

# Holocaust Literature Catalogue

Years 5 - 8

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

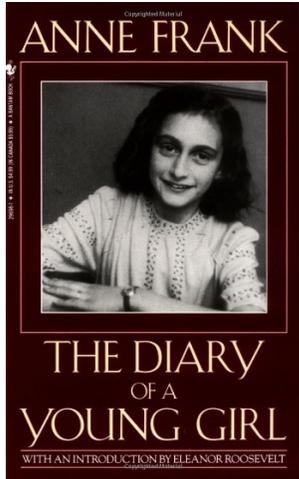
There is great value in using survivor memoirs when studying the Holocaust. Combined with traditional historical research it can help to assemble a more complete picture. It also helps to provide authenticity and accuracy of an experience, and to construct a history that otherwise, for lack of documented 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



### The Diary of a young Girl By Anne Frank

Recommended for strong readers 11 years +

Discovered in the attic in which she spent the last years of her life, Anne Frank's remarkable diary has since become a world classic -- a powerful reminder of the horrors of war and an eloquent testament to the human spirit. In 1942, with 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, they and another family lived cloistered in the "Secret Annex" of an old office building.

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### Anne Frank's Diary – The Graphic Adaptation

Recommended for 10 years +

"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 only help young readers to grasp this story.

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# Historical Fiction based on Holocaust survivors

## About using historical fiction

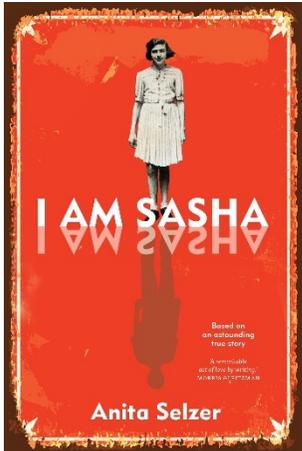
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## Historical Fiction featuring Melbourne based Holocaust survivors



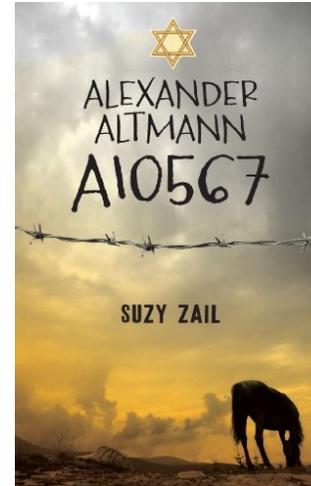
### I Am Sasha By Anita Selzer

**Recommended for 13 years + (Years 8 - 9)**

This book is highly recommended for Year 9 students, though it equally could be read by mature Year 7 students. I am Sasha is based on the incredible true story of what happened to the author'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, the story is placed in its historical context to get a clear understanding of the events surrounding Selzer's 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 12 years + (Years 7 - 9)**

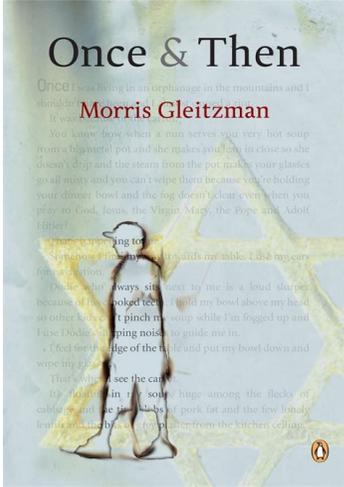
Suzy Zail's story about fourteen-year-old Alexander Altmann was inspired by the true story of Fred Steiner, an Auschwitz survivor she met at the Melbourne Holocaust Museum in Melbourne.

Alexander is a strong and resilient character who closed himself off from everyone else, convincing himself that this was the only way to survive. He was tough and incredibly angry, yet his ability to work with horses was his way to freedom. This graphic and 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. It is a harrowing account of the cruelty and brutality that took place in Auschwitz. The descriptive language is powerful and the reality that confronts Alexander is palpable.

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# Historical Fiction



**Once and Then** By Morris Gleitzman

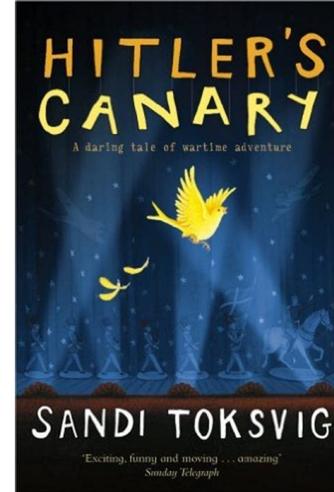
**Recommended for readers 11 years +**

“For all those children whose stories have not been told.”

A Holocaust story of love, friendship, hope and resilience. Gleitzman has introduced his readers to some wonderful characters, telling this story through the eyes of Felix, a young boy who has emerged from the Catholic orphanage where he has been living for the past 3 years and 9 months. He is thrown into the chaos of Poland in 1942, yet Gleitzman has successfully used humour together with the young boy’s innocence to take us on his harrowing journey.

“It could end in a few minutes, or tomorrow, or next year...,” however it turns out, Felix believes he has been lucky — more than once.

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**Hitler’s Canary** By Sandi Toksvig

**Recommended for readers 10 years + (Years 5 – 8)**

We recommend this book for teachers who are looking for examples of resistance during the Holocaust. Sandi Toksvig incorporates her father’s experiences during World War II into the story of Bamse who was 10 when the Nazis invaded Denmark in 1940. This story beautifully tells the impact of Nazi occupation and how the Danes helped to save their fellow Jewish citizens.

As this book focuses on one of the few inspirational and hopeful episodes from the Holocaust, it is a suitable book for younger students; for older students it provides an important example of how one country resisted the Nazis efforts to murder their fellow Jewish citizens.

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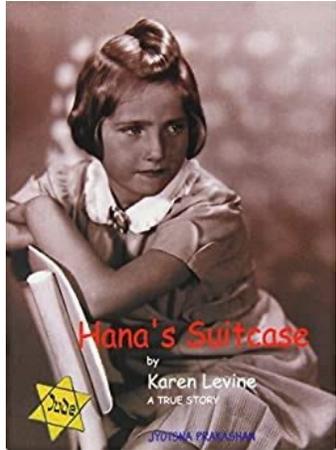
# Memoirs

## About using memoirs

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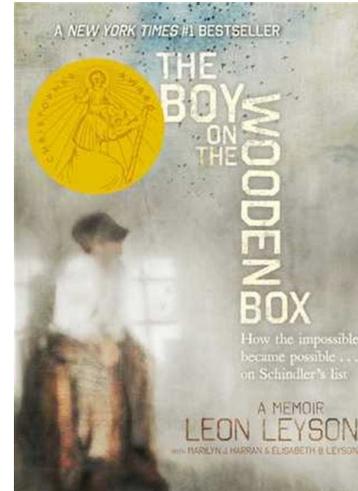
## Hana's Suitcase By Karen Levine

**Recommended for readers 11 years +  
(Years 6 – 8)**

Hana's Suitcase is a true story connecting the experiences of a young Czech girl and her family during the 1930s and '40s, and a young teacher with her students in Tokyo, Japan from 1999. Holocaust survivor Yaffa Eliach shared her story with Japanese students, explaining that children have the power "to create peace in the future." Hana's Suitcase provides a reminder of the brutality of the past and hope for the future.

This beautifully written true story is conveyed in a unique style that maintains the reader's attention. It evokes empathy for the events of the Holocaust that directly affected children like Hana, as well as its impact upon children around the world today. It was a very ordinary small, brown suitcase that brought the past and present together.

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## The Boy on the Wooden Box

**By Leon Leyson**

**Recommended for readers 11 years +  
(Years 6 – 8)**

This is a powerful memoir about one of the youngest boys on 'Schindler's List.' Leyson reveals various emotions throughout his journey, yet readers are compelled to recognise the strength of human endeavour and his powerful message of courage and humanity.

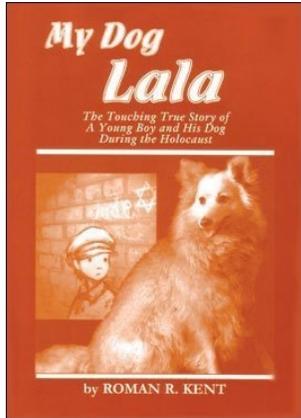
"I am an unlikely survivor of the Holocaust. I was just a boy; I had no connections...but, Oskar Schindler thought my life had value."

This memoir provides details to keep young readers interested and weaves Leyson's personal story through the most brutal days of the Holocaust. Written in a very simple and straightforward style, The Boy on the Wooden Box also provides readers with hope and gratitude. The large font will also appeal to reluctant or younger readers.

[Click here to purchase](#)



## Memoirs



### My dog Lala – Roman R Kent

#### Recommended for readers Age 11+

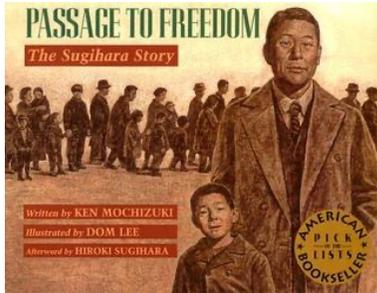
This book is perfectly pitched to young students learning about the Holocaust for the first time. It takes the simple story of a boy and his dog, Lala, in the Lodz ghetto Poland, and how Lala was taken from him. It is told through the eyes of a child and explores how 'love is stronger than hate'.

The Shoah Foundation have created wonderful [support materials](#), including an animated VR experience and lesson plans and resources.

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## Memoirs: Picture Books



**Passage to Freedom. The Sugihara Story**

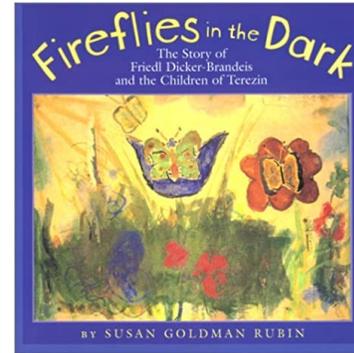
**By Ken Mochizuki & illustrated by Dom Lee**

**Recommended for readers Age 11+**

This book tells an important story of rescue during the Holocaust and provides teachers with the opportunity to explore the topic of rescuers and the Righteous among the Nations.

Passage to Freedom, tells the story of Chiune Sugihara, a Japanese diplomat in Lithuania in 1940, and explains how he used his powers - against the orders of his own government - to assist thousands of Jews escape the Holocaust, many who settled in Australia after the war. Sugihara's actions resulted in the imprisonment and disgrace of his entire family. He was only recognised in 1984, as a 'Righteous among the Nations' for his bravery.

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**Fireflies in the Dark**

**By Susan Goldman Rubin**

**Recommended for readers Age 12+**

This beautiful picture book is based on a true story. It covers the years during which Friedl Dicker, a Jewish woman from Czechoslovakia, taught art to children at the Terezin Concentration Camp as a form of resistance and hope. The book includes art created by

teacher and students, excerpts from diaries, and interviews with camp survivors. We recommend this book for those teachers wanting to explore resistance in the ghettos.

[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.

