

Discussion Questions:

Name: _____

Period: _____

Ch. 16

After Sasha accidentally breaks the nose of a plaster bust of Stalin, he thinks his life is over and he will never become a pioneer. What conditions led him to think this way?

Ch. 17

Why is Sasha's first instinct to write a letter to Stalin in his head? Where does his respect and desire to follow Stalin come from? _____

Ch. 18

When it is discovered that Stalin's bust has been vandalized, Nina Petrovna asks her students to write a list of suspicious names to hand to the authorities. How does this relate to the situation in which Sasha's father was arrested? What kind of atmosphere might this behavior create?

Ch. 19

The principal gives a speech to the school. Sasha says that usually he agrees with everything that he says, but this time he thinks that he has gone too far. Why did Sasha have a change in opinion?

Ch. 20

Why does Sasha hesitate to give himself up to the authorities? Think about a time where you did something and did not want to own up to it. How was it similar to Sasha's situation? How is it different? _____

Earlier in the book we learned that Finkelstein's parents were arrested and sent to the Lubyanka prison. Do you think Finkelstein made the right choice by confessing to a crime that he did not commit? Why did he confess? _____

Ch. 21

Sasha admits that there is a possibility that Finkelstein's parents were arrested by mistake, just like his dad. How many were unfairly arrested during these times? What feelings would you have if you had lived in the same situation?
