

Vocabulary

Retrieval

Inference

Clarify

Visualise

Note

Coventry Cathedral

by Jo Franklin

Part 1



Vocab inference:

What does this expression mean? Why not just say, 'in the middle'? **I**

Retrieval/ Prior

knowledge: What date does that bring us to? What was happening at the time? **R**

Explain 'incendiary'

Designed to cause fire **V**

Link back to 'the heart of the City' 'inferno' **I**

Why were the people underground? **I**

Visualise: what does 'shell' imply? **Vi**

Why 'picked'?

Consider a quick mime of this manner of walking **V**

Explain 'reverend' if necessary **V**

What does 'they' refer to? **I**

The place known as 'Coventry Cathedral' is actually two buildings situated in

the heart of the City of

Coventry. The old cathedral was

a medieval church that was consecrated as a cathedral in 1918, but it only stayed that way for 22 years.

On the night of 14th November 1940, during World War II, the Luftwaffe launched a devastating attack on the manufacturing city of Coventry. More than five hundred German planes dropped high explosive and incendiary bombs in a relentless assault. The city was on fire and at the centre of the inferno Coventry Cathedral was ablaze.

In the morning, when the people crawled out of the underground bomb shelters, they were shocked and shattered. Not only had the buildings been destroyed, the spirit of Coventry's citizens had been decimated.

The cathedral was a ruined shell. As its stonemason, Jock Forbes, picked his way through the smoking rubble, he found two charred beams lying in the shape of a cross. He bound them together and propped them up on an altar of rubble.

On the same morning, a young reverend also walked through the ruins. He found three hand-forged nails, which came from the old cathedral and had survived the firestorm. Fashioned into a cross, they were a reminder to Christians of the crucifixion and a symbol that faith can survive and flourish even in the face of terrible events like the Coventry Blitz.

Clarify meaning of 'manufacturing city' **C**

Clarify: 500 planes, each dropping many bombs **C**

What do these words mean in this context? Note difference from lighter colloquial use **V**

What does 'its' refer to here? And what is a stonemason? **I**

Guide visualisation here. **Vi**

Clarify: Nails made by hand, not in a machine - therefore very old **C**

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Part 2

New beginnings

On Christmas Day 1940,

Provost of Coventry Richard

Howard declared in a BBC

radio broadcast that when the war was

over, the people of Coventry and Britain should strive for

reconciliation with their enemies rather than to seek revenge.

He led the city away from feelings of bitterness and hatred

towards forgiveness. The Coventry Cross of Nails became

a symbol of reconciliation.

The decision to rebuild the cathedral was made on the morning

after its destruction. The new St Michael's Cathedral was

designed by Basil Spence in a modernist style. Rather than building

on the foundations of the old church, the design incorporated

the ruins of the old cathedral as a garden of remembrance. The

foundation stone of the new cathedral was laid by Queen Elizabeth

II in 1956 and the building was consecrated in 1962. It is

built from the same type of sandstone as the old

cathedral, creating a unity across both buildings.

A Charred Cross was set up in the

garden of remembrance behind the

altar of the ruined building and the

neutral words 'Father Forgive' were

engraved into the wall behind it. The

original Cross of Nails sits in the high altar

cross in the new cathedral.



Check back to the date of the bombing and note how soon after this is **R**

Clarify 'Provost': leader - usually of a college **C**

Vocab inference: encourage inference from context **I**

Clarify meaning **C**

What does this suggest about the people's determination? **I**

Prior knowledge: relate to similar locally

Clarify vocab 'not supporting either side in a conflict' **C**

Infer from context **I**

Recall this from previous session

Infer from context **I**

Clarify meaning 'declared sacred' **C**

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Part 2

A community of peace

Clarify

community: Check understanding of 'community' **C**

Note: that this is not long after the end of the war

Recall meaning from previous readings **V**

Clarify: not organised; just a friendly way of passing on the message **C**

Clarify: The basis for a belief that guides how people behave **C**

Retrieve and infer: How often? What does this suggest? **R**

Note: how important this is

In September **1947**, Provost Howard visited **Kiel in Germany** and presented a Cross of Nails to the church of St Nikolai. In return he was given a stone from Kiel's ruined church. Further Crosses of Nails were presented as gifts of friendship and **reconciliation** to churches in Dresden, Berlin and other cities destroyed by British and Allied forces. In subsequent years, more Crosses of Nails were gifted to many organisations across the world.

The gift of The Cross of Nails started as **an informal gesture** of friendship and hope, but in 1974, the Community of the Cross of Nails was formed. The community **is made up** of over 200 churches, charities, peace-building centres, educational and training organisations inspired by the Coventry story of destruction, rebuilding and renewal. All are active in promoting peace, justice and reconciliation.

What does the switch to present tense tell us? **I**

The three guiding **principles** of the Community of the Cross of Nails are: healing the wounds of history, learning to live with difference and celebrate diversity, and building a culture of peace.

A series of prayers called the Litany of Reconciliation is read **every day** in Coventry Cathedral and throughout the Community of the Cross of Nails.

