

Kaufman Silverberg Library
Grade 8 Suggested Reading List
2013

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Books with Judaic Content

Black Radishes, by Susan Lynn Meyer. Inspired by her father's experiences as a Jewish child living in France during World War II, Susan Lynn Meyer tells the story of a family's day-to-day struggles in a country that may not be able to keep its promise of "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity".

Checkpoints, by Marilyn Levy. The Passover suicide bombing in Netanya changes sixteen-year-old Noa's family forever and transforms her faith, politics, and friendships.

Cry of the Giraffe, by Judie Oron. Based on a true situation, this book tells the story of Wudita and her family who were labeled outcasts by their Ethiopian neighbors because of their Jewish faith. They make the arduous trek on foot to Sudan in the hope of the promise of a better life.

A Drastic Turn of Destiny, by Fred Mann. An account of one family's efforts to stay one step ahead of the Nazi death machine and the story of a boy's coming of age in the chaos of war.

Inconvenient, by Margie Gelwasser. Growing up in a Russian Jewish community in suburban New Jersey, fifteen-year-old Alyssa gets advice from her best friend about how to fit in with the popular high-school crowd.

Lily Renée, Escape Artist: from Holocaust survivor to comic book pioneer, by Trina Robbins. In 1938, Lily Renée Wilhelm is a 14-year-old Jewish girl living in Vienna. To survive, Lily leaves her parents behind and travels alone to England where she becomes an artist of heroes.

Out of Line: growing up Soviet, by Tina Grimberg. This collection of memories is an unforgettable look behind what was the Iron Curtain

Past crimes, by Carol Matas. Bestselling local author Carol Matas once again asks her readers to question their assumptions about the world around them. Are we capable of fully understanding the lives we lead, or do the things we fail to understand far outnumber those that we do?

To Hope and Back: the journey of the St. Louis, by Kathy Kacer. Told through the eyes of two children, this is a tragic, true story of the St. Louis, a ship full of Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Europe.

Under the Yellow & Red Stars, by Alex Levin. A remarkable story of the survival, coming of age and homecoming of Alex Levin, who was only ten years old when he ran deep into the forest after the Germans invaded his hometown of Rokitno.

The Underground Reporters, by Kathy Kacer. The true story of two young Jewish boys who refused to be silenced and defeated in a small European town at the beginning of World War II.

Whispers from the Camps, by Kathy Kacer and Sharon E. McKay. Presents stirring accounts of children who endured capture and imprisonment in Nazi concentration camps.

Zayda was a Cowboy, by June Levitt Nislick. When a Jewish grandfather comes to live with his son's family, he relates his experiences fleeing Eastern Europe for America, his adventures as a cowboy, and his assimilation into American culture.

Non-Fiction

Case Files: 40 murders and mysteries solved by science, by Larry Verstraete. Forty amazing stories of how scientists solve crimes, reveal identities, untangle evidence and discover the truth.

Exploring the Life, Myth, and Art of the Maya, by Timothy Laughton. If you are travelling to Central America you may want to read up on the Mayan culture before you go. They were the longest-lived and most widely spread of the great cultures of pre-Columbian America.

Stem Cell Research, by Pete Moore. Discusses real-life case studies involving stem cell research, the sources of stem cells, ethical issues surrounding the use of stem cells.

Welcome to Canada: a student resource on Canadian immigration policies - past, present and future, by John Myers. Answers questions such as 'who has been welcomed' and 'who has been turned away' guiding high school students through Canadian immigration and refugee policy from pre-Confederation to today.

Fiction

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian, by Sherman Alexie. Budding cartoonist Junior leaves his troubled school on the Spokane Indian Reservation to attend an all-white farm town school where the only other Indian is the school mascot.

The Capture, by Kathryn Lasky. When Soren, a barn owl, is pushed from his family's nest by his older brother, he is rescued from certain death on the forest floor by agents from a mysterious school for orphaned owls, St. Aggie's.

The Downside of being Charlie, by Jenny Torres Sanchez. Charlie is handed a lousy senior year. Despite losing thirty pounds over the summer, he still gets called "Chunks" Grisner. What's worse, he has to share a locker with the biggest *Lord of the Rings* freak his school has ever seen.

Four Seasons, by Jane Breskin Zalben. Thirteen-year-old Allegra Katz, a student at the demanding Julliard School and the daughter of two musicians, tries to decide whether she wants to continue to pursue a career as a concert pianist or to do something else with her life.

In Darkness, by Nick Lake. In this award winning book in the aftermath of the Haitian earthquake, fifteen-year-old Shorty, a poor gang member from the slums of Site Soleil, is trapped in the rubble of a ruined hospital, and as he grows weaker he has a vision and memories of his life of violence, his lost twin sister, and of Toussaint L'Ouverture, who liberated Haiti from French rule in 1804.

Looking for Me, by Betsy R. Rosenthal. In 1936 Baltimore, an eleven-year-old Jewish girl, one of twelve siblings, tries to find her place in her overcrowded family in this novel written in free verse.

Lord Sunday, Book 7 in the series *The Keys to the Kingdom*, by Garth Nix. As Arthur Penhaligon seeks to find the seventh key, complete his quest to save the Kingdom to which he is heir, and learn his true identity, he discovers that he has a greater purpose than he could have imagined.

The Mark of Athena: Book 3 in the series *The Heroes of Olympus*, by Rick Riordan. The Greek and Roman demigods will have to cooperate in order to defeat the giants released by the Earth Mother, Gaea. Then they will have to sail together to the ancient land of Greece.

The White Bicycle, by Beverley Brenna. A teenage girl with Asperger's Syndrome travels to the south of France with her mother and friends and strives for independence. This is a story about life, obstacles and ultimately, the dignity found in the search for independence.

The Strange Case of Origami Yoda, by Tom Angleberger. Sixth-grader Tommy and his friends describe their interactions with a paper finger puppet of Yoda, worn by their weird classmate Dwight, as they try to figure out whether or not the puppet can really predict the future.

The Tiffin, by Mahtab Narsimhan. In Mumbai, India, when a note placed in a tiffin, or boxed lunch, is lost, newborn Kunal is separated from his mother. Twelve years later, Kunal lives as a virtual slave under the thumb of his foster father, Seth.

Timber Wolf, by Caroline Pignat. Jack wakes up alone and injured in the Northern wilderness. He has no memory of what happened, or who he is and a wolf is the only one who comes for him.