



# The Unexpected Heroine

## READ ALOUD GUIDE

**Themes:** Courage, Heroism

**Book Brief:** The true tale of a brave girl who fights for her country.

**Author:**  
Storytime

**Illustrator:**  
Adam Pekalski

## BEFORE READING

**The Cover:** Ask students to make a prediction about the story based on the cover and title.

**The Pictures:** Take a brief picture walk and ask students what they notice.

**Prior Knowledge:** Ask, “Have you ever surprised someone by doing something brave? How might that feel?” Explain to students that this story is about real events, but it is told like a story with characters, a setting, and events in order.

**Vocabulary:** Frontload Tier 2 words using the accompanying [Vocabulary Guide](#).

**Purpose for Reading:** “As we read, think about the ways in which Joan showed courage.”

## DURING READING

**Check for understanding & make connections:**

- Describe the village in France during this time. What was it like? What was taking place?
- Why are Joan and her family feeling scared?
- What decision(s) did Joan make? How does this show courage?

## AFTER READING

**Our Purpose:** “How has Joan become an inspiration for those who are fighting for peace?”

**Extending Our Thinking:** Have students write a journal entry from the perspective of Joan. Ask, “Imagine you are Joan the night before she meets the Dauphin. What thoughts, hopes, and worries would you write in your journal?”

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- Encourage them to continue to discuss it and refer to it in other lessons and conversations.
- Let them explore more about the topic by reading other books with similar themes, structure, characters, or content.