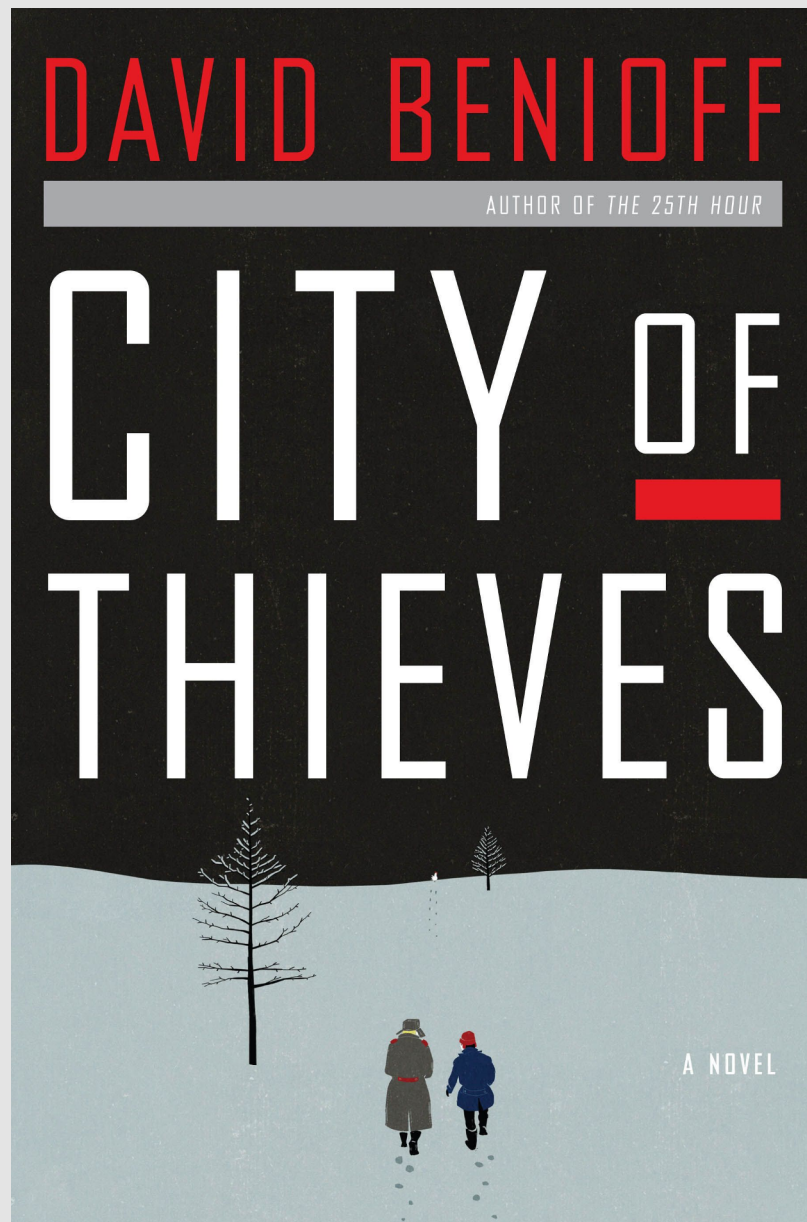


Emulation Handbook



A Russian teenager, Lev Beniov, gets caught looting the corpse of a German soldier and was sent to a local jail known as the Crosses. There, he meets his cell mate and best friend, Kolya, a supposed deserter of the Red Army. After a night of getting acquainted, the thief and deserter awaited certain death. However, the colonel gave them a special deal: if they could find him a dozen eggs that could be used for his daughter's wedding cake, he'll let them free. A seemingly odd request, but eggs were almost unseen in the deprived city of Piter. For the next week, Lev and Kolya embark on an epic journey finding those eggs--facing death, building friendship, and growing up as young men.

Component #1 - First Person Perspective

Excerpt

“Darkness and solitude generally didn’t frighten me. Electricity was rare as bacon in Piter those days, and my apartment in the Kirov was empty now that Mother and Taisya had fled. The long nights were dark and quiet, but there was always noise somewhere. Mortars fired from the German lines; an army truck motoring down the boulevard; the dying old woman upstairs moaning in her bed. Awful sounds, really, but sounds— something to let you know you were still in this world. That cell in the Crosses was the only truly silent place I’d ever entered. I could hear nothing at all; I could see nothing. They had locked me in death’s waiting room.” (19)

What Is This Element?

The story is told through the first person perspective. The protagonist, Lev, is sharing his experiences through his point of view. We see what he sees, hear what he hears, and get influenced by his thoughts.

Why Does It Matter?

This is important to the book because it pays respect to the origin of the story and lets us see the world through the protagonist’s eyes. In the prologue, the author explains that this story is based off of his grandfather’s adventures in his teenage years during World War II. The foundation of the book is based off of what his grandfather told him. The story is specifically about his life. It is what makes this book unique from any other book that is set around the same time era.

What's The Impact On The Reader?

The target audience of this book are teenagers. Making the story told through the perspective of another teenager makes it a lot more comforting and relatable, and it shows that people share common thoughts and ideas despite living in different parts of the world and at different times. At some point in our lives, we all feel alone and helpless, just as Lev did in this scene.

When learning about history, through sources such as textbooks, everything is told in the third person. Everyone tells history as a thing of the past, making it feel distant and irrelevant. This story is told through the first person perspective, giving us insight on some of the minor details about people’s lives that textbooks typically find too insignificant to cover. This makes the story a lot more personal, and as a result, more interesting.

Component #2 - Flashbacks

Excerpt

“When I was six, the club coach declared me a talent. For several years I was one of the top-ranked young players, winning little ribbons and medals at tournaments throughout Leningrad Oblast... When I was fourteen, I quit the club. I had learned that I was a good player but would never be a great one. Friends of mine at Spartak, whom I had beaten consistently when we were younger, had left me far behind, advancing to a plane I could not access no matter how many games I played, how many books I read, how many endgame problems I worked on in bed at night... A brilliant player understands the game in a way he can never quite articulate; he analyzes the board and knows how to improve his position before his brain can devise an explanation for the move... Chess became far more fun once I no longer had to worry about my citywide ranking.” (43)

What's The Impact On The Reader?

Whenever we start a new book, we don't immediately understand the whole story. The process is gradual, and we slowly learn more and more as we read. Over time, context becomes enriched and the plot becomes clearer. Books that have linear plots are often very boring, as they tend to follow a “then... after...” structure. In this book, there are flashbacks. This element makes the reader feel more knowledgeable and allows them to better understand Lev's story by explaining interesting details of his past life. This specific flashback stands out because it addresses a problem that many people face: at what point is committing to something no longer worth it?

What Is This Element?

Throughout the book, there are numerous flashbacks scattered about. This specific one pertains to Lev's background with chess: how he used to play competitively but eventually quit due to the realization that he could never be the best.

Why Does It Matter?

This is important to the book overall because it gives insight on Lev's background. The book begins a couple months after the war had already started, so we don't immediately learn what his life was like before. Instead, we gain that knowledge bits and pieces at a time through his flashbacks. As a result, we learn more about his past, and it provides a stronger contrast between life before and during the war. In the book, Lev describes that “You have never been so hungry; you have never been so cold.” This puts emphasis on the contrast.

Component #3 - Simple Sentences

Excerpt

“I thought the girls would be pleased, but when they heard the news they exchanged worried looks. Their life of the past few months was over now. They would have to run without knowing where their next meal would come from or where they would sleep. Millions of Russians could say the same, but things were worse for the girls. If the Germans caught them again, they would suffer a harsher punishment than Zoya had.” (142)

Why Does It Matter?

This is important to the book because it is told through the perspective of a teenage boy and based off of the story that the author’s grandfather had told him. The average teenage boy doesn’t speak like an English or History professor on a daily basis. Simple sentences of thought or description really fits the character. Another reason why it’s important is because the story was told through the author’s grandfather, someone who is likely in their seventies. No matter how memorable an event could be, small details here and there are bound to be

What Is This Element?

Most of the book is written just like this — simple sentences, typically with at most 1 comma.

What's The Impact On The Reader?

The reserved use of commas in sentences makes the reader feel more confident about their reading. Sentences that typically use more than three commas at a time are very compact and talk about several things at a time. This is a recipe for confusion. When readers are confused about an event that happens in a book, the rest of the story would be out of context. By reducing a majority of sentences to simple, one comma lines, the author is making the book much more readable and caters to a larger audience.

My Emulation

Education At It's Worst

In my early years of school, I had a hard time as an English learner. While I was born in America, I moved to China for the first four years of my life. When I returned, I found myself lost and confused in this foreign place. I didn't know what the kids in school said, and struggled to express my thoughts. One thing was for sure, however: I wanted to be like the smart kids in class.

Over time, I developed self discipline through competition. It put me on the right track and helped me maintain a good work ethic. It was no longer about bringing good grades home for my parents. Whenever I got a good grade on a test or did good on a project, I felt a sense of accomplishment. I didn't have that before. I began to really care about my education. As a result however, I became extremely concerned when I had teachers who I felt was not doing their job.

First person perspective:

My author wrote his story in first person. This story is also told through the first person perspective, and it gives insight on the life of a student who is having problems with a teacher. Not every kid likes school, in fact, most don't. Sometimes, it's because they don't understand its importance, other times, it's simply because they aren't motivated to learn. Students feel comforted when they find out that they aren't the only ones who struggle to find a reason to learn.

Simple sentences

In my author's story, most of the sentences were simple: typically with at most one comma. In my story, I had made sure to do just that. I'm hoping that it helps make the story straight-forward and easier to understand.

My Emulation cont.

I remember it was a cold, November afternoon, and we were just transitioning from Science class. As we shuffled into our seats, the teacher gave instruction.

"Today we're going to watch a fun little cartoon on the American Revolution," Ms. Carol announced. The atmosphere of the class changed immediately. Silence swept across the room. Typically, students love when teachers let them watch videos during class. It's a nice little break from the usual lectures. But watching videos in her class meant something different.

"You're responsible for taking at least eight sentences worth of notes and writing a one paragraph summary on the video," she added. It was the same assignment we've had for the past week. I think at least half the class knew it was coming.

Although I never quite enjoyed the concept of school as a whole, I understand why it exists. While the idea of school is right, but there are examples in which teachers fail to show students its importance. As a result, they soon lose motivation and end up never appreciating its existence. Lucky, I've had teachers in my life who have shown me how learning can be exciting. Thanks to them, I have come to understand that education is an invaluable experience.

Flashbacks:

There are a lot of flashbacks that my author had included in his story. In my story, there is also a flashback. It details a specific experience that shows how the narrator in my story had struggled with finding motivation in school.

About The Authors

David Benioff

Born in New York City, David Benioff is an American novelist, screenwriter, television producer and director. He is widely known as the co-creator and showrunner of the acclaimed award-winning HBO series Game of Thrones. He has written several novels, including The 25th Hour and City of Thieves



William Huang

Born in Philadelphia, William Huang is a high school student attending Science Leadership Academy. He is a gamer, music enthusiast, and excellent procrastinator. As a life-long learner, he is always looking for a great book to read.

