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Cold War on Maplewood Street

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Book Review

Title: Cold War on Maplewood Street

Author: Gayle Rosengren

Reviewer: Amanda Shrum

Publisher: G. P. Putnam's Sons

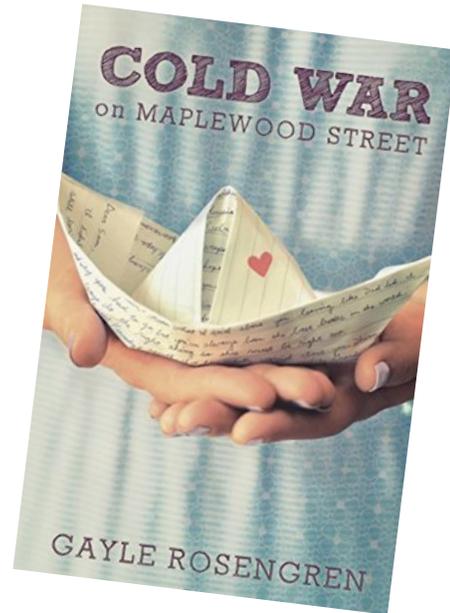
Publication Year: 2015

ISBN: 9780399171833

Number of Pages: 180

Interest Level: Intermediate

Rating: Excellent



Review

The Cuban Missile Crisis was one of the two tensest weeks in American history. Gayle Rosengren used her own memories to recreate how the event affected average Americans in *Cold War on Maple Street*. The novel begins with Joanna hearing that the Russians are sending missiles to Cuba. Although the entire neighborhood is frightened, the news affects Joanna deeply as her brother Sam is in the Navy and stationed on one of the ships involved in the stand-off. Joanna tries to continue going about life as usual by focusing on parties and cute boys, but drills at school and frightening news updates get in the way. The fear makes everyone react differently. It causes Joanna to forgive her brother for leaving, befriend the old lady who lives next door, and grow closer to her mom. By the time the crisis is announced to be over, Joanna realizes how much it changed everything.

Cold War on Maple Street is an excellent introduction to the Cuban Missile Crisis. The event itself is explained in a way that is easy to understand. While it may not seem relevant to young, modern readers, Rosengren effectively creates a relatable story about how differently people react in times of crisis. As war in today's world usually feels very distant from American soil, young readers can benefit from a tale about how the effects of conflicts can be felt no matter where they happen, as well as ways to cope with fear and anxiety. This book is perfect for middle school history teachers wishing to introduce the time period and situation in American history to their students, or other realistic historical fiction readers.