



MARTIN AARON

1. Martin and his family were transported to Auschwitz in a _____. The trip took ____ days.
(cattle car, two)

2. What does Martin describe as the “saddest day of my life”?

(Being separated from his family at Auschwitz)

For additional discussion:

1. For many survivors, their deportation was to an unknown place with unknown conditions. In Martin's case, his only solace was that he was with his family. Beyond the horrendous travel conditions, discuss the possible emotions of each of his family members. How did parents deal with this differently than children?

2. Today, Martin is often haunted by the fact that he cannot remember what several of his younger siblings looked like. For many survivors, there are no photo albums to return to for memory. They were either left behind or destroyed. Try to imagine how this must feel for Martin.

JACK BASS

1. In school, Jack was forced to recite part of a poem that mocked the Jews. What did the Jew in the poem do? _____
(He stole golden leaves from a tree.)

2. In the concentration camp, Jack saw prisoners commit suicide by _____

(Electrocuting themselves on the electric fence)

For additional discussion:

1. What does the fact that the Jew stole the golden leaves imply about the nature of Jews? Why would Jack be asked to recite this particular poem? School/teachers are normally a safe haven for children, a place where they are nurtured. How would it be if a student was tormented daily in school by the very adults who are supposed to be nurturing him. Would you want to go to school under such circumstances? What kind of lesson is this teaching the other students?

2. Why would prisoners in a concentration camp choose to commit suicide? How did this effect the

other prisoners?

MAX HERZEL

1. Max, like other Jews, was made to wear a badge in the shape of a _____.
(Star of David)

2. During the war, Max was hidden on a farm in the _____, where he pretended to be a _____.
(French Alps, Catholic orphan)

For additional discussion:

1. How would it feel to have to wear any kind of identifying mark on your clothing that made you stand out? How would others treat you? Knowing that you and/or your family could be punished if you did not comply with the rules to wear this "marker," would you choose to disobey the rules? How could you make this decree into a positive situation?

2. Max was a young boy, on his own, living a disguise. What kind of things did Max have to do to pretend to be of a different religion? The ultimate distinguisher of Jewish boys is circumcision. How did he have to behave to make sure no one knew he was circumcised? How did he feel, knowing that if he was discovered he could be arrested, or worse? Have you ever experienced fear? A fear that never went away?

RIVA HIRSCH

1. Riva's father made her a beautiful coat, hat, and muff out of white _____.
(rabbit fur)

2. Riva spent _____ years hidden in a dark bunker where swallowing _____ kept her alive.
(two, lice)

For additional discussion:

1. Looking at Riva with her favorite coat, what does this tell you about her father's feelings towards his daughter? Imagine a father's feelings when he can no longer protect his darling daughter. Imagine Riva's feelings when the parents who were her protector and provide are no longer there for her.

2. Under such circumstances, how do you think Riva spent her days? How did she maintain hope?

AISIC HIRSCH

1. The non-Jewish boys who bullied Jewish boys after school would leave Aisic alone because he was good at _____.

(soccer)

2. Aisic was hidden in a _____. The boy who brought Aisic food betrayed him by bringing _____ to kill him, but Aisic hid in a _____.

(cemetery, German soldiers, tree)

For additional discussion:

1. Prejudices often develop when we develop an unfavorable opinion of a person based on one particular stereotype. In this case, the stereotype was that Jews were not equal. Yet Aisic's soccer talents were equal. What does this say about stereotypes and prejudices?

2. The son of a family friend turned on Aisic and tried to have him killed. What does this say about who the Jews were able to trust? Where do you turn when you can trust no one? Compare Aisic's situation with that of the life of a fugitive from the law.

HENRY AIZENMAN

1. Henry's family was the first in their town to have a _____, and Henry listened to propaganda speeches by _____.

(radio, Adolf Hitler)

2. In the concentration camp, Henry escaped from the attack of a guard dog by throwing a _____.

(cabbage)

For additional discussion:

1. What is propaganda and how does it sway the way we think? Henry is listening to propaganda teaching the message that Jews are trying to destroy the world, that they must be removed from society before it is too late. How do you think this made young Henry feel?

2. Henry was a very young boy in the concentration camp. He learned that in order to survive, he had to look out for himself. What might this entail? In extreme circumstances of hunger and deprivation, what rules of society might need to be modified or ignored in order to survive? Is this right or wrong? Are people in such extremes judgeable by the normal rules of society?

ILSE NATHAN AND RUTH SIEGLER

1. Ilse was _____ years old and Ruth was _____ years old when they were loaded onto a cattle car with their family.

(18, 15)

2. In the concentration camp, Ilse was punished for picking up a _____. She was beaten with a _____, her head was _____, and she was forced to stand with her arms raised in front of the _____.

(piece of paper, horse whip, shaved, barbwire electric fence)

3. The most important possession for a prisoner in a concentration camp was a _____.

(bowl)

4. Ilse and Ruth were on a death march with _____ girls. Only _____ survived.

(800, 50)

For additional discussion:

1. Until their deportation to Auschwitz from Theresienstadt, Ilse and Ruth had not known the true depravity of the Nazi's treatment of the Jews. Imagine being a teenage girl or boy, riding in cramped quarters in a cattle car, not knowing where you are going or what your fate will be. You are hungry. You are thirsty. More importantly, you have to go to the bathroom. How do you relieve yourself in a boxcar of 50-60 other people? What of your privacy? What of the cleanliness?

2. Usually the degree of punishment is related to the severity of the crime. Is this the case with this incident? Why do you suppose the camp guards were so brutal to the prisoners?

3. If I asked you what your most prized possession was, what would it be? For Ruth, it was a bowl to receive her food in. What does this tell you about Ruth's priorities at this point in her life? Often bowls were stolen if someone lost them. Ruth came from a very religious family. Do you think she could have done that?

4. The term death march appeared after the fact due to the number of people who died. Why were camp prisoners taken on Death Marches? Where were they going? What were the conditions like?

MAX STEINMETZ

1. When his family arrived at the concentration camp, Max and his brother were sent to the right and their parents and sister were sent to the left. Max later smelled _____, and another prisoner told him that the line to the left led to the _____, where his parents and sister had been killed.

(smoke, crematorium)

2. Sacred Jewish scrolls were stolen by the _____ during the war. Some have been found and restored to Jewish congregations. The sacred scroll is called a _____.

(Nazis, Torah)

For additional discussion:

1. The crematoriums gave off a foul odor of burning flesh that could be smelled from miles away. Often nearby villagers claimed they had no idea what was going on in the nearby camps. Knowing this, do you think that is possible?

For Max, his family was by his side one minute and gone the next. How do you move on?

2. The Torah is the central text of Judaism. It contains the Five Books of Moses, hand-written by a scribe on kosher parchment. Its text is read weekly during Sabbath services. Although many were destroyed, some were kept safe. If Jews and their religion were so detrimental to society, why do you suppose Jewish artifacts were stolen and kept safe by the Nazis?