***The Safest Lie*** by Angela Cerrito – **Lesson 2** (Chapters 1-7)

**Summary:** In 1940, Nine-year-old Anna Bauman and her parents struggle to survive in the wretched conditions of the Warsaw ghetto in Poland during World War II. During this time, German soldiers (under the direction of Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler) have occupied Poland and many Jewish people are being taken away to camps every day to work or largely to be killed. Sickness, despair, and starvation are commonplace. Living conditions were miserable. Jolanta (real-life code name for the famous Irena Sendler, a resistance fighter and Polish Catholic social worker) offers to smuggle Anna out of the ghetto. Anna’s parents must make a heart-wrenching decision.

**Vocabulary**

Ghetto – On October 12, 1940, the Germans established a “ghetto” in Warsaw, Poland. A ghetto is an enclosed section of the city, where Jewish people were isolated and held by force.

**Learn more about conditions in the Warsaw ghetto**:

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/warsaw>

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/ghettos>

**Discussion Questions – Answer the following questions in your journal or discuss them.**

1. What are conditions like in the Warsaw ghetto?
2. What are some of the ways that Anna and her family cope with life in the ghetto?
3. Anna reminisces about what life was like for her family two years ago. What kind of life did the family have before they were forced to move into the Warsaw ghetto?
4. In Chapter 3, Anna describes waiting in line for the bathroom with her parents, to do something “dangerous.” What was so dangerous to do in the ghetto?
5. We become acquainted with Anna’s teacher Ms. Rechtman and some of her students. When Jolanta brings three vaccinations against typhoid fever, who does Anna suggest should receive the typhoid vaccination and why?
6. What very difficult decision do Anna’s parents have to make?
7. How does Anna feel about becoming “Anna Karwolska?”
8. What are some of the preparations Anna must make to escape from the ghetto?