

Holocaust Literature Catalogue

Years 9 – 12

The titles profiled in this catalogue are a select list recommended by the MHM education team.



Judy & Leon Goldman
Learning Centre

Holocaust Literature: The Classics

About using Holocaust literature

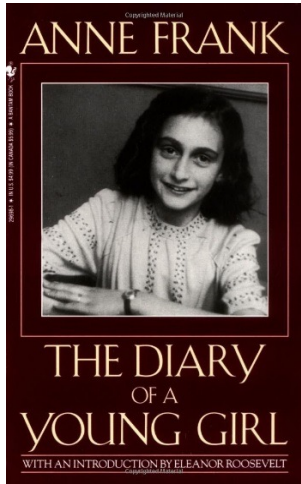
There is great value in using survivor memoirs when studying the Holocaust. Combined with traditional historical research it can help to assemble a more complete picture. It also helps to provide authenticity and accuracy of an experience, and to construct a history that otherwise, for lack of documented evidence of a particular place or event, would not exist.

Most importantly, these personal stories of survivors provide insights into the human impact of the Holocaust and illuminate the human response.

However, the history of an event and the memory of it are not the same thing; we need to be mindful of this when using memories and recollections.



Holocaust Literature: The Classics

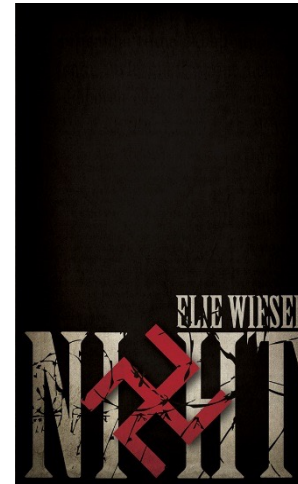


Anne Frank – The Diary of Young Girl by Anne Frank

Recommended for strong readers age 11+ (Levels 6+) or EAL students

Anne Frank’s *The Diary of a Young Girl* is a wonderful first book to encounter when studying the Holocaust. In 1942, with the Nazis occupying Holland, a thirteen-year-old Jewish girl and her family fled their home in Amsterdam and went into hiding. For the next two years, until their whereabouts were betrayed to the Gestapo, the Franks and another family lived cloistered in the “Secret Annexe” of an old office building. Cut off from the outside world, they faced hunger, boredom, the constant cruelties of living in confined quarters, and the ever-present threat of discovery and death. In her diary Anne Frank recorded vivid impressions of her experiences during this period. It is timeless in its appeal to students, but teachers might select extracts to use with their students.

[Click here to purchase](#)



Night by Elie Wiesel

Recommended for strong readers age 15+ (Levels 10-12)

“Never shall I forget that night, the first night in camp, which has turned my life into one long night. Never shall I forget those flames which consumed my faith forever.”

This exceptionally written account is possibly one of the most confronting, yet crucially important Holocaust autobiographies ever written. Elie Wiesel tells his story about growing up in the small Hungarian town of Sighet, where towards the very end of the war, as a religious twelve-year-old, he saw Jews were being rounded up and sent to their deaths. We learn about, “the death of G-d in the soul of a child who suddenly discovers absolute evil.” Francois Mauriac

This harrowing and heartbreaking memoir about Elie Wiesel’s experiences in Auschwitz and Buchwald is essential reading for older students studying the Holocaust.

[Click here to purchase](#)



Holocaust Literature: The Classics – Graphic Novels



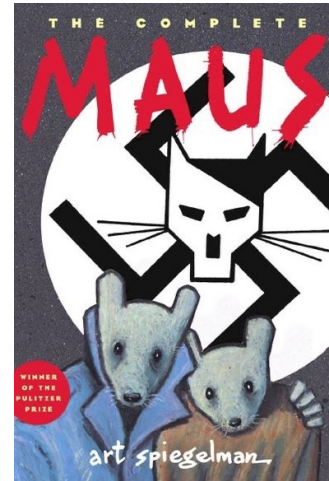
Anne Frank's Diary – The Graphic Adaptation

Recommended for age 10+ (Levels 5+)

“So, you are going to be the closest friend I never had in my life....and I’m going to call this friend Kitty.”

This first ever graphic edition of Anne Frank’s story continues to capture the incredible spirit of this young girl. It contains extensive quotes from Anne’s original edition and is accompanied by outstanding illustrations that help readers to grasp this story, making it accessible to visual learners and reluctant readers.

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The Complete Maus by Art Spiegelman

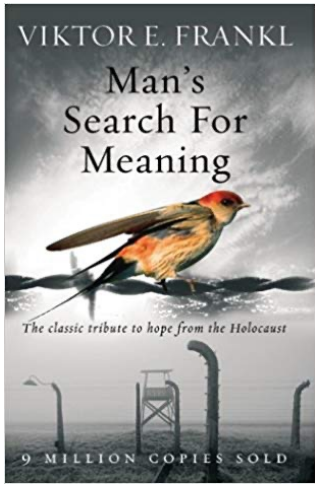
This graphic novel contains some confronting content and is recommended for readers age 16+ (Levels 11-12)

This text is suitable for both senior History and English students in years 11 or 12 who have some basic knowledge and understanding of the Holocaust. Although a graphic novel, Maus contains confronting content and themes and is not suitable for young students. If it was to be used with year 10 students, it is recommended that teachers select certain appropriate sections for discussion. Maus is sophisticated and allows for exploration on many different levels. It offers a deep insight into the horror of what Vladek and others suffered. It also examines how the Holocaust impacted on the survivors but also on their children through the trans-generational trauma. The use of the graphic novel to convey the complexities of the Holocaust is also worth investigating.

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Holocaust Literature: The Classics – Advanced Students

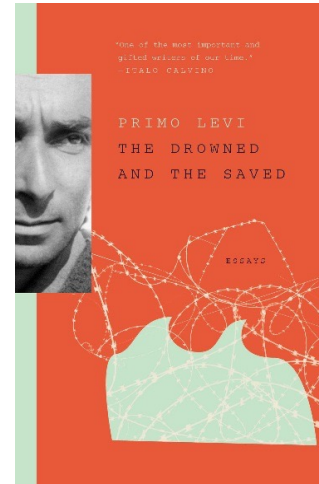


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Man's Search for Meaning by Viktor Frankl

Recommended for mature students age 16+ (Level 11+)

Psychiatrist Viktor Frankl's memoir has riveted generations of readers with its descriptions of life in Nazi death camps and its lessons for spiritual survival. Based on his own experience and the stories of his patients, Frankl argues that we cannot avoid suffering but we can choose how to cope with it, find meaning in it, and move forward with renewed purpose. At the heart of his theory, known as logotherapy, is a conviction that the primary human drive is not pleasure but the pursuit of what we find meaningful. This powerful book is suitable for students who are interested in exploring themes of survival and resilience.



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'The Grey Zone' in The Drowned and the Saved by Primo Levi

Recommended for mature students age 16+ (Level 11+)

This book is for advanced students exploring how the Holocaust was humanly possible? Holocaust survivor Primo Levi tries to understand the rationale behind Auschwitz, Treblinka, Bergen-Belsen. Dismissing stereotyped images of brutal Nazi torturers and helpless victims, Levi draws extensively on his own experiences to delve into the minds and motives of oppressors and oppressed alike. Describing the difficulty and shame of remembering, the limited forms of collaboration between inmates and SS, the exploitation of useless violence and the plight of the intellectual, Levi writes about the issue of power, mercy and guilt, and their effects on the lives of the ordinary people who suffered so incomprehensibly.

Historical Fiction based on Holocaust survivors

About using historical fiction

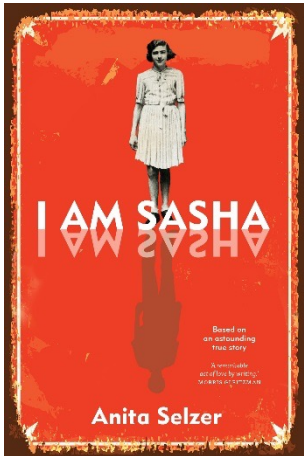
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Historical Fiction featuring Melbourne based Holocaust survivors



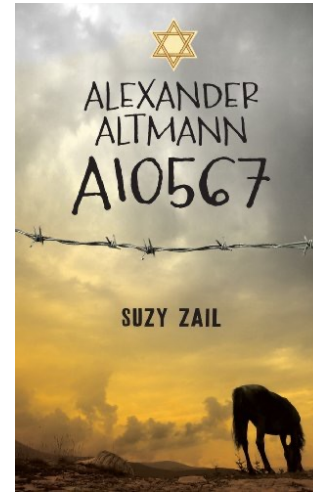
I Am Sasha by Anita Selzer

Recommended for age 13+ (Level 8+)

This book is highly recommended for Year 9 students. I am Sasha is based on the incredible true story of what happened to Melbourne based author Anita's father and grandmother during the Holocaust. It has real value for students trying to understand how this one family survived by going to extraordinary lengths. Students will get a sense of how difficult and frightening it would have been.

More than an amazing story of survival, Anita ensures that the story is placed in its historical context to get a clear understanding of the events surrounding her father's survival. Students will read accurate historical details, which is important to get a clear understanding of the Holocaust

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Alexander Altmann A10567 by Suzy Zail

Recommended for strong readers age 13+ (Level 8+)

Suzy Zail's story about fourteen-year-old Alexander Altmann was inspired by the true story of Fred Steiner, an Auschwitz survivor she met at the Jewish Holocaust Centre in Melbourne. It is excellent example of Holocaust fiction.

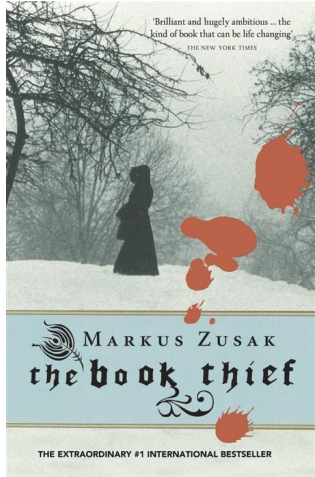
"Alexander doesn't need to look at the number tattooed on his arm; he knows it by heart. And he hates it."

This carefully researched, moving novel will appeal to readers who want to make a personal connection to a teenage protagonist who defies the odds by working for the Nazi Commander of the camp. The descriptive language is powerful and the reality that confronts Alexander is palpable. Suzy Zail is aware of her young audience and ensures that she takes her readers 'safely in and safely out' of the Holocaust.

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Historical Fiction



The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

Recommended for readers age 15+
(Levels 9-12)

The Book Thief is an exceptional story that takes place in 1939 in Nazi Germany. It is a story about the power of words and a young girl's passion for reading. The characters are extraordinary and demonstrate to the reader the impact the war had upon the lives of everyone living in Germany at this time. Interestingly, this novel is narrated by Death, itself a difficult concept to comprehend. This beautifully written story is a wonderful journey for students who are learning about World War 2. It introduces them to several concepts about the war that are cleverly woven throughout.

This book will grab the attention of readers from the very beginning. Marcus Zusak has written an outstanding and superbly crafted novel. This could be read by readers of all ages from 15 years and up.

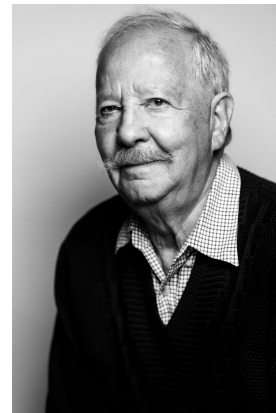
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Sonia Kempler



Maria Lewitt



Henri Korn



Sarah Saaroni

Melbourne Holocaust Museum Survivor Memoirs

About using memoirs

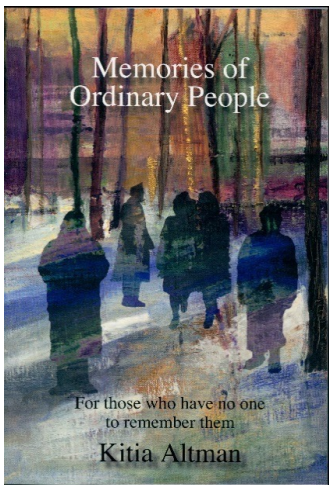
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Melbourne Holocaust Museum Survivor Memoirs



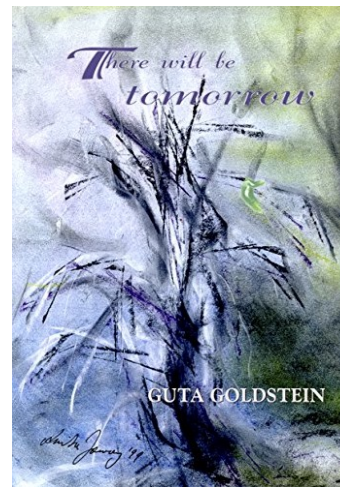
Memories of Ordinary People: For those who have no one to remember them

by Kitia Altman OAM

Recommended for readers 14+ (Level 9+)

This is a beautifully written memoir, by Melbourne-based survivor, Kitia Altman. Kitia describes and paints a vivid picture of the ordinary people in her life who did not survive the Holocaust. The memoir is written in the form of vignettes as she chronologically moves through her happy childhood, to the war years, liberation and creating a life in Australia. Although a long memoir, the vignettes are short. Teachers could allocate vignettes to students to read. Students could also complement this memoir by listening to Kitia's testimony.

Available to [purchase](#) from the *Melbourne Holocaust Museum*.



There will be tomorrow

by Guta Goldstein

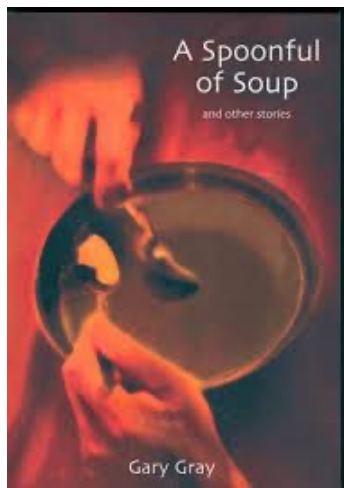
Recommended for readers 14+ (Level 9+)

A beautifully written memoir that details Melbourne-based survivor, Guta's happy childhood in Poland before the war, through her years in the Holocaust to her survival and liberation at 14 years. This is an accessible memoir, where Guta is very aware of her audience. Despite its difficult content and the pain of her loss, it is written in a gentle and optimistic manner where readers will be in awe of Guta's resilient, life affirming spirit.

[Click here to purchase](#)



Melbourne Holocaust Museum Survivor Memoirs



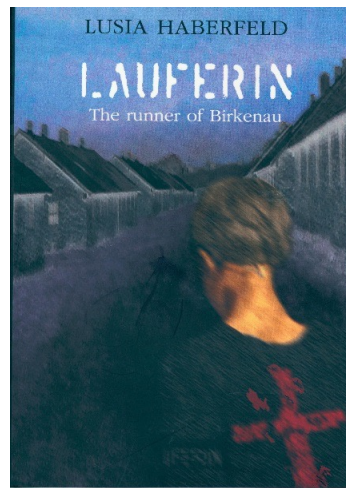
A Spoonful of Soup and Other Stories by Gary Gray

Recommended for readers age 13+ (Level 8 +)

Gary Gray was born in Sosnowiec, Poland. In April 1942, aged 13, he was incarcerated for three years in a number of slave labour concentration camps. During this time, he discovered that his parents and younger sister had died in Auschwitz in 1943. In 1958 in a remarkable sequence of events, two aunts living in Melbourne tracked him down and a year later he came to join them.

In 1986, Gary Gray began recording his war experiences as a legacy for his three daughters, in the form of short stories. *A Spoonful of Soup* brings together all these stories. This memoir does not give a chronological account of Gary's experiences during the Holocaust, but allows students to select chapters as stand-alone vignettes, which explore the hardship and experiences Gary faced. It is written in a factual manner, though Gary injects humour into his recount, reflecting his warm personality.

Available to [purchase](#) from the Melbourne Holocaust Museum.



Lauferin: The Runner of Birkenau

by Lusia Haberfeld

Recommended for readers age 15+ (Level 10 +)

This very personal memoir is as gripping as a thriller, but it is much more: it is a story of courageous and triumphant survival.

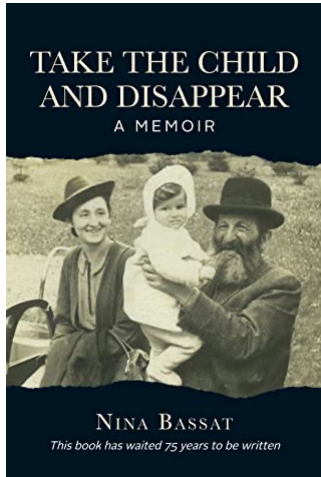
The German invasion of Poland brought to an end the happy and privileged childhood of Lusia Hasman (Haberfeld) when she was eight years old. The family fled Lodz for Warsaw with the intention of escaping to Russia but were caught up in awful and momentous events of history.

Throughout this memoir students will be able to connect with a remarkable young girl, whose wit, bravery and enterprise kept her alive.

Available to [purchase](#) from the Melbourne Holocaust Museum.



Melbourne Holocaust Museum Survivor Memoirs



Take the Child and Disappear – A Memoir

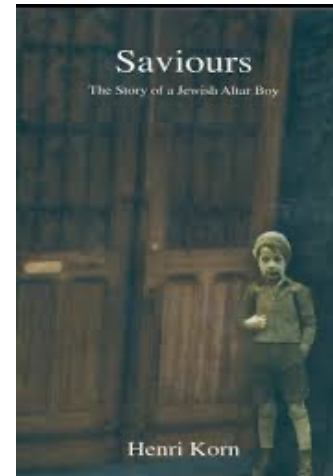
by Nina Bassat AM

Recommended for readers 13+ (Level 8+)

This memoir of Melbourne based survivor, Nina Bassat allows students to engage and explore the Shoah (Holocaust) from multiple perspectives – before, during and after. As the author recounts her experiences and those of her family members, she contemplates the many ways being a child survivor has shaped her life, both consciously and unconsciously. There has always been a sense of dislocation, and some unresolved questions remain, the most troubling of which was: ‘Who am I and where do I belong?’ The book is also about Hadassa, Nina’s courageous and wise mother.

Nina Bassat was born in Lwów, Poland in 1939. The time and place has influenced much of her life and provides the background to her book.

[Click here to purchase](#)



Saviours: The Story of a Jewish Altar Boy

by Henri Korn

Recommended for readers 14+ (Level 9+)

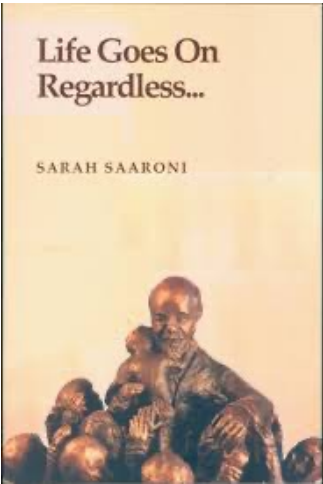
Henri Korn was born in Wuppertal-Elberfeld in Germany, the son of Jewish-Polish immigrants who had fallen in love with German culture. This memoir is highly recommended for those who are studying the rise of Nazism and its impact on the Jewish population. Henri recounts through the innocent eyes of a child the growing discrimination, Kristallnacht, his mother’s arrest and how he and his sister were smuggled into Belgium in June 1939. Henri’s survival until 1945 was never certain, not even when in hiding for more than two years in a children’s home run by the fearsome Madame Jacquemotte, who pressured all those under her care to convert to Catholicism.

There are two main themes in this book: one, the war experiences of a young boy; the other, his continuing struggle to define his identity. A memorable, vividly told story.

Available to [purchase](#) from the *Jewish Holocaust Centre*.



Melbourne Holocaust Museum Survivor Memoirs



Life Goes on Regardless...

by Sarah Saaroni OAM

**Recommended for readers age
14+ (Level 9+)**

Sarah Saaroni is a Melbourne-based Holocaust survivor who has shared her remarkable story of survival with thousands of students at the Melbourne Holocaust Museum. This is her story about being a young teenage girl during her journey through the Holocaust. This personal narrative describes the struggle of a young Polish Jewish girl who was forced to hide in plain sight by using false identification. Sarah's incredible courage and perseverance helped her to survive many encounters with the Nazis. The book is only 103 pages and the chapters are short, making it an accessible memoir.

*Available to [purchase](#)
from the Melbourne
Holocaust Museum.*



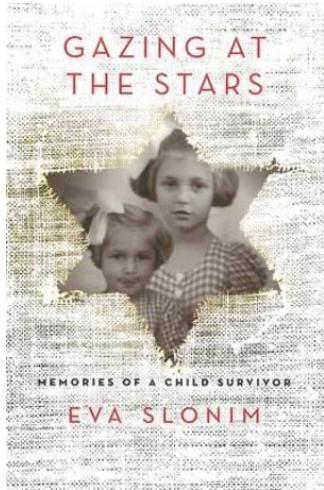
Come Spring: an autobiographical novel

by Maria Lewitt OAM

**Recommended for strong readers age
14+ (Level 9+)**

Maria Lewitt is a Melbourne-based Holocaust survivor who has written a powerful autobiographical novel based on her experiences of being a teenage girl during the Holocaust. Outside the concentration camps and mostly outside the ghetto, the adolescent heroine and her family experience the war as civilians with a secret. It is beautifully written, exploring many themes and ethical issues that occurred during the Holocaust. It is highly recommended for strong readers.

*Available to [purchase](#)
from the Melbourne
Holocaust Museum*



Gazing at the Stars

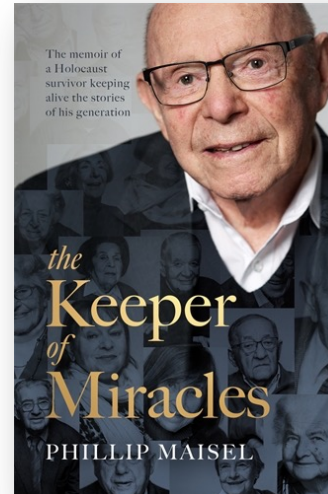
by Eva Slonim OAM

Recommended for strong readers age 15+ (Level 10+)

Narrated with the heartbreaking innocence of a young girl and the wisdom of an 83-year-old woman, *Gazing at the Stars* is a record of survival in the face of unimaginable evil. It is the culmination of Melbourne-based survivor Eva Slonim's lifelong commitment to educating the world about the Holocaust, and to keeping alive the memory of the many who perished.

Despite its confronting content this beautifully written memoir is essential reading. It will resonate with female students and could be used in conjunction with *Night* by Elie Wiesel or on its own.

[Click here to purchase](#)



The Keeper of Miracles

by Phillip Maisel OAM

Recommended readers age 14+ (Level 9+)

In his memoir, Phillip advises us, 'Once you begin to look for the miracles in your life, you cannot stop to find them.' Phillip's optimism shines through the book, even as it details his darkest days.

This unique perspective is highlighted through the darkness of the Holocaust. Born in Vilna, modern Lithuania in August 1922, Phillip was incarcerated in the Vilna Ghetto, and worked as a slave labourer in a number of camps. Despite experiencing cruelty and starvation Phillip does not hate or lose his hope for humanity. An inspirational memoir for all students.

[Click here to purchase](#)

Thank you

We appreciate your time in considering our recommendations. We are passionate about supporting meaningful and appropriate literature for your students. Please do not hesitate to [get in touch with our educators](#) if you have any questions.

