Week 3 at a Glance

Reading for the week:

Echo pages 1-161 (Chapters 1-20)

Answer comprehension questions in the Student Workbook.

Lessons:

Titles, introductions, and conclusions to personal essays

Parts of speech: adjectives

Brainstorming and topic choice for research papers

Doing research

Composition: Finish the personal essay.

Optional Materials:

Recordings of Brahms' Lullaby, "Alle Vögel Sind Schon Da," Bach's Cello Suite Number 1, and Bach's Cantata no. 147

Spaetzle and/or apple strudel

Week 3: *Echo* Unit 1

Day One

Reading

Today's reading is pages 1-30 of *Echo*.

Note that the book uses the word "Gypsy" because that is the word that would have been used in this time and place. I will use the currently preferred term "Romani."

Comprehension Questions

1. The opening scene is set "fifty years before the war to end all wars." What war is this referring to?

   World War I. (It's OK if students have to research this answer. But it's important that they understand the setting.)

2. Who are Eins, Zwei, and Drei?

   They are three characters in a story but also three girls Otto meets.

3. What special talent do the sisters have?

   They sing beautifully.

4. What does Otto get from the Romani?

   Otto gets a book and a harmonica.

5. What do the sisters have to do to be free of the witch's spell?

   The sisters have to save a soul at the moment of death.

Lesson

Today's lesson is on titles, introductions, and conclusions to personal essays.

Answers to workbook pages

There are no workbook pages today, but students should use today's lesson in their composition.

Composition

Today students finish the rough draft of their personal essay.

Day Two

Reading

Today's reading is pages 37-77 (chapters 1-5 of Part One) of *Echo*.

Comprehension Questions

1. What is Frederick nervous about in the opening of Chapter 1?

   Frederick is nervous about walking to work on his own.

2. Frederick misses many things about his sister, Elisabeth. Name at least two.

   Any two of the following: playing music with her, their late-night talks, reading a novel together, playing Binokel (a card game), and her cooking. Students may also give answers such as she is kind to him or she always defends him or she loves him. These are not explicitly stated, but they are reasonable inferences from the text, and I would count them as correct.

3. What is Frederick ashamed of?

   Frederick is ashamed of his birthmark.

4. How old is Friedrich?

   Friedrich is twelve years old.

5. Why did Ernst join the Nazi Party?

   Ernst joined the Nazi Party because if he hadn't he would have been sent to a concentration camp and his factory would have been shut down.

6. Friedrich feels different emotions when he is in the graveyard. Name one of them.

   Any one of the following: curiosity, puzzlement, fear, pleasure (on finding the harmonica). I would also accept nearly synonymous answers such as anxiety or hope. If a student has a different answer, ask them to support it from the text.

Lesson

Today's lesson is on adjectives.

Answers to workbook pages

Students are to write a single noun that encapsulates each adjective-noun phrase. Multiple answers are possible for each. I have given sample answers, but any single-noun answer that works is fine. For example, for number 1, any flower that can be red is acceptable. Of course, sometimes there can be debate (is a seagull large enough? should it be an emu?), but some answers will clearly be wrong (not a hummingbird).

1.	Red flower	**rose**		4.	huge house	**mansion**
2.	Tall tree	**redwood**		5.	comfortable shoes	**flipflops**
3.	Prickly plant	**cactus**		6.	large bird	**seagull**

Composition

Today students rewrite the rough draft focusing on content and organization. Are the title and introduction strong? Do they intrigue the reader and announce the topic? Is the conclusion interesting? Does every paragraph speak to the point of the story? Are the nature and degree of the student's fear clearly expressed in the story? Does the story provide some sort of resolution to the fear or lesson learned? (A lesson learned is not required, but it can be a nice touch.)

Is the story clearly organized and told? It does not have to proceed strictly chronologically. Students may choose to start with the climax or directly before the climax, then backtrack to tell the beginning of the story. But however they choose to tell it, by the end of the paper the order of events must be clear in the reader's mind.

By the end of today, students should have an improved rough draft.

Day Three

Reading

Today's reading is pages 78-118 (chapters 6-12) of *Echo*.

Comprehension Questions

1. Elisabeth says several shocking things to her father and Friedrich. Name two.

   Any two of the following: she is not going to stay home but is going to Berlin, she requested the transfer herself, she has joined the League of German Girls (a Nazi organization), she thinks some kinds of music are degenerate, she wants Friedrich to join the Hitler Youth, the family members she has been staying with share her views, she is hoping for a leadership position, she understands and supports the new law, she plans on getting sterilized because of it, she would report her own family as disloyal if questioned.

2. What disturbing discovery does Friedrich make?

   Friedrich finds a paper with his name and birthdate, stating that he died.

3. Why did Friedrich's mother insist on keeping his epilepsy a secret?

   Friedrich's mother knew he would have enough to deal with because of his birthmark, and many people were superstitious about epilepsy.

4. Friedrich's father experiences several emotions about Elisabeth and her revelations. Name three.

   Any three of the following: amazement, shock, surprise, anger, rage, concern, fear. Other answers in the same vein are also reasonable. If students say something different (for example, pleasure or pride), ask them to support their answer with the text.

Lesson

Today's lesson is on choosing a topic and thesis statement for a research paper (which students will begin next week).

Answers to workbook pages

There are no workbook pages, but students will use today's lesson in next week's composition.

Composition

Today students rewrite the rough draft with a focus on word choice for nouns and verbs. Are all nouns and verbs as specific as they need to be? This does not mean every noun and verb should be as specific and vivid as possible, but that the specificity should match what the student is trying to communicate at that point. Most often, students tend to be too vague when greater specificity would communicate a clearer picture to the reader. But it is possible to be too specific and clutter or confuse the point of the story.

By the end of today, students should have an improved rough draft.

Day Four

Reading

Today's reading is pages 119-161 (chapters 13-20) of *Echo*.

Comprehension Questions

1. What does Anselm want Friedrich to do?

   Anselm wants Friedrich to go to a Hitler Youth meeting.

2. What might save Friedrich from having to be sterilized?

   If Friedrich is admitted to the music conservatory, he might avoid sterilization.

3. Why won't Rudolph play music with Joseph?

   Rudolph won't play music with Joseph because Joseph is Jewish.

4.   Who tells the authorities that Friedrich and his father are planning to leave?
   Anselm tells the authorities.

Lesson

Today's lesson is on doing research, evaluating sources, taking notes, and rewriting sources.

Answers to the workbook pages

There are no workbook pages, but students should use today's lesson in next week's composition.

Composition

Today students write their final draft.

Paper Check-List

☐   The story communicates a time the student was afraid.
☐   The nature of this fear is clearly shown.
☐   The story is easy to follow.
☐   Nouns are well chosen with regards to impact and specificity.
☐   Verbs are also well chosen.
☐   Any grammar and mechanics the student knows is correct.

Day Five

Today is a free day to use however you choose. Finish any unfinished work from the week, review, explore some of the ideas below, or simply take a day off language arts.

Extending the Lesson

Get a harmonica for each student with an instruction booklet and simple songs to learn.

Find the Black Forest and the Swabian Alps on a map. Locate Trossingen, Munich, and Berlin.

You can find rules for the game Binokel (mentioned in Chapter 1) online. And if you can figure them out, much less successfully teach them to your students, I doff my hat to you.

Find a recording of "Für Elise" for students to listen to (a piano solo).

Listen to some music from Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty*. (You can play this music in the background during class.)

Listen to a recording of Brahms' Lullaby.

Listen to a recording of "Alle Vögel Sind Schon Da." (You'll need to google the German title, not the English translation.)

Listen to Bach's Cello Suite Number 1.

Listen to Bach's Cantata no. 147. Or listen to the final chorale, "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring."

Have some spaetzle and/or apple strudel. (Spaetzle is not too hard to make from scratch, but strudel I would buy premade unless you are a dedicated baker.)

In the story, Friedrich is threatened with sterilization because he has a birthmark and had seizures as a small baby. This was the Nazi policy of eugenics. But official policies of eugenics were not restricted to Nazi Germany. In fact, many states in the US had eugenics laws on their books for decades in the 20th century. Discuss eugenics with students. In what circumstances has it been practiced in the US? In what ways was it the same here as in Nazi Germany, and in what ways was it different? Do students think there is ever a good reason for state-enforced sterilization? Is there any sort of compensation the state can make to those it has unjustifiably sterilized? I have placed this here rather than as a discussion question because I recognize that not all teachers will feel comfortable raising these issues with students. Also, there may be more than discussion here, as students may need to do research. (If you wished, you could even assign this as the topic for the upcoming research report – or allow it as a possibility.)