

# GUIDELINES FOR USING HOLOCAUST LITERATURE WITH MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

## Book Suggestions

### Evaluation Strategies

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. *The Boy Who Dared: A Novel Based on the True Story of a Hitler Youth*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2008. ISBN-13: 978-0-439-68013-4. Helmuth Hubener was a German teenager during World War II. He listened to foreign broadcasts and distributed pamphlets based on the information he heard. For these illegal activities, he was condemned to death. On the day of his execution, Helmuth sits in prison. As he waits, his memories are seen as flashbacks told in the third person. He reflects on his life in Hamburg, Hitler's rise to power, his Mormon beliefs, and the events that led to this day. (ages 12 and up)

Codell, Esme Raji. *Vive La Paris*. New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2006. ISBN: 0-7868-5124-4. Paris McCray is a fifth grader with four older brothers, a musician father and a mother living in Chicago. Paris enjoys reading and playing the piano, and takes lessons with her neighbor Mrs. Rosen, a Holocaust survivor. Her brother Michael accompanies her to the apartment. When Mrs. Rosen gives Paris the yellow star she had to wear during World War II, Paris' ignorance of the Holocaust and what the star means results in a faux pas of major proportion. As she learns about the Holocaust, she becomes aware of her error and gains even more respect for Mrs. Rosen. From her studies, she sees that ignorance and violence must be faced and stopped, and she intercedes with the bully who is bothering her brother. When Mrs. Rosen does not show up to hear Michael sing at his school talent show, Paris realizes she has died. Mrs. Rosen bequeaths all her sheet music to Michael, and sets up a trust fund so that Paris can visit The City of Lights when she gets older.

Fitzgerald, Stephanie. *Kristallnacht, The Night of Broken Glass: Igniting the Nazi War Against Jews*. (Snapshots in History). Minneapolis: Compass Point Books, 2008; ISBN: 978-0-7565-3489-9. Excellent resource that includes a timeline with hour by hour events of November 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, 1938. Gives enough background and information about what happened afterward without losing focus on the subject matter. Straightforward presentation makes the narrative very effective in relating the fear and horror wrought by the Nazis. (ages 12 and up)

Fleischman, Sid. *The Entertainer and the Dybbuk*. New York: Greenwillow Books, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 2007. 180 p. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-0-06-134445-9. When the spirit of a 12-year old Jewish boy, murdered by the Nazis, possesses the body of an American GI traveling through Europe as a second-rate ventriloquist, the pair is able to unmask the Nazi responsible for the boy's death. (ages 12 and up)

Levine, Karen. *Hana's Suitcase*. Toronto: Second Story Press, 2002; ISBN: 189676455X. This is the true story of a Tokyo Holocaust education center that receives a suitcase from Auschwitz as an artifact for display. The director travels to Europe and Canada to get information about Hana's childhood and meet with her brother. Chapters alternate between the activities in 2000 Tokyo and Europe in the 1930's and 1940s. (ages 8-12)

Steele, D. Kelley. *Would You Salute?: One Child's Story of the Holocaust*. Statesville, North Carolina: Hidden Path Publications, 2005; ISBN: 0-9711534-2-6. The title question is posed by the protagonist of the book, Margot Wimpfheimer, the daughter of a Jewish father and a Christian mother growing up in Germany. When Hitler comes to power, her idyllic life changes gradually as people "do the

salute," wear uniforms, and become openly anti-Semitic. The family's possessions are confiscated by Nazi soldiers and her father is prohibited from practicing medicine. Margot's father commits suicide, and Nazis do not bother Margot and her mother. At the end of the book, the reader finds out that Margot and her mother came to the United States in 1939 and settled in New York. (ages 8-12)

Zullo, Allan and Mara Bovsun. ***Survivors: True Stories of Children in the Holocaust***. New York: Scholastic, 2004; ISBN: 0-439-66996-0. Eight stories of young survivors are disturbing for their graphic details, but also an inspiring tribute to the human spirit. (ages 13 and up)

## Books for Younger Readers

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. ***Hitler Youth: Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow***. New York: Scholastic, 2005; ISBN: 0-4393-5379-3. This well-researched, large-format book describes the rise of Hitler and the Nazi Party, and World War II and its aftermath, through the eyes of twelve ordinary young people in Germany including those who participated in the Hitler Youth movement and those who resisted. (ages 12 and up)

Forest, Jim. ***Silent as a Stone: Mother Maria of Paris and the Trash Can Rescue***. Illustrated by Dasha Pancheshnaya. Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2007; ISBN-13: 978-0-88141-314-4. An Orthodox Christian nun saves children by having them hide in trash collector's bins to be transported to safe havens. (10-14)

Little Sugar, Amy. ***Willy & Max: A Holocaust Story***. Illustrated by William Low. New York: Philomel Books, 2006; ISBN: 0-399-23483-7. This heartwarming tale of kindness, truth, honesty, and friendship during the Holocaust also introduces readers to the widespread theft and looting by the Nazis of artwork belonging to European Jews. (ages 8-12)

Rubin, Susan Goldman. ***The Anne Frank Case: Simon Wiesenthal's Search for the Truth***. Illustrated by Bill Farnsworth. New York: Holiday House, 2009; ISBN: 978-08234-2109-1. When a performance of *The Diary of Anne Frank* was staged in Austria in 1958, it was disrupted by booing and assertions that the diary was a forgery and a fraud. Using his photographic memory and investigative skills, Wiesenthal sets out to find the Gestapo officer that had arrested the Frank family. He interviews people in Holland, searches telephone books, and asks friends for help. It takes five years, but in 1963, Karl Silberbauer came forward as the officer who had arrested the Franks. Otto Frank had known his name, but withheld it because Silberbauer had treated the family with respect. The officer was cleared of any guilt because there was no evidence that he deported the Franks. Wiesenthal continued his investigative work until his death in 2005. (10-14)

***Saved by Deportation: An Unknown Odyssey of Polish Jews***. DVD. 79 minutes. Alden Films. 2008. \$49.95. At the start of World War II, when Germany invaded Poland, people fled east to Russia. Poland was divided, and the refugees who wanted to return were deported to Russian labor camps. In 1941, Germany attacked Russia, and the Poles were released from the camps. Many made the journey south and sat out the war in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. (ages 12 and up)

Shulevitz, Uri. ***How I Learned Geography***. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2008; ISBN: 978-0-374-33499-4. When a little boy's family is forced to flee during wartime, they end up in a distant country. Instead of buying bread, the boy's father buys a map, which the boy studies. He then imagines going to faraway places and doing exciting and fun things. An author's note explains that this is the true story of

Uri Shulevitz's childhood. His family fled Poland during World War II and ended up in Turkestan. After the war, the family moved to Paris and eventually the United States. (ages 6-10)

Taylor, Peter Lane with Christos Nicola. ***The Secret of Priest's Grotto: A Holocaust Survival Story***. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben/Lerner, 2007; ISBN: 1-58013-260-X. The amazing story of how a group of thirty-eight Jews managed to survive during World War II in the underground caves of the Western Ukraine is told with captivating narratives and descriptions, sharp full-color photographs, and an attractive layout design. (10-14)

Wood, Angela Gluck. ***Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People***. DK Publishing in association with USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education, 2007; ISBN: 978-0-7566-2535-1. This highly visual history spans the origins of Jews, life in Europe, and the history of anti-Semitism to the post-WWII period, including the survivors, Nazi trials, stolen property, and concentration camps and present-day memorials. The book is supplemented by a DVD of personal testimonies from the archive of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education. (ages 12 and up)

## Books for High School

Boyne, John. ***The Boy in the Striped Pajamas***. New York: David Fickling Books, 2006. 218 p. \$15.95. ISBN: 0-385-75106-0. This book is not particularly Jewish, and some may contend that it trivializes the horrors of Auschwitz because everything is seen through Bruno's naïve eyes. But what make this book so gripping are the irony and the slow, but eventual realization of what is going to happen.

Glatshetyn, Yankev. ***Emil and Karl***. Translated by Jeffrey Shandler. New Milford, Connecticut: Roaring Brook Press, 2006; ISBN 1-69643-119-9. The story of two boys left alone in Vienna after their parents have been arrested by the Nazis. (ages 12 and up)

Laskier, Rutka. ***Rutka's Notebook***. New York: Time Inc. Home Entertainment, 2008; ISBN: 978-1603200196. Rutka Laskier, a 14-year-old Jewish girl in the town of Bedzin in Poland, died in Auschwitz in 1943. But she left behind a notebook in which she recorded her thoughts, fears and dreams. Now, after 60 years in the keeping of a friend, that notebook has been recovered - and it opens a unique, moving window into the everyday life of Polish Jews caught in the throes of Adolf Hitler's Final Solution. The editors of TIME add annotations, photos, maps, and quotations that help bring this tragic era into compelling focus for today's readers.

LeZotte, Ann Clare. ***T4***. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2008. ISBN: 978-0-547-04684-6. "When the Nazi party takes control of Germany, thirteen-year-old Paula, who is deaf, finds her world-as-she-knows-it turned upside down, as she is taken into hiding to protect her from the new law nicknamed T4." (ages 10-14)

Minac, Matej. ***Nicholas Winton's Lottery of Life***. American Friends of the Czech Republic, 2007; ISBN: 978-0-9792026-5. English translation of documentary film maker's account of how he discovered the story of Nicholas Winton and created two movies based on Winton's effort of saving 669 children during World War II. The documentary won the 2002 International Emmy Award: ***Nicholas Winton: The Power of Good*** (available through the Gelman Educational Foundation).

Roy, Jennifer. ***Yellow Star***. Tarrytown, New York: Marshall Cavendish, 2006; ISBN 0-7614-5277-X. Told in verse, this is the story of Sylvia Perlmutter, one of twelve surviving children, who hid in the Lodz ghetto with her family. (ages 12 and up)

Zusak, Marcus. ***The Book Thief***. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006; ISBN: 978-0375831003. Death narrates the story of Leisl Meminger, a Lutheran girl in Nazi Germany who sustains herself and those close to her with her love of books and reading. An engaging story that resonates with the full spectrum of human emotions and experiences. (Audio: 11 CDs; \$75, about 12 hours)

## Books for Adults

Chiger, Krystyna with Daniel Paisner. ***The Girl in the Green Sweater: A Life in Holocaust's Shadow***. (St. Martin's Press, 2008; ISBN: 978-0-312-37656-7). Chiger's first person account of the fourteen months she spent with her family in the sewers of Lvov and how a Polish Catholic risked his life to help them.

de Rosnay, Tatiana. ***Sarah's Key***. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2008; ISBN: 978-03123-7084-8. "On Vel' d'Hiv's 60th anniversary, journalist Julia Jarmond is asked to write an article about this black day in France's past. Through her contemporary investigation, she stumbles onto a trail of long-hidden family secrets that connect her to Sarah. Julia finds herself compelled to retrace the girl's ordeal, from that terrible term in the Vel d'Hiv', to the camps, and beyond. As she probes into Sarah's past, she begins to question her own place in France, and to reevaluate her marriage and her life."

Desbois, Father Patrick. ***The Holocaust by Bullets: A Priest's Journey to Uncover the Truth Behind the Murder of 1.5 Million Jews***. New York: Palgrave (Macmillan), 2008; ISBN: 978-0-230-60617-3. "In this heart-wrenching book, Father Desbois tells the poignant story of his discovery of mass gravesites of Jews exterminated by Nazi mobile units in the Ukraine during World War II and his journey to honor the victims with proper burials and to bring their stories to life. Using forensic evidence, eyewitness accounts, and new archival material, Father Desbois has created the first definitive account of one of history's forgotten chapters.

Kaplan, Marion A. ***Dominican Haven: The Jewish Refugee Settlement in Sosua, 1940-1945***. New York: Museum of Jewish Heritage, 2008; ISBN: 0-9716859-3-2. A history of the Jews who left Europe and became part of a farming cooperative in the Dominican Republic. Archival photographs and first person accounts add more interest to this relatively unknown chapter of Holocaust-related history.

Tec, Nechama. ***Defiance***. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009; ISBN: 978-0-19-537685-2. Reprint of excellent 1993 book about the Bielski brothers that "reconstructs the poignant and unforgettable story of those who chose to fight."

## Reference

Kokkola, Lydia. ***Representing the Holocaust in Children's Literature***. London: Routledge, 2003; ISBN: 0-415-93719-1. "This unique study examines genres of Holocaust literature for children and young adults in order to explore the ways in which material that has been called 'unrepresentable' can be portrayed. Specific topics of discussion include the rhetoric and power of silence, the reliability of life writing, and the attraction/revulsion of Holocaust literature."

Langer, Lawrence L. ***Using and Abusing the Holocaust***. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006; ISBN: 978-0-253-34745-9. A collection of essays that consider Holocaust-related issues and how to go on living fruitfully amidst almost daily announcements of unnatural or violent death.

Rosen, Philip and Apfelbaum, Nina. ***Bearing Witness: A Resource Guide to Literature, Poetry, Art, Music, and Videos by Holocaust Victims and Survivors***. Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002; ISBN: 0-313-31076-9. "Will help readers locate over 800 first-person accounts, fiction, poetry, art interpretations, and music."

Roth, John K., editor. ***Holocaust Literature*** (Magill's Choice). Salem Press, 2008; ISBN: 978-1-58765-375-9. Excellent literature reviews of more than one hundred core works about the Holocaust. Each listing includes the author, when it was first published, the genre and subgenre, principal characters, an overview, and sources for further study. The material is presented in two volumes: Volume I: *The Accident through Letters and Papers from Prison*, and Volume II: *Life with a Star through A World at Arms*.

Sullivan, Edward T. ***The Holocaust in Literature for Youth***. Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1999; ISBN: 0-8108-3607-6. Provides classroom teachers and public and school librarians with a practical, comprehensive resource guide to all of the literature available on the subject for children and young adults. Includes activities and lessons plans and the author's guide to the essential core materials one should have in building a collection of Holocaust literature.

## Additional Resources

Horning, Kathleen T. ***From Cover to Cover: Evaluating and Reviewing Children's Books***. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997. ISBN: 0-06-446167-X.

Vander Zee, Ruth and Marian Sneider. ***Eli Remembers***. Illustrated by Bill Farnsworth. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-8028-5309-7. (5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade)

## Websites

**Book Thief- Novel Information and Resources.**

<http://english.byu.edu/Novelinks/Novel%20Pages/The%20Book%20Thief.htm> . Excellent list of resources, lessons plans and activities to use in conjunction with Marcus Zusak's award-winning novel.

**Children's Books About the Holocaust** (Queensborough Community College). <http://www.holocaust-trc.org/chldbook.htm>. Annotated bibliography created in 1998. Books are listed by Biography and Memoir, Fiction, Non-Fiction, Reference and includes a grade index, subject index and title index.

**Do You Know? Will You Remember? Books and Websites about the Holocaust for Young Adults by Karen L. Simonetti ©1998-2003.** <http://nonesuch.flyingredslippers.org/holocaust.html>

**Holland Knight Teacher Resource Guide.** <http://holocaust.hklaw.com/trg/login.asp> . Structured in four units with questions and research options.

**Hidden Child Foundation.** <http://www.adl.org/hidden/default.asp> . A project of the Ant-Defamation League, includes stories of children and a teacher's guide with activities. Use the ADL site for more information about the consequences of bigotry and hatred.

**Holocaust Memorial Day Trust** (British). [www.hmd.org.uk/resources](http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources). Includes artwork, bibliography, coloring book for younger grades, and book group activities for elementary school level.

**Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation.** <http://www.jewishpartisans.org/>. Study guides, lessons and activities, and video testimony of partisan make this a useful site.

**Museum of Jewish Heritage.** <http://www.mjhnyc.org>. Includes Teacher's Guide to "Daring to Resist: Jewish Defiance in the Holocaust" and other free downloadable resources.

**Museum of Tolerance Online Multimedia Learning Center.** <http://motlc.learningcenter.wiesenthal.org/>. Includes virtual exhibits, teacher resources, and online learning with many photographs.

## **New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education.**

"To Honor All Children: from Prejudice to Discrimination to Hatred...to Holocaust." A Curriculum Guide for Grades 5-8.

[http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/downloads/curriculum/to\\_honor\\_all\\_children\\_file1.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/downloads/curriculum/to_honor_all_children_file1.pdf)

[http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/downloads/curriculum/to\\_honor\\_all\\_children\\_file2.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/downloads/curriculum/to_honor_all_children_file2.pdf)

[http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/downloads/curriculum/to\\_honor\\_all\\_children\\_file3.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/downloads/curriculum/to_honor_all_children_file3.pdf)

[http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/downloads/curriculum/to\\_honor\\_all\\_children\\_file4.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/downloads/curriculum/to_honor_all_children_file4.pdf)

"The Holocaust and Genocide: The Betrayal of Humanity. "A Curriculum Guide for Grades 9-12.

[http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/downloads/curriculum/holocaust\\_and\\_genocide\\_file1.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/downloads/curriculum/holocaust_and_genocide_file1.pdf)

[http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/downloads/curriculum/holocaust\\_and\\_genocide\\_file2.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/downloads/curriculum/holocaust_and_genocide_file2.pdf)

**United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.** <http://www.ushmm.org/education/foreducators/> . This part of the site includes a printable bibliography and teaching resources.

**Yad Vashem.** [www.yadvashem.org.il](http://www.yadvashem.org.il) . Shoah Resource Center presents subjects similarly to New Jersey Curriculum Topics and offers documents, research and testimonies.

**Yellow Star Foundation.** [www.yellowstarfoundation.org](http://www.yellowstarfoundation.org) – a site "helping educators develop sensitive, effective lessons about the Holocaust." It includes tips for teaching about the Holocaust, an interactive map of Matthausen, lesson plans, a bibliography, and lesson plans.

## **Articles**

Bird, Elizabeth. "Mark Herman's The Boy in the Striped Pajamas." The Horn Book (December 2008). Available at <http://www.hbook.com/resources/films/pajamas.asp> .

Blech, Rabbi Benjamin. "The Boy in the Striped Pajamas." Aish.com (October 24, 2008). Available at [http://www.aish.com/societyWork/arts/The\\_Boy\\_in\\_the\\_Striped\\_Pajamas.asp](http://www.aish.com/societyWork/arts/The_Boy_in_the_Striped_Pajamas.asp) .

Jordan, Sarah D. "Educating Without Overwhelming: Authorial Strategies in Children's Holocaust Literature." Children's Literature in Education 35.3 (September 2004): 199-218.

Lamme, Linda Leonard and Be Astengo. "Geography of the Holocaust." Book Links (September 2006): 35-40.

Rochman, Hazel. "What Makes a Good Holocaust Book? Beyond Oral History." The Horn Book (September/October 2006): 547-551.

Schneider, Dean. "Bringing History of Life: Hitler Youth by Susan Campbell Bartoletti." Booklinks (July 2008): 9-12.

Silver, Linda. "Holocaust Resources for High School." Association of Jewish Libraries (April 2005).

Available at [http://www.jewishlibraries.org/ajlweb/resources/bib\\_bank/holocaust\\_resources\\_hs.pdf](http://www.jewishlibraries.org/ajlweb/resources/bib_bank/holocaust_resources_hs.pdf).

Silverman, Lisa. "Bearing Witness Through Picture Books." School Library Journal (March 1, 2007).

Available at <http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA6420400.html>.