

Literacy Skills Teacher's Guide for

Patriot Games

by
Tom Clancy

Book Information

Tom Clancy, Patriot Games
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The C. I. A.'s Jack Ryan battles terrorists in England, Ireland, and America.

Topics: Adventure, Survival; Community Life, Politics; Community Life, Violence; Family Life, Misc./Other; Popular Groupings, Upper Grades Popular Authors/Starred Reviews

Main Characters

Admiral James Greer and Marty Cantor Deputy Director of Intelligence for the CIA and his assistant

Alex Dobbens the American contact man for the ULA who helps set up operations within the United States

Cathy and Sally Ryan Jack's wife and daughter

David Ashley, Dan Murray, Bill Shaw, and James Owens various intelligence officers in the United States and Great Britain

Dennis Cooley a book store owner in London who passes intelligence information to the ULA

Geoffrey Watkins a employee of the British Special Intelligence Service who leaks information to Dennis Cooley

Jack Ryan a history professor at the Naval Academy at Annapolis who occasionally does contract work for the CIA

Kevin O'Donnell the leader of the Ulster Liberation Army (ULA) and a former PIRA member

Sean Miller an operative for the Ulster Liberation Army

Sissy and Robby Jackson friends of Jack and his wife Cathy; Robby is a temporarily grounded Navy pilot teaching at Annapolis

Vocabulary

anomaly departure from the regular arrangement, general rule, or usual method

dichotomy division into two parts, groups, or classes

intransigence refusal to compromise

nascent beginning to form or develop: said of ideas, cultures, etc.

pariah any person despised or rejected by others

treason betrayal of one's country

Synopsis

Jack Ryan, a history professor and former Marine, disrupts a terrorist attack on the Royal Family while on a working vacation in London. Jack is shot during the incident and spends approximately two weeks in the hospital and then a while longer in London until he can testify in the trial of a captured terrorist, Sean Miller.

After the trial Jack, his wife, and young daughter return home to Annapolis, Maryland. Life gets back to normal for the Ryans, while at the same time, the terrorists manage to rescue Miller from prison as he is being transferred to another prison. Restless for something to do and bent on getting revenge on Jack Ryan, Miller convinces his organization, the Ulster Liberation Army (ULA), to plan an attack on Jack and his family in the United States.

Jack briefly thinks his family may be in danger but dismisses the idea because no Irish terrorists have ever operated within the United States. After quickly planning the attack on the Ryans with the assistance of an American, Alex Dobbens, the ULA attempts to carry out the plan. Though they fail to kill the Ryans, they do manage to seriously hurt Cathy and Sally by causing their car to crash on the highway. Driven by his anger with the ULA, Jack asks to see CIA files on the group. By doing so he agrees to return the favor and help the CIA with the case.

Not happy to have failed, Miller and the ULA again plan to get revenge on Jack Ryan and complete the kidnap attempt of the Prince and Princess of Wales when they visit the United States. As an "unscheduled" activity, the Royals go to the Ryans'

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house one night for a meal. The combination of all their targets in one place gives the ULA the perfect chance to accomplish all their goals at once. However, foiled by events and people they had not accounted for, the ULA again fails to accomplish their mission and they fall into the hands of American authorities. Jack finally feels he has won the battle against him and Miller, but decides to join the CIA full-time in order to prevent future terrorist activities around the world.

Open-Ended Questions

Use these open-ended questions as the basis for class discussions, student presentations, or extended writing assignments.

Initial Understanding

The ULA was known among intelligence circles as an anomaly because they operated in ways that contradicted the traditional behavior of Irish terrorist organizations. List the ways they varied from other groups.

They went after the Royal Family, didn't advertise their operations, and operated in the United States. They also were extremely patient and meticulously planned, prior to their run-in with Jack Ryan.

Literary Analysis

Jack and Cathy are invited one night to view the traditional locking-up ceremony in the castle of the Queen. It is explained that the ceremony has been carried out since the year 1240. Tradition is very important to the British. Explain why tradition would be more ingrained in England than in the United States.

There are many reasons, but the most obvious include the relative youth of the United States and the ethnically mixed heritage of America. The United States is thousands of years younger than England, and therefore has not had the time to form such strong traditions. America was formed by people from many different countries who brought different cultural and ethnic histories with them. These have generally blended and adjusted as the society developed in the United States.

Inferential Comprehension

When Jack takes a walk in London he realizes there are ways to tell he is an American. Reread the first four pages and find the things that signal he is American. Discuss what other things might make an American easy to spot in London or another foreign country. Discuss ways foreigners would stand out in the United States.

He looked the wrong way when trying to cross the street; he didn't carry an umbrella; and he wore a new three-piece suit. He had a different accent, didn't know the streets, etc.

Constructing Meaning

In different places in the story the ULA is described as an extremely professional organization. The irony of this concept as applied to terrorists is debated. Define a professional and list the characteristics of a professional. Compare these to what you know about the ULA. Debate whether they deserve to be considered professionals or not.

In one sense, a professional is someone who does his job extremely well and with great pride. In this sense, the ULA falls into that category, but professionals are generally considered people in legitimate professions that require proper formal education. The ULAs don't necessarily fall into that category.

Teachable Skills

Understanding Hist./Cultural Factors During one conversation with Jack Ryan, the Queen wondered why Jack helped the Royal Family during the attack on them. By asking this question, Jack realizes she is implying that she doesn't understand why he, as an Irishman, would help protect the British royalty. The question and implication offends Jack, and he points out the danger of the generality. He tells her that many Irish in the United States are respectable and responsible. What would have made the Queen assume Jack was like her perception of all other Irishmen? How is her

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experience with Irishmen different than Jack's?
Discuss the history of the problems between England and Ireland. Discuss possible solutions to the problems.

Understanding the Author's Craft Paddy O'Neil was considered a mouthpiece for the Irish terrorist organization known as the Provisional Irish Liberation Army. Agent Donoho had tried for years to convince his uncle that Paddy was just as bad as the men who actually carry out the terrorist activities. Discuss whether a distinction should be made between the people who get their hands bloody and those who don't but aid the group by raising the funds necessary for them to operate. List and discuss other situations where people try to ethically distinguish themselves from their cohorts just because they don't "pull the trigger" so to speak. Good examples of this are gun and drug dealers.

Drawing Conclusions Throughout the story, the CIA refers to satellite photos to gather information about terrorist activities around the world. The images are clear enough to conclude certain things about the people, places, and things in them, however, they are not quite clear enough to identify people with absolute certainty. These same satellites pass over the homes of people throughout the world, included the United States. Imagine what the satellites would see when they pass over your home, city, school, etc. Create a picture of what you think the satellite would see at different times throughout the day and what conclusions could be drawn by outsiders from your pictures.

Differentiating Fact and Opinion During his trial, Sean Miller's lawyer tries to cast doubt on the intentions of his client at the scene of the ambush. He tries to develop the possibility that Miller was merely a passerby also trying to help, like Jack Ryan. Develop arguments for and against this possibility; be sure to determine exactly what concrete evidence the prosecutor has or doesn't have. Stage a mock trial for the defendant.