



Classroom Book List

With so many books about the Holocaust to choose from, selecting the right resource for classroom use can be difficult. This list provides examples of books for the secondary school level, although it is not intended to be comprehensive. Suggested grade levels and resources for teachers are provided.

The Museum also offers a [rubric](#) that guides educators in selecting age-appropriate and historically accurate books. Educators are encouraged to evaluate the options in the bibliography with the rubric to assess how the source fits their classroom needs. The Museum's [Holocaust Literature Guide](#) and foundational [Timeline Activity](#) can be used with any text as well.



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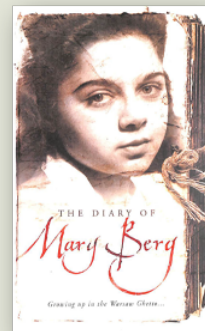
DIARIES

The Diary of Mary Berg: Growing Up in the Warsaw Ghetto by Mary Berg

GRADES: 7-12; **THEMES:** *Ghetto*

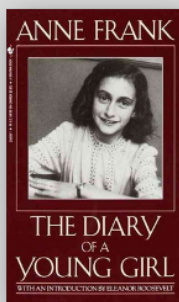
In her diary, Jewish teenager Mary Berg (born Miriam Wattenberg) documented her daily life in the Warsaw ghetto. In July 1942, as the Germans began large-scale deportations from the ghetto, she described her family's imprisonment in Pawiak prison. Due to Mary's mother's American birth, Nazi officials transferred the family to Vittel, a camp in occupied France. In spring 1944, Mary and her family were part of a prisoner exchange and arrived in the United States. Mary's diary was published as a book in 1945.

- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Series: Diaries](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Series: Warsaw](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Vittel](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Portrait: Mary Berg](#)



The Diary of a Young Girl by Anne Frank

GRADES 6–12; THEMES: *Netherlands, Hiding, Diaries, Rescue*



Anne Frank began writing in her diary on her thirteenth birthday, shortly before going into hiding with her family in German-occupied Amsterdam in the Netherlands. Her diary details her family's daily life in hiding and her own personal feelings and reflections. There are multiple published versions of the diary. Otto Frank, Anne's father, edited the first published version, while subsequent versions have added passages that Otto had originally deleted.

- [Lesson: “Exploring Anne Frank’s Diary” with timeline cards](#)
- [Classroom Video: “Anne Frank: Her World and Her Diary” \(11:28\)](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia: Anne Frank](#)

There are many options for sharing Anne Frank's diary and experiences with your students, including different editions of the diary, graphic novels, a play, and films. The content of these versions may vary and teachers should select the work most appropriate for their classroom.

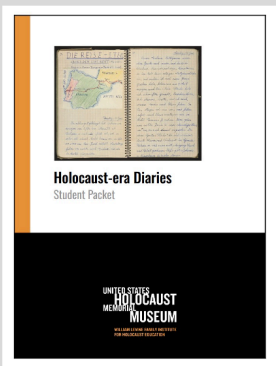
DIARIES

Salvaged Pages: Young Writers' Diaries of the Holocaust edited by Alexandra Zapruder

GRADES: 8-12; THEMES: *Nazi Rise to Power, Immigration, Ghettos, Concentration Camps, Liberation, Rescue, Hiding, Resistance, Choice*

A collection of diary excerpts written by young people between the ages of 12 and 22. The diaries cover a range of Holocaust experiences and locations throughout Europe. Each diary includes a detailed introduction providing background and context to the diary. The ebook edition includes maps and video clips with surviving diarists. The documentary *I'm Still Here: Real Diaries of Young People Who Lived During the Holocaust* is based on this anthology.

- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Series: Diaries](#)



Holocaust-Era Diaries edited by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

GRADES: 6-12; THEMES: *Nazi Rise to Power, Kristallnacht, Immigration, Ghettos, Concentration Camps, Liberation, Rescue, Hiding, Resistance, Choice*

A collection of diary excerpts from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The diarists are a range of ages, from varying backgrounds and locations, and have different Holocaust experiences. Each diary includes a brief introduction and background, and the anthology includes a timeline and glossary of terms. This free resource is downloadable as a PDF and comes with a lesson plan with activity options.

- [Lesson and Diary Anthology: Exploring Holocaust-era Diaries](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Series: Diaries](#)

MEMOIRS

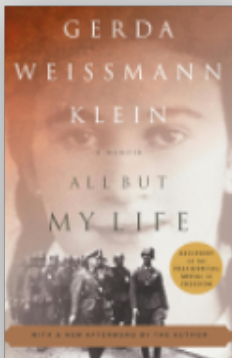
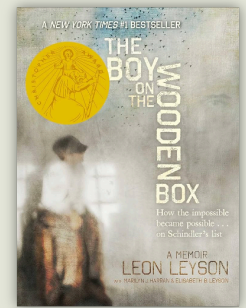
The Boy on the Wooden Box: How the Impossible Became Possible . . . on Schindler's List

by Leon Leyson, Marilyn J. Harran, and Elisabeth B. Leyson

GRADES: 6-9; THEMES: *Pre-war Jewish Life, Ghettos, Concentration Camp, Rescue, Choice, Complicity*

In his memoir, Leon Leyson describes how he survived the Holocaust as a boy with the help of German businessman Oskar Schindler. Shortly before Leon's 10th birthday, Nazi Germany invaded Poland. Young Leon experienced German authorities discriminating against and terrorizing Jews in Kraków, eventually forcing his family to move into a ghetto. Leon and his family struggled to survive and ultimately began to work for Oskar Schindler, who employed Jews in his factory and saved their lives.

- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Oskar Schindler](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Invasion of Poland](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Plaszow](#)



All But My Life: A Memoir by Gerda Weissmann Klein

GRADES: 8-12; THEMES: *Pre-war Jewish life, Ghettos, Concentration Camp, Liberation*

In her memoir, Gerda Weissmann Klein describes her life in pre-war Bielsko, Poland, the German invasion of her country, and her experiences in a ghetto, multiple forced labor camps, and finally on a death march. She was liberated by the American Army and on the day of her liberation met Kurt Klein, a US soldier who had escaped Europe as a Jewish refugee in the 1930s. He eventually became her husband. The Academy Award-winning documentary, *One Survivor Remembers*, also documents Klein's experiences.

- [Film: *One Survivor Remembers* \(39:04\)](#)
- [Lesson: Introduction to the Holocaust](#)

MEMOIRS

The Girl in the Green Sweater: A Life in Holocaust's Shadow

by Krystyna Chiger and Daniel Paisner

GRADES: 7-12; THEMES: *Ghettos, Rescue, Hiding, Choice, Resistance, Liberation*

In her memoir, young Krystyna Chiger (now Kristine Keren) describes life in the Lwów ghetto in German-occupied Poland. As deportations began from the ghetto, Krystyna and her family escaped into the sewers under the city. She describes the horrible and dangerous conditions in which they lived for over a year and the aid provided to them by Polish sewer worker Leopold Socha, who risked his life to provide the family and others with food and supplies.



- [Holocaust Encyclopedia: Lvov](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Series: Ghettos](#)
- [Artifact Photo: Green Sweater](#)
- [Curators Corner Video: "A Cherished Object: Kristine Keren's Green Sweater" \(3:19\)](#)

I Have Lived a Thousand Years: Growing Up in the Holocaust

by Livia Bitton-Jackson

GRADES: 8-12; THEMES: *Pre-war Jewish life, Ghettos, Concentration Camp, Liberation*

In her memoir, Livia Bitton-Jackson (then known as Elli Friedmann) describes her experiences as a young teenager during the Holocaust. When she was just 13, Hungarian authorities, collaborating with the Nazis, forced Jews in her community to move into a transit ghetto, stripping them of their property and their freedom. She recounts her subsequent deportation to Auschwitz, the dehumanization she and her mother experienced as prisoners in Nazi camps, and their liberation by the American military.



- [Holocaust Encyclopedia: Hungary Before the German Occupation](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia: Hungary After the German Occupation](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia: Auschwitz](#)

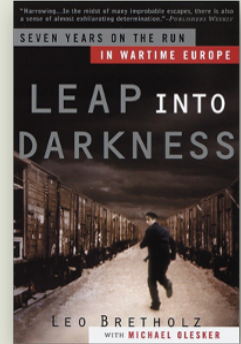
MEMOIRS

Leap into Darkness: Seven Years on the Run in Wartime Europe

by Leo Bretholz and Michael Olesker

GRADES: 9-12; THEMES: *Pre-war Jewish life, Kristallnacht, World War II, Immigration, Concentration Camp, Choice, Resistance*

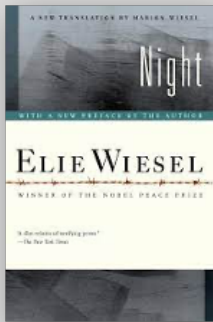
In his memoir, Leo Bretholz describes his experiences as a young adult during the Holocaust and his multiple escapes from Nazi authorities. Leo describes the German annexation of his home country of Austria in 1938, his escape to Luxembourg, and then to Belgium. After Germany invaded Belgium in 1940, he fled to France, where he was arrested and sent to an internment camp. In 1942, he jumped from a train that was headed to Auschwitz, assumed a false name, and joined a resistance movement in France.



- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Nazi Territorial Aggression: The Anschluss](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Student Site: Deportations](#)

Night by Elie Wiesel and Marion Wiesel (Translator)

GRADES: 9-12; THEMES: *Pre-war Jewish life, Ghettos, Concentration Camp, Liberation*



In his memoir, Elie Wiesel recounts his experiences as a young teenager in Sighet, in an area controlled by Hungary. After Germany occupied Hungary in March 1944, Elie and his family were sent to a transit ghetto and then deported to Auschwitz, where his mother and sister were murdered. Elie describes life and forced labor at Auschwitz. In January 1945, Elie and his father were sent on a death march and then transported by rail to the Buchenwald concentration camp, where his father died. The memoir ends with Elie's liberation by the American Army.

- [Lesson: "Exploring *Night* as Literature" with timeline cards](#)
- [Classroom Video: "Bearing Witness: Elie Wiesel and *Night*" \(8 minutes\)](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia: Elie Wiesel](#)

NON-FICTION

Hana's Suitcase: The Quest to Solve a Holocaust Mystery by Karen Levine

GRADES: 5-8; THEMES: *Pre-war Jewish life, Ghettos*

This non-fiction book contains the dual narrative of Hana Brady, a Czech Jewish girl sent to the Theresienstadt (Terezín) ghetto during the Holocaust, and the Japanese Holocaust educators and students seeking to learn what happened to her. Beginning in 2000, the Japanese group researched Hana Brady's childhood in Czechoslovakia, her experiences in Theresienstadt, and eventual deportation to Auschwitz. She did not survive the Holocaust. The students eventually met Brady's brother, who had survived.

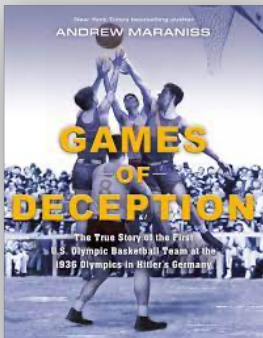


- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Series: Children During the Holocaust](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Czechoslovakia](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Theresienstadt](#)

Games of Deception: The True Story of the First U.S. Olympic Basketball Team at the 1936 Olympics in Hitler's Germany

by Andrew Maraniss

Grades: 7-10; Themes: *United States History, Sports, Nazi Rise to Power, Propaganda*



This non-fiction book describes the US Olympic basketball team's experiences at the 1936 Olympics, which were held in Berlin, Germany. With many photographs and images of artifacts, the book weaves together the history of basketball from its creation in 1891 and its debut as an Olympic sport in Berlin, where the Nazis used propaganda to manipulate international opinion. It includes the experiences of individual athletes during the Games, as well as German Jews impacted by Germany's anti-Jewish laws. Includes photos, Who's Who of the 1936 Olympics, bibliography, and index.

- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Series: 1936 Olympics](#)
- [Artifacts Unpacked Video: "The Olympic Torch Holder" \(2:08\)](#)

LITERATURE

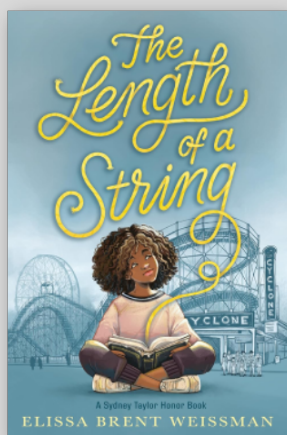
White Bird: A Novel by R. J. Palacio with Erica S. Perl

GRADES: 6-8; **THEMES:** *Rescue, Hiding, Choice, Resistance*

This novelization of a best-selling graphic novel of the same name tells the story of Sara Blum, a fictional Jewish girl. She experiences antisemitism in school, but the danger worsens in November 1942, when Germans occupy her town in France. She is forced to separate from her parents and go into hiding with the aid of her classmate Julien, who had been an outsider at school. Together, they create an imaginary world to cope with the danger they are both facing. The novel flashes forward and backward as elderly Sara shares her experiences with her grandchild.



- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Series: Children During the Holocaust](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia: France](#)



The Length of a String by Elissa Brent Weissman

GRADES: 5-8; **THEMES:** *Immigration, United States History, Jewish Life*

In this novel, Imani, a Jewish girl preparing for her bat mitzvah, discovers her great-grandmother's diary, which she had written as a twelve-year-old child escaping to the United States alone during the Holocaust. Imani also wants to learn more about her own history—she is Black and adopted. The novel follows Imani as she reads about her great-grandmother's escape in 1941 from German-occupied Luxembourg, and her new life in the United States with relatives who adopt her. Imani discovers the importance of family, both born and chosen.

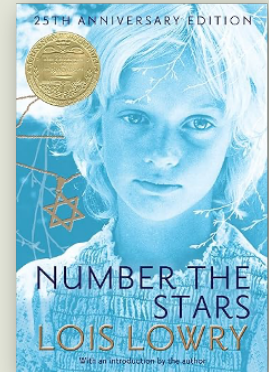
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Series: Diaries](#)
- [Artifacts Unpacked Video: "The Diary" \(2:12\)](#)

LITERATURE

Number the Stars by Lois Lowry

GRADES: 5-9; THEMES: *Hiding, Rescue, Resistance*

In this novel, ten-year-old Annemarie Johansen and her best friend Ellen Rosen, who is Jewish, are living in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1943. Germany has occupied Denmark, and the danger has increased for Ellen, her family, and other Danish Jews. With warnings of deportations, the Danish resistance works with ordinary people to organize a rescue mission. They protect their Jewish neighbors and aid in their dangerous escape by boat to neutral Sweden.

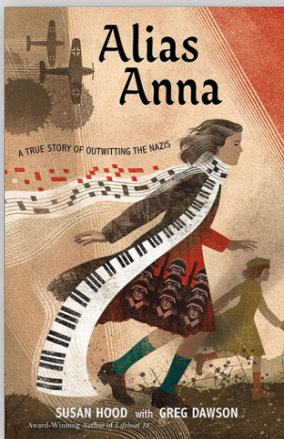


- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Denmark](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Rescue in Denmark](#)
- [Artifacts Unpacked Video: “The Motorboat” \(1:52\)](#)

Alias Anna: A True Story of Outwitting the Nazis

by Susan Hood and Greg Dawson

GRADES: 9-12; THEMES: *Pre-war Jewish life, Choice, Resistance, Hiding, Rescue*



After Germany invades Soviet Ukraine in 1941, Zhanna, a young Jewish girl, must leave behind her promising future as a musical prodigy. When Nazis round up Jewish people and march them out of her hometown, Zhanna and her sister Frina escape. The girls’ musical skills help them survive as they attempt to live under false identities as non-Jews. This is a true story co-authored by Zhanna’s son. It is told in different types of poetry and verse.

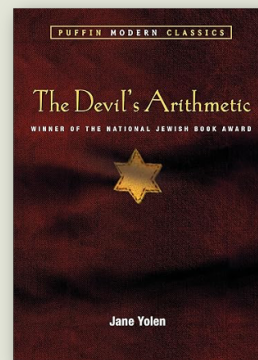
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Invasion of the Soviet Union, 1941](#)
- [Online Exhibition: The Holocaust in Ukraine](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Series: Children During the Holocaust](#)

LITERATURE

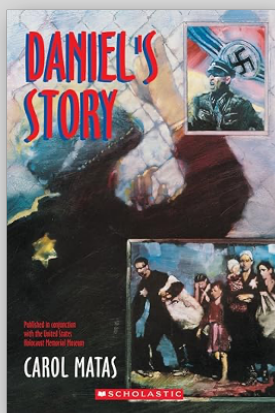
The Devil's Arithmetic by Jane Yolen

GRADES: 6-9; THEMES: *Pre-war Jewish life, Ghettos, Concentration Camps*

This novel is the story of a teenage Jewish girl, Hannah, who, while bored at a long family seder, travels through time. She finds herself in her ancestors' hometown, which seems to have been a small town in Eastern Europe, right before the German occupation of the area around 1941. She meets her relatives and, like them, is rounded up and sent to a concentration camp, which is unidentified and fictionalized in the novel but based on Auschwitz. Hannah eventually reemerges in the present with a newfound appreciation for her own Judaism and for the bravery of her relatives.



- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Auschwitz](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Deportations](#)



Daniel's Story by Carol Matas

GRADES: 4-7; THEMES: *Pre-war Jewish life, Antisemitism, Propaganda, Ghettos, Concentration Camps, Liberation*

In this novel, based on the “Remember the Children: Daniel’s Story” exhibition at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, Daniel is a fictional German Jewish boy who experiences Nazi persecution. He remembers his childhood and experiences of Nazi persecution beginning in 1933. The family is forced from their home and deported to the Łódź ghetto in German-occupied Poland. They are eventually sent to Auschwitz. Daniel and his father survive the Holocaust, and Daniel emerges determined to remember all that he has survived and with hope for a new future.

- ["Remember the Children: Daniel's Story" Exhibition Video \(9:47\)](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Series: Children During the Holocaust](#)

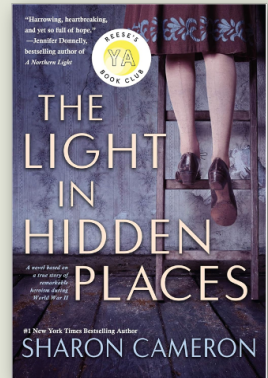
LITERATURE

The Light in Hidden Places by Sharon Cameron

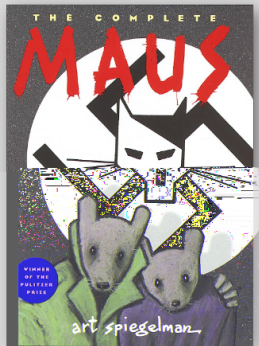
GRADES: 9-12; THEMES: *Pre-war Jewish Life, Ghettos, Rescue, Hiding, Resistance, Choice*

This novel tells the true story of Stefania Podgórska, a Polish Catholic teenager. She lived and worked for the Diamant family, who were Jewish, in Przemyśl, Poland. After the Nazis occupied the city, the Diamants were forced into the Przemyśl ghetto, Stefania and her little sister struggled to aid them. At great personal risk, Stefania hid Max Diamant and a dozen other Jews in the attic of her home. The book includes photographs and a description of Stefania's life after the war.

- [Holocaust Encyclopedia ID Card: Stefania \(Fusia\) Podgorska](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Photo: Rescuer Stefania Podgorska with her younger sister Helena](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia ID Card: Max Diamant \(now Josef Burzminski\)](#)



GRAPHIC NOVELS



Maus by Art Spiegelman

GRADES: 8-12; **THEMES:** *Pre-war Jewish life, Antisemitism, Ghettos, Concentration Camp, Liberation, Collaboration, Liberation*

This graphic novel, in two volumes, includes the dual narratives of the relationship between Art Spiegelman (the author) and his elderly father Vladek, and the Holocaust experiences of Vladek in German-occupied Poland during the Holocaust. The first volume includes the German invasion of Poland, life in ghettos and in hiding, and Vladek’s deportation to Auschwitz. The second volume includes Vladek’s experiences in Auschwitz and his liberation. The graphic novel uses animals to represent people, with Jews—including Art and Vladek—as mice and Germans as cats.

- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Auschwitz](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Invasion of Poland, Fall 1939](#)

Teacher note: The first volume of the graphic novel includes the suicide of Art’s mother, Anja.

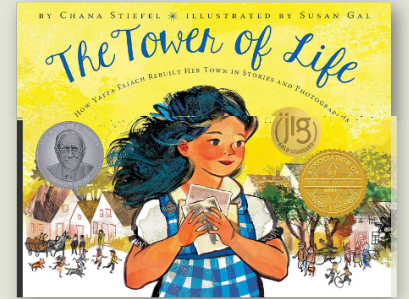
BOOKS FOR ALL GRADES

The Tower of Life: How Yaffa Eliach Rebuilt Her Town in Stories and Photographs

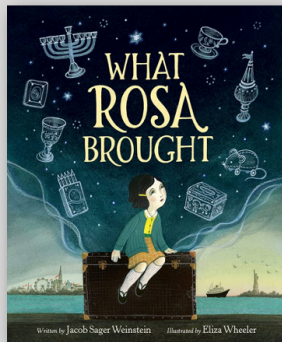
by Chana Stiefel and Susan Gal

GRADES: 2-5; THEMES: *Pre-war Jewish life, Hiding*

This picture book describes the experiences of Yaffa, a girl living in Eyshishok, a majority Jewish town in Eastern Europe. After Nazi Germany occupied her small town, many of Yaffa's family and neighbors were killed, but Yaffa managed to survive. The book shares how Yaffa collected thousands of photographs of her town in order to honor what life had been like before the Holocaust. Yaffa's photographs became the basis for the "Tower of Faces" installation at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.



- [Holocaust Encyclopedia: Mobile Killing Squads](#)
- [USHMM Medium: Stories from a Tower of Faces](#)



What Rosa Brought by Jacob Sager Weinstein

GRADES: K-5; THEMES: *Antisemitism, Resistance, Immigration*

This picture book, based on the experiences of the author's mother, tells the story of Rosa, a young Jewish girl in Vienna, Austria. After Nazi Germany annexes Austria, life changes for Rosa's family, and she begins to witness anti-Jewish persecution. She and her parents eventually immigrated to the United States.

- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Vienna](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Nazi Territorial Aggression: The Anschluss](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Immigration to the United States, 1933-41](#)

BOOKS FOR ALL GRADES



A Star Like Jesse Owens by Nikki Shannon Smith

GRADES: 3-5; THEMES: *United States History, Sports, Propaganda*

This easy-reader chapter book tells the story of Matthew, a young Black boy from Ohio whose father was a journalist for a Black newspaper in the 1930s. Matthew's father is given the chance to cover the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, Germany, and brings Matthew along for the trip. Matthew dreams of being a sprinter like his hero, Jesse Owens, but Matthew's asthma poses a challenge. Matthew witnesses racism in the United States and anti-Jewish persecution while visiting Nazi Germany and rooting for his hero.

- [Lesson: Black Americans and the Nazi Olympics](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Series: 1936 Olympics](#)
- [Testimony from Olympic Athlete John Woodruff](#)

The Bicycle Spy by Yona Zeldis McDonough

GRADES: 3-6; THEMES: *Resistance, Choice, Sports*

Marcel is a non-Jewish boy in France who loves riding his bicycle. But the German invasion of France and the presence of German soldiers made Marcel's bike rides feel dangerous. Marcel eventually discovers that his parents are part of the French resistance opposing the Nazis. He also befriends a new student in class, who later confesses to Marcel that she is Jewish. Using his bicycle, Marcel helps pass secret messages for the resistance and helps his friend and her family reach safety.

- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: France](#)
- [Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: Rescue and Resistance](#)

