



Activity One

Coping With Diabetes

Peter's grandmother, Mrs. Bruning, is a diabetic. Although in the majority of cases this disease can be controlled through medication, it seems that Mrs. Bruning is not very responsible in taking her medication (insulin) as prescribed by her physician. As a result, Peter and Debbie are faced with a huge, complicated crisis.

Diabetes affects more than 20 million Americans.

Over 40 million Americans have pre-diabetes (early type 2 diabetes).

There are three different types of diabetes, but common to all three types is the fact that the body's pancreas does not produce enough insulin for the body to function properly. Fortunately, there are now drugs like insulin that diabetes sufferers (like Mrs. Bruning) can take to help cope with the disease.

Certainly, diabetes is something that all of us would like to avoid getting, and there are things most people can do to help in this regard.

Your task is to do a further investigation of diabetes. You are then asked to create an **informational pamphlet** that will assist the general population in identifying:

- a) **symptoms** of the disease to alert those who might be suffering from it;
- b) **risk factors**, forewarning people as to how they might possibly avoid getting diabetes;
- c) **treatments** for the disease.

Your pamphlet should be professional in appearance and include the important information outlined above. It should also contain at least one relevant picture or diagram.



Activity Two

Hector, the Musician/Songwriter

Hector seems to really enjoy music and learning how to play the guitar. As he picks up more chords and improves his technique, his confidence also seems to grow by leaps and bounds until he decides he is ready to perform publicly at the block party.

During his first few days as a guitar player, Hector experiments with a number of genres of music. These included folk (*This Land is Your Land*), calypso, samba, Latin, Caribbean and Hawaiian.

In addition to these types of music, there are, of course, many others. These include:

- Rock
- Hip-hop
- Country
- Bluegrass
- Jazz
- Blues
- Cabaret
- Celtic
- Gospel
- Classical
- And countless others

**Music washes away from the soul
the dust of everyday life.**

—Berthold Auerbach

Music is what feelings sound like.

—Author Unknown

Your task is to conduct at least three **interviews** of people you know to determine their favorite genre(s) of music and the reasons for their preference. You may also wish to include one or two of their favorite examples from their chosen genre.

Your report should be about a half-page in length.



Activity Three

Character Growth (or not)



One of the great things about reading a well-written novel is the opportunity of getting to know the characters. As is often true in real life, many fictional characters are afforded the opportunity to grow and mature as they face the difficulties and challenges of life. Others, however, remain the same shallow people they were when first introduced to us — and still others may even regress in this regard.

“You can easily judge the character of a man by how he treats those who can do nothing for him.”

—James D. Miles

In ***Criss Cross***, we meet a number of very interesting characters. Most are teens, but some (like Mrs. Bruning) are older. The author, Lynne Rae Perkins, has a definite knack for presenting a good variety of personalities in her novel: from the shy, introspective Debbie; to the shallow, self-centered Dan; to the nerdy Hector.

Your first task is to choose one character from the novel from whom you felt a growing affinity and admiration. Describe how this feeling you had for the character developed, citing examples from the novel. Now, choose a second character from ***Criss Cross*** — one that you had difficulty developing a solid respect for. Describe why you felt this way about this person and again provide examples to support your choice.

Your report should total approximately one-half of a page.





Activity Four

The Lightning Bug

In Chapter 38 of the novel, Debbie and her friends enjoy capturing a number of “lightning bugs” and putting them in a ventilated jar for observation.

Lampyridae is a family of insects in the beetle order that are commonly called **fireflies** or **lightning bugs**. A chemically-produced light from the lower abdomen may be yellow, green, or pale-red and is used to attract mates or prey.



There are 2,000 species of firefly found in temperate and tropical environments. Many are in marshes or in wet, wooded areas where their larvae have abundant sources of food.

Fireflies, also known as glow worms, tend to be brown and soft-bodied, often with the forewings more leathery than in other beetles.

Your task is to prepare an **information card** (similar to a baseball or hockey card) for the lightning bug. Your card should contain an appropriate labeled, colored picture on the front. The back should contain at least four interesting facts about the lightning bug. These facts could pertain to its appearance, diet, enemies, habitat, etc.



Activity Five

Casting Director

- **This activity can be done with students working in small groups.**

Imagine you are the casting director for a movie company planning to do a film version of this novel. You are to cast all of the major roles for the movie and must choose one of the following two scenarios.

- a)** For the list of characters in the box below, choose an appropriate Hollywood actor to fill each role and write a brief explanation as to why you chose this particular actor.

OR

- b)** For the list of characters below, choose an appropriate person from your own school to fill each role and write a brief explanation as to why you chose this particular person. For this assignment, you might choose fellow students (including yourself), teachers, principal, custodian, etc.

Roles

- **Debbie**
- **Patty**
- **Hector**
- **Rowanne**
- **Lenny**
- **Peter**
- **Meadow**
- **Mrs. Bruning**
- **Phil**
- **Dan**
- **Pastor Don**
- _____
- _____

NAME: _____



Activity Six

Sprechen Sie Deutsch?

- This activity can be done individually or in small groups.

Mrs. Bruning often reverts to her first language (German) when in conversation with others — especially when she is excited or confused. In the course of the novel, we have the opportunity to learn a few German phrases from her.

Using resources found in your school library or on the Internet, find the meaning of the words in the box, translating from German to English or English to German, as required. (Some meanings you may be able to derive from the novel itself.)

In the space provided, find more English or German words and their translations.

Have fun!

GERMAN	ENGLISH
Dummkopf	
danke	
	good-bye
bitte	
	Why?
nein	
	hello