page, we will discover the true stories behind these famous photographs.

***Worth a Thousand Words* Writing Activity**

Part II

The Real Stories!

The top photograph, taken by Gerald Waller, was published in Life Magazine in 1946. The photo captures the joy of Werfel, a six-year-old Austrian orphan, as he receives a much-needed pair of shoes after the end of World War II. It's unknown where Werfel ended up.

Ruby Bridges was the first black child to desegregate the all-white William Frantz Elementary School in Louisiana. She had to be escorted to school by several U.S. Marshals. One of the marshals later said it was the proudest moment of his life, and Bridges grew up to be a Civil Rights activist.

Now discuss!:

How did your story or your imagination compare with the reality behind the picture?

What does it tell you about the phrase "A picture is worth a thousand words"? Do you agree with that phrase? Does a picture say more than words can?

***Worth a Thousand Words* Discussion Questions**

1) Jake tells himself all kinds of stories about what could have happened to his dad. At the end of the book, he reveals that he held back information from Tillie about a fight between his parents. Do you think Jake knew what happened to his dad all along? Do you think he believed many things all at once? What stories do we tell ourselves in order to feel better?

2) Jake tells Tillie that she's so afraid of being made fun of and left out that she doesn't let people care about her or be her friend. Do you ever feel afraid of making new friends? Do you think people are more judgmental or less judgmental than you assume?

3) Tillie's parents react in opposite ways to the car accident. Her mom worries too much, and her dad grows apart from her. What do you think would have been the best way to deal with the car accident? Is there anything Tillie's parents do *right*?

4) Photography keeps Tillie at a distance, always observing others. However, even though she considers herself very observant, she's often wrong about what people are truly feeling. Why do you think this is? Do you think it's important to observe *and* socialize, or is one more important than the other?

5) Tillie gets in trouble with her parents for taking pictures of them and others without their knowledge. Do you think Tillie went too far? Do you think her dad was too hard on her? Where do you draw the line when it comes to photographs and privacy?

6) One of the themes of *Worth a Thousand Words* is forgiveness. We all make mistakes, and we're all human. What do you think makes Tillie decide to tell her dad that she forgives him? Do you think it was important that she tell him she forgives him?