

**After the Wall Teaching Materials**  
**Literature about the *Wende* and the**  
***Montagsdemonstrationen***

**Resources**

Jana Hensel (2002) *Zonenkinder* (Hamburg: Rowohlt), pp. 11-13.

Erich Loest [first published 1995] (2009) *Nikolaikirche*, 13<sup>th</sup> edition (Munich: dtv), pp. 490-492.

**Comprehension Questions: *Zonenkinder***

1. Which event is Hensel describing?
2. What is the main focus of Hensel's account? How do you think this focus would be different if the account were from an adult's perspective?
3. What different feelings does Hensel experience during the event? Find some quotations to explain your answers.
4. Which terms does Hensel use to refer to the GDR in the extract? What do these tell you about her sentiments about East Germany?
5. Hensel begins her account with the words, 'am letzten Tag meiner Kindheit'. What do you think she means by this?
6. Hensel often uses the personal pronoun 'wir' throughout the extract. Who do you think this refers to? Why does she use 'wir' instead of 'ich'? In your opinion, is it possible for her personal memories to be representative of a larger group? Why (not)?

**Comprehension Questions: *Nikolaikirche***

1. Which event is being described in the extract from Loest's text? Whose perspective is Loest writing from?
2. How does Bacher feel about these events, particularly about those organising them? Support your answers with quotations from the text.

3. How does the SED respond to the situation?
4. What is Bacher's opinion about the SED's approach to the demonstrations? Support your answers with quotations from the text.
5. Is there anything surprising about the extract? Are the SED's feelings and responses to the demonstrations as you expected?
6. What do you imagine Bacher is feeling during these events? Draw from the text to explain your answer.

### **Comparing the Texts/Questions for Discussion**

1. What are the differences and similarities between the two accounts of the same event?
2. How do you imagine the two characters responded to unification? Who do you think would have found the transition easier? Why?
3. What have you learned from each text? Which one do you think is the most useful for learning about how people experienced the events leading up to unification?
4. Which text do you think would be the most popular among young east Germans? Why?
5. Why do you think so many younger east Germans have published texts about their childhoods? Do you think such texts are useful? Why? What advantages and limitations do they have for presenting an image of the GDR?

### **Class Activity**

As a class, think about an event which happened when you were children and which you all remember (e.g. a big news story). Each write a paragraph explaining how you remember the event, and then compare your memories as a class. Think about these questions:

- How do your memories differ?
- What has influenced the ways that different people remember the same event?
- Does this activity make you think differently about memories of the GDR? Why and how?