

CRUSADES_KIDS @ THE CROSSROADS

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LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Extra Blog Posts

Ask students to pretend to be Hans and write a short blog post (around 300 words) about a part of his journey. Some possible topics:

- A typical day on the road
- Hans's favorite thing about Genoa; how it felt to see the sea for the first time
- The first conversation between Hans and Otto in the monastery

2. A Different Point of View

Ask students to choose a different character from *Crusades* (for example, Nicholas or Margarete) and write a short blog post (around 300 words) about one of the events in the book from that character's perspective. Things to consider:

- How would your character view Hans? For example, what does Margarete think when she first meets Hans? Does Nicholas notice Hans, or does he have too many followers to remember them all?
- What does your character think about the situation? For example, how does Margarete feel when Hans leaves her with the nuns? Is she relieved or sad? Is she planning on returning to her family? How does Nicholas feel when some of his followers start leaving him? Is he worried that his crusade will fail, or does he still believe that he will succeed?

3. Class Discussion

Have students discuss the structure of the book. Some questions to ask:

- Why did the author choose blog posts to tell this story?
- How are blog posts similar to and different from book chapters?
- Do you think this literary technique (blog posts) worked? Why or why not?
- Some books are written as diaries (for example, *Leslie's Journal*, *Go Ask Alice*, Anne Frank's *The Diary of a Young Girl*). How are blog posts different from a diary?

4. Blog Research

Ask students to prepare a presentation on blogging. Things to consider:

- Why do people blog?
- What are some common topics for blogs?
- How can you tell if a blog is popular?
- How can you judge whether or not a blog is a reliable source of information?
- How are blogs different from newspapers and magazines?

Extra Credit

For extra credit, let students research free blogging websites (such as Livejournal and Blogger) and set up their own blog accounts. They can post their blog entries from the Learning Activities above, or create a class blog.