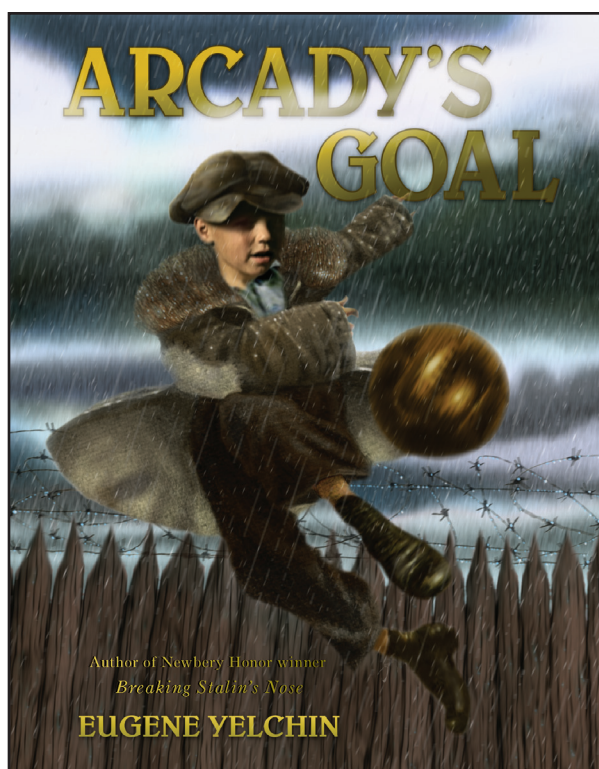


# A TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR ARCADY'S GOAL

FOR  
USE WITH  
COMMON CORE  
STATE  
STANDARDS



Grades: 4-7 • Ages: 9-12  
HC: 9780805098440 • \$15.99

## ABOUT THE BOOK

For twelve-year-old Arcady, soccer is more than just a game—it is a means of survival. Scoring goals wins Arcady food rations and respect at the orphanage for the children of the enemies of the Soviet state. But Arcady wants out, and he is determined to achieve his goal. In Soviet Russia, achieving one's goal always comes with strings attached, but Arcady never expected those strings to tug at his heart.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Eugene Yelchin is the author and illustrator of the Newbery Honor book *Breaking Stalin's Nose*. Born and educated in Russia, he left the former Soviet Union when he was twenty-seven years old. He lives in California with his wife and children.

To attain specific Common Core grade-level standard for their classrooms and students, teachers are encouraged to adapt the activities listed in this guide to their classes' needs. You know your kids best!



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## PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Before reading *Arcady's Goal* have students mark their opinion of the following statements below. Then place posters around the four corners of your room that correspond with the rankings and discuss the answers as a class, allowing kids to move between their answers.

Statement:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	WHY I think this:
Kids are always treated fairly by adults.					
Fear helps keep people safe.					
It's important to stand up for what's right.					
Adults are wrong sometimes, too.					
Having someone on your own team is often more important than winning.					

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- (CHAPTER 1) List all the clues about what each day is like where Arcady lives and plays soccer after reading chapter one. Then put a star by the things you think will be most important in the story.
- (CHAPTER 4) What do we learn in chapter four about why the children are in a government-run home? Butterball tells the kids to “show their loyalty and gratitude.” What does he mean by this? Why should they?
- (CHAPTER 5) Describe the game between Arcady and Akim. Why do you think the inspector stands up for Arcady?
- (CHAPTER 6) When Arcady goes to ask for the extra rations he's earned, what happens? What can readers infer about Arcady's parents? What inference can you make about how Arcady's been treated by the way he acts?
- (CHAPTER 7) Why does Arcady pretend to be Fedor Brutko? Do his friends think he should trust the inspector? Do you think he should? Why or why not?
- (CHAPTER 11) Explain how and why Arcady acts the way he does at his first meal in his new home. What can you infer about food in the children's home?
- (CHAPTER 12) Why does talking about soccer end up with Arcady crying? Do you have a dream as big as his?
- (CHAPTER 13) What does Arcady believe about the man? What do you think is the truth? Why can't Arcady believe he wants to raise him like his own son?
- (CHAPTER 14) Explain what Arcady means when he says “Birds wouldn't do a thing like that to each other. Leave it to people” (page 87).



10. (CHAPTER 16) Explain how a gift of a uniform shows that Arcady was not taught to read. How do you think he feels with Ivan learning this secret?
11. (CHAPTER 19) Why do you think Ivan has “doubts about himself” but not about Arcady? Do you have doubts about yourself? Does Arcady seem to have any?
12. (CHAPTER 20) What does Arcady believe will happen if he fails to score? Why does he believe this? What happens with the other kids when they look at the comic?
13. (CHAPTER 24) Why did Ivan feel envious of the other fathers? What does Ivan want? What does Arcady want? Why are these two things in conflict (or opposite)?
14. (CHAPTER 26) Why won't the athletic director sign the letter for Arcady to try out for the team? How does Ivan react? What does the director give Arcady? Why do you think he does this?
15. (CHAPTER 28) What questions does Arcady have about Ivan? Why? Has he drawn any conclusions about Ivan?
16. (CHAPTER 29) What happened to Ivan's wife? How was he taught a lesson by the guards? How did Arcady “wake him up”?
17. (CHAPTER 32) Compare and contrast Arcady and Ivan. How are they alike? How are they different? When you look at both lists should they get along as well as they do?
18. (CHAPTER 33) What does Arcady imagine as he practices? What happens to the ball?
19. (CHAPTER 35) Describe what happens in the tree. What does Arcady do? Why can't he yell for help? What happens?
20. (CHAPTER 36) In the end, where are Ivan and Arcady headed? What do you think will happen at the tryouts? Does it matter if Arcady makes the team? What new important word is introduced to Arcady and makes him smile for certain?

CCSS: SL.5.1.A, SL.5.1.C

## POINT OF VIEW: THE VIEW FROM WHICH A STORY IS TOLD

In reading partners, ask students to discuss how *Arcady's Goal* would be different if told through the eyes of each of the characters in the chart below.

Butterball	Ivan	Freckles

### Follow-up Question

How does point of view influence what a reader thinks or understands about events and other characters in the story?

CCSS: RL.6; SL.5.1.A, SL.5.1.C



# SUMMARIZING: A KEY TO UNLOCK COMPREHENSION!

Summarizing what happened in a chapter or section will help a reader to understand and remember it. After reading each chapter, ask students to write a summary of what happened on a sticky note. Then split the class into pairs and compare each summary with a reading buddy, and then revise together on a separate sheet of paper.

## DEFINITION

**SUMMARIZE:** RETELL the KEY parts of the chapter in just a sentence.

(Hint: This is what you would TELL YOUR FRIEND if they forgot to read the chapter.)

### Example:

#### Ch. One-sentence summary:

1 Arcady is playing an intense game of one-on-one soccer to win an extra portion of bread, which he ends up giving back to the boy he won it off of.

CCSS: RL.2; SL.5.1.A, SL.5.1.C

## THEME: THE LESSONS IN LITERATURE

After reading the entire book and summarizing each chapter, provide teams with the following definition of *theme*, then complete the activity as a class.

## DEFINITION

**THEME:** The meaning or truth about life shown in a story through characters' choices rather than told directly to the reader.

Then ask each team to read through the summaries of each chapter and make a list of the three most important choices or decisions that Arcady makes in the whole book. Once each team has finalized its list have them fill out the chart below for each choice or decision.

List two to three bigger ideas shown by these choices or decisions.	Write a sentence about what you think the author is trying to say to readers about each of the bigger ideas. This is often the lesson hidden in the events of the story. The main character usually teaches us this lesson.
Example: Risk taking	Sometimes you have to take a risk with your heart to win, too.
1.	
2.	
3.	

CCSS: RL.2; SL.5.1.A, SL.5.1.C



## INFERENCES: BE A READING DETECTIVE!

Inferences are conclusions that a reader makes about something by reading closely and following the clues. It is something you know without being told. Sometimes it takes detective work. Have students look closely at the following scenes from *Arcady's Goal* and ask them to draw an inference from the text. The first two have been completed for you as examples. Expand the activity by selecting other scenes from the text for the class to examine.

Scene:	An inference that can be made:	Clue and evidence that make me believe this to be true:
<b>Ch. 1 Arcady plays hard to win an eighth of bread.</b>	They must not get much food to eat where he lives.	Picture of the bread in his hand and "I look up to see his eyes shiny from hunger" and "an eighth of bread, our daily ration."
<b>Ch. 5 The inspector yells at Butterball.</b>	He must actually care about the children who live there.	"How could you be so cruel?" "He's only a child!"
<b>Ch. 11 Arcady eats and eats until he feels sick.</b>		
<b>Ch. 17 Arcady breaks the glass window with the new ball.</b>		
<b>Ch. 29 Ivan's wife, Natasha, was accused of being a spy.</b>		

CCSS: RL.1; SL.5.1.A, SL.5.1.C