



## TEACHER'S GUIDE

### POPASNA - A TOWN WHICH DOESN'T EXIST

#### PREPARE TO READ

##### 1. Get students' attention

- Ask students what they already know about Ukraine, Luhansk and the Donetsk region.
- Tell students that Popasna was a small village in southern Ukraine with a large railway junction between Luhansk and Donetsk.
- Show students some before and after photos of the town from page 5, then elicit their reactions. Write notes on the board.

##### 2. Connect to students' experiences

This can be done in the native language or English.

- Say that today students will learn more about one of the destroyed Ukrainian towns.
- Ask Ss to complete a K-W-L chart (know, want, learned). See handout from page 6 of this lesson.

##### 3. Guess: What will happen?

- Tell students the title of this story. Ask, "Why do you think the town doesn't exist now?"

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- Ask: “What do you think the writer will say is a special quality of Popasna?” Write some guesses on board so they can be reviewed after reading. Note that even if a guess is incorrect, predictions make our brains more active while reading.
- Say: “Now let’s listen to the story and see what we can learn about Popasna.”

### READ & LISTEN

#### 1. Identify and mark

- Have students underline each of the good things the story says about the town.
- Have students circle the bad things that happened to the town.

#### 2. Identify and react

- As you play the audio recording, have students stand up whenever they hear a sentence about rebuilding the town.

### RESPOND

#### 1. Check understanding with specific questions

- Ask, “Where is Popasna situated?” Show the map at the end of this lesson plan to confirm students’ understanding.
- Continue with other questions:
  - “How many people lived in Popasna before the war?”
  - “What kinds of jobs did people have in Popasna?”
  - “How does the writer feel about the invasion?”
  - “What gives the writer hope for the future?”

#### 2. Talk more about the story

- Ask students what they liked, what made them think, what parts they want to read again.
- Clarify vocabulary from the story: appreciate, refurbish, fertile, erase, Nazi, Soviet Union, rebuild.
- Ask students to revisit their KWL chart (page 6) and write what they learned. Ask for some volunteers to share what they have written.

### **3. Create a Story map**

#### **Set up**

- Give students a copy of the story map on page 7.

#### **How-to**

- Say, "We're going to explore our knowledge about Popasna now with the help of the story map."
- Explain: "There are 3 parts in it 1- Features of Popasna Before the War, 2 - Events During and After the War, 3 - Hope for Rebuilding"
- Divide students into small groups and give each the materials you have chosen for them.
- After a given period of time, ask the groups to present the information they have gathered and explain how it has added to their understanding about the topic.
- Example:

#### ***Features of Popasna Before the War:***

- Cozy and developing town
- Lyceum 25
- "Unity of Hearts" bridge
- School, locomotive depot, train repair workshop, bread factory
- Agriculture businesses
- Forest walks and pond swims
- Population over 30,000 by 1974

#### ***Events During and After the War:***

- Russian occupation in 2022
- Destruction of the town
- Erasure from maps
- Previous occupations (Soviet rule, Nazi occupation)
- Rebuilding after World War II
- Previous population decline due to Soviet policies (1932-1933)

#### ***Hope for Rebuilding:***

- Belief in the town rising again
- Resilience despite past hardships
- Quote: "nothing shall burn the living record of our memory"

## **EXPAND**

### **1. Other Destroyed Towns**

#### **Set up**

- Share the news story, The Ukrainian Cities Obliterated In Russia's Self-Proclaimed 'Liberation' <https://www.rferl.org/a/ukraine-destroyed-cities-russia-war/32454453.html>
- Depending on the country where you are teaching, find a city or town that was once settled but no longer exists. Print or share a story in English about the place.

#### **How to**

- Ask students to choose a town from the story and make a story map about it based on the example of page 7.
- Have students present the story map about the town they chose orally to the class.

#### **Variation**

- Post the story maps on the wall of the classroom or in a hallway to share with other classes.

## Popasna Before and After

### Popasna's central square in June 2018



### Unity of Hearts Bridge



### A Pond in Popasna



### Apartment Building After Bombing



### Inside a Ruined Home



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Before you read, think about the topic. What do you know already about it? Write it in the K column. Ask yourself, "What do I want to know about the topic?" Write it in the W column. After you read, think, "What did I learn?" Write it in the L column.

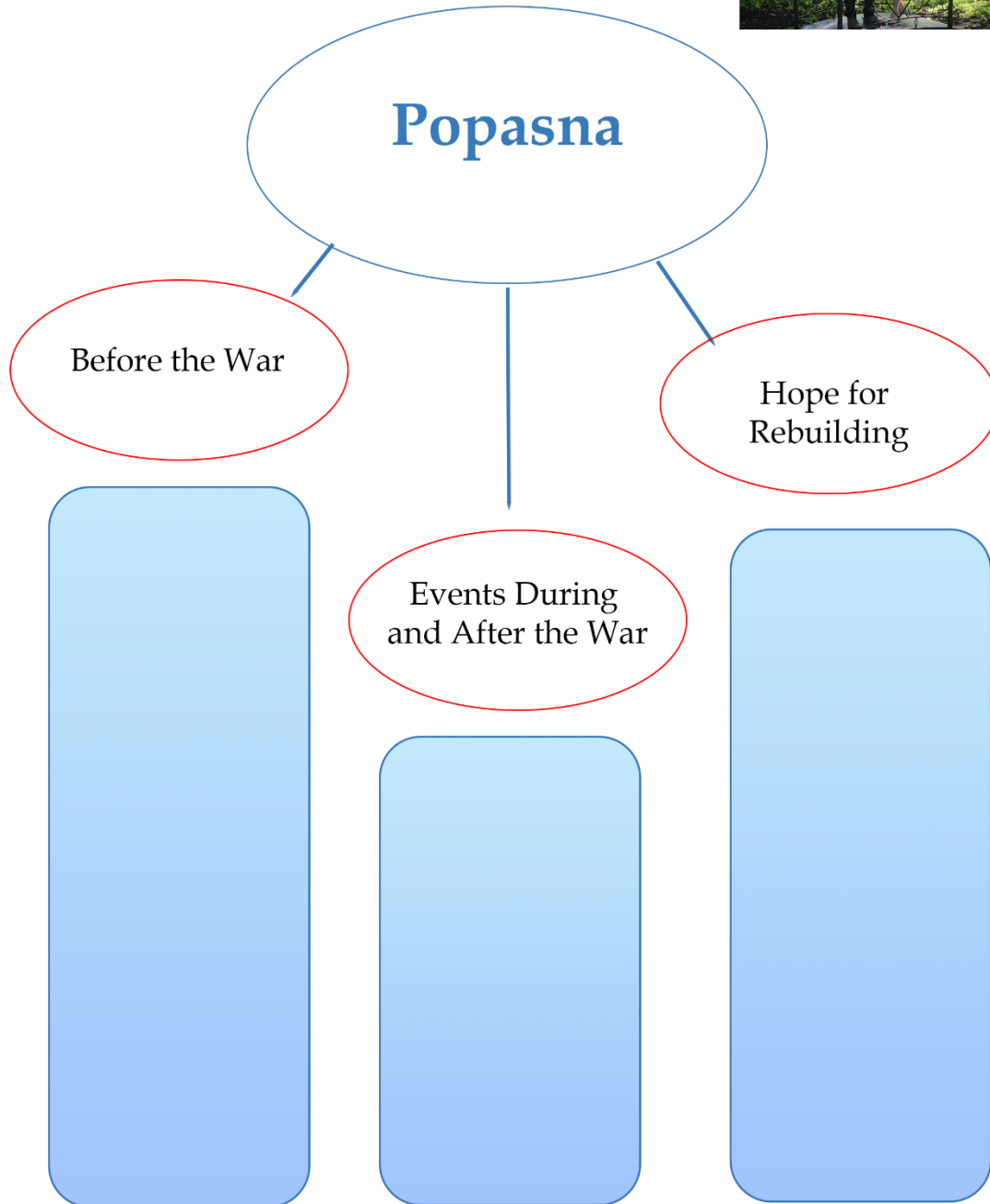
<b>K</b> Know	<b>W</b> Want to Know	<b>L</b> Learned

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List the things the writer says about the three different parts of this story.



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