



The Devil's Arithmetic

by Jane Yolen

Teacher's Guide

Written By Mary Ellen Snodgrass

PERMA-BOUND
THE STRONGEST BOOKS YOU CAN BUY

CLASSROOM
FAVORITES

A Perma-Bound Production

This guide was prepared using the Puffin Books edition, ©1988. Other editions may differ.

Synopsis

Chapter 1

At Passover in April, 12-year-old Hannah Stern complains about the drive from New Rochelle to the Bronx to Grandpa Will and Grandma Belle's first night Seder. Hannah prefers to celebrate Easter with her friend Rosemary rather than share somber Passover meals. Her mother insists that remembering is important to elders who lost relatives to the Nazi Holocaust. Only Aunt Eva and Grandpa Will remain alive among of a family of eight. Aaron anticipates answering the ritual Four Questions from the Haggadah. To entertain him, she tells him a story of the walking dead. At the gathering, Hannah recalls that she is named for a deceased friend of Aunt Eva.

Chapter 2

Grandpa Will rails and gestures at a television image of concentration camps. She recalls horrifying him by scribbling a string of numbers on her arm to resemble a death camp tattoo. To escape hearing how Grandpa Dan fled to America, Hannah helps Eva in the kitchen. Eva prays the Hebrew prayers. Hannah is reprimanded for pinching Aaron.

Chapter 3

Hannah is bored during the dinner. Her grandfather tells of the plagues that preceded the exodus from Egypt. Aaron answers the ritual questions. The group sings "Dayenu." Aaron locates the hidden *afikoman*. Hannah's head throbs as she opens the door for the prophet Elijah. Beyond, she sees a shadowy figure in a field.

Chapter 4

With no warning, Hannah becomes Chaya, orphaned niece of Shmuel and Gitl, country folk near Viosk, Poland. To Shmuel and Gitl, Hannah's confusion about the sudden change in person seems natural for a girl

recovering from cholera. Gitl expresses her intent not to marry Yitzchak the butcher, a widower with two small children. Shmuel believes she has been waiting three years for Avrom Morowitz to send for her to come to America. Hannah is amazed that she understands their Yiddish conversation. Shmuel anticipates marrying Fayge, daughter of Reb Boruch, the next day.

Chapter 5

At dawn the next morning, Hannah arises and finds Shmuel up and dressed for the wedding. She insists she is not Chaya and that she is from New Rochelle, not Lublin. She helps Shmuel feed the work horses. At breakfast, she asks for white bread and chokes on whole milk with cream. Shmuel keeps the groom's wedding fast. Yitzchak arrives to help with the wedding preparations. Gitl and Chaya will stay with the bride's family so Fayge and Shmuel can have the house to themselves.

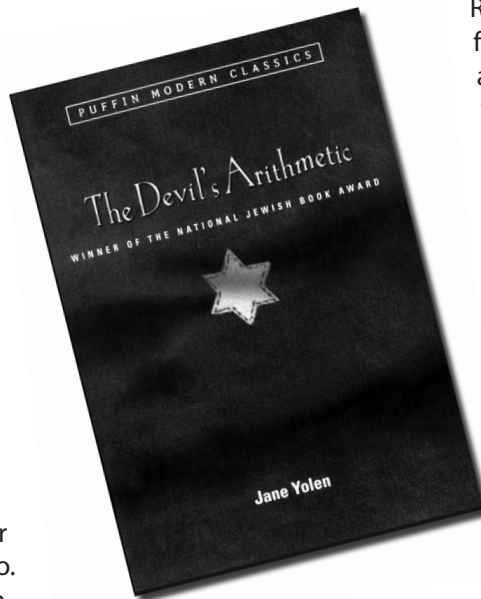
Chapter 6

Gitl offers Hannah her own clothes, which are out of date, and plaits Hannah's hair. At noon, half the village gathers for the trip to the bride's home. Rachel introduces herself and notes that she has waited for Hannah to recover from ten weeks in the hospital. She introduces Shifre, Esther, and

Yente. Hannah declares that Rosemary is her best friend, so Rachel must be second-best. She surprises the girls with details of her American life, especially going to school.

Chapter 7

During the long walk, Hannah tells stories from American movies. Her skillful narrations make her more popular than she is at home. While telling *Hansel and Gretel*, she hears musicians, who play clarinet, violin, and accordion for the wedding celebration. Rachel informs Hannah that Fayge fell in love with Shmuel. To Hannah, falling in love is not unusual. The *badchan* notes that Chaya means "life." Hannah thinks of him as a Jewish jester.



Chapter 8

The forest is alive with local well-wishers. The bride appears in white. Celebrants dance the Sherele. At Viosk, the open market contains three cars and 12 army trucks. Black-uniformed men step forward. Hannah asks the date and learns that it is 1942. She tries to warn her friends that the men are Nazis and that they will kill six million Jews. Reb Boruch refuses to be afraid.

Chapter 9

The Jewish men talk with the Nazi chief, who insists they board the trucks for resettlement. Fayge fears that her wedding is spoiled. Shmuel assures her that nothing will keep them apart. Hannah warns that the Nazis intend to put them in gas ovens. Fayge fears that such words will summon the Angel of Death. Shmuel learns that Aunt Sarah and Aunt Devorah have been sent ahead. The Nazi colonel promises that the group will need nothing. The *badchan* is unconvinced. The group boards the trucks, but there is no room to sit. Gitl sings a lullaby. Hannah recalls learning in school about the crematoria at the death camps.

Chapter 10

The group is still singing when they arrive at a train station. The soldiers hurry them aboard. On the way Fayge recognizes family belongings from earlier groups. An officer threatens to shoot if they dawdle. The men pray as they enter the cars. Crammed in tight, the Jews stand up as the car fills. To Hannah's claim to be from the future, the rabbi asserts that all children are from the future. Peasants in the field make gestures of slitting their throats as the cars carry the prisoners away. They share rumors of Russian Jews being slain in a pit filled with lime. The rabbi dismisses their comments as gossip. Another speaker recalls that a Polish community was locked in a synagogue and burned. Hannah weeps as a child is found dead.

Chapter 11

For four days, the group journeys to an unknown destination. The smell of feces, urine, and sweat overwhelm them. At Troniat, they are allowed to get out. They discover three more corpses and a dying woman. They share a bucket of filthy water. At the next stop, another car is opened, but theirs remains shut. When they reach the death camp, Shmuel complains that more people have died. They are forced to barracks beyond a barbed wire fence. A sign in German proclaims "Work makes you free." Fayge's wedding dress is ruined. An evil three-fingered Gentile overseer calls them newcomers and demands Hannah's blue hair ribbons. She forces them

into a shower. Hannah fears the showers are really gas jets. Esther reports that Rachel died from breathing difficulties. Hannah regrets not making Rachel her best friend. After a cold shower, they stand naked and shivering while barbers shear off their hair. Gitl vows never to cry again.

Chapter 12

Cold and fearful, the women await the end of the barbering. They select garments from a long table piled high with malodorous rags. Hannah helps to dress Tzipporah, Yitzchak's small daughter. A man tattoos their arms with six numbers following the letter J for Jew. He recognizes Hannah's dress as that of his own daughter Chaya Abramowicz. Hannah studies her number J197241. He urges her to live for Chaya. At the barracks, they find triple bunks bare of linens and share outdoor privies. A soldier points to the brick chimney, which emits smoke from the burning of bodies of dead Jews. Hannah sleeps in the hard bunk and dreams of the Seder in America.

Chapter 13

A harsh signal calls the prisoners to breakfast. When Hannah reaches for Tzipporah, Gitl slaps her. Hannah realizes that the little girl is dead. Rivka distributes the bowls with which the prisoners eat, wash, and drink. The rough three-fingered overseer orders them to work hard or expect punishment. She promises they will comply or perish. Gitl remains firmly resolved to survive.

Chapter 14

That evening, the prisoners have a second meal of watery soup and bread. Rivka explains that choosing is done each day and that prisoners have an hour of exercise each night. A veteran of a year's imprisonment, Rivka has seen her whole family killed. Her brother Wolfe is a *Sonderkommando*. She makes a credo out of her tattoo and claims to play "God's game" by staying alive. She encourages Hannah to let Esther dream and concentrate on her own survival. She warns that Greek Jews are *musselmen* because they know no Yiddish and soon die because they can't understand instructions. She points to the gate from which no one returns and explains that the midden is a garbage dump where children hide from Commandant Breuer. Rivka takes them to her bunk and distributes shoes. She explains that their original garments are sent to Germany. Hannah indicates that she knows English and makes her own credo from her number. Shifre explains that Hannah's parents died of cholera. That night, Hannah sobs in her sleep.

Chapter 15

At roll call and breakfast the next morning, Rivka demonstrates the clucking noise that warns children to hide in the midden. Hannah retrieves Leye's infant and must be washed when they depart the filth and stench of the garbage heap. At work, crews clean, haul wood, and sort clothing and stolen goods. Hannah and Shifre work with Rivka at hauling water for the kitchen. Leye explains that Rivka bribed a guard with a gold ring to get Hannah a job in the kitchen. Gitl scolds Hannah for giving food to Yitzchak's son Reuven. On the third day, Commandant Breuer chooses again, condemning all who are still in bed. Hannah recalls the name of Dr. Mengele, the Angel of Auschwitz. Gitl locates a blue scarf for Hannah's thirteenth birthday. She protests that her birthday is in February. Rumors confirm that the men are working at their trades, but the Rabbi has been executed, along with the dissident *badchan* and others. Gitl slaps Hannah for disrespect to the dead and insists on reciting the funeral prayer.

Chapter 16

Gitl refers to the daily struggle for survival as the "Devil's arithmetic." One prisoner hangs herself after her family is killed. Shifre longs for an orange; Hannah misses pizza. She learns that the overseer lost two fingers for failing to control the newcomers, six of whom hanged themselves. Another visit from the commandant finds Reuven unsupervised. The commandant gently lifts the boy and takes him to his death. That evening, newcomers are sent directly to "processing." Rivka believes God has a reason for letting the murders continue. Hannah vows to fight. That night, Fayge tells a story of a werewolf.

Chapter 17

Gitl whispers a plan that she, Yitzchak, and Shmuel are part of. She urges Hannah to stay alert. One night, Gitl urges her to go outside through a door the guard has left unlocked. Behind the midden, they hear shots. Spotlights rake the compound. Gitl tells the overseer that she went out because she needed her bowl. Gitl and Hannah hurry back to bed. Gitl lies silently sobbing, but gets her revenge on the overseer by leaving her shoes outside.

Chapter 18

At roll call, the commandant and SS guards lead six men in chains to execution. Breuer claims to have been too easy on the prisoners and insists that processing Jews is part of the "Final Solution to the Jewish Problem." As the guards lift their guns, the conspirators recite their ritual

creed. Fayge rushes toward Shmuel. All are shot and dragged to the gate. Rivka points out Wolfe, who carries Fayge. The overseer's hand is bandaged from the loss of another finger. Gitl takes hope from the fact that Yitzchak was not captured. That afternoon, Hannah tells the kitchen help a story of the six million Jews who die in the Holocaust and of the survivors who formed a Jewish state in Israel. She urges them all to remember and to carry the message to the future. A guard accuses them of not working. He chooses Esther, Shifre, and Rivka for the next selection. Hannah snatches Rivka's kerchief and takes her place. On her way to the gate, she gaily tells the women about her life in New Rochelle.

Chapter 19

Hannah looks into an empty hall, then returns to the Seder. She stares at Eva's number and realizes that Eva is Rivka and Wolfe, her brother. Grandpa Will is the camp slave who carried Fayge to the oven. Hannah declares that she remembers it all.

Epilogue

Later, Eva tells Hannah the whole story in private. Yitzchak escaped to fight with the partisans. The camp was liberated in 1945. All died except Gitl, Yitzchak, Rivka, Leye, and her baby. Gitl and Yitzchak emigrated to Israel. He entered the Israeli senate. Gitl helped survivors reunite with families. She named an adoption agency Chaya.

Timeline

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Jan. 30, 1933 | Hitler is appointed Chancellor of Germany. |
| March 23 | Heinrich Himmler creates Dachau near Munich, Germany, as a repository for undesirables.
Hitler assumes the role of dictator and withdraws Germany from the League of Nations.
Jewish civil workers lose their jobs. |
| Sept. 15, 1935 | Nuremberg Laws deprive Jews of citizenship and forbid intermarriage between Jews and gentiles. |
| July 16, 1937 | Buchenwald concentration camp is activated. |
| early summer 1938 | Rumanian Jews are stripped of their citizenship. Buchenwald is expanded for use as a labor camp. |
| Nov. 9-10 | <i>Kristall Nacht</i> (literally, "Crystal Night" or the Night of Broken Glass), a Nazi |

pogrom against German Jews results in the destruction of 7500 Jewish-owned stores and synagogues, removal of Jewish children from German schools, and widespread emigration of Jews.

Jan. 1, 1939 Hitler announces plans to exterminate the Jewish race.

March Hitler controls Austria and Czechoslovakia.

August 29 Germany and the U.S.S.R sign a ten-year nonaggression pact.

September World War II begins after Germany invades Poland.

April 1940 Hitler conquers Norway, Denmark, and Belgium.

April 27 Himmler creates a concentration camp at Auschwitz.

June 22 France surrenders.

August Jews are expelled from cultural and commercial life in Rumania.

October-November The Rumanian government confiscates Jewish homes, farms, and businesses.

January 1941 A massacre in Bucharest results in the murder of 170 Jews.

June The first of the pogroms and deportations of Jews begins in Rumania. About 8,000 die and 212,000 are shot.

June 22 Hitler attacks Russia.

September The first Zyklon B gassings are carried out in Auschwitz. At Babi Yar, near Kiev, Russia, 33,000 Jews are machine-gunned. Jews are marked by a yellow star.

Oct. 15 Jews are declared outlaws.

Dec. 7 United States enters the war after Japanese planes bomb Pear Harbor.

Dec. 8 Chelmo, the first death camp to be completed, begins operations with mobile vans.

1942 Around 200,000 Jews are deported to Transnistria. Two-thirds die of hunger and disease. Others are allowed to buy their emigration papers and depart for Israel.

March 13, 1943 Crematoria opens at Auschwitz.

April Germans crush uprising by Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto.

July Mussolini's government collapses.

July 10-Aug. 7 Allied forces pursue German troops across the Strait of Messina and into Italy.

March 1944 Adolf Eichmann comes to Hungary to

supervise the deportation of Jews.

June 6 The Allies land in Normandy.

Oct. 26 Believing the Jewish question at an end, Himmler dismantles the Auschwitz crematory.

Jan. 17, 1945 The Red Army liberates Auschwitz.

Feb. 4-12 The Big Three—Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Josef Stalin—meet at Yalta to discuss the end of the war in Europe.

Feb. 14 Allied troops reach the Rhine.

April 10 American forces liberate Buchenwald and Dachau. British forces liberate Belsen.

April 30 Hitler commits suicide.

May 7 Germany surrenders to the Allies.

July 17-Aug. 2 Harry Truman, Winston Churchill, Clement Attlee, and Josef Stalin meet to discuss the denazification of Germany.

1946 The Nuremburg Trials begin to punish war criminals.

Dec. 13 Eleven war criminals convicted of atrocities at Belsen and Auschwitz are hanged at Hameln.

Feb. 10, 1947 The Allies sign a peace treaty with Rumania in Paris.

May 14, 1948 Israel, settled by many survivors of the Holocaust, proclaims itself a sovereign state.

1952 Anne Frank's *The Diary of a Young Girl* is published in English.

1960 Elie Wiesel publishes *Night*.

1961 Adolf Eichmann is brought to trial in Jerusalem.

Author Sketch

Of Finno-Russian lineage, Jane Hyatt Yolen is well known among readers, parents, librarians, teachers, and storytellers for her vast range of narratives. A native of New York City, she was born on February 11, 1939, and spent World War II in Virginia with her grandparents while her father, scriptwriter and storyteller Will Hyatt Yolen, served in England. From him, she acquired a love of stories. Her mother, social worker Isabelle Berlin, also wrote short fiction and crossword puzzles. Yolen began writing and acting out stories in childhood. She



also enjoyed ballet, fantasy games, and folk songs. At age 12, she entered Hunter, a girl's school for the gifted, where she began writing books.

While summering at a Quaker camp in Vermont, Yolen learned about pacifism. Influenced by a cousin, she worked for a Quaker committee in Yellow Springs, Ohio, through her years at Staples High School in Westport, Connecticut, and at Smith College. She recorded the experience in *Friend: The Story of George Fox and the Quakers*. Intent on a wide religious outlook, she tells of her interest in religious ritual and beliefs in two books—In the *Magic Three of Solatia* and *Cards of Grief*. She developed a lyrical writing style that reflects folk music. After graduating with a degree in journalism, she settled in Greenwich Village, married photographer and computer expert David W. Stemple, and entered publishing as an editor of children's literature for Gold Medal Books, Rutledge Books, and Alfred A. Knopf. She published a first book, *Pirates in Petticoats*, in 1963. Five years later, she honored her father with *World on a String: The Story of Kites* (1968).

Yolen and her husband toured Europe and Israel and returned to the United States to travel by dog sled in Alaska and raft on the Colorado River. In 1976, she completed an M. Ed. at the University of Massachusetts. The family settled their children—Heidi Elisabet, Adam Douglas, and Jason Frederic—at Phoenix Farm in Hatfield, Massachusetts, where they built a craft business in their barn. Yolen's writing broadened to adult literature as well as fiction and nonfiction for young readers and columns for the *Daily Hampshire Gazette*. In 1988, she launched her own fantasy and science fiction imprint, Jane Yolen Books, for Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Critic's Corner

The Devil's Arithmetic, earned no awards but received critical praise. A reviewer in *Booklist* found "the characters were convincingly drawn to type." Readers would "come away with a sense of tragic history that both disturbs and compels." The reviewer for *Publishers Weekly* concluded, "The book's simplicity is its strength; no comment is needed because the facts speak for themselves. This brave and powerful book has much it can teach a young audience." In 1999 the cable network Showtime produced a film version of *The Devil's Arithmetic*, with Kirsten Dunst starring as Hannah.

Yolen has also succeeded with children's counting and

alphabet books, storytelling, poems, and the Commander Toad series and has contributed articles to *Writer*, *NAPPS Journal*, *Parabola*, *New York Times*, *Parents' Choice*, *New Advocate*, *Horn Book*, *Wilson Library Bulletin*, Isaac Asimov's *Science Fiction Magazine*, *Language Arts*, *Washington Post Book World*, and *Los Angeles Times*. Her works are available for stage and on film, filmstrip, cassette tape, and animated cartoon. Yolen's honoraria include Caldecott Medals, Boys' Club of America Junior Book Award, Lewis Carroll Shelf Award, *New York Times'* Best Books, multiple ALA Notable Books, Chandler Book Talk Reward of Merit, Children's Book Showcase Award, Golden Kite Award, National Book Award, and Christopher Medal. More recent awards include an honorary doctorate from College of Our Lady of the Elms, Parents' Choice Award, *School Library Journal* Best Book, Garden State Children's Book Award, Cranberry Award, Daedalus Award, Child Study Association of America's Children's Book, World Fantasy Award, Kerlan Award, Jewish Book Council citation, Nebula Award, Golden Sower Award, Charlotte Award, Children's Choice from IRA, Skylark Award, and Regina Medal. Her manuscripts reside at the University of Minnesota.

Selected Fiction by Jane Yolen

- Armageddon Summer* (1998) with Bruce Coville
- Atalanta and the Arcadian Beast: Young Heroes* (2003) with Robert J. Harris
- Bagpiper's Ghost: Tartan Magic, Book Three* (1999)
- Boots and the Seven Leaguers* (2000)
- Briar Rose* (1992)
- Children of the Wolf* (1984)
- Dragon's Blood: Pit Dragon Trilogy* (1982)
- Dragon's Boy* (1990)
- Girl in a Cage* (2002) with Robert J. Harris
- Heart's Blood: Pit Dragon Trilogy* (1984)
- Hippolyta and the Curse of the Amazons: Young Heroes* (2002) with Robert J. Harris
- Jason and the Gorgon's Blood: Young Heroes* (2001) with Robert J. Harris
- Magic Three of Solatia* (1974)
- Odysseus in the Serpent Maze: Young Heroes* (2001) with Robert J. Harris
- One-Armed Queen* (1998)
- Pay the Piper* (2005) with her son Adam Stemple
- Pictish Child: Tartan Magic, Book Two* (1999)
- Prince Across the Water* (2004) with Robert J. Harris
- Queen's Own Fool* (2000) with Robert J. Harris
- Sending of Dragons: Pit Dragon Trilogy* (1987)
- Sister Light, Sister Dark* (1988)

Troll Bridge (2005) with her son Adam Stemple
White Jenna (1989)
Wild Hunt (1995)
Wizard of Washington Square (1969)
Wizard's Hall (1991)
Wizard's Map: Tartan Magic, Book One (1999)
Young Merlin Trilogy (2004)

Related Reading

Avi, *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*
Mariano Azuela, *The Underdogs*
Orson Scott Card, *Ender's Game*
Malka Drucker and Michael Halperin, *Jacob's Rescue: A Holocaust Story*
Anne Frank, *Diary of a Young Girl*
Patricia Reilly Giff, *Lily's Crossing*
Stephen Gould, *Jumper*
Erik Haugaard, *The Samurai's Tale*
Esther Hautzig, *The Endless Steppe*
Robert Heinlein, *Citizen of the Galaxy* and *Friday*
Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar*
Nancy Kress, *Beggars in Spain, Beggars and Choosers, and Beggar's Ride*
Theodora Kroeber, *Ishi*
Lois Lowry, *Number the Stars*
Michelle Magorian, *Good Night, Mr. Tom*
Walter Dean Myers, *Fallen Angels* and *Scorpions*
Scott O'Dell, *Sing Down the Moon*
Ayn Rand, *Anthem*
Art Spiegelman, *Maus: A Survivor's Tale I and II*
Corrie ten Boom, *The Hiding Place*
Yoko Kawashima Watkins, *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*
Jessamyn West, *The Friendly Persuasion* and *Except for Me and Thee*
Elie Wiesel, *Night*
G. Clifton Wisler, *Red Cap*
Yevgeny Yevtushenko, "Baba Yar"

Bibliography

Alter, Gloria, ed., "Touching Magic with Jane Yolen," Perspectives, *Social Studies and the Young Learner*, November-December 1995, pp. 29-32. *Contemporary Authors New Revision Series*, Vol. 29. Detroit: Gale, 1990.

de Montreville, Doris, and Elizabeth D. Crawford, eds. *The Fourth Book of Junior Authors and Illustrators*. New York: H. W. Wilson, 1978.

Dictionary of Literary Biography, Vol. 52. Detroit: Gale, 1982.

DIScovering Authors. (CD-ROM) Detroit: Gale, 1994.

Fuchs, Marcia G. *Twentieth Century Children's Writers*. 3rd Edition. New York: St. James Press, 1989.

Hopkins, Lee Bennett, "O, Yolen: A Look at the Poetry of Jane Yolen," *Teaching and Learning Literature with Children and Young Adults*, November-December 1996, pp. 66-68.

"Interview," *Locus*, August 1997.

"Jane Yolen," <<http://www.ipl.org/youth/AskAuthor/Yolen.html>>

"Jane Yolen," <<http://www.readin.org/ReadIn/TheReadIn/transcripts/1998/jane-yol.htm>>

Koch, John, "Interview," *Writer*, March 1997, pp. 20-22.

Merryman, Jane, "Readers Ride on Writer's Imagination," Tacoma, *Washington News Tribune*, April 27, 1998.

"A Note from Jane Yolen," <http://pages.prodigy.com/childrens_writers/JaneYole.html>

Roginski, Jim. *Behind the Covers: Interviews with Authors and Illustrators of Books for Children and Young Adults*. Englewood, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 1985.

Something About the Author Autobiography Series, Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1987.

St. James Guide to Fantasy Writers. New York: St. James Press, 1996.

White, David E., "Profile: Jane Yolen," *Language Arts*, May 1983, pp. 652-660.

Yolen, Jane. *Touch Magic: Fantasy, Faerie, and Folktale in the Literature of Childhood*. New York: Philomel, 1981.

General Objectives

1. To define anti-semitism
2. To explain the relationship between humiliation and discipline
3. To define ritual and tradition
4. To note how families pass on culture
5. To characterize methods of organization within a prison
6. To examine the importance of attitude on prisoners
7. To list survival techniques
8. To narrate examples of giving and self-sacrifice
9. To note the effect of rumor
10. To define genocide

Specific Objectives

1. To describe the effects of deportation, internment, and tattooing
2. To acknowledge the perseverance of prisoners
3. To outline the political and economic events that lead to deportation
4. To discuss Hannah's disinterest in Judaism
5. To account for the gentile overseer's loss of fingers
6. To enumerate events at a Seder
7. To describe life as a kitchen slave
8. To explain why Rivka survives
9. To contrast Hannah with Chaya
10. To analyze Yitzchak's heroism
11. To study the rabbi's role in comforting Jews
12. To analyze Hannah's relationship with Aunt Eva
13. To account for Hitler's plan for a master race

Literary Terms and Applications

For a better understanding of Jane Yolen's fiction, present the following terms and applications:

Aphorism: a short, pithy statement of a basic truth. At significant points in the novel, characters summarize wisdom into succinct statements and bits of advice, for example, Eva's plea to Lily, "Let the children play. They are children for such a short time." In reference to charity, Grandpa Will acknowledges a cup of wine with "A sacrifice unasked is so much the greater." In reference to individual fears, Hannah observes, "Maybe there's something everyone is afraid of." As the market scene grows ominous, the *badchan* murmurs, "The snake smiles but it shows no teeth." He adds, "Better the fox to guard the hens and the wolves to guard the sheep."

Bildungsroman: literally a "formation novel," which describes the coming-of-age of an untried or naive youth. Hannah's nettlesome complaints about the traditional seder in the Bronx with her grandparents indicate that she gives little thought to the sources of her family's traditions and history. The first person experience instructs Hannah in a way mere words and pictures cannot. After undergoing her dream state in Poland and witnessing the Holocaust for herself, she is more interested in Aunt Eva's history of the camps and how she and others survived.

Irony: an implied discrepancy between what is said or done and what is meant. All of Hannah's whining and self-centered complaints give place to genuine admiration for Grandpa Will and the others. Her pallor in the final chapter proves that she has had a ghostly experience far more intense than answering the four traditional questions or welcoming Elijah to a place at the Passover table. In an unintentionally ironic effort to lift her spirits, Aunt Eva raises her glass to Hannah and proposes the standard Jewish toast, "*L'chaim*. To life."

The Importance of Setting

The milieu of Jane Yolen's *The Devil's Arithmetic* is an ironic pairing of the comforts of late 20th-century New Rochelle and Bronx, New York, with the privations of Polish peasants of Viosk and the stark final days of Jews confined to a concentration camp. In her confused state, Hannah contemplates the Yiddish-speaking Poles who claim to be her aunt and uncle and tries to prove to them that she is from America a half century in the future. To stress the changes, Yolen describes Hannah's holiday dress and hairstyle for the wedding and her procession with the farm folk and wedding musicians to a town square.

From the safety of Viosk, Hannah and the others are forced to abandon their belongings and accept arbitrary displacement. At gunpoint, they travel in wretched, unsanitary train cars that are too tightly packed for sitting or even deep breaths. On the way, people die from the restrictions to lungs and health. Stripped and shorn at the camp, Hannah recognizes settings she has heard about in classroom studies of World War II in New Rochelle. Her anticipation of gas ovens and certain death terrorizes her even more than tattooing and dressing in rags.

On an abrupt return over decades of history to the hallway outside her grandparents' Bronx apartment, Hannah is unable to shake off the horror of children crouching in a garbage heap, despairing people committing suicide, and adults shot by a firing squad. Still pale and unnerved in the safety of family, she battles her terrors and resituates her thinking to the present. After Aunt Eva proposes a toast, Hannah observes the tattooed number on her wrist and listens to Eva's explanation of how she and the others survived the camp, traveled to Israel or arrived in America, and changed their names to forget their old identities. Hannah's grasp of Eva's suffering impresses the whole table of seder diners with Hannah's insistence: "I remember. Oh, I remember."

Cross-Curricular Sources

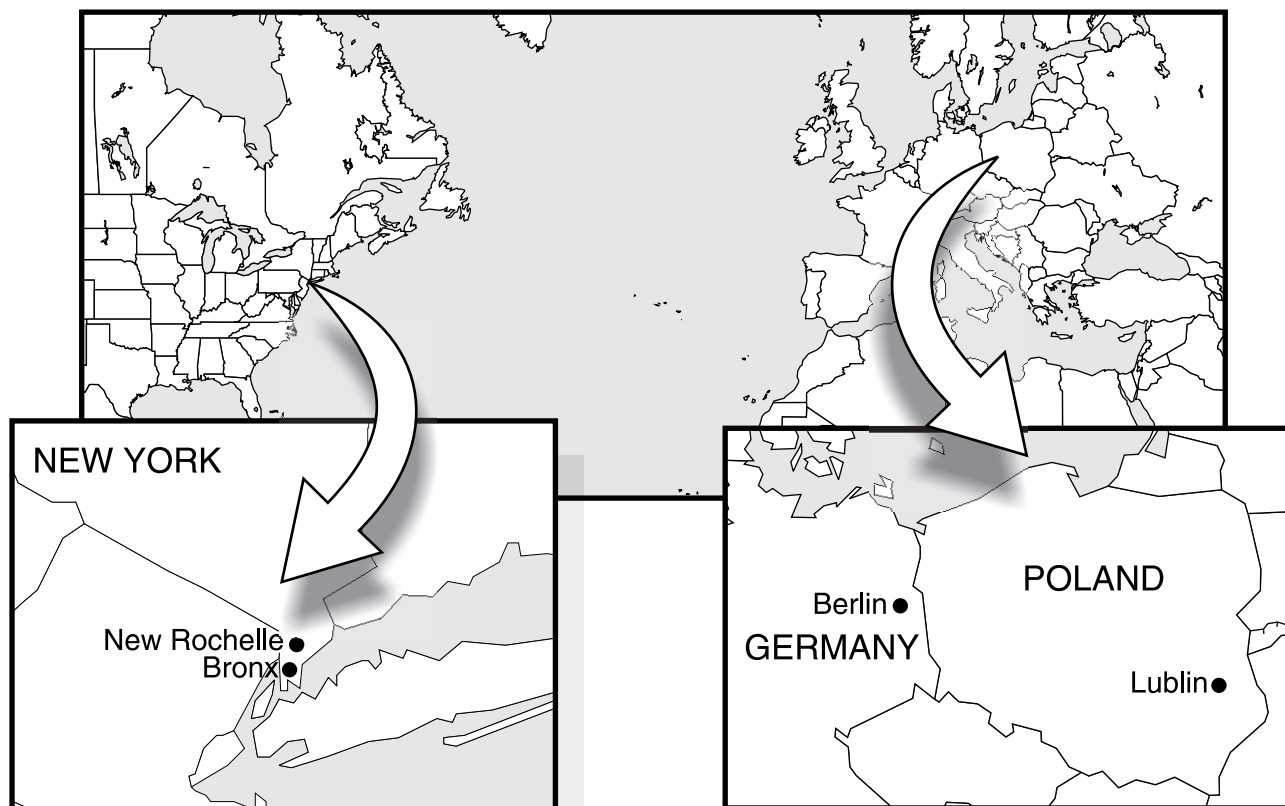
For more information about the Holocaust, Judaism, World War II, and other subjects and issues deriving from the novel, consult these sources:

Stephen Ambrose, *Citizen Soldiers* and *The Victors*
Mary Jane Cahill, *Israel*
Kathlyn Gay, *World War II*
Martin Gilbert, *Holocaust: A History of the Jews of Europe*

During the Second World War
Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*
Diane M. MacMillan, *Jewish Holidays in the Spring*
Tom McGowan, *World War II*
Howard Muggamin, *Jewish Americans*
Norman Solomon, *Judaism*
Dennis Wepman, *Adolf Hitler*

Also, consult these web sites:

Defying the Death Ethic
<http://www.execpc.com/~jfish/na/052697n1.txt>
Elijah the Prophet
<http://www.realttime.net/~wdoud/elijah/elijah.html>
The Holocaust Web Project
<http://www.nizkor.netizen.org/hweb>
The Holocaust History Project
<http://www.holocaust-history.org>
Israel 1948
<http://www.prophesy2000.com/Israel19481.htm>
The Men Behind Hitler: A German Warning to the World
<http://homepages.enterprise.net/toolan/hitler/htm>
"The Opening Statement of the Prosecution of Brigadier General Telford Taylor, 9 December 1946,"
<http://www.ushmm.org/research/doctors/telfptx.htm>
The Passover Seder
<http://www.templesolel.org/passover.html>



Themes and Motifs

A study of the central issues and situations in Jane Yolen's *The Devil's Arithmetic* should include these aspects:

Themes

- immaturity
- shock
- remembrance
- warning
- violence
- unity
- survival
- self-knowledge
- responsibility

Motifs

- coping with family and religious responsibilities
- experiencing social issues on a personal level
- taking responsibility for actions
- comforting grieving people
- plotting a revolt
- assuming the role of martyr

Meaning Study

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have particular meaning in the novel. Explain the meaning of each. Chapter and page numbers note the context in which each appears.

1. During the endless Seder dinner and the even more endless explanations from the Haggadah, Hannah frequently glanced out the window. (Chap. 3, p. 13)
(During the Passover meal, Hannah's family refers to the Haggadah, a prayer book containing the seder ritual, to explain how and why Jews celebrate the exodus from Egypt.)
2. Her grandfather droned on and on about the plagues and the exodus from Egypt. (Chap. 3, p. 13)
(The event that preceded the birth of the nation of Israel, the exodus was an epic flight from Egyptian slavery. The leader, Moses, a former Hebrew-born Egyptian prince, guided his Hebrew followers away from enslavement and Pharaoh's pursuing army, across the Red Sea, and through difficult desert passages. Along the way, he chided them for faithlessness and transmitted God's laws, which he received on stone tablets.)

3. And the game is to uncover the hidden order of the universe. Seder means 'order.' I read that in a book. (Chap. 3, p. 17)
(Lily pursues a complex thought about the traditional Hebrew need during the exodus to establish order in a nomadic existence. The story of Judaism is a constant struggle for standards and settled lives in a secure land where they can worship in peace and rear their families in the faith.)
4. Uncle Sam handed around the large cut-crystal goblet, Elijah's cup, and everyone poured a little bit of wine from their own glasses into it. (Chap. 3, p. 19)
(The invisible guest at the seder is Elijah, Israel's great prophet in the time of King Ahab. Elijah wandered the land dressed in a rough skin and chided the people for forgetting their faith and abandoning their traditions. His spirit guides the Passover seder and requires a small acknowledgement in a place at the table and a sacrificial cup of wine.)
5. "You will wear the dress I wore as a child for Shmuel's Bar Mitzvah." (Chap. 6, p. 42)
(Gitl was well dressed for her brother's coming-of-age ritual as "son of the law." The tradition consists of a blessing, speech, reading from the Torah, and joyous meal in celebration of coming manhood and adult accountability for sin.)
6. "Try on the stockings and shoes. I only used them for *shul* and for the photographer." (Chap. 6, p. 43)
(Gitl wore her garments to a parochial school or temple, a place where Jews worship, study religion, or enjoy fellowship. Thus, the clothing would not be subjected to hard wear, such as from farm labor, travel, or housework.)
7. This is Shifre, Esther, and Yente—but we call her the Cossack! (Chap. 6, p. 46)
(The Russian military governed the long frontier with mounted militia known as Cossacks. These fierce, lance-wielding riders were central figures in pogroms, the swift anti-Semitic assaults on unsuspecting Jewish shtetls to quell dissension or force settlers from a predominantly Catholic state to rid it of Judaism.)
8. "Lilith . . .," Hannah muttered as if remembering a story. (Chap. 14, p. 116)
(In Jewish lore, Lilith, Adam's first wife, is a demon who was cast out of Eden for trying to override God's discipline. In literature, she preys on sleeping men, seducing them and sucking their blood, and steals boy babies.)
9. "Her parents died of cholera." (Chap. 14, p. 120)
(Cholera is an acute bacterial form of diarrhea that quickly empties the body of fluids and electrolytes, bringing on fainting, physical collapse, coma, and rapid death.)

10. Gitl began reciting the *Kaddish*, rocking back and forth on the sleeping shelf with the sonorous words, and the prayer was like the tolling of a death bell. (Chap. 15, p. 134)
(Gitl recites the traditional Jewish prayer for peace, a hymn to God recited at burials, during memorial services, and on subsequent anniversaries of a death. Derived from the Aramaic word for "holy," the prayer unifies the hopes of Jews for the prosperity of Israel.)

Comprehension Study

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages from the novel.

Questions 1-5 (Literal Level)

1. What is the central action of the historical novel?
(The Devil's Arithmetic, a fictional account of an unidentified World War II death camp, carries the reader from the safety of a Jewish ceremonial dinner to an eyewitness account of the Nazi plot to exterminate Jews and other undesirables from the proposed German "Master Race." Composed as a dream state, the action awakens a young girl to the somber history of her family by giving her a new identity, nationality, and fate. In the course of her coming-to-knowledge of the terrible cost of survival, she brings hope to some inmates by looking back on the Holocaust from the vantage point of her life in late twentieth-century New York State. By the historical novel's end, Hannah is not only aware of her people's sufferings, but also is prepared to remember and carry on the history of Judaism to enlighten subsequent generations.)
2. What does Hannah/Chaya recall from the past as evidence to her Polish uncle and aunt that she is not from Lublin?
(In the unfamiliar peasant setting outside Viosk, Poland, Hannah/Chaya tries to prove that she is from the future. To dispel the "crazy game," she lets her mind sort out the details of two parents supposedly dead from cholera in Lublin. In her mind, Hannah/Chaya clings to braces on the teeth and "the jungle gym in the backyard and the seventeen stuffed dogs on her bed." She merits some sympathy for her whimpers and absence of appetite. Silently, she accepts a bedroom with goosedown comforter, gently folded around her by Aunt Gitl.

On the second day of her dreamscape, Hannah/Chaya divulges more bits of the past, including anachronisms like shots for disease, her mother's fear of snakes, and insistence that she is Hannah, not Chaya. Shmuel refuses to accept New Rochelle as

her place of residence and questions the identity of Old Rochelle. Unfamiliar with farm life, Hannah/Chaya gags at the taste of whole milk.)

3. What preparations does the family make for the wedding?
(As Shmuel displays nerves at the coming nuptial, he refrains from food in a ritual pre-wedding fast as Gitl dresses Hannah/Chaya in appropriate dress and braids her hair. The women intend to vacate the cottage so Shmuel and his bride can have privacy. At noon, peasants gather outside the door to laugh and tell stories. The women pack butter, cloths and linens, bowls, and candlesticks on the two wagons alongside gifts of crated chickens.

On the way to the gathering, Hannah/Chaya tells stories from Yentl, a Barbra Streisand movie about a woman who dresses as a man to attend a yeshiva, and follows with the plots of Conan the Barbarian, Star Wars, Fiddler on the Roof, Little Women, and The Wizard of Oz. In the middle of Hansel and Gretel, she stops to hear klezmer musicians and sings along with the clapping, laughing assembly. Gitl introduces her to the bride, Fayge, who sits beside her father, Reb Borach, the elderly rabbi. The procession takes the villagers forward to Viosk, where they halt at the open market.)

4. How does the colonel end the procession?
(In Viosk, the villagers are surprised to find army vehicles alongside the shul. The Nazi colonel in black uniform and high boots is ushered from the back seat of the first car. Standing with glinting medals on his chest, he terrifies Hannah/Chaya, who calculates forward to spring 1942, when Nazis were killing hundreds of Jews. As the procession moves closer, more soldiers exit the vehicles and make "a perfect half circle in front of the synagogue doors, like a steel trap with gaping jaws ready to be sprung."

When Rabbi Boruch addresses the chief, he learns that the party is to enter the trucks to be resettled with peasants who have gone on earlier convoys. The proof of his words lies in the heap of belongings left by the wayside. Without warning, Hannah/Chaya announces that Jews will be killed in gas ovens. The rabbi interprets the action as a non-threatening move—a temporary settlement "for the duration of this war." The colonel assures them that deportees will "want for nothing." In the new locale, tradesmen will work at their usual jobs. The colonel promises that soldiers will guard stores, houses, and schools and especially the shul, "to make sure the peasants do not desecrate it.")

5. Describe the arrival at the camp.
(The misery of traveling four days standing up concludes with dead Jews— adults and a child—left behind on the train. From the tracks, Hannah/Chaya trudges toward a “stark line of low barracks.” She recognizes barbed wire fencing and a message on the gate in German proclaiming “Work makes you free.” With a single misstep, Fayge falls down the hill, marring her bridal gown. The soldiers roughly separate men and women.

A tattooed overseer, a non-Jew, initiates newcomers as “the lowest of the low.” She indicates that the deportees are now prisoners and demands Hannah/Chaya’s blue hair ribbons, which match her dress. In the amphitheater, the women strip to shower; shivering without towels to dry themselves, they advance to the barber to be clipped and shaved. The overseer declares the denuding a sanitary measure to halt the spread of lice. To Hannah/Chaya, the shorn, naked inmates begin to look alike. After passing through a room heaped with dank rags, they select clothing and march on past the tattooer, then into barracks fitted with low shelves devoid of pillows, linens, and mattresses.)

Questions 6-8 (Interpretive Level)

6. Why is the badchan unlike the other Jews in Viosk?
(Of the wedding party and Hannah/Chaya’s new girl friends, the jester and fortune-teller, a clairvoyant, is the only person who recognizes that she is from another time. He rhymes jovially to the girls, then points to Hannah/Chaya and calls her “Old girl in young-girl disguise” and “young-old Chaya.” In Viosk, he is the first to recognize the “Angel of Death,” his name for the Nazi colonel who dispatches the Jews in train cars to the concentration camp. Of the ominous departure, the badchan is the first to speak of the insidious colonel as “the snake [who] smiles but . . . shows no teeth.”

At the camp, the jester is not fooled by the camp’s upbeat motto, which he characterizes as “the Devil’s work, not God’s.” Hannah/Chaya later learns that the rabbi was among the first men killed because he had no working trade to perform. The jester, on the other hand, chose to die and said of his chosen profession, “This is not a place for a fool, where there are idiots in charge.”)

7. How is Eva different in the opening and closing chapters?
(On Hannah’s arrival at her grandparents’ home in the Bronx, she eludes her patronizing Aunt Rose and scrubs at a lipstick stain left by a kiss from Aunt Eva. Although Eva annoys Hannah, she is her favorite aunt. Hannah is vaguely aware that she “was even named after some friend of Aunt Eva’s. Some dead friend.” Like the touch of history, the lipstick refuses to come off Hannah’s forehead. In the family setting, Eva takes Grandpa Will’s side for gesturing

belligerently at the television displaying “old photos of Nazi concentration camp victims, corpses stacked like cordwood, and dead-eyed survivors.” With a prayerful tone, she intercedes, reminding Uncle Sam “Please forgive him, please. It was the war.” Yolen later adds that Eva preferred living with Will and Belle to help them rear Hannah’s father, their only child. At the seder, Eva lights the holiday candles and recites prayers, forming a kind of bond with her niece “as if magic was still, somehow, alive.”

On the bizarre return from death in a concentration camp, Hannah immediately merits love from Aunt Eva, who pats an empty chair, as though welcoming the prophet Elijah. To lighten Hannah’s pallor, it is Eva who lifts her glass and toasts life. The upward arm gesture reveals the tattooed wrist, which Hannah touches “with surprising gentleness” and accounts for the meaning of each mark. For the first time, Eva seems to see Hannah and to value her empathy.)

8. How do workers manage during captivity?
(Hannah/Chaya and the other female workers carry water to the kitchen and entertain themselves with rumors of Tzadik the cobbler, who makes riding boots for the commandant in size five, which Esther’s mother identifies as a woman’s size. They giggle at the men’s rhyme, which mocks Breuer as a strutter in small shoes. When the talk turns to deaths, the women pause to honor the dead with the Kaddish, a somber, rhythmic chant.

As “one day eroded into the next,” children play jump rope games. Adults comment on newcomers, some of whom go directly to “processing.” Masha hangs herself after learning that her husband and seventeen-year-old son had been killed. While Shifre and Hannah/Chaya clean cauldrons, they escape in fantasy by discussing favorite foods. Shifre longs for an orange or egg, either boiled, fried, scrambled, or made into an omelet. Hannah/Chaya longs for pizza, an anachronism that requires explanation to Polish girls in 1942.)

Questions 9 and 10 (Critical Level)

9. How does Yolen depict Nazi cruelty?
(Camp persecution comes in a variety of guises. The overseer, herself a prisoner, is harsh and cruel. Commandant Breuer, in contrast, is less demonstrative. When he locates Reuven, he appears to sympathize with the weeping child, asking “Have you hurt yourself?” To the reply that his mother died when Reuven was born, the commandant gently wraps a handkerchief around the boy’s injured knee and replies, “A boy of your age should be with his mother,” indicating that the child is marked for death.

In Chapter 18, a more violent scenario involves Breuer, SS guards, and six men in chains. As Shmuel, the violin player, and four unknown men march by, they bear the marks of severe beatings. One victim is almost unable to stand. When Shmuel spits, a guard strikes him with a gun butt to the stomach. Breuer calls the men "drek," then reminds them that the only reason they still live is their willingness to work. Because the men tried to escape, he can no longer shelter them. He declares that they should be part of "the Final Solution to the Jewish Problem," a German euphemism for genocide.

When the guards force the men to the wall, Hannah/Chaya and the other onlookers moan. Breuer declares that he will "let [them] watch" if they are silent. As the violinist cries out "Shema Yisrael, adonai Eloheynu," the Jewish creed, Fayge rushes to join Shmuel in death, claiming that the sky is their wedding canopy. Breuer concludes the execution with a callous command, "Let them all go up the stack."

10. What does Yolen accomplish with her historical novel?
(Yolen's fiction quickly sets Hannah apart from Christian contemporaries like Rosemary by situating her in a decidedly Jewish family that keeps the faith through memories, ritual, and reverence. Hannah, who retreats into the past under her Hebrew name "Chaya," relives the Holocaust through some quirk of the supernatural. Her experience is terrible, but valuable in that it turns her attention to the past and strips her of the cynicism that keeps her from appreciating the Stern family's survival. The novel is the vehicle by which Yolen honors such devout, unified families and reminds young readers that they owe a debt of remembrance to a time when Jews gave their lives for their ethnic identity and religion.)

In a post-text commentary, Yolen speaks of her own family's slide from orthodoxy and the gradual loss of horror at "the scale of slaughter [which is now] difficult to grasp." In recognition, Yolen speaks of heroism "to resist being dehumanized, to simply outlive one's tormentors, to practice the quiet, everyday caring for one's equally tormented neighbors." She declares that witnessing and remembrance are "the only victories of the camps."

Questions 11 to 14 (Creative Level)

11. Explain in a short speech how Hannah/Chaya relives her aunt's incarceration in a death camp.
12. Make an Internet home page depicting various aspects of the Holocaust, especially deportation on cattle cars, tattooing, slave labor, underground fighters, smokestacks, and gas ovens.

13. Lead a panel discussion of the causes of ethnic hatred. Compare the German attempt to exterminate Jews to other historical incidents of genocide.
14. Make an annotated list of wise sayings from the novel, for example "Carrying straw to Egypt" and "There's a fool in every house."

Across the Curriculum

Art and Music

1. Make an illustrated notebook of Jewish holidays, particularly Passover. Fit each festival into its proper place on the Jewish calendar. Highlight the background, meals, and ceremonies that mark each occasion. Cite prayers, scripture, and hymns that are central to Jewish worship. Include sabbath prayers, wedding liturgy, and prayers for the dead.
2. Work with a group to list music suitable for a Polish wedding. Select songs that children can perform, hymns for group singing, and instrumental solos suited to dancing.

Cinema

View the films *Playing for Time*, *Schindler's List*, *The Hiding Place*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Julia*, *Shoah*, or *Sophie's Choice*. Compare the movies' themes to those of *The Devil's Arithmetic*. Comment on the ways that individuals face certain death.

Geography

1. Create a mural or web site that introduces these settings: Viosk, Poland, Auschwitz, Mostochowa, Troniat, Lublin, Silesia, Israel, Holland, Egypt, Krakow, Siberia, Kansas, New Rochelle, and the Bronx.

History and Social Studies

1. Explain to a small group why Yitzchak joins the Knesset and why Eva and other Holocaust victims continue helping orphans and other survivors and reminding the world of the devastation caused by Hitler's death camps. Discuss whether or not survivors are true heroes.
2. Report orally on Hitler's attempt to annihilate the Jews. Explain why history books remind people of the huge numbers of deportees who did not survive the death camps.

3. Divide the class into small groups to study the events leading to Adolf Hitler's rise to power. Prepare a time line of parallel world events. Explain why other nations and the Vatican failed to halt his creation of a master race.
4. Compose an extended definition of genocide as it applies to Jews and Gypsies during the Holocaust. Discuss why survivors accept responsibility for the past for the sake of the future.
5. Brainstorm ways of preparing subsequent generations to carry the message of the Holocaust and its devastation of Jews.
6. Read biographical comment about Hitler, Himmler, Eichmann, Goering, Dr. Mengele, Jodl, and Mussolini. Decide how history should judge their war crimes. Include comment on the fairness of the Nuremburg Trials.
7. Enumerate the Geneva Conventions, which detail the manner in which prisoners of war, exiles, and refugees are to be treated.
8. Describe the culture and lifestyle of Polish Jews before and after World War II. Discuss why so many survivors emigrated to Israel after 1948. Depict on a map the areas that provided the most emigres to Israel.
9. Create a web site or bulletin board that identifies the Nazi labor and death camps, particularly Bergen-Belsen, Belzec, Majdanek, Mauthausen, Ravensbruck, Birkenau, Chelmno, Dachau, Treblinka, and the Auschwitz complex. Include the totals of people killed and their nationalities.

Language Arts

1. Write a news release for radio transmission announcing the removal of Jews from Viosk, Poland, the creation of work crews, and the end of personal rights, including the ownership of valuables. Outline the type of photograph that should accompany the print version.
2. Prepare a dialogue dramatizing Hannah's disbelief that she has been transported back in time and into the person of Chaya.
3. Design a war memorial that creates a positive outlook while recalling the slaughter of innocent peo-

ple. Write or quote a dedication that will remind people of the worth of peace, such as verses from Psalms, speeches by Gandhi, Abraham Lincoln, John F. Kennedy, or Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., verse by Walt Whitman, Robert Lowell, Emma Lazarus, or Yevgeny Yevtushenko, or the words of Eleanor Roosevelt on the founding of the United Nations human rights charter.

4. Lead a debate about the bravery of Chaya's theft of the kerchief and her acceptance of death. Cite examples of earlier bold acts and unselfishness.
5. Read aloud from nonfiction, novels, plays, and stories about war and survival, such as Erik Hugaard's *The Samurai's Tale*, Esther Hautzig's *The Endless Steppe*, and Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game*.
6. Explain in a theme the significance of the title, particularly as it applies to historical, theological, and moral themes. Propose other titles.
7. Write a theme in which you explain the role of a minor character, such as Tzipporah, Reuven, the *badchan*, Leye, Wolfe, Grandfather Dan, Chaya, Lily, guards, Moishe, Aaron, Grandma Belle, and Leye's baby.
8. Prepare an illustrated glossary of unfamiliar terms, such as *raus schnell*, *reb/rabbi*, *yahrzeit*, *nu*, *achtung*, *klezmer*, *badchan*, *zugangi*, *pilpul*, *drek*, *shabos*, *holocaust*, *synagogue*, *Torah*, *exodus*, *Seder*, *musselman*, *l'chaim*, and *Kaddish*. Define each.

Psychology

1. Describe aloud the importance of survival. Explain why Esther seems destined to become a *musselman*, why Reuven is easily captured, how Rachel dies, and why Greek Jews die early in their imprisonment.
2. Suggest ways survivors like Eva and Yitzchak might cope with starvation, grief, emotional trauma, and disease, such as with meditation, prayer, counseling, group therapy, exercise, work, writing, speaking, or community involvement.
3. Explain in a short speech the combined effect of terror, shock, alienation, loneliness, separation, loss, torture, hunger, disease, and fatigue on prisoners. Discuss the survival instinct, which causes depor-

tees to forget to say prayers for the dead, abandon the weak, keep their food for themselves, play fantasy games, and have difficulty remembering their past lives.

4. Using incidents from the book, comment on the gradual changes in Hannah's outlook. Discuss why she chooses to die in place of Rivka.

Religion

1. Explain the significance of Elijah's example, Isaac's ordeal, Seder, and the exodus from Egypt to Hannah's vision of the Holocaust.
2. Analyze world response to the creation of a Jewish state in 1948. Explain how the Zionist movement grew out of reaction to the Holocaust.
3. Using a Bible or Bible commentary, locate the origin of the Passover seder. Explain the significance of a meal in which the youngest child answers the "Four Questions" and welcomes Elijah to the empty seat.

Science and Health

1. Compose a lecture on the dangers of hiding in the midden, for example, infection, suffocation, or cuts from pieces of wood or metal.
2. Explain the purpose of Zyklon B, the gas used in Nazi gas ovens to exterminate Jews and other undesirables.

Speech and Drama

1. Organize a discussion of the nature of anti-Semitism and other forms of persecution and exclusion. Answer basic questions, such as: What makes people hate identifiable groups, even innocent members such as babies and children or victims of AIDS? How can people destroy others in the name of religion or patriotism? Why do occurrences of anti-Semitism continue to crop up, even after the hideous example of the Holocaust? How do books, plays, monuments, music, murals, and other forms of creativity help quell hatred and prejudice?
2. Listen to recordings of speeches and commentary about World War II, including news dispatches by Edward R. Murrow and other key news gatherers. Explain how these comments reflect a lack of awareness of Hitler's systematic extermination of

"undesirables," including Jews, Gypsies, political dissidents, retardates, homosexuals, prostitutes, the handicapped, and the elderly.

3. Draw stage settings for a dramatization of the attempted breakout and the execution of Fayge, Shmuel, and the other plotters. Supply sketches of costumes and props, such as searchlights, watch towers, SS uniforms, work clothes and shoes, chains, barbed wire, and guns.
4. Compose a first person account of the loading of trucks in Viosk and removal of Jewish deportees to train cars. Describe the belongings left behind and the anguish of families who recognize personal effects of people who precede them to the camps.
3. Role-play your own response to the deportation of a portion of your home town. Indicate how you would cope with confusion, rumors, fear, hunger, thirst, pain, separation, and loss. Describe skills you would need, such as first aid, knowledge of a foreign language, self-control, and food procurement.

Student Involvement Activities

1. Discuss the long-range effects of war. Project how survivors cope with the loss of homes, businesses, family, friends, strength, religious convictions, health, and hope. Comment on what other nations do to help Holocaust survivors and emigres.
2. Draw a character web representing the interconnectedness of prisoners, particularly Greek Jews and the newly arrived deportees sent directly to "processing." Indicate relationships with non-Jews such as the three-fingered woman, the Nazi colonel, guards, and Commandant Breuer.
3. Write a brief explanation of the need for a Holocaust museum. Explain why Elie Wiesel writes and speaks on the subject and why his words influenced world opinion about human suffering during Slobodan Milosevich's persecution of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.
4. Consult periodicals about Jane Yolen's expression of Jewish and Quaker beliefs. Comment on tenets the two theologies share, particularly a reverence for peace and a respect for the individual.

5. Compose a suitable epitaph for Chaya. Comment on her gift for life and hope. Mention her double existence, both as a victim of the Holocaust and as Hannah Stern.
 6. Create a web site or bulletin board illustrating the inner workings of the SS, Luftwaffe, Hitler Youth, and such figures as Hitler, Eva Braun, Himmler, Goering, Eichmann, Jodl, and Dr. Mengele. Include the post-war activities of Simon Wiesenthal and other Nazi hunters.
 7. Sample psychology books which describe how people cope with catastrophe, terrorism, and imprisonment. Examine articles that describe the ordeals of Elie Wiesel, Anne Frank, Otto Frank, Esther Hautzig, Corrie ten Boom, Oscar Schindler, Juanita Redmond, Jeremiah Denton, and Terry Anderson. Discuss your findings with a group.
 8. Characterize in a theme why people take advantage of victims during wartime. Analyze the peasant workers' sadistic expression of slitting the throat as the train goes past their fields.
 9. Compare the attitudes of significant witnesses to torment: Esther Hautzig, Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, Black Elk, John Hersey, Yoko Kawashima Watkins, Corrie ten Boom, Anne Frank, Geronimo, Zlata Filipovich, Chief Joseph, and Elie Wiesel. Explain variations in their experiences with cruelty and prejudice.
 10. Introduce the class to the pursuit and prosecution of war criminals. Comment on how the passage of time has dimmed the hopes of rounding up guards, medical workers, and others who tormented prisoners.
4. Make a character list and explain the character flaws of each, including Hannah's immaturity, Gitl's short temper, Grandpa Will's anger, the commandant's evil, musselmen's weaknesses, and the overseer's vindictiveness.
 5. Account for the author's connection between the Holocaust and Satan.

Alternate Assessment

1. List examples of teamwork, fear, religious fervor, loyalty, admiration for courage, ingenuity, discipline, and luck among the deportees.
2. Compile a list of actions that demonstrate determination to survive and defeat the Germans.
3. Compose a scene in which Hannah studies records of the camp and notes familiar names among survivors.

Vocabulary

Underline one word in the choices below to complete each statement.

1. Yitzchak, who had indeed escaped, had lived in the forest with the (**bris, partisans, zombies, plagues**), fighting the Germans.
2. After all, this is our (**SS, shtetl, exodus, yarmulke**), not theirs, and there is still a wedding to be made.
3. For a moment she thought he meant time to the next toast, and then she realized he meant time to steal . . . the (**Haggadah, matzoh, Passover, Seder**) wrapped in the blue embroidered cloth.
4. Now, all of you, undress. (**Badchan, Afikoman, Schnell, L'chaim**)!
5. But here in the country, we still marry the one our parents pick out with the shadchan, the (**mishigaas, Yentl, marriage broker, yeshiva**).
6. The wagons came to a halt as the (**Suzuki, Sherele, Viosk, klezmer**) band came around the bend in the forest path.
7. There were armed guards standing in front of the station house door and scattered around the (**crematoria, periphery, Achtung, Tzipporah**).
8. After the meal, the zugangi were lined up again in what seemed to Hannah to be a totally (**watchtower, billeted, arbitrary, musselman**) order, orchestrated by the same three-fingered woman.
9. Her parents died of (**steerage, cholera, saga, yahrzeit**).
10. Though she'd already gotten used to the (**riveted, pervasive, Gottenyu, Silesia**) camp smell, a cloudy musk that seemed to hang over everything, a mix of sweat and fear and sickness and the ever-present smoke that stained the sky, the smell in the midden was worse.
11. Butting and hauling wood for the stoves. Building more barracks, more (**privies, commandants, drek, Auschwitz**).
12. Gitl began reciting the (**guffaw, kosher, sacrifice, Kaddish**), rocking back and forth on the sleeping shelf with the sonorous words, and the prayer was like the tolling of a death bell.
13. Fayge's voice rose and fell as she told how young Israel led a small band of children against a (**portent, werewolf, Lilith, Knisset**) whose heart was Satan's.
14. He bent down and kissed the top of her head as the guns roared, a loud (**volley, double bolt, Nazi, babushka**) that drowned out birdsong and wind and screams.
15. Her stomach felt heavy, as if the argument lay there like (**unleavened, Dayenu, contagious, Reb**) bread.
16. The Kommandos lifted their heads at the sound and in mocking (**blokova, Hannahleh, parody, perimeter**) of the soldiers marched over to the wall.
17. And Esther was plump with rosy cheeks and a mouth that seemed to rest in a (**guttural, Liebchen, pout, stark**).
18. She could feel the blood flowing down and the sharp (**goy, gritty, midden, Mikvah**) pain, but before she could bend over to look at it, someone else was behind her.
19. The woman in the green dress clapped her hand over Fayge's mouth, (**haunting, punctuating, seeking, stifling**) the scream, pulling her onto the sandy floor.
20. And one woman wept throughout the night, low horrible sobs that rose in (**cordwood, pitch, plait, render**) until someone got up and comforted her.

Comprehension Test A

Part I: Short Answer (20 points)

Briefly describe each of the following characters.

- | | |
|-------|------------------|
| _____ | 1. Breuer |
| _____ | 2. Grandma Belle |
| _____ | 3. Rivka |
| _____ | 4. Yitzchak |
| _____ | 5. Shmuel |
| _____ | 6. Fayge |
| _____ | 7. Chaya |
| _____ | 8. Elijah |
| _____ | 9. Rachel |
| _____ | 10. Reuven |
| _____ | 11. Tzipporah |
| _____ | 12. Moishe |
| _____ | 13. Aaron |
| _____ | 14. Grandpa Will |
| _____ | 15. Leye |

Part II: True/False (20 points)

Mark the following statements either T for true or F if any part is false.

- ___ 1. Rivka insists that Hannah steal the overseer's shoes.
- ___ 2. Hannah hates adult conversations in Yiddish during Passover.
- ___ 3. Yitzchak leaves Tzipporah and Reuven outside at Shmuel's house.
- ___ 4. The SS guards shoot six escapees and whistle for Wolfe's gang.
- ___ 5. Hannah fears she can never wash away the smell of the midden.
- ___ 6. Grandma Belle was born in America, like Grandpa Will.
- ___ 7. The adoption agency was named Chaya.
- ___ 8. Hannah predicts that the Jews will survive.
- ___ 9. Musselmen die quickly because they can't speak Yiddish.
- ___ 10. Chaya Abramowicz stayed in the Viosk hospital for ten weeks.

Comprehension Test A (Page 2)

Part III: Quotation Completion (30 points)

Supply a word or phrase to complete each of the following statements. Write your answer in the blank provided.

1. "We're locked in!" a woman screamed. "My God, we'll _____."
2. She is still waiting to hear from Avrom Morowitz, who went three years ago to _____.
3. That is _____'s satchel.
4. Then we're going to Grandpa Will and Grandma Belle's for the first night's _____.
5. If you would accept Yitzchak the butcher's offer, you could be married, and living in a fine new house in the center of the _____.
6. Your father will marry us. Maybe not here, in your _____.
7. Now you are _____. Remember it.
8. Hannah noticed the number on her arm: _____.
9. Yitzchak, who had indeed escaped, had lived in the forest with the _____, fighting the Germans.
10. She remembered when, as the only child, she'd been the one to take the _____.
11. Hannah had taken a ballpoint pen and written a string of _____ on the inside of her own left arm.
12. The Viosk villagers had come behind the _____ to greet Shmuel and his friends.
13. But _____ had preferred living with her brother, Will, and his wife.
14. Let Hannahleh join in the _____ for real.
15. Uncle Sam handed around the large cut-crystal goblet, _____'s cup.

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Explain how Rivka survives so long in the camp.
2. Describe the failed escape and execution.
3. Explain how Hannah returns to the Seder from the camp.
4. Analyze the camp motto.
5. Determine what Hannah needs to learn in order to respect tradition.

Comprehension Test B

Part I: Matching (20 points)

Match the following quotations with names of speakers from the list below. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided at left. Some answers will be used more than once and some not at all.

- | | | | | |
|-------------|------------------|-----------|-----------------|----------------|
| A. Breuer | D. Reuven | G. Shmuel | J. Grandpa Will | M. Rachel |
| B. Yitzchak | E. Reb Boruch | H. Gitl | K. Rivka | N. the blokova |
| C. Lily | F. Grandma Belle | I. Rachel | L. Fayge | O. Aunt Eva |

- ___ 1. For being so unselfish, you can open the door for the prophet and welcome him in.
- ___ 2. Pretend you are in one of your ritual baths.
- ___ 3. And the game is to uncover the hidden order of the universe. Seder means "order."
- ___ 4. She should be counting your curls, not her gifts.
- ___ 5. Yitzchak ... what will I say ... Tzipporah ... he must be told ... what can I ... monsters!
- ___ 6. If you are silent, I will let you watch.
- ___ 7. Gitl and Chaya will stay the night with Fayge's people and come back home in the morning.
- ___ 8. God is everywhere. There will always be Nazis among us.
- ___ 9. I worry about you and your dreams.
- ___ 10. What is Kansas?

Part II: Short Answer (30 points)

Supply a word or phrase in answer to each of the following questions.

- 1. Who supplies Hannah's dress for the wedding?
- 2. How long is the trip to the camp?
- 3. Which of Hannah's friends dies in the rail car?
- 4. What was Grandpa Will's name in the camp?
- 5. Who saves Leye's infant?
- 6. Whom is Hannah supposed to greet at the apartment door?
- 7. Which musician is executed?
- 8. How does Sarah please the commandant?
- 9. Who spends ten weeks in a hospital?
- 10. Which wedding party member chooses not to survive?
- 11. Who falls in love with Shmuel?
- 12. In what year of the Christian calendar does Hannah find herself in Poland?
- 13. Who rejects Yitzchak?
- 14. What surprises Hannah in the milk?
- 15. What is Aaron's nickname?

Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

Part III: Fill-in (20 points)

Supply a word or phrase to complete each of the following statements. Write your answer in the blank provided.

1. It was even more magical than the forest in _____.
2. First she tried a _____ called "Yankele" to quiet them, then several children's songs.
3. That's _____ smoke! Learn to eat when it's given to you.
4. This is Shifre, Esther, and Yente—but we call her the _____!
5. With the _____ covering his fair hair, he looked like a miniature Grandpa Will.
6. She was about to recite another part of the family _____.
7. My _____ is ... is in the winter.
8. You want to be a hero, like _____ at Jericho.
9. That's where we are now. In the belly of the _____.
10. As she spoke, great _____ raked the compound, missing them by inches and seeking the outerperimeter.

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Analyze Hannah's warnings to the wedding party.
2. Describe the treatment of camp newcomers.
3. Discuss the best way for an inmate to stay alive in a concentration camp.
4. Outline the segments of a Seder.
5. Explain the importance of remembering the Holocaust.

Answer Key

VOCABULARY

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. partisans | 8. arbitrary | 15. unleavened |
| 2. shtetl | 9. cholera | 16. parody |
| 3. matzoh | 10. pervasive | 17. pout |
| 4. Schnell | 11. privies | 18. gritty |
| 5. marriage broker | 12. Kaddish | 19. stifling |
| 6. klezmer | 13. werewolf | 20. pitch |
| 7. periphery | 14. volley | |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Short Answer (20 points)

Answers will vary.

Part II: True/False (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. F |
| 2. T | 7. T |
| 3. T | 8. T |
| 4. F | 9. F |
| 5. T | 10. F |

Part III: Quotation Completion (30 points)

- | | | |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. suffocate | 6. shul | 11. numbers |
| 2. America | 7. J197241 | 12. klezmer |
| 3. Grandma | 8. J18202 | 13. Aunt Eva |
| 4. seder | 9. partisans | 14. toasts |
| 5. shtetl | 10. afikoman | 15. Elijah |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Matching (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. J | 6. A |
| 2. N | 7. G |
| 3. C | 8. E |
| 4. H | 9. G |
| 5. H | 10. I |

Part II: Short Answer (30 points)

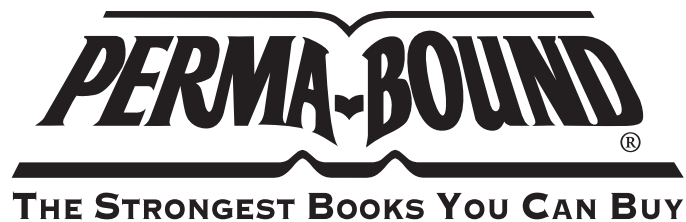
- | | | |
|--------------|------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Gitl | 6. Elijah | 11. Fayge |
| 2. four days | 7. violinist | 12. 1942 |
| 3. Rachel | 8. by singing | 13. Gitl |
| 4. Wolfe | 9. Chaya | 14. cream |
| 5. Hannah | 10. the <i>badchan</i> | 15. Ron-Ron |

Part III: Fill-in (20 points)

- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1. Oz | 6. saga |
| 2. lullaby | 7. birthday |
| 3. Jew | 8. Joshua |
| 4. Cossack | 9. werewolf |
| 5. yarmulke | 10. spotlights |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.



Perma-Bound

617 East Vandalia Road • Jacksonville, Illinois 62650
Toll Free 1-800-637-6581 • Fax 1-800-551-1169
E-Mail: books@perma-bound.com

Perma-Bound Canada

Box 868, Station Main • Peterborough, Ontario K9J 7A2
Toll Free 1-800-461-1999 • Fax 1-888-250-3811
E-Mail: perma-bound.ca@sympatico.ca

Visit us online at www.perma-bound.com