

Before-reading questions

- 1 *Reader's own answer.*
- 2 *Reader's own answer.*
- 3 *Reader's own answer.*
- 4 **Model answer:** It is on Fifth Avenue between 33rd and 34th streets in Manhattan, New York. It has 103 floors and is 381 meters tall. It took only one year and forty-five days to build. About four million people visit the building every year.
Reader's own answer.
- 5 a true b false c true

During-reading questions

CHAPTER ONE

- 1 A singing and talking kettle, a very small helicopter, a parachute with a motor, a new kind of skyscraper. He invents things to make himself feel better.
- 2 September 11th 2001, because it is the day of the attacks on the World Trade Center and Oskar's father died in the attacks.

CHAPTER TWO

- 1 May 21st 1963 in New York airport
- 2 **Model answer:** The writer was an adult when he wrote the letter, so this person must now be an older man. It could be Oskar's grandfather or another person in the family. The woman in the café says that his name is Thomas.
- 3 The writer of the letter was in love with Anna, the older sister of the woman he now marries. Also, they are both from Dresden in Germany.

CHAPTER THREE

- 1 He finds a small key inside a blue glass vase in his father's closet.
- 2 The word "Black" is written on the envelope. Walt thinks it is a name, and Oskar thinks it is a clue to who owns the lock that the key opens.

- 3 Because he wants to keep the phone messages that his dad left on the phone, but hide them from his mother.

CHAPTER FOUR

- 1 Traveling on buses, subways, and trains; bridges; tall buildings
- 2 Because Oskar doesn't like to go up tall buildings, and Aaron Black is very sick and can't come down to Oskar.

CHAPTER FIVE

- 1 His "unborn child"
- 2 Because he feels that he can't stay with his wife and unborn child in New York. He has decided to leave them and return to Germany.

CHAPTER SIX

- 1 Because he thinks Grandma will find it funny, but also because he needs the attention.
- 2 She is very worried about Oskar because his father has just died, but Oskar's father is also her own son and she is upset about losing him.
- 3 Ron is Oskar's mother's friend or boyfriend.

CHAPTER SEVEN

- 1 **Model answer:** Mr. Black is a very old man who lives upstairs in Oskar's apartment block. He used to be a journalist. His wife died a long time ago, and he is lonely. He hasn't left his apartment for twenty-four years. He can't hear very well, and he speaks very loudly.
- 2 Oskar thinks Mr. Black could help him by coming on the Lock Mission.

CHAPTER EIGHT

- 1 She has "gone", and this probably means that she died in the September 11th 2001 World Trade Center attacks, because she worked in a restaurant there.
- 2 Because Oskar's dad had a meeting in the restaurant where Agnes worked, on the day he

died. Oskar thinks it is possible that they met each other and maybe even died together.

- 3 Because it makes him feel better. He is upset thinking about Agnes Black, and is also nervous about traveling on the subway.

CHAPTER NINE

- 1 December 4th 1978, in Dresden, Germany
- 2 What he sees and experiences upsets him and makes it very difficult for him to talk and love again.

CHAPTER TEN

- 1 It slowly moves away from New York, toward Antarctica, and is lost.
- 2 Engineers put big hooks into it and people pull it from the Sixth Borough into Manhattan to save it.
- 3 **Model answer:** It is a story about loss, change, and missing people. It is also about belief and trust.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

- 1 She is one of the Blacks on Oskar's list and she lives on the eighty-sixth floor of the Empire State Building.
- 2 They are both old, they are both lonely because their husband or wife has died, they have both stayed in one place without leaving it for a long time, and they both say they are not very good with people.
- 3 Because Mr. Black has been coming with him on the Lock Mission, but now he has told Oskar that he is not going to come with him again.

CHAPTER TWELVE

- 1 He finds hundreds of empty envelopes. They are all from Dresden, Germany, and are addressed "To my unborn child" or "To my child." They are written between May 31st 1963 and September 11th 2001.

- 2 The renter is Oskar's grandpa. The renter wants to know what Oskar thinks of him.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

- 1 The phone message is from Abby Black, the second "Black" that Oskar visited. She left the message months ago, on the day that Oskar visited her.
- 2 The question was, "Why hadn't Mom said anything? Or done anything?" The answer is that his mother knew everything about the Lock Mission and didn't need to ask him.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

- 1 Because Oskar has the key that William has been looking for during the last two years.
- 2 He met him in September 2001. Oskar's father bought a blue glass vase from him in a street sale.
- 3 That Oskar's father called while Oskar was in the apartment, but Oskar was too frightened to answer the call.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

- 1 The first time he lost everything was in 1945 when he saw his parents and Anna for the last time. The second time he lost everything was when he discovered that his son was dead.
- 2 Oskar is Thomas's grandson, but Grandma means that she does not want him to know Oskar because Thomas ran away from her, her son, and her grandson.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

- 1 Ron's wife and daughter died in a car accident. He and Oskar's mother met at a group for people who have lost family.
- 2 All the letters that Thomas Schell has written to his son over the years.
- 3 She tells Oskar that she spoke to his father just before he died.

After-reading questions

- 1 *Reader's own answers.*
- 2 **Model answer:** Oskar is a clever young boy who is very sad and frightened because of his father's sudden death. At the beginning of the story he is very upset and frightened and is angry with his mother. During the story he faces many of his fears and shares his story with many people. He slowly learns to accept his father's death and by the end of the story he feels much closer to his mother.
- 3 **Model answer:** Thomas Schell really wanted to talk to his son but found it very difficult. He sent the empty envelopes because it was the only way of connecting that he could manage. It was too difficult and upsetting for him to send the letters, so he wrote them but did not send them.
- 4 *Reader's own answer.*

Exercises

CHAPTERS ONE AND TWO

- 1 1 e 2 c 3 d 4 g
5 b 6 a 7 f

CHAPTER THREE

- 2 1 c 2 a 3 d 4 b
5 f 6 g 7 e

CHAPTER FIVE

- 3 1 Thomas Schell **used to love** going to the airport to pick up magazines for his wife.
2 Thomas **hoped** that he and his wife **would be** happy together.
3 **Since** very early in their marriage they **have had** lots of rules.
4 Thomas believes he **will never be able to** see his son's face.
5 Thomas **has been trying** to tell his son that he is sorry **for** years.
6 The letters to his son **might not ever arrive** in New York.

CHAPTERS SIX AND SEVEN

- 4 Oskar wanted to play a ¹ **joke** on Grandma so he hid in the park. After that, Grandma went home and put a note in her window. Oskar used his ² **binoculars** to read it. He then went to visit her and he rang the ³ **doorbell**. When she answered she looked upset. He didn't tell her about his ⁴ **inventions**, the Lock Mission, or the plan to ⁵ **dig up** his father's coffin. Next he went to see Abe Black, and he decided to go on a ⁶ **roller coaster**. After that he went upstairs in his apartment building to visit Mr. Black. Mr. Black was a very old man and wore ⁷ **hearing aids**. But he still had a very good ⁸ **memory** and told Oskar about when he used to be a ⁹ **journalist**.

CHAPTER TWELVE

- 5 1 Oskar is sad that he **can't** talk to his mom about the Lock Mission.
2 Oskar knows that he **shouldn't** touch the envelopes in Grandma's bedroom, but he opens some of them.
3 "**Can** I tell you my story?" Oskar asks the renter.
4 Oskar **had** to tell a lot of lies to people when he was on the mission.
5 Oskar **doesn't have to** tell the renter all his secrets, but he decides to.

CHAPTERS THIRTEEN AND FOURTEEN

- 6 1 **Mr. Black** has stopped coming on the Lock Mission.
2 **Oskar** has had an idea and makes a new plan.
3 **The renter** has agreed to help Oskar with his new plan.
4 **Abby Black** has been waiting for Oskar to come and visit her again.
5 **Mom** has been watching Oskar and talking to all the people he visits.
6 **William Black** has been looking for a key for two years.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

7 1 b 2 e 3 c 4 d 5 a

Project work

Reader's own answers.