



MAUS

A MEMOIR OF THE HOLOCAUST

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Frieda Miller
Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre

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FRIEDA MILLER AND THE
VANCOUVER HOLOCAUST EDUCATION CENTRE

MAUS: A MEMOIR OF THE HOLOCAUST / Teacher's Guide
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The Exhibition

MAUS: A Memoir of the Holocaust

Curated by Natalia Indrimi and organized by La Centrale dell'Arte, Rome-New York.

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INTRODUCTION

Historical record, memoir or comic book? *MAUS* defies easy definition. The two volume, Pulitzer Prize winning book by acclaimed graphic artist Art Spiegelman functions on three distinct yet seamless levels. It is the story of the Holocaust as seen through the eyes of the artist's father, Vladek; it is the story of the tortured relationship between the artist and his father; and finally it is the story of the relationship between the artist and his art.

Spiegelman uses a unique cartoon style, characterizing humans as animals, to illustrate the disturbing story of his parents' Holocaust survival, his father's ongoing pain, its impact on family relationships and his own artistic struggle. As a character in his own work, Spiegelman juxtaposes the minutiae of day to day life with the magnitude of events surrounding the Holocaust. Beneath the apparent simplicity of *MAUS'* comic book format lies a serious and complex narrative derived from hours of personal interviews and historical research that included visits to Auschwitz and other places in Poland.

MAUS first appeared in 1980 in Art Spiegelman's avant-garde magazine *Raw*. *MAUS, A SURVIVOR'S TALE I: MY FATHER BLEEDS HISTORY* was published in 1986 and *MAUS, A SURVIVOR'S TALE II: AND HERE MY TROUBLES BEGAN* in 1991. The two volumes were awarded a Pulitzer Prize in 1992 with the creation of a special category to honour the originality of the work.

Some critics contend that the comic book format is inappropriate for the subject matter and demeans the enormity of the Holocaust experience. Others argue that the cartoon medium opens up the history to a new readership and that by neither trivializing nor sentimentalizing, *MAUS* raises the comic book to a higher art form.

ABOUT THE TEACHER'S GUIDE

The guide has been organized into three classroom subject areas. Teachers who wish to borrow ideas across disciplines will find that the student materials are particularly easy to adapt to different teaching needs.

SOCIAL STUDIES

As a memoir of the Holocaust, History and Social Studies teachers will find that **MAUS** offers an opportunity to explore the history of the Holocaust through Vladek's experiences of: segregation, hiding and deportation, the workings and specialized language of Auschwitz, resistance, liberation, and the aftermath of war.

LANGUAGE ARTS

As autobiography, expressed through the conversations between father and son, **MAUS** offers English teachers a unique opportunity to analyze form and explore character development and the use of metaphor.

VISUAL ART

As a comic book which features the artist as one of the characters, **MAUS** offers art teachers an opportunity to explore style, the artistic process and contemporary cartooning as it relates to issues of social justice.

PLEASE NOTE: References to the two volumes of **MAUS** are denoted in the text with Roman numerals followed by the page number: page 46 in Volume II is indicated as (II.46).

Art Spiegelman was born in 1948 in Stockholm, Sweden, the son of Andzi (Anja) and Vladek Spiegelman. The family moved to Rego Park, New York in 1951. Spiegelman demonstrated an early interest in comic books. Popular horror comics, *Mad*, underground comics, television, as well as pop and high art were all formative influences. By adolescence, Spiegelman was seriously involved in comic making. As Spiegelman tells us, the underground comic movement developed in the 1960s while he was in junior high school:

"I met some people who later became, like myself, that first generation of underground cartoonists – like Jay Lynch, Skip Williamson. We were all working for the same little magazines. They were amateur self-produced magazines." (Dreifus, 36)

Chapters of **MAUS** were first serialized in 1980 in Art Spiegelman's avant-garde magazine *Raw*. **MAUS, A SURVIVOR'S TALE I: MY FATHER BLEEDS HISTORY** was published in 1986 and **MAUS, A SURVIVOR'S TALE II: AND HERE MY TROUBLES BEGAN** in 1991. The two volumes won a Pulitzer Prize in 1992 with the creation of a special category to honour the originality of the work. The acclaim and public attention that followed the publication of **MAUS** came as a surprise to Spiegelman.

"One of the reasons I wasn't ready for the response to MAUS is that I was living in a world where comics were being made seriously and taken seriously. So, to me, it was very natural." (Dreifus, 36)

"There's a kind of shock in people's minds when they hear that this story is a comic strip – 'Somebody did a comic strip about the Holocaust.'

Actually, that invests it with a certain lack of hubris. It's not an opera about the Holocaust; it's something modest, it's a comic strip – a medium that has a history of being without pretensions or aspirations to art. And perhaps if there can be no art about the Holocaust, then there may at least be comic strips." (Dreifus, 35)

Despite the acclaim, Spiegelman experienced angst and misgivings about his work. This self-doubt is expressed both in the text (I.16) and images of **MAUS**, where he is diminished in size (II.2, II.46).

Today Spiegelman is acknowledged as one of this generation's foremost comic artists. Co-founder and co-editor of *Raw* with his wife Françoise Mouly, the acclaimed magazine of avant-garde comix and graphics, Spiegelman has become widely known for **MAUS** and his current work as a cover artist, contributor and consulting editor for the *New Yorker* magazine.

A MEMOIR OF THE HOLOCAUST

MAUS is a memoir of one man's Holocaust experience. Like any eyewitness account, Vladek's story is a partial view that enhances but does not replace historical knowledge. Vladek's personal account reflects his particular circumstances, age, personality and country of origin. Yet his unrelenting honesty and unwavering recall provide students with many entry points into the study of the Holocaust including: pre-war Jewish life; the layout and workings of Auschwitz; the euphemistic language particular to Auschwitz; survival and resistance; liberation and the aftermath of war.

VLADEK AS EYEWITNESS

Vladek tells us why his eyewitness testimony is important by explaining that his first hand knowledge of the Holocaust is different from historically acquired knowledge.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read the definition of crematoria provided in the glossary and compare it to Vladek's first hand experiences (I.46, I.86, II.27, II.55, II.69-72, II.79). What do you learn from Vladek's account that is different from a historical definition? Conversely, what details are missing from Vladek's account that historical research provides? Memoirs and history books are two ways of learning about the Holocaust. Which provides a greater sense of immediacy, an identification with the individual and why? What are the limitations of one person's memoir? How do first hand accounts help us understand the larger history?

TIMELINE ACTIVITY

Understand how one person's experiences can both intersect and deviate from the larger history. Plot the major events and dates in Vladek's life against the timeline of the Holocaust included in the appendix.

RESEARCH EXTENSION

Students are encouraged to hear from a Holocaust survivor or read other first hand accounts, diaries or memoirs of the Holocaust (see bibliography). Compare them to Vladek's story in **MAUS**. For example, Elie Wiesel, like Vladek, was also interned in Auschwitz and bears witness to the workings of Auschwitz, slave labour and death marches. Unlike Vladek, Wiesel speaks from the particular vantage point of a young boy from a traditional and religiously observant Hungarian family.

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

Students are divided into small groups and each group is provided with one or more of the following study documents. Each group chooses a recorder and a reporter. Students read the materials, the suggested excerpts from **MAUS** and answer the questions. Groups share their findings with the class.

- pre-war Jewish life
- things began to change
- separation, hiding, deportation
- workings of Auschwitz-Birkenau
- language of Auschwitz
- resistance
- liberation and the aftermath of war

Before 1933 Jewish families lived in diverse, vibrant communities across Europe. In Poland, where Vladek and Anja came from, there were 3.35 million Jews, representing ten percent of the population. Jewish communities had been in place since the eleventh century. Some of the Jews were religiously observant, others more secular. Some, particularly those from smaller villages, spoke Yiddish, others only the language of their native land. Depending on where they lived, Jews often faced many restrictions. Others enjoyed greater freedoms and achieved success as scholars, politicians, artists and scientists. Not only were millions of lives lost in the Holocaust, entire Jewish communities and a rich culture were lost. Today there are fewer than 4,000 Jews remaining in Poland.

READ VLADEK'S ACCOUNT

- Anja's family I.15-22
- grandparents I.86, I.116

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Vladek presents Anja's large extended family, the Zylberbergs, in some detail. What does he tell you about them? Describe their social and economic status? How do the Zylberbergs compare to the description of pre-war Jewish life above? Why do you think Vladek's account of his pre-war life is included in **MAUS**?

The restriction of Jewish rights and the removal of Jews from public life was a gradual and systematic process. The 1933 Anti-Jewish Legislation and the 1935 Nuremberg Laws were the first legal steps to be enacted by the Nazis. These laws barred Jews from the German civil service. Basic civil rights and rights of citizenship were removed. Jews were no longer permitted to hold jobs in public schools, the law courts, post offices, railways, fire and police departments. They were forbidden to practice law or marry non-Jews. Children were forbidden to attend public schools, visit parks and own pets. Jews were forced to wear yellow stars of David in public and their identification papers were stamped with the letter "J" for Jew as part of the process of identifying and isolating them.

READ VLADEK'S ACCOUNT

- swastika appears I.32
- pogroms in Germany and Poland I.33, I.37
- invasion of Poland, Vladek drafted I.37-8, I.44, I.47-50
- restrictions against Jews of Sosnowiec I.65, I.75-76, I.78-79
- identification of Jews I.62, I.71, I.80, I.83, I.88, I.90, I.106
- gradual systematic change I.65, I.74, I.79
- aryanization of Jewish businesses I.33, I.76-77

FACT FINDING QUESTIONS

Describe the ways in which Vladek, Anja and their family were subjected to discrimination. What rights were removed first? How does **MAUS** make use of images to explain this process to readers? What did you learn from Vladek's testimony about the initial stages of the Holocaust?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What role did these initial restrictions play in the overall Final Solution? Why is it important to understand these early restrictions and their gradual implementation? What lessons do they hold for racism and discrimination today?

RESEARCH EXTENSION

The Nuremberg Laws laid down the legal groundwork for restrictions against Jews. What were they, how were they enacted and why? Who benefited from them?

Kristallnacht, the "Night of Broken Glass," was a defining moment in the history of the Holocaust. On November 9, 1938, Jewish synagogues, stores and homes in Germany and Austria were looted and destroyed. Jews were murdered and thousands were deported to concentration camps. News of this event spread to Jewish communities across Europe.

Those who could, tried to emigrate. Some made the difficult decision to send their children on "Kindertransports" to safety in other countries. Families who remained were driven into hiding, ghettos and concentration camps. To survive in hiding, Jews had to assume other identities – changing their names and passing as non-Jews. Separated from their families they lived in constant danger of discovery.

Children suffered fear, separation, disease, starvation and death. Older children, who could serve as slave labourers, had the best chance of survival. Only 1.1 percent of Jewish children in Europe alive at the beginning of the war, survived to its conclusion.

READ VLADEK'S ACCOUNT

- "actions," round-ups and deportations I.78-80, I.86-91, I.109-111
- slave labour I.106, I.116-7, II.67
- hiding I.110-113, I.121-125, II.80-88
- ghettos I.82, I.105, I.121-24
- liquidation I.112-115, I.121
- experiences of children I.81, I.90-1, I.107-109, I.121-123

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Vladek uses several terms to describe the systematic roundup and deportation of Jews to concentration camps. Draw up a list of these words and use Vladek's descriptions of the events to explain their meaning. Compare your findings to the definitions found in the glossary.

Vladek and Anja's survival depended on their being able to work as slave labourers, evade capture or go into hiding. What skills did Vladek have to accomplish this? Who helped him?

Vladek was a witness to the liquidation of the Sosnowiec ghetto and the particular experiences of children. What steps did he and Anja take to keep Richieu safe? What were the obstacles and risks to placing a child in hiding? Describe the liquidation process and its purpose.

Vladek was a witness to the workings of the concentration camp Dachau and the death camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Immediately after assuming power on January 30, 1933, the Nazis established camps where they “concentrated” and imprisoned perceived enemies of the state including political opponents, trade unionists, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Gypsies and homosexuals. The general round-up of Jews began in 1938.

Dachau was one of the first three concentration camps built. The barracks, gas chamber (which was never used) and crematorium of Dachau became the prototype for later concentration camps. Auschwitz was established in 1940 near Oswiecim, Poland and became an extermination camp in 1942. It contained a labour camp and the sub-camp Birkenau (also known as Auschwitz II) with its four gas chambers. The Auschwitz gassings took place at Birkenau, as many as 6,000 a day. Up to 1.5 million Jewish men, women and children and 100,000 victims from other ethnic and cultural groups were killed in this camp. Only 7,650 prisoners were found alive at liberation.

READ VLADEK’S ACCOUNT

Dachau

- cattle cars/ trains II.85-88
- "Here, in Dachau, my troubles began" II.91-97

Birkenau

- map back cover Vol. I & II, II.52, II.51
- trains II.55
- gas chamber I.109, I.116, II.69-72
- crematoria I.86, I.146, II.27, II.55, II.69-72

Auschwitz

- map back cover Vol. I & II, II.51
- foreshadowing I.78, I.86, I.88, I.107
- deportations I.114, I.121, I.146, II.108
- arrival in Auschwitz I.157, II.24-5
- role call II.50
- work II.36, II.47, II.53, II.60
- "organizing", trading II.64, II.67, II.96
- resourcefulness II.85, II.94
- hunger II.32, II.48-49, II.59, II.61, II.78, II.86, II.91-94, II.111
- disease II.91-2, II.94-96
- brutality II.50, II.57

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What do you learn from Vladek about Dachau, Auschwitz and Birkenau? Using the maps found in **MAUS**, describe the physical layout of the camps.

How was Auschwitz-Birkenau organized to achieve the Nazi purpose of the mass killings of Jews, Gypsies, Poles, Homosexuals and others? Consider the movement of people from the trains to showers, barracks and forced labour or to the gas chambers and crematoria. What jobs were performed in this systematic process by guards and prisoners? What jobs did Vladek perform?

Despite the cruelty and deprivation of life in Auschwitz-Birkenau, an underground culture developed amongst the prisoners that included a communication network. Describe the physical and social conditions of the camps. How was a typical day organized? Describe some of the strategies that improved prisoners' chances of surviving in Auschwitz. How did Vladek avoid selections? From Vladek's description of his rations, calculate the number of calories he consumed daily. How does this compare to the number of calories you consume on an average day?

RESEARCH EXTENSION

Auschwitz is sometimes referred to as a "factory of death." To what extent is it accurate to say that Auschwitz and the Holocaust are essentially modern events? What technological and organizational developments of the 20th century made the Holocaust possible?

Because Auschwitz seemed like another world, it has sometimes been referred to as "Planet Auschwitz." In many ways Auschwitz functioned as a society, albeit a perverse one, removed from the world and all sense of normalcy and justice. A specialized language arose to describe this destructive world. Vladek makes liberal use of this language throughout **MAUS**.

READ VLADEK'S ACCOUNT

- action I.111
- appel II.50, II.66
- kapo II.30-33, II.63
- liquidation I.112, I.114, I.121
- organize II.64
- selection/selektion II.31-32, II.58-59, II.67
- Sonderkommando II.71, II.79

DEFINE THE WORDS

Work in pairs or small groups to write definitions for each of the following words. Compare your definitions with others in the class. Match the class' definitions with the glossary. What is the difference between the words' actual meanings (denotation) and their use in the Holocaust (connotation)? For an alternative activity, cut up the glossary so that the words and their definitions are separated. Give each group a set and see which group can be the first to match the words and their definitions.

Action/ Aktion

Appel

Aryanization

Final Solution

Kapo

Liquidation

Organize

Roundup

Selection/ Selektion

Shower

Sonderkommando

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Which words do you think were coined by the Nazis as a language of deception, to mask what was really going on? Which words do you think may have been coined by the prisoners themselves? Which of the words describe some general aspect of the Holocaust? Which of the words refer to the concentration camps in particular?

Why do you think Spiegelman kept these specialized words in **MAUS** rather than replace them with ones more easily understood? How does understanding these words contribute to your appreciation of the work?

On the gates to Dachau and Auschwitz were the words *Arbeit Macht Frei*, German for "*work will make you free.*" What do you think the intent of this motto was? How does it relate to the language of deception? Do you think this language evolved or was created, and why?

Action / Aktion

German word meaning "action" but used to refer to any non-military campaign. An Aktion would be an operation undertaken for political or racial reasons. For example *Aktion 14f13* was the code name for the murder of the disabled.

Appel

French word for roll call. Process of forcing concentration camp prisoners to line up outdoors to be counted, often for several hours and under all weather conditions.

Aryanization

Term used to describe the confiscation of Jewish-owned businesses and their transfer to German ownership.

Final Solution

Nazi code name for the plan to destroy the Jews of Europe.

Kapo

Prisoner in charge of a group of inmates in Nazi concentration camps. The word "kapo" comes from the Italian "capo" meaning head or chief. Kapos were often professional criminals, former soldiers, foreign legionnaires and other rough unskilled prisoners who directed the forced labour work details of Jews in concentration camps. They were appointed by the SS work detail officers, and they had equally cruel foremen assisting them. Prisoners often had to bribe Kapos to avoid being beaten to death. To distinguish them from Jews wearing yellow stars, Kapos wore black arm bands with white lettering on their left arms.

Liquidation

Term used by Nazis referring to the removal and/or elimination of prisoners: the *liquidation* of the Warsaw ghetto saw the deportation of Jews to the concentration camp Treblinka, where most were then killed.

Organize

Word used by Auschwitz prisoners to refer to stealing and procuring food or other necessities needed to survive.

Roundup

Term used to refer to the Nazi collection of Jews and other victims for deportation, labour or murder.

Selection / Selektion

Term for choosing whom to kill. The process of choosing (selecting) victims for the gas chambers by separating them from those considered fit to work.

Shower

Language of deception for the gas chamber.

Sonderkommando

German word meaning, "special commando." The Sonderkommando was a unit of SS soldiers given a special duty or assignment such as helping the mobile killing squads. It is also the name given to Jewish prisoners assigned to work at the gas chambers and crematoria. At Auschwitz-Birkenau these Jewish Sonderkommando were replaced every few months and put to death themselves.

Despite the extreme danger to life, Vladek recounts several instances of resistance that occurred under Nazi occupation and in the concentration camps. Some were small acts of personal altruism and sacrifice, others heroism on a greater scale. Resistance to injustice took many forms including the physical, psychological and spiritual. Some acts of resistance were planned, others more spontaneous.

READ VLADEK'S ACCOUNT

- Anja's resistance I.27-8
- spiritual resistance I.54
- false identity cards I.78
- altruism I.53, II.33-35, II.56, II.59
- obstacles to resistance II.73
- Sonderkommando resistance II.79
- Polish rescuers I.81, I.136-139, I.141-148

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Vladek's account illustrates some altruistic acts and sacrifices. Describe these using examples from the text.

Describe the conditions at Auschwitz that made resistance difficult if not impossible. In what way might a small act such as the sharing of food be considered to be an act of heroism in Auschwitz? Jews who participated in religious practice did so in defiance of Nazi orders. In what way was maintaining a spiritual life a form of resistance?

Describe the Sonderkommando uprising of October 7, 1944 and its significance. Vladek identifies a few acts of altruism and rescue by Polish Christians. What can these examples teach us about the human response to moral crisis?

RESEARCH EXTENSION

Research other examples of Jewish resistance to the Holocaust, including: the Warsaw Ghetto uprising; the rebellion at the Sobibor death camp; and Jewish partisan activity.

A small number of non-Jews performed heroic deeds and rescued Jews during the Holocaust. Some of these individuals, such as Oskar Schindler and Raoul Wallenberg, are well known. Many others are known only to the individuals they rescued. Research some accounts of rescuers. Can we make generaliza-

For survivors of the Holocaust, liberation was the gradual process of reclaiming identities, searching for family, and finding countries that would accept them. The lucky ones found a relative alive. Many did not. With nowhere else to go they drifted through Europe and ended up in Displaced Persons Camps. Many waited years for the nations which had defeated Germany to determine their fate. Some languished in Europe until 1950 – more than five years after the war. Most countries had very restrictive immigration laws barring Jews from entry. There were very few choices open to Jewish refugees. Canada was one of the first to open its doors.

Many Displaced Persons Camps were housed in former labour or concentration camps. Nutrition, sanitary conditions and accommodations were often poor. Despite this, camp life was often culturally rich and included marriages, births, schools, clubs, training and employment. Basic necessities were provided by the United Nations Rehabilitation and Relief Agency, the International Red Cross and other welfare organizations.

LIBERATION

- German retreat II.69
- death march II.80-88
- exchanged as a prisoner of war II.97
- false liberation II.105-108
- guards run away II.109
- food II.111

AFTERMATH OF WAR

- Sweden II.123
- displaced persons camps II.129, II.31
- search for family II.131, II.133, II.136
- dangers of returning home II.131-132
- return to Poland II.135
- aid organizations II.134

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Auschwitz-Birkenau and many of the other concentration camps were in Poland. As the Russian Army approached, the Germans retreated, force-marching their prisoners towards Germany. Why were these evacuations called "death marches" and how did Vladek survive?

Liberation did not come to Vladek in a single defining moment. Describe the stages of his liberation, the dangers and the set-backs.

Liberation did not bring an immediate end to survivors' hardships. Map Vladek and Anja's route through Europe in their search for family and a home. Why could Vladek and Anja not remain in Poland?

RESEARCH EXTENSION

Who were the liberators? Interview members of your family or community who served as a member of one of the liberation forces about their experiences.

What was Canada's response to those seeking refuge, during and after the Holocaust? Research Canadian immigration policies towards various ethnic groups during the first half of this century.

FORM AND GENRE

MAUS has generated much debate as to its literary form. Even the Pulitzer Prize committee established a special category to honour the work. **MAUS** has been categorized variously as a cartoon, graphic novel, memoir (Vladek's), autobiography (Art Spiegelman's), oral history and allegory. Some think of it as a work of fiction, others as non-fiction.

Spiegelman recounts an amusing anecdote about his efforts to have **MAUS** removed from the *New York Times Book Review's* fiction list, saying that "David Duke [the former leader of the Ku Klux Klan] would be quite happy to read that what happened to his father was fiction" (Blume, 1997). In response, one of the book review editors quipped that if he rang Spiegelman's doorbell and a giant mouse answered, then he would place **MAUS** on the non-fiction list.

Spiegelman's use of the comic book has been highly controversial, with some suggesting that the form demeans the gravity of the Holocaust experience. Others argue that to the contrary, **MAUS** has elevated the comic book form to new and serious heights.

ANALYSIS OF FORM

Students choose one of the possible forms or genre's attributed to **MAUS** listed below, and find a working definition of that form. Students write an argument for classifying **MAUS** according to that form. Students present their arguments in the form of a class debate. After hearing all the presentations, the class agrees on a collective classification of **MAUS**. Students discuss how the classification can change readers' perception of the work.

- comic book
- graphic novel
- memoir
- autobiography
- oral history
- allegory
- fiction
- non-fiction

MAUS AS METAPHOR

No part of the comic book style has evoked more discussion than **MAUS'** use of the animal metaphor. Central to the metaphor is Spiegelman's decision to represent Germans as cats, Jews as mice, and Poles as pigs. This metaphor is a vehicle for rendering the enormity of the Holocaust in a contained form.

Students examine the use of metaphor by reading the following student materials including the excerpts from **MAUS** and answering the questions. Students are encouraged to support their arguments with references to **MAUS**.

- metaphor by design
- ethnic metaphors
- controversies

MAUS is clearly intended as a metaphor. Readers are continually reminded that the animals are to be thought of as human and that the animals in **MAUS** think of themselves as human.

In explaining the origins of **MAUS**, Spiegelman tells of having seen old cat and mice cartoons and old racist cartoons, which spawned an idea for a comic strip about racism in America that would be called "The Ku Klux Katz." However, Spiegelman changed his mind, realizing that he could use the cat and mice metaphor with a subject much closer to his own past – the Holocaust (from Spiegelman's The Complete **MAUS** CD-ROM).

READ EXCERPTS

- Spiegelman aware of his own metaphor II.41, II.43
- Anja startled by a real rat I.147
- psychiatrist's real cat and dog II.43

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

How does Spiegelman remind readers that **MAUS** is to read as a metaphor? Why do you think he does this?

RESEARCH EXTENSION

Compare **MAUS'** use of the extended metaphor with another literary work such as George Orwell's *Animal Farm* or Aesop's *Fables*.

The central metaphor of **MAUS**, in which Germans are represented as cats, Jews as mice, and Poles as pigs, is not as straightforward as it seems. **MAUS** plays with ideas of ethnic identity and how those identities can be hidden or masked. Only the representation of Jews as mice remains constant. Jews are mice whether they are Polish, French or American. Yet other ethnic or national groups are portrayed with some variations.

READ EXCERPTS

- African-Americans II.98-100
- an ordinary German soldier II.54
- German civilians II.130
- German-Jewish children II.131
- Art's wife, Françoise II.11-12
- masking Jewish identity I.64, I.125, I.136-141, I.149
- Spiegelman's identity II.41

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

How are African-Americans represented and why? What visual element is used to distinguish ordinary Germans from Nazis? How is this same element used to convey the mixed identity of German-Jewish children? Explain the dilemma Spiegelman faces in trying to find an animal metaphor to represent his French wife who has converted to Judaism? Why do you think Spiegelman draws himself as a human with a mouse mask? What do Vladek and Anja do to pass as non-Jews and how is this conveyed visually? What does this suggest to you about the notion of ethnic identity? How are masks a fitting way to convey people's perception of race or ethnic identity?

Why do you think Spiegelman used animals instead of humans to tell the story? Do you think the animal metaphor is effective, or do you think the animal metaphor diminishes the enormity of the Holocaust?

RESEARCH EXTENSION

The classification of people according to their ethnic identities was central to Nazi policy. Research Nazi racial ideology, eugenics and the theory of a master race. Explain how these beliefs were implemented during the Holocaust. Consider Nazi propaganda and legislation.

MAUS' use of metaphor raises the controversial issue of race and the dangers of identifying people by race. Some people have objected to the mice metaphor because of its association with Nazi propaganda which portrayed Jews as vermin, and Poles particularly have found the pig metaphor objectionable.

RACE

Because we think of cats, pigs, dogs and frogs as different species, readers might conclude that different nationalities such as Germans, Poles, Americans and French are distinct races. In reality each of these countries is populated by people of different races and ethnic backgrounds.

Some critics say that the animal metaphor plays into the Nazi ideology of Jews as a race. Hitler wrote that "The Jews are undoubtedly a race, but they are not human" (preface, **MAUS**, Vol. I). In fact, Judaism is not a race, it is a religion. People of any race can be Jewish.

Nazism used race to segregate people and create the distinction between a master Aryan race and the inferior Slavic races, like the Poles who were to be used as slaves. Jews and Gypsies were considered to be sub-human and targeted for death. Recent genetic research has questioned the whole idea of race. Research findings show few genetic differences amongst people.

VERMIN

Nazi propaganda portrayed Jews as vermin.

"Mickey Mouse is the most miserable ideal ever revealed. ... Healthy emotions tell every independent young man and every honorable youth that the dirty and filth-covered vermin, the greatest bacteria carrier in the animal kingdom, cannot be the ideal type of animal. ... Away with Jewish brutalization of the People! Down with Mickey Mouse! Wear the Swastika Cross!" (from a German newspaper article, mid-1930s, reproduced in the preface to **MAUS**, vol. II)

Spiegelman created the mice metaphor intentionally, knowing about the Nazi association of Jews as vermin and that their method of "extermination" was through the use of a common pesticide – Zyklon B.

"I found that in a film called *The Eternal Jew*, a racist documentary made by a guy named Hippler, there's shots of old Jewish men milling around in a ghetto, cut to a swarm of rats in a sewer, and saying that the Jews are the rats of mankind, carrying their disease through out the world." (from Spiegelman's The Complete **MAUS** CD-ROM)

POLES AS PIGS

Some Poles have found the pig metaphor to be offensive. Spiegelman relates a conversation he had with a member of the Polish press:

"[A Polish press attaché] said, 'Do you realize that it is a terrible insult to call a Pole a pig? It's worse than it even sounds in English. Do you realize that the Germans called us *schwein* [pigs]?' So I said, 'Yeah, and the Germans called us vermin. These aren't my metaphors. These are Hitler's.' And that gave us common ground. I pointed out that, in the book, there are Jews who act admirably-but there are many Jews in the book who don't. These are just people wearing masks. And the same is true of the Poles. There are some Poles who saved my parents' lives and who were very kind, and there were some who were swine." (Dreifus, 37)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Why do you think the mice and pig metaphors might be controversial? Do you think that **MAUS** plays into the hands of the Nazi ideology of Jews as vermin or do you think that it refutes it? Explain. What reasons does Spiegelman give for using these metaphors?

How did the Nazi ideology of Jews as a race contribute to the "Final Solution"? How was Nazi racial ideology used against Gypsies and Poles? How are ethnic and religious differences being used today in the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda?

Do you think it is appropriate to designate people by race? A recent Canadian census question asked people to identify themselves according to race. This information is commonly used to measure racial discrimination and to study income differences between ethnic groups and its causes. Do you think people should be categorized by race? When do you think it would be appropriate or inappropriate?

CHARACTER STUDY

As a work of literature, **MAUS'** strength lies in its honest and unsentimental depiction of the characters and their emotions. At the same time the narrative is complex, for who is telling the story after all? The story is Vladek's, and told by Vladek, but then reported to us by Spiegelman. To what extent is the narrative clouded by the layers of interpretation or by the different stories which Vladek or Art might wish to tell? By studying the relationship between characters, students can gain an awareness of the richness and complexity of **MAUS**.

Students choose one of the characters for a character study. They read the related excerpts and questions and write an analysis. Students are encouraged to support their arguments by using quotes from **MAUS** and relevant portions of the comic strip.

READERS' THEATRE

Select a portion of **MAUS** that explores the relationship between two of the characters. Do a dramatic reading of the excerpt. Props may be used. Following the readers' theatre, students paraphrase the scene in their own words and discuss their interpretations of the event, characters and emotions.

VLADEK

Vladek was once a dashing young man, resourceful and daring (I.12-16, II.33). In **MAUS** he is portrayed as an aging and in poor health. Describe some of these changes using examples from the text. How do you think Vladek's Holocaust experiences have contributed to the kind of person he became?

Vladek is sometimes portrayed in a negative light and at other times more sympathetically. Compare Vladek's altruism towards Mandelbaum in Auschwitz (II.33-34) with his prejudice towards an African-American hitch-hiker (II.98-100). Describe Vladek's character – his strengths and weaknesses. Find other contrasting examples to support your argument and explain how these examples affect your attitude towards him.

Art portrays Vladek as an inconsiderate father, emotionally demanding and guilt inducing (I.67 -69, I.96-7, II.13, II.77). What other examples can you find that support this view? Describe Vladek's relationship with Anja and his second wife Mala (I.11, I.104, I.130-134)?

Vladek is presented as someone who hoards food, rusty nails and tries to return opened boxes of cereal to the store (I.98, I.116, I.132). Art says that "in some ways [Vladek] didn't survive"(II.90). What does Art mean by this? Find other examples of hoarding. Why do you think Vladek would carefully keep calendars from 1965 (I.93) and yet throw out Anja's diaries (I.158-159)? What are the physical and psychological effects of the Holocaust on Vladek?

ART

Talking about the past gives Art a reason to talk to his father. Art's self-portrait is a realistic one. He presents himself as sarcastic, bitter and ambivalent towards his father. Find examples of Art's feelings for Vladek. Why do you think Art responds so badly to his father? Art breaks a promise to Vladek not to use some of Vladek's more private memories (I.23). What do you think of this broken promise?

Art fears that he has reduced his father, not only to a mouse, but to a rat, a "racist caricature" who reuses tea bags and hoards wooden matches. Do you think it is important that Vladek be portrayed with such honesty? How does it contribute to the literary merit of **MAUS**? Can you find contrasting examples of Art's compassion for his father.

The Holocaust had lasting effects, not only on survivors, but also on the children of survivors, often referred to as the Second Generation. Art, like many of the Second Generation, is plagued by guilt (I.100-103, II.120), fears (II.16) and anger (I.84, I.158-159). Art grew up with the ghost of his brother Richieu who died in the Holocaust (II.15, II.136). Explain Art's feelings and fears. Why is Art so angry with his father for having destroyed Anja's diaries? Explain the irony of Art spraying insects with pesticide in the Catskills (II.74).

ANJA

Anja is a more difficult character to assess, because unlike Art and Vladek, Anja does not really speak for herself. Anja is created from memory. Compare the similarities and differences between Art and Vladek's relationships with Anja. Do Art and Vladek speak about or present Anja differently? If so, what does this tell us about her husband and son? How does Anja's memory, or lack of it (as her diaries were destroyed (I.158-159)), affect the relationship between Art and Vladek? How might the story of **MAUS** have changed if Art could have interviewed his mother as well as his father?

A COMIC BOOK ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST ?

Spiegelman shares the making of **MAUS** with his readers. As a result, readers are continually reminded of the fact that **MAUS** is a comic book and that the artist, is a character in his own work. The artist's process (I.132-133, II.11, II.16), and the response of readers (II. 41-42) are transparent features of the narrative.

As an art form, comic books can be extremely varied in style and content. **MAUS** makes use of a deceptively simple style but is the result of a lengthy and involved process that included forty hours of taped interviews, first hand historical research and much editing and reworking.

Students can gain an appreciation of **MAUS'** understated style and an understanding of the complex, artistic process by reading the following student material and responding to the questions.

STUDENT MATERIAL

- > artistic style
- > artistic process

As a comic book about the Holocaust, **MAUS** has generated some controversy. Ask students to discuss whether they think **MAUS** demeans the Holocaust experience or to the contrary, elevates the comic book form and informs a wider audience about the history? Students should support their ideas with quotes and illustrations from the text.

SIMPLICITY

The style of **MAUS** is deceptively simple. Unlike colourful mainstream comics, **MAUS** uses only black and white. There are few details and few facial expressions. Mice faces are expressed simply with dots for eyes and short lines for mouths and eyebrows. Sometimes, facial shadows are used to convey emotions (II.78). Only differences in clothing distinguishes one mouse from another. Despite this, each character is clearly recognizable. The simplicity of **MAUS** makes it easy to read both in terms of text and images.

In contrast, Spiegelman's earlier work, *Prisoner on the Hell Planet* (I.99-103) is very different in style. In this "comic within a comic" his mother's suicide is powerfully drawn, with human faces depicting a full range of expression.

FRAMES

Renowned comic book artist, Will Eisner calls comics "sequential art," referring in part to the way each frame follows the other. **MAUS'** use of frames is a traditional one. Few drawings break out of their borders and the frames help keep the Holocaust separate from the present. An exception to this, where past and present meet can be found in the drawing of the Auschwitz hangings presented simultaneously with a drive through the Catskills (II.79). Other variations include the use of a frame within a frame (I.74, II.81), varied sizes of frames, and a single image drawn through multiple frames (II.116).

FLASHBACKS

MAUS makes use of many flashbacks and flash forwards to tell the story in an alternating fashion. At one point Vladek is shown looking back in time at his younger self (I.74, I.115). Although extremely effective, **MAUS'** use of flashbacks and flash forwards is not new. Students will be accustomed to interpreting these time shifts from their experience with other comic books, film and television.

DIAGRAMS, CHARTS, MAPS AND PHOTOS

A unique feature of **MAUS** is its use of informational drawings. These diagrams, charts, maps and photos provide concrete support for Vladek's story. They are almost a kind of documentary evidence for the history. These special drawings enhance readers' understanding of people, places and events by adding a richness of details to an otherwise simple style.

- map of Poland I.60, back cover Vol. I, II.84
- map of concentration camp back cover vol. II, II.51
- map of death march II.84
- map of Rego Park and the Catskills back covers vol. I & II
- family photographs II.5, II.134
- drawings of photographs I.17, II.114-116
- magnified drawing of lice II.91
- diagram on shoe repair II.60
- diagrams of hiding places I.86, I.110, I.112
- diagram of the work done by slave labour I.56
- diagrams of the crematoria II.70
- chart showing exchange values of goods in Auschwitz II.64
- document – Nazi proclamation I.82
- document – passport marked with a "J" 1.90
- timeline II.68
- a comic within a comic I.99-103

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Compare the soft, rounded curves of the mice faces with the sharp, angular edges of the cat faces.

Prisoner on the Hell Planet and **MAUS** are very different in their length and subject matter. Which do you find more powerful or effective? Do you identify or empathize more with the characters when they are drawn as animals or as humans? Do you think you would relate to Vladek as much had he been drawn realistically?

How does the use of frames help to convey a sense of time?

What stylistic techniques are used to move the reader between flashbacks and flash forwards?

How do diagrams, charts, maps and photos act as documentary evidence of the Holocaust? What do you learn from them? Why do you think Art and Vladek include them in the narrative? What function do they serve?

INTERVIEWS

Spiegelman recorded more than forty hours of taped interviews with his father. Because Spiegelman was not trained to collect oral histories, these interviews were conducted over a long period of time and are often highly personal in nature.

"I have no background per se in oral history. Long after the interview I did with my father I found a book on oral history, read it and found out that maybe I had gone about it in an unorthodox way. ... **MAUS** grew out of a comic strip I did in 1971. A three page strip based on stories of my father's and mother's that I recalled being told in childhood. When I finished the 1971 strip, I was pretty much estranged from my father. I went back to him and showed him the strip as an excuse to renew contact with him. Some of the information he gave me at that point made me actually go back and rework the three page strip. And that led me to tape his experiences in more full detail, and I spent about four days with him talking into a reel-to-reel clunky tape recorder." (Smith, 1987)

Spiegelman's intended to tell his father's story "the way it really happened"(I.23). However the interviews reflect the troubled relationship between father and son. For example Vladek wants to talk about the glaucoma in his left eye, while Art wants to continue to hear about the Holocaust. Spiegelman expresses frustration with his father's digressions, to the point of yelling at him to continue (II.47). He also resorts to bribery, promising to put up the storm windows if Vladek tells him more about Anja (II.103). The process seems to be a difficult and emotionally draining one for both of them:

Art: I'm - uh - sorry I made you talk so much, pop.

Vladek: So, never mind, darling. Always it's a pleasure when you visit (II.117).

RESEARCH

Spiegelman researched his parents' story by visiting Poland and the concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau.

"The crew helped me find my parents' house in Sosnowiec. We found people who remembered my family. In Auschwitz, we were able to hook up with the curator of the visual archives of the museum, and he helped me find the pictures I needed for my visual reconstruction. ... The first time I went, we went to Auschwitz I, which is where my father was incarcerated. And that looks fairly benign in some bizarre way. It's paved. It's got trees. So in that first trip, I spent a lot of time in Auschwitz I, which was a rather sanitized place, set up like a museum or a world's fair display. And that kept it at a peculiar distance... [Birkenau] stretched as far as the eye could see in any given direction. And then in the back is the rubble of where the killing apparatus was. We walked in and it was nearing dusk when we found Birkenau. And that was frightening. It was one of the only places I've ever walked where one really does believe in ghosts. It felt like every step was walking on ashes." (Dreifus, 37)

LAYOUT

Spiegelman used a lengthy process to complete each page. Starting with his father's taped memories, Spiegelman selected the most important scenes and scraps of dialogue, which he then edited to fit the restrictions of a comic-strip. Spiegelman began with a tiny layout of each page, followed by a full-size trial on a plastic master grid. Spiegelman reworked each panel many times, paring down the dialogue and tracing and retracing the contours of each drawing with multi-coloured inks. Spiegelman continued to edit even some of his final versions with white-out or pasted-in dialogue.

STUDENT DRAWING ACTIVITY

History is often left to historians. But ordinary people, who have lived through momentous historical events have much to contribute to our understanding of history. Interview a member of your family or community about their memories of the Holocaust, World War II or other recent historical events. Record their experiences and discuss any related photographs and documents that they may have. Do library research for background information and supporting visual documentation. Select the most important events and dialogue. Edit to fit the limitations of a comic strip. Do a rough layout of each page before doing the final drawings.

SOCIAL JUSTICE CARTOONS

Issues of social justice have long been the subject matter of graphic artists and cartoonists. Though not the first of its kind, **MAUS** helped to legitimize graphic novels and introduced a new form of literary expression to a general readership. It also introduced a more serious topic to a readership that may not have sought it out otherwise. Other graphic novels concerned with historical events or issues of social justice include: Keiji Nakazawa's *Barefoot Gen* which records the testimony of a child survivor of the bombing of Hiroshima; Jack Jackson's *Comanche Moon* about Native American displacement; Jacques Tardi's account of the First World War in *The War of the Trenches*; and Raymond Brigg's *When the Wind Blows* about a nuclear attack.

On a daily basis, newspaper editorial cartoonists often use irony and satire as a weapon against discrimination and racism wherever they find it, be it in Canada or on the world stage. By responding with immediacy to current issues and events cartoonists challenge us to examine our own ethical and moral values.

Students examine the selection of Canadian editorial cartoons found in the student material:

- Brian Gable, *The Globe and Mail*
- Bob Krieger, *The Province*
- Bruce MacKinnon, *The Halifax Herald*
- Malcolm Mayes, *The Edmonton Journal*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Describe your first reaction to each cartoon. Was it one of amusement, annoyance, understanding or puzzlement? Did you agree with the intent of the cartoon? Explain why you reacted in the way that you did. What purpose can such cartoons serve?

Compare the styles of the four cartoons in terms of their use of realism, details, backgrounds and use of exaggeration. How does the artist's style contribute to the message of the cartoon?

WRITTEN RESPONSE

Write a brief explanation of each cartoon as you would for a younger sibling or friend. Set the stage by explaining the event or issue being portrayed. Explain the intended irony and your reaction to it.

CARTOONING ACTIVITY

Select a current or historical issue or event from a newspaper, social studies text, novel or memoir that interests you. Describe the social injustice found in the situation. Identify the victims, oppressors and moral dilemma. Choose a style that best suits your purposes and draw a cartoon that challenges the viewer to think more closely about your subject. Share your cartoons with classmates.

Measure how well the intent of your cartoon has been conveyed to fellow students. Working in pairs or small groups, read each other's cartoons. Write a single word describing your initial reaction to each cartoon. Write a sentence which explains your understanding of each cartoon's social justice issue or moral dilemma.

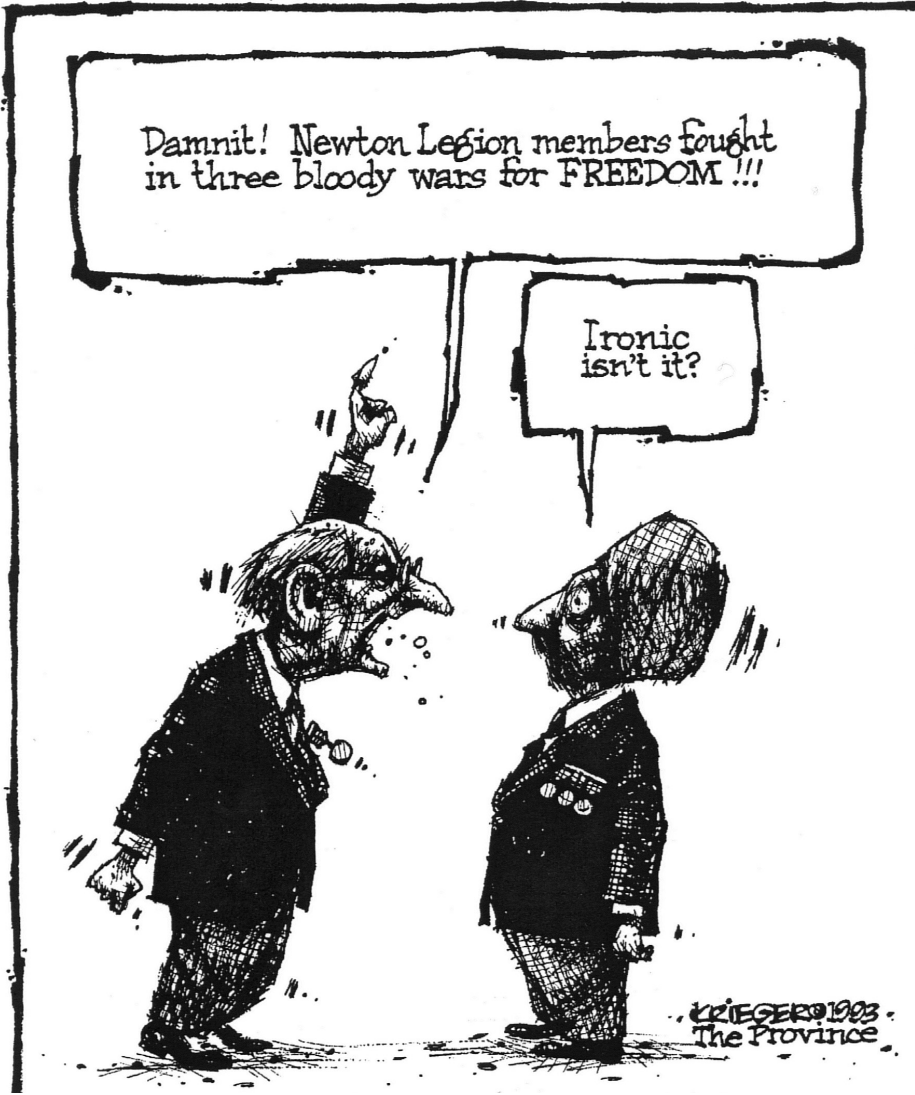
student material

EDITORIAL CARTOONS



student material

EDITORIAL CARTOONS



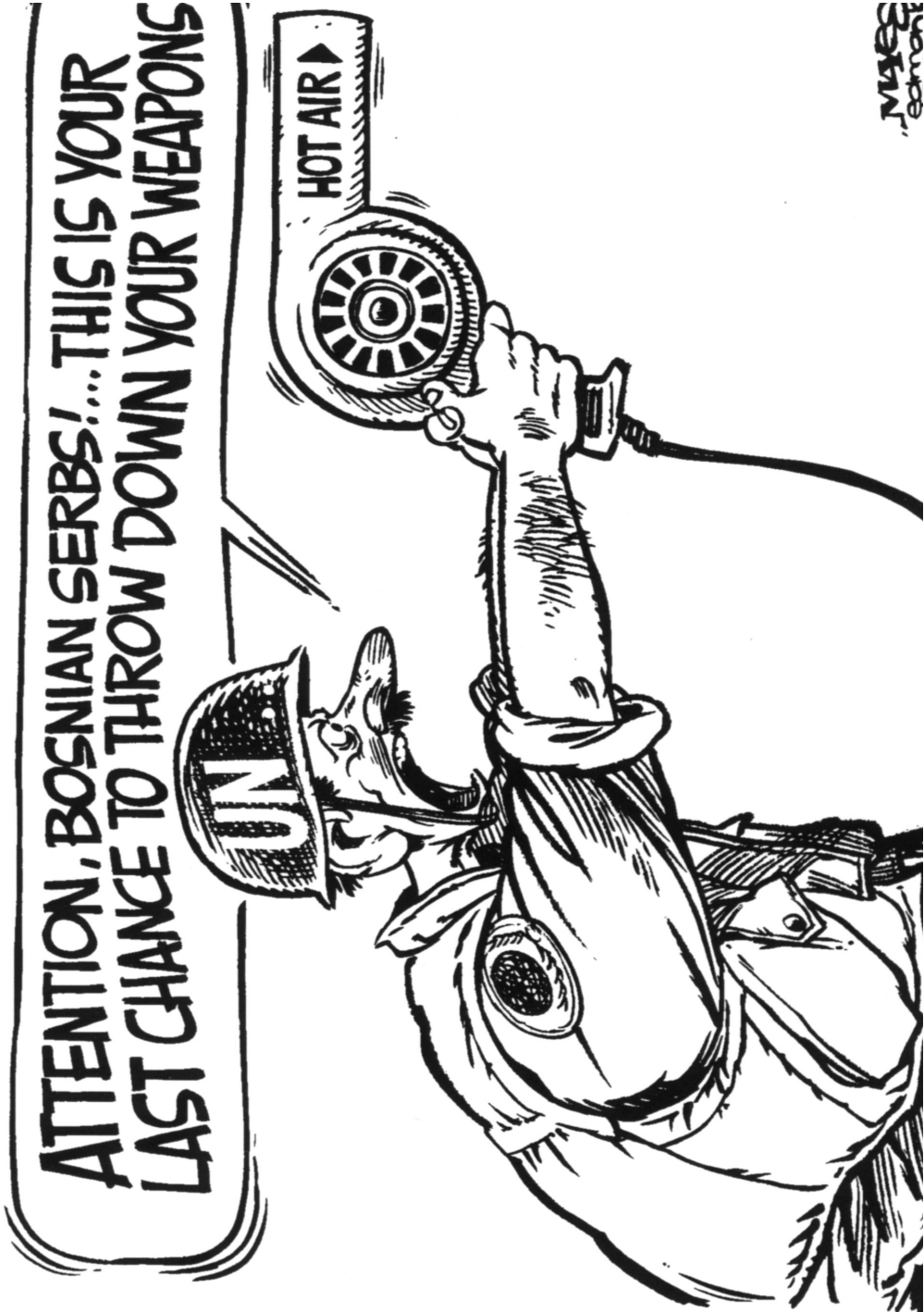
student material

EDITORIAL CARTOONS



© Bruce MacKinnon

student material



© Malcolm Mayes

Action / Aktion

German word meaning "action" but used to refer to any non-military campaign. An Aktion would be an operation undertaken for political or racial reasons. For example *Aktion 14f13* was the code name for the murder of the disabled.

Anti-Semitism

Opposition or hatred of Jews. As a term, it came into wide-spread use in the 1870's. Subsequently, it has come to denote hatred of Jews, in all of its forms throughout history.

Appel

French word for roll call. Process of forcing concentration camp prisoners to line up outdoors to be counted, often for several hours and under all weather conditions.

Aryan

Originally a linguistic term referring to the Indo-European group of languages. Before the end of the nineteenth century, the term had taken on racial definitions, often referring to people whose ancestors were northern European and thus "purer" than "lesser" races. The Nazis viewed Jews and other non-Aryans such as Gypsies and Poles as either inferior or subhuman.

Aryanization

Term used to describe the confiscation of Jewish-owned businesses and their transfer to German ownership.

Auschwitz

A concentration camp established in 1940 near Oswiecim, Poland. In 1942, it became an extermination camp. It contained a labour camp, the death camp Birkenau, and the slave labour camp, Buna-Monowitz. Up to 1.5 million Jewish men, women and children were murdered in this camp and 100,000 victims from other ethnic and cultural groups. Only 7,650 were found alive at liberation.

Birkenau

The sub-camp of Auschwitz with four gas chambers, also known as Auschwitz II. The Auschwitz gassings took place here – as many as 6,000 a day.

Cattle Car

Jews were most often transported to concentration camps by train in freight cars – sometimes referred to as cattle cars. The cars were packed tight and sealed off, and passengers had no food or water. Many people inside the cars, especially the old and very young, died before the train reached its destination.

Concentration Camps

Immediately after assuming power on January 30, 1933, the Nazis established camps where they “concentrated” and imprisoned perceived enemies of the state. Enemies of Nazism included: actual and potential political opponents including; Communists, Socialists, Monarchists, trade unionist, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Gypsies, homosexuals and others deemed “anti-social.” The general round-up of Jews did not begin until 1938. Before then, only Jews who fit the other categories were interned in the camps. The first three camps were: Dachau, Buchenwald, and Sachsenhausen.

Crematorium

Building in a concentration camp containing large brick ovens where corpses, including those who had been gassed to death, were burned. Vladek refers to the crematorium as “ovens.” Jewish prisoners, called Sonderkommando, were assigned to work in the crematorium for a few months, until they were killed and replaced by other prisoners.

Dachau

One of the first concentration camps, it opened in March 1933 as a prison for political opponents of the Nazi regime. Although, Dachau did not have a poison gas, mass extermination program, there were 31,591 registered deaths out of 206,206 registered prisoners. The total number of non-registered deaths is not known. The camp was liberated on April 29, 1945.

Death March

In retreating from Allied soldiers at the end of the war, Nazis forced large numbers of prisoners to march long distances under heavy guard and under intolerable conditions. Approximately a quarter of a million prisoners were murdered or otherwise died on these marches between the summer of 1944 and the end of the war.

Deportation

Part of the Nazi program to remove Jews from Germany, and increase living space for ethnic Germans. Initially an effort to rid German-held land of Jews, deportation eventually became a means to deliver Jews to concentration camps and implement the Final Solution.

Displaced Persons

After the war, refugees who no longer had families or homes to return to. They faced economic deprivation and feared reprisals or even death if they returned to their prewar homes. Immediately after the war it was estimated that there were between 1.5 million and 2 million displaced persons including 200,000 Jews, mainly from Eastern Europe.

Dysentery

Often leading to death during the Holocaust, dysentery is a disease causing an inflammation of the intestines and severe diarrhea. It can be caused by various bacterial, viral, or parasitic infections, and is most often passed by contaminated water.

Einsatzgruppen

Nazi mobile killing units made of up men from the SS Security Police and other volunteers, operating in German-occupied territories during World War II. The Einsatzgruppen was used in the invasions of Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland and, most brutally, Russia. Their victims, primarily Jews were executed by shooting and were buried in mass graves from which they were later exhumed and burned.

Final Solution

Nazi code name for the plan to destroy the Jews of Europe.

Gas

The Nazis used poison gas to kill large numbers of victims. Among the different gases used, Zyklon B was one of the most efficient and deadly.

Gas Chamber

Underground room where victims were gassed. Prisoners were told that they were showers intended for sanitation purposes. After gassing the bodies of the victims were brought to the crematorium.

Gestapo

A political police unit established in 1933. Its official name was Geheime Staatspolizei or secret state police. The Gestapo acted above the law and were notorious for their brutality.

Ghetto

The ghetto was a section of the city where all Jews from the surrounding areas were forced to live. Surrounded by barbed wire or walls, the ghettos were often sealed to prevent people from entering or leaving. Established mostly in Eastern Europe, ghettos were characterized by overcrowding, starvation and forced labour. All were eventually destroyed as the Jews were deported to death camps.

Graphic Novel

Differentiated from an ordinary comic book in its length and that it tends to deal with more serious issues and is aimed at more mature readers.

Hitler, Adolf

Nazi party leader from 1921 to 1945. He became the German Chancellor on January 30, 1933 and President on August 2, 1934. He committed suicide in his Berlin bunker on April 30, 1945 following Germany's defeat by the Allied powers.

Holocaust

The destruction of some 6 million Jews by the Nazis and their followers in Europe between the years 1933-1945. Other individuals and groups were persecuted and suffered grievously during this period, but only the Jews were marked for complete annihilation. The term "Holocaust" - literally meaning "a completely burned sacrifice" – suggests a sacrificial connotation to what occurred. The word *Shoah*, originally a Biblical term meaning widespread disaster, is the modern Hebrew equivalent.

Kaddish

The Jewish prayer of mourning for the dead.

Kapo

Prisoner in charge of a group of inmates in Nazi concentration camps. The word "kapo" comes from the Italian "capo" meaning head or chief. Kapos were most often professional criminals, former soldiers, foreign legionnaires and other rough unskilled prisoners who directed the forced labour work details of Jews in concentration camps. They were appointed by the SS work detail officers, and they had equally cruel foremen assisting them. Prisoners often had to bribe Kapos to avoid being beaten to death. To distinguish them from Jews wearing yellow stars, Kapos wore black arm bands with white lettering on their left arms.

Liberation

Period of time during which concentration camps were entered and captured by Allied forces.

Liberators

Soviet, British, Canadian and American troops who entered the concentration camps after the Nazis had left.

Liquidation

Term used by Nazis referring to the removal and/or elimination of prisoners: the *liquidation* of the Warsaw ghetto saw the deportation of Jews to the concentration camp Treblinka, where most were then killed.

Maus

German word for mouse.

Mauschwitz

Name used in **MAUS** to refer to the concentration camp of Auschwitz. Derived from a combination of the words maus and Auschwitz.

Meshuga

Yiddish word for crazy. Vladek uses this word to describe his nephew, Lolek, in **MAUS I**.

Nazi

Name for the National Socialist German Workers Party.

Nazism

The ideology of the National Socialist German Workers Party and the party's system of rule from 1933 to 1945. Also a form of fascism. The ideology included: 1) anti-liberalism and anti-parliamentarianism, 2) anti-communism and anti-socialism; 3) the Führer principle which replaced parliament with a hierarchical dictatorship based on the concepts of leader and follower, command and obedience; 4) nationalism, 5) racism and anti-Semitism, 6) imperialism and 8) militarism.

Organize

Word used by Auschwitz prisoners to mean stealing or procuring food or other necessities needed to survive.

Oswiecim

Polish name for the town and camp of Auschwitz.

Pogrom

A Russian word for physical attacks on Jews, usually accompanied by the destruction of property, murder and rape.

Ravensbrück

A concentration camp for women located outside of Berlin. Opened on May 15, 1939, a men's camp was added in April 1941, and Uckermark, a camp for 1,000 children, was also established. Out of 132,000 prisoners, 92,000 women from 23 nations were murdered at this site. Inmates were forced to work for the armaments industry and Siemens, who had built a factory adjacent to the camp. Those unable to work were killed in the gas chambers of Uckermark which operated from December 1944 to April 14, 1945. The camp was liberated by the Soviet Army.

Role call

Process of forcing concentration camp prisoners to line up outdoors to be counted, often for several hours and under all weather conditions. Vladek refers to it by its French name, "appel."

Round-up

Term used to refer to the Nazi collection of Jews and other victims for deportation, labour or murder.

SS

Abbreviation usually written with two lightning symbols for Schutzstaffel (Defense Protective Units). Originally organized as Hitler's personal bodyguard, the SS was transformed into a giant organization by Heinrich Himmler. Although various SS units were assigned to the battlefield, the organization is best known for carrying out the destruction of European Jewry.

Selection/Selektion

Term for choosing (selecting) whom to kill. The process of choosing victims for the gas chambers by separating them from those considered fit to work.

Schnell

German word for "quickly or hurry."

Shower

Language of deception for the gas chamber.

Shvartser

German/Yiddish word for black. Used in a derogatory manner by Vladek Spiegelman when referring to the black hitchhiker in **MAUS II**.

Sonderkommando

German, meaning "special commando." Sonderkommando was a unit of SS soldiers, given a special duty or assignment such as to help the mobile killing squads. It is also the name given to Jewish prisoners assigned to work at the gas chambers and crematoria. At Auschwitz-Birkenau these Jewish Sonderkommando were replaced every few months and put to death themselves.

Sonderkommando Revolt

The revolt by prisoners at Birkenau in which a crematorium was blown-up, October 7, 1944.

Sosnowiec

Located in Upper Silesia (south-west Poland), it is the town where Vladek and Anja Spiegelman lived prior to the war. Sosnowiec grew tremendously through the late 1930's and early 1940's, and of a population of 130,000, over twenty percent were Jewish. Annexed early in the war, and located less than 60km away from Auschwitz-Birkenau, the large scale deportation of Sosnowiec's Jews began in 1942. May 10th to 12th saw the deportation of 1500 Jews to Auschwitz, followed by another 2000 in June. By August 12th 1942 all the remaining Jews of Sosnowiec and its outlying areas were ordered to gather in the town's central square allegedly to have their papers checked. Over a period of several days an additional 8,000 Jews were deported to Auschwitz. In 1943 the remaining Jews of Sosnowiec were transferred to a ghetto near Kamionka.

Star of David

A six-pointed star formed of two equilateral triangles; a traditional symbol of Judaism. Used by the Nazis as an identification mark for Jews. By Nazi decree, Jews over the age of six had to wear a yellow Star of David badge on their clothing.

Swastika

Symbol of the Nazi party. A cross with equal arms each of which is bent at a right angle. It appeared on Nazi uniforms and flags.

Terezin (Czech) / Theresienstadt (German)

Terezin was established in 1941 as a "model camp" to deflect international criticism of the Nazi's treatment of Jews and to camouflage the extermination of Jews from world opinion. Situated in northwestern Czechoslovakia it served as a transit camp for Jews deported from Western European countries under Nazi occupation. As a ghetto and transit camp it was little more than a stopover for Jews on route to the extermination camps of Treblinka, Majdanek and Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Typhus

An infectious disease and common cause of death in the camps. Characterized by fever, exhaustion and nervous symptoms, typhus was most often spread by lice and fleas which thrive under unsanitary conditions.

World War II

The war fought from 1939 -1945 between the Axis and the Allied powers. The war began when Germany invaded Poland in September 1939. Germany surrendered on May 7, 1945. On August 6, 1945, the US. dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. On August 15, Japan surrendered. The war ended with the signing of a peace treaty on September 2, 1945.

Yid

Someone who speaks Yiddish or a slang term for a Jew. Sometimes used in a derogatory manner.

Yiddish

A language spoken by many Jews in Europe, usually written in the Hebrew alphabet. It is a dialect of High German with a mixture of words of Hebrew, Romance and Slavic origins.

Zyklon B

A pesticide and commercial name for prussic acid. As a deadly poison gas, it was used by the Nazis to kill large numbers of victims. Among the different gases used, Zyklon B was one of the most efficient and deadly.

TIMELINE OF THE HOLOCAUST 1933-1945

1933

January 30

Adolf Hitler appointed Chancellor of Germany.

March 20

Dachau concentration camp opens.

April 1

Boycott of Jewish shops and businesses.

April 7

Laws for re-establishment of the Civil Service barred Jews from holding civil service, university and state positions.

April 26

Gestapo established.

May 10

Public burning of books written by Jews, political opponents of the Nazis, and others.

July 14

Law permitting the forced sterilization of Gypsies, the mentally and physically disabled, African-Germans and others considered "unfit." East European Jewish immigrants stripped of German citizenship.

1934

August 2

Hitler proclaims himself *Führer und Reichskanzler* (Leader and Reich Chancellor). Armed Forces must now swear allegiance to him.

October - November

First major wave of arrests of homosexuals.

1935

March 17

Hitler's army invades the Rhine land.

April

Jehovah's Witnesses banned from all civil service jobs and are arrested.

September 15

"Nuremberg Laws," anti-Jewish racial laws enacted; Jews lose the right to German citizenship and to marry Aryans.

1936

Summer

Olympic Games take place in Berlin. Anti-Jewish signs are temporarily removed.

July 12

First German Gypsies are arrested and deported to Dachau concentration camp.

October 25

Mussolini and Hitler form Rome-Berlin Axis.

1938

March 13

Austria is peacefully annexed (Anschluss) by Germany. All anti-Semitic decrees immediately applied in Austria.

July 6-15

Representatives from thirty-two countries meet at the Evian Conference in France. Most countries refuse to let in more Jewish refugees.

November 9-10

Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass): anti-Jewish pogrom in Germany and Austria; synagogues destroyed; Jewish homes and shops looted; nearly 30,000 Jewish men sent to concentration camps.

November 12

Decree forcing all Jews to transfer retail businesses into Aryan hands.

November 15

All Jewish pupils expelled from German schools.

December 2-3

All Gypsies are required to register with the police.

1939

March 15
Germans invade Czechoslovakia.

August 23
Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact signed: non-aggression pact between Soviet Union and Germany.

June
Cuba, the United States and Canada refuse to admit Jewish refugees aboard the S.S. St. Louis, which is forced to return to Europe.

September 1
Germany invades Poland; World War II begins.

September 10
Canada declares war on Germany.

October
Hitler extends power of doctors to kill institutionalized mentally and physically disabled people in the "euthanasia" program.

October 12
Germany begins deportation of Austrian and Czech Jews to Poland.

October 28
First Polish ghetto established in Piotrków.

November 23
Jews in German-occupied Poland forced to wear an arm band or yellow star.

1940

Spring
Germany invades Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland and France.

May 7
Lodz Ghetto sealed.

May 20
Auschwitz concentration camp established at Oswiecim, Poland.

September 27
Italy, Germany and Japan form an alliance called the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis.

October
Warsaw Ghetto established: ultimately contains 500,000 people.

1941

March 22
Gypsy and African-German children are expelled from schools in the Reich.

March 24
Germany invades North Africa.

April 6
Germany invades Yugoslavia and Greece.

June 22
Germany invades the Soviet Union. The Einsatzgruppen, mobile killing squads, begin mass murders of Jews, Gypsies and Communist leaders.

July 31
Heydrich appointed by Göring to implement the "Final Solution."

September 23
Soviet prisoners of war and Polish prisoners are killed in Nazi test of gas chambers in Auschwitz.

September 28-29
Approximately 34,000 Jews are murdered by mobile killing squads, at Babi Yar near Kiev, Ukraine.

October
Establishment of Auschwitz II (Birkenau) for the extermination of Jews; Gypsies, Poles, Russians and others.

December 7
Japan attacks Pearl Harbour.

December 8
Gassing begins at Chelmno extermination camp in Poland.

December 11
United States declares war on Japan and Germany.

1942

Nazi extermination camps at Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec and Majdanek-Lublin begin the mass murder of Jews in gas chambers.

January 20

Wannsee conference in Berlin; Nazi leaders meet to discuss "the Final Solution," the plan to exterminate the Jews of Europe.

June

Jewish partisan units established in the forests of Belorussia and the Baltic States.

June 1

Jews in France and Holland are required to wear identifying stars.

1943

January

German 6th Army surrenders at Stalingrad.

April 19 - May 16

Warsaw Ghetto uprising; Jewish armed resistance to deportation.

June

Himmler orders the liquidation of all ghettos in Poland and the Soviet Union.

Summer

Armed resistance by Jews in Treblinka concentration camp, Bedzin, Bialystok, Czestochowa, Lvov and Tarnów ghettos.

October 14

Armed revolt in Sobibor extermination camp.

October - November

Rescue of Danish Jewry to Sweden.

1944

March 19

Germany occupies Hungary; Eichmann put in charge of plan to eliminate Hungarian Jewry.

May 15 - July 9

Over 430,000 Hungarian Jews are deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where most of them are gassed.

June 6

D-Day: Allied invasion at Normandy, France.

July 24

Russians liberate Majdanek concentration camp.

August 2

Nazis destroy the Gypsy camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau; approximately 3,000 Gypsies are gassed.

October 7

Prisoners revolt at Auschwitz-Birkenau and blow up one crematorium.

1945

January 17

Nazis evacuate Auschwitz and force prisoners on "death marches" toward Germany.

January 27

Soviet troops liberate Auschwitz-Birkenau.

April

U.S. troops liberate Buchenwald and Dachau concentration camps.

April 30

Hitler commits suicide in his bunker in Berlin.

May 5

U.S. troops liberate Mauthausen concentration camp.

May 8

V-E Day: Germany surrenders; the war ends in Europe.

August 6 and 9

The U.S. bombs Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan.

September 2

V-J Day: Japan surrenders; end of World War II.

November 1945 - October 1946

International Military War Crimes Tribunal held at Nuremberg, Germany.

REVIEWS AND ARTICLES ON MAUS

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- Tabachinick, Stephen E. "Of MAUS and Memory: The Structure of Art Spiegelman's Graphic Novel of the Holocaust." **Word & Image.** Vol. 9, No. 2, April-June 1993. 154-162.
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- Weinstein, Andrew. "Art After Auschwitz." **Boulevard.** Vol. 9, No. 1-2, 1994. 187-196.

Witck, Joseph. **Comic Book as History: The Narrative Art of Jack Jackson, Art Spiegelman, and Harvey Pekar.** Jackson Mississippi: University of Mississippi Press, 1989.

GRAPHIC NOVELS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Briggs, Raymond. **When the Wind Blows.** Penguin, 1983.
Concerned with possibility of nuclear war.

Briggs, Raymond. **The Tin-Pot Foreign General and the Old Iron Woman.**
Penguin, 1984. A satire of the Falklands War.

Eisner, Will. **To the Heart of the Storm.** Kitchen Sink Press Inc., 1991.
An autobiographical novel that examines how the anti-Semitism in 1920s and 1930s America shapes the author's personality and life.

Jackson, Jack. **Comanche Moon.** Last Gasp, 1978.
Concerned with Native American displacement, it is the true story of Cynthia Ann Parker, her son Quarah and the Comanches of Texas.

Nakazawa, Keiji. **Barefoot Gen.** Penguin, 1987.
A powerful and tragic story of the bombing of Hiroshima as seen through the eyes of the artist as a young boy growing up in Japan.

Nakazawa, Keiji. **Barefoot Gen: The Day After.** Penguin, 1988.
The testimony of a child who survives the bombing of Hiroshima.

Tardi, Jacques. **The War of The Trenches.**
Relates the experiences of French soldier during the First World War.

AUSCHWITZ MEMOIRS

Bitton-Jackson, Livia. **I Have Lived A Thousand Years.**

New York: Simon & Schuster Books For Young Readers, 1997.

Memoir of the author, who was thirteen years old when the Nazis invaded Hungary. As one of the few teenage camp inmates, Elli managed to survive Auschwitz. Grades 7-12

Brewster, Eva. **Progeny of Light / Vanished in Darkness.**

Edmonton: NewWest Publishers Limited, 1994.

Of the thousand Berlin Jews deported to Auschwitz–Birkenau on April 20, 1943 Eva Brewster and her mother were among the seven who survived. Brewster describes her youth, the events that led to her capture, her time in Auschwitz and the rebuilding of her life. Grades 10-12

Delbo, Charlotte. **Auschwitz And After.**

New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.

This unique and profoundly moving memoir of life in the concentration camps and afterward was written by a French female resistance leader and non-Jew who became an important literary figure in postwar France. Vignettes, poems, and prose are used to speak eloquently of horror, heroism and conscience. Grade 12

Delbo, Charlotte. **Convoy to Auschwitz: Women of the French Resistance.**

Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997.

The book is Delbo's testament to those who, along with herself, formed a convoy to Auschwitz. Delbo recounts the unique life history of each woman, from her childhood to her involvement in the Resistance, from her arrest to her horrifying experience in the concentration camp. Grade 12

Delbo, Charlotte. **Days and Memories.**

Vermont: Marlboro Press, 1990.

The book relates scenes and images of Birkenau, Spain at the end of Franco's regime, Kolyma in the Soviet Union and a Greek village martyred by the Germans. Delbo weaves a logical continuity between the not so distant past and an ongoing present. Grade 12

Geve, Thomas. **Guns and Barbed Wire: A Child Survives the Holocaust.**

Chicago: Chicago Academy, 1987

Thomas Geve (a pseudonym) spent a total of 22 months in Auschwitz and Buchenwald. He arrived at the camps at the age of 13, one of the youngest inmates at the time. Included in the book are seventeen full-colour reproductions of Thomas's haunting drawings done immediately after liberation. The drawings represent memories of daily camp life. Grades 10-12

resources

Lengyel, Olga. **Five Chimneys.**

St. Albans: Granada Publishing Limited, 1973.

An intimate, day-to-day record of a woman who survived the nightmare of Auschwitz–Birkenau. Told with an extraordinary calmness and detachment. Grades 9-12

Levi, Primo. **If This is a Man / The Truce (Survival in Auschwitz / The Reawakening).** London: Abacus, 1987

Two books, but they should be read as one. The first book tells of the descent into the hell of Auschwitz, and the second book tells of Levi's return home and renewal. One of the most important works of this period. Grades 11-12

Leitner, Isabella. **Fragments of Isabella.**

New York: Laurel, 1978.

The Katz family was deported to Auschwitz in May, 1944. Many of Leitner's family did not survive the first selection. Those who did survive heard their mother's final words: live! Grades 8-12

Leitner, Isabella & Irving Leitner. **Saving the Fragments.**

New York: New American Library of Canada Ltd., 1985.

Isabella continues her difficult yet important story from liberation in Auschwitz to life in New York. Grades 8-12

Matas, Carol. **Daniel's Story.**

Toronto: Scholastic Inc., 1993.

Story of young Daniel and his family who are uprooted from their home in Frankfurt and sent to the Lodz ghetto in Poland and finally, to Auschwitz. Although a fictitious character, Daniel's story is based on the real experiences of many of the more than one million children who died in the Holocaust. Grades 5-6

Mayer, Anita. **One Who Came Back.**

Ottawa: Oberon Press, 1981.

Like Anne Frank, Anita Mayer spent several months in hiding from the Nazis. Her story begins where Anne Frank's left off, with the arrest of her family by the Germans. Anita tells of her time in a Dutch concentration camp (where she met Anne Frank) and in Auschwitz, as well as her triumph in overcoming the past. Grades 9-12

Mermelstein, Mel. **By Bread Alone: The Story of A-4685.**

Huntington Beach: Auschwitz Study Foundation, Inc., 1981.

Mermelstein, a survivor of the Holocaust who spent time in Auschwitz, sums up his reason for writing this book: "The study of the Holocaust is the study of mankind." The book contains some disturbing photographs. Grades 11-12

Millu, Liana. **Smoke Over Birkenau.**

Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991.

The astonishing stories of the women who lived and suffered alongside Liana Millu during her months in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Millu's book has been called the woman's equivalent of Primo Levi's work. Grades 10-12

Muller, Filip. **Auschwitz Inferno: Testimony of a Sonderkommando.**

London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1979.

This is the testimony of one of the very few who saw the death process up close and lived to tell about it. Grade 12

Nyiszli, Miklos. **Auschwitz: A Doctor's Eyewitness Account.**

Toronto: Little, Brown & Company, 1993.

While virtually all of his fellow Hungarian Jews were sent to Auschwitz to die, Nyiszli was spared for a grimmer fate: to perform "scientific research" on fellow inmates under the supervision of Dr. Mengele. Nyiszli also served as physician to the Sonderkommando. A disturbing account of the full horror of a Nazi death camp. Grade 12

Stadler, Aranka. **Mosaics of a Nightmare.**

London: Kall-Kwik Printing, 1995.

A short, yet very informative account of a survivor's experiences. Grades 10-12

Vrba, Rudolf and Alan Bestic. **Escape From Auschwitz (I Cannot Forgive).**

New York: Grove Press, 1986.

Vrba spent two years in Auschwitz and miraculously escaped with another prisoner. Their account of what the Nazis were doing shocked those who listened. The response of the Allies to the report is still a point of contention among historians and observers. Grades 10-12

Wiesel, Elie. **Night.**

Avon Books, 1960.

Perhaps the most well-known memoir of the Holocaust. The story of a boy's loss of innocence, family and the death of his God. Grades 10-12

AUSCHWITZ NON-FICTION

Auschwitz, 1940-1945.

Albuquerque: Route 66 Publishing, 1995.

Documents the daily existence of those imprisoned in the Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz. Includes descriptions of sanitation and living conditions, crematoria and gas chambers, as well as maps of the camp. Grades 9-12

Czech, Danuta. **Auschwitz Chronicle, 1939-1945.**

London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 1990.

From the Archives of the Auschwitz Memorial and the German Federal Archives, this is a complete record of the events in Auschwitz. Included are sketches of perpetrators, glossary and bibliography. Grades 11-12

Dwork, Debórah and Robert Jan van Pelt. **Auschwitz: 1270 to the Present.**

New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996.

This unprecedented history reveals how an unremarkable Polish village was transformed into a killing field. Using architectural designs and planning documents recently discovered in Poland and Russia and over 200 illustrations, this definitive book traces the successive stages of how Auschwitz became the focus of a Germanized Poland and the epicenter of the Final Solution. Grade 12

Gilbert, Martin. **Atlas of the Holocaust.**

New York: William Morrow & Company Inc., 1993.

A collection of 316 fully annotated maps, this atlas is a comprehensive record of the Nazi attempt to annihilate the Jews of Europe during World War II. The atlas covers all aspects of the Holocaust from its anti-semitic beginnings to the liberation of survivors. Grades 9-12

Gilbert, Martin. **Auschwitz and the Allies.**

London: Mandarin, 1981.

Story of how and when the Allies learned of the Nazi extermination of the Jews, and of how they responded. One of the major questions still debated by historians today: what could the Allies have done to stop the genocide? Grade 12

Hellman, Peter. **The Auschwitz Album: A Book Based Upon an Album Discovered by a Concentration Camp Survivor, Lili Meier.**

New York: Random House, 1981.

An amazing historical record of Auschwitz from a photo album discovered there.

Lagnado, Lucette & Sheila Dekel. **Children of the Flames: Dr. Mengele and the Untold Story of the Twins of Auschwitz.**

Toronto: Penguin, 1991.

Of the approximate 3,000 twins subjected to medical experimentation by Dr. Joseph Mengele only 160 survived. This is the story of those twins. Grade 12

Piper, Franciszek & Teresa Swiebocka. Eds. **Auschwitz: Nazi Death Camp.**

The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, 1996.

A history of the camp dealing with: the distribution of the camp's victims in terms of nationality, the plundering of the personal effects of the murdered Jews, the fate of children at the camp, medical experiments upon prisoners, and aspects of the camp resistance that are little known outside of Poland. Grade 12

Webber, Jonathan & Connie Wilsack. Eds. **Auschwitz: A History in Photographs.**

Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993.

Through more than 280 documentary photographs from the archives of Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and reproductions of artistic works by former prisoners, this book records the history of Auschwitz and what it looks like today. It includes photographs taken by the Nazis of the construction and expansion of the camp, of individual prisoners and scenes from daily life, and of the machinery of mass murder itself; clandestine photographs, taken by prisoners; aerial photographs, taken by the Allies; and photographs taken at the time of liberation.

VIDEOS

Eva Brewster: Interview with a Survivor

Interview with a survivor of Auschwitz-Birkenau. 00:24 min. colour.

Choosing One's Way: Resistance in Auschwitz-Birkenau

This documentary is about the little-known story of resistance in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Accomplished through the smuggling of gun powder from a nearby munitions factory, the inmates succeeded in destroying Crematorium #4. The film features thirteen survivors, each of whom contributes to the piecing together of this incredible story of heroism. 00:30 min. colour / bw.

David E. Testimony Project

Vancouver: Vancouver Holocaust Centre Society, 1993.

This tape follows the experiences of a teenage Holocaust survivor from Hungary. David describes the ghettoization of his community, Auschwitz concentration camp, a Death March, forced labour and his liberation. 00:23 min. colour. Includes teaching guide.

Klara F. Testimony Project

Vancouver: Vancouver Holocaust Centre Society, 1993.

The first part of the tape documents Klara's life in Hungary, her life before deportation, her experiences in Auschwitz-Birkenau, labour camps and Bergen-Belsen. The second part is her answers to students' questions. 00:34 min. colour. Includes teaching guide.

One Survivor Remembers

It is an Academy Award winning documentary based on the memoir of Gerda Weissmann Klein's "All But My Life." It records the moving story of a young woman's three frightful years as a slave labourer of the Nazis and her miraculous liberation. It stands as the ultimate lesson in humanity, hope, and friendship.

Prisoner 88

A documentary on Sigmund Sobolewski, a Polish Catholic survivor of Auschwitz, who, as one of the first prisoners of Auschwitz and as Chief of the Second Fire Brigade, brings a unique perspective as he bears witness to the Holocaust. 00:49 min. colour.

POSTERS

Auschwitz-Birkenau: The Death Factory

Wiesenthal Poster Set (#31/40)

Auschwitz-Birkenau was the largest Nazi camp. Poster contains photographs of Zyklon-B, selections, burning corpses, and the gates and railway lines of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Auschwitz-Birkenau: Half Hell, Half Lunatic Asylum

Wiesenthal Poster Set (#32/40)

Between April 1942 and November 1944, 2,000,000 Jews were gassed and in addition hundreds of thousands of non-Jews, including Poles, Soviet POWs and Gypsies were murdered at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Sadistic and brutal medical experiments were conducted by Josef Mengele and other physicians. To erase all signs of their horrific deeds, the Nazis reduced corpses to ashes in the crematoria. Poster contains photographs of barracks, a crematorium, and children. Script notes, other victims: Poles, Soviet POWs and Gypsies.

The Last Agony at Auschwitz: Liberation, January 1945

Wiesenthal Poster Set (#33/40)

November 1944, the Auschwitz gas chambers were dismantled. Last minute mass murder, death marches, starvation or death from exposure in over crowded camps typified the last days of the Nazi terror. Poster contains photographs of a liberated Auschwitz.

CURRICULA

Bolkosky, Dr. Sidney; Betty Ellias and Dr. David Harris. **The Holocaust Curriculum: Life Unworthy of Life.**

Farmington Hills, Michigan: Center for the Study of the Child, 1987.

An 18-lesson instructional Unit. Chapter called "Planet Auschwitz", includes time-line, glossary, suggested additional activities and a bibliography.

