**How do situations in the novel mirror parts in our own lives?**

An important part of reading is making connections between the ideas and themes in the text to our current way of living. Even though the crusades happened 1000 years ago, we can see some situations that we are still dealing with today.

Instructions: Look at the following ideas and themes that come from the story and indicate what you have learned about these concepts. In a group of two, choose 6 issues to expand on. If you can, use a modern day example to clearly demonstrate your understanding. You can discuss these ideas with a partner and write down your ideas in a well-developed paragraph.

1. Religion
2. Bullying
3. Persuading people
4. Being different
5. Illiteracy vs. literacy
6. War and violence
7. Class structure
8. Politics
9. Intellectual strength vs physical strength

Each group will be required to take the ideas from the paragraphs and present their thoughts to the class in a mini presentation.

Sample paragraphs

Religion:

The Christians in the story believe “God Wills It”(the Crusade). This means taking over land that now is controlled by another religion. However, the question is, whose side is God on? Does God want Christians to kill other people? The problem today is certain people believe that their religion is superior to another person’s religion. Thereby, some people are judged as less human because their religion is different or misunderstood. This prejudice can also lead to terrorism. In addition, certain people who put their faith in science can also feel intellectually superior to people who believe in God.

Bullying:

The issue of bullying arises in the story when we realize that Verity and Elizabeth are being bullied by Lemmet. Ursula, who claims to be a healer, feels she needs to get involved; but Bruno says, “it’s not our concern.” We notice how difficult it is to get involved in someone else’s problems, but Ursula of course is strong willed and does get involved. Today, bullying still happens and it still difficult to speak up and, thereby, stand out, if we notice a person being victimized. Helping out has consequences as well and a person needs to be strong to be able to deal with them.