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. (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)

“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**


Littlesugar, 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)


**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.


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.


**Books for Adults**


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.”


**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.”


**Additional Resources**


**Websites**

*Book Thief- Novel Information and Resources.*  
[http://english.byu.edu/Novelinks/Novel%20Pages/The%20Book%20Thief.htm](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://nonesuch.flyingredslippers.org/holocaust.html](http://nonesuch.flyingredslippers.org/holocaust.html)

*Holland Knight Teacher Resource Guide*.  

*Hidden Child Foundation*.  

*Holocaust Memorial Day Trust* (British).  

*Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation*.  

*Museum of Jewish Heritage*.  

*Museum of Tolerance Online Multimedia Learning Center*.  
New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education.


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_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/holocaust_and_genocide_file1.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 . Shoa Resource Center presents subjects similarly to New Jersey Curriculum Topics and offers documents, research and testimonies.

Yellow Star Foundation. 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


