



South Carolina Council on the Holocaust

Literature for Teaching the Holocaust

This abridged list comprises a small group of selected factual works related to the Holocaust that are appropriate for school age audiences. We suggest these as a good starting place for quality works to use with students. See the link at the end for a much more comprehensive list.*

When evaluating your choices of texts for your classroom we find it helpful to use the following rubric created by the USHMM: [Rubric for Evaluating Resources](#)

Diaries

Frank, Anne, and Otto Frank. *The Diary of a Young Girl*. New York: Doubleday, 1995. Print.

Anne Frank documents her experience in Nazi occupied Amsterdam. The diary details her family's daily life, the years they spent in hiding, and her own personal experiences. (Lexile 1020 - Grades 6-12)

Zapruder, Alexandra. *Salvaged Pages: Young Writers' Diaries of the Holocaust*. New Haven, Yale UP, 2004.

A collection of diaries written by young people aged twelve to twenty-two. The diaries cover a range of experiences and geographic locations. Each diary provides a detailed introduction providing background and context to the diary. The ebook edition includes maps and video clips with surviving diarists. (Grades 8-12)

Memoirs

Bretholz, Leo, and Michael Olesker. *Leap Into Darkness: Seven Years on the Run in Wartime Europe*. New York: Anchor Books, 1998.

Bretholz records his harrowing experiences of being on the run from the Nazis as a teenager for almost seven years, including the duration of World War II. During this time Bretholz escaped from Nazi authorities seven times including leaping from trains, hiding in attics, and outrunning police. This is a story of resilience, survival, and hope that is even more unbelievable because it is true. Students are very engaged throughout their reading of this memoir. (Grades 7 - 12)



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Frankl, Viktor E. *Man's Search for Meaning: Young Readers Edition*. Boston: Beacon Press Books, 2017.

Frankl documents his experiences in Auschwitz and how he survived by finding a meaning for his life. This historical account has been newly adapted for younger readers to provide an accessible overview of Frankel's writing on psychology. Includes a glossary, and timeline of the Holocaust and Frankel's life. (Grades 7-12)

Klein, Gerda Weissmann. *All but My Life*. New York, Hill and Wang, 2001.

Gerda Weissmann Klein's detailed account of her experiences during the Holocaust. From her life in Bielsko, Poland, through ghettos, camps, and a death march to her eventual liberation by Kurt Klein, who would later become her husband. (Lexile 780 - Grades 8-12)

Kor, Eva Moses. *Surviving the Angel of Death: The True Story of a Mengele Twin in Auschwitz*. Terre Haute, IN: Tanglewood, 2009.

In her memoir, Eva Kor details the murder of her family at Auschwitz and the experiments she and her sister, Miriam, were subjected to by Dr. Josef Mengele. Kor also writes about her personal journey to educate about the Holocaust and her eventual decision to forgive the Nazis. (Lexile 830 - Grades 6-9)

Levi, Primo. *Survival at Auschwitz: The Nazi Assault on Humanity*. New York, Touchstone Books, 1996.

Primo Levi, an Italian Jew, describes his time in Auschwitz-Monowitz (Buna). Levi documents his daily horrific experiences, including the physical and psychological torment he endures. (Grades 9-12)

Leyson, Leon. *The Boy on the Wooden Box: How the Impossible Became Possible...On Schindler's List*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2015.

Leon Leyson documents his experience as one of the youngest people rescued by Oskar Schindler. Following the invasion of Poland, Leon and his family are sent to the Krakow ghetto. Leon describes their daily lives, working for Schindler, and his survival. (Lexile 1000—Grades 6–9)



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Perl, Lila, and Marion Blumenthal Lazan. *Four Perfect Pebbles: A Holocaust Story*. New York, Greenwillow Books, 1996.

Marion Blumenthal details her experiences when her family fled Germany for Holland. Detained at the Westerbork transit camp, they had visas for travel to the United States, then the Nazis invaded Holland. Initially, they were to be part of an exchange to go to Palestine. Instead, they are sent to Bergen Belsen before they are finally liberated. (Lexile 1060 - Grades 4-9)

Wiesel, Elie, and Marion Wiesel. *Night*. New York, Hill and Wang, 2006.

In his autobiography, Elie Wiesel recounts his experiences as a young man in Sighet. Deported to Auschwitz with his family he was separated from his sister and mother upon arrival. Elie stays with his father through Auschwitz-Birkenau, Buna, and then Buchenwald where his father dies. Eventually, the U.S. Army liberates Weisel. (Grades 9-12)

Secondary Sources

Adler, David A. *We Remember the Holocaust*. New York: Holt, 1989.

Using survivor testimony, photographs, and brief historical narratives to provide context, David Adler provides an overview of the Holocaust. Covers Jewish life, Hitler's rise to power and the ghettos and camps. Includes a detailed chronology, a glossary that includes names of places and people; suggested reading, a list of sources; and an index. (Lexile 830 - Grades 6-10)

Bartolleti, Susan. *Hitler Youth: Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow*. New York: Scholastic, Inc. 2005

This work focuses on telling the perspectives of youth who grew up in Nazi Germany. It includes many direct quotes from people who lived in Nazi Germany as children, including voices from members of the Hitler Youth and those from young people who resisted the Nazi movement. A great book for use in both social studies and ELA classes. (Grades 7-9)

Freedman, Russell. *We Will Not Be Silent: The White Rose Student Resistance Movement That Defied Adolf Hitler*. New York: Clarion, 2016.

Details the resistance efforts of Hans and Sophie Scholl, Christoph Probst, Willi Graf, and Alexander Schmorell and others. Provides an overview of their lives and their initial involvement in the Hitler Youth, to their printing of anti-Nazi leaflets, their subsequent arrest, and trials. Includes black and white photos, a bibliography, and an index. (Lexile 640 - Grades 6-10)



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Herman, Gail. *What was the Holocaust?* New York: Penguin Workshop, 2018

The Holocaust was a genocide on a scale never before seen, with as many as twelve million people killed in Nazi death camps—six million of them Jews. Gail Herman traces the rise of Hitler and the Nazis, whose rabid anti-Semitism led first to humiliating anti-Jewish laws, then to ghettos all over Eastern Europe, and ultimately to the Final Solution. She presents just enough information for an elementary-school audience in a readable, well-researched book that covers one of the most horrible times in history. This entry in the New York Times best-selling series contains eighty carefully chosen illustrations and sixteen pages of black and white photographs suitable for young readers. (Lexile 720 - Grades 5 - 8)

Rappaport, Doreen. *Beyond Courage: The Untold Story of Jewish Resistance during the Holocaust.* Somerville, Candlewick Press, 2012.

Rappaport details twenty stories of Jewish individuals who committed acts of resistance during the Holocaust. The author includes stories of armed resistance, but also those individuals who resisted through other means. Includes photographs, maps, a pronunciation guide, bibliography, source notes, and index. (Lexile 1030 - Grades 6-12)

Volavkova, Hana. *I Never Saw Another Butterfly.* New York: Schocken Books, 1992.

A collection of children's artwork and poetry from the ghetto of Terezin (Theresienstadt). A brief epilogue details the history of the camp. The book concludes with a brief synopsis on the known artists. 60 color illustrations. (Grades 6-12)

*This is an abbreviated list and does not include historical fiction. While we understand historical fiction to be an important component of many courses, we highly stress that using works of historical fiction can potentially distort the truth of the Holocaust. Therefore, while we do not discourage you from using historical fiction, we highly encourage teachers who do so to be sure that they are teaching the proper historical context of the Holocaust so students get an accurate view of the event.

If you want a much more comprehensive bibliography of literature and film you can visit the following website: [USHMM Bibliography & Videography](#)