GHMEC Book Synopsis

Teaching Tolerance Storybook List

GRADERS PRE-K - 8

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Remember: Remembrance is Continuing the Resistance
NEW JERSEY COMMISSION ON HOLOCAUST EDUCATION
“26 BIG Things Small Hands Do”  
Coleen Paratore  
Alphabet book with beautiful, colorful illustrations.  

**Grades: Pre K – 1**  

**Theme:** Small hands can do BIG things to make the world better.  

**Pre-reading:**  
- Look at the book cover.  
- What kind of book is this?  
- What is an alphabet book?  
- What are some “big” things or good things you do with your hands?  

**Post-reading:**  
- How do small hands make the world more wonderful?  
- If time allows, have students draw a picture of one thing their hands can do.

“A Bus Called Heaven”  
Bob Graham  

**Grades: K - 4**  

**Themes:**  
- A tale of “community”  
- How a little girl named Stella created a gathering place for all of her neighbors  
- Character development/Stella took control and improved her neighborhood.  

**Vocabulary:** regulations (parking regulations), donations, obstruction, junkyard, vacant (lots)  

**Pre-reading:**  
- Does your neighborhood have a place where people can meet and talk? Discuss.  
- Do you think that just one person can change a neighborhood?  

**Post-reading:**  
- What did Stella do for her neighborhood?  
- How did Stella make her dream/idea (for the bus) come true?  
- Did Stella improve the lives of her friends and neighbors? How did she do it?  
- Can just one person, even a young child, make a difference?

“Accept and Value Each Person”  
Cheri Meiners  

**Grades: Pre-school – 3**  

- This book has a section for teachers with questions and games to reinforce the ten skills (see pgs. 32-35 in the book).
Theme:
- Accepting and valuing people, respecting differences and teaching empathy

Pre-reading:
- Read about the illustrator and the author on the back cover. Show their photos. Ask students to think about what they like best about themselves.

Post-reading:
- Ask students to share what they like best about themselves.

“A Children's Book About Being Bullied”
Joy Berry

Grades: K - 3

Themes:
Definition of bullying
How to deal with a bully

Pre-reading:
- What does it mean to be bullied?
- Have you ever been bullied?
- How did it make you feel?

Post-reading:
- 1. What do you think is the best way to deal with a bully?
- 2. Who can you go to for help?

“A Good Night for FREEDOM”
Barbara Olenyik Morrow

Note: Students need some knowledge of slavery in pre-Civil War US

Grades: 4 – 8

Themes:
- Have the courage to obey your conscience. Think for yourself.
- Do what you feel is morally right even if others might not agree - even if it means going against your family or the law.

Vocabulary: Abolitionist, Quaker, slavery, runaway slaves, slave catchers conscience, Underground Railroad, upstanders, bystanders

Pre-reading:
- Ask what students know about slavery. Discuss vocabulary.
- How might it feel to be a slave? Would you risk your life for freedom?
- What kind of people would risk everything to help slaves escape? “This story is based on historical events that took place in 1839 in Newport, Indiana. It is told by a young girl named Hallie.
- Listen to find out what difficult decision Hallie has to make.
- Should she listen to her conscience or obey her father?

Post-reading:
• How did Hallie discover the 2 young runaway slaves?
• Aunt Katy refers to Susan and Margaret as “her guests.”
• Why does she want Hallie to meet them?
• What do Susan and Margaret tell Hallie that she will never forget?
• How was Mr. Levi Coffin different from Hallie’s Pa?
• What did Mr. Coffin mean when he said to Hallie, “But thou has a conscience, child.”
• Describe what is happening on the cover illustration.
• Why is this the most important scene in the story? (Climax).
• Why do you think Hallie made this decision? Would you have?
• Read the “Author’s Note” on the dedication page. Discuss upstanders and bystanders.
• You may want to show a map of the US to trace Susan & Margaret’s route from Tennessee to Indiana to Canada.

“A Hero and the Holocaust: The Story of Janusz Korczak and His Children”
David A. Adler
Illustrated by Bill Farnsworth

Grades: K-8

So many of these picture books detail how Jews were saved by kindness; this is not one of them. This is about a different kind of hero. Janusz Korczak, who was born Henryk Goldszmit, was an author, doctor, teacher, and radio personality. He was also the director of a Jewish orphanage in Warsaw. And while he was not able to save the nearly two hundred children who were his charges, he never left their sides. In horrible times, he modeled bravery and generosity. Even when offered a reprieve to escape the death train to Treblinka, he wouldn't abandon his children. A very different and moving story from the Holocaust.

“A Lesson My Cat Taught Me”
Saul Weber

Grades: K - 5

Theme: People with disabilities are productive and capable human beings and should be treated accordingly.

Synopsis: A young girl sees a stray cat in her apartment garage. She convinces her mom that the cat is homeless and that they should adopt it. They already have a cat and the mom has concerns but relents and they bring the new cat into their home. Both cats get along nicely. The young girl, Jennifer, notices that the new cat has only one eye. Mom explains that it was very possible that a family ‘threw the cat out’ because it was deformed. This horrifies Jennifer because the new cat is a loving wonderful addition to their family.

A new student is brought into Jennifer’s class and she is in a wheelchair. The other students are not nice to Hillary, the new student. They make fun of her disability and ignore her. Jennifer befriends her and explains that Hillary is not disabled, she is very capable. Jennifer enters a school essay contest and writes a story about her new cat with one eye, Uno, and her new friend Hillary in the wheel chair. She wins the contest. Her essay is entitled “Lessons My Cat Taught Me”

Follow up discussion:
• Discuss how everyone has strengths and weaknesses. Everyone can learn something from others, no matter what limitations they may have.
• That the word handicapped should be replaced with ‘handi-capable’.
• That all people should be treated with respect and dignity and that people who have handicaps have feelings like everyone else and want to be loved and included.

“A Little PEACE”
Barbara Kerley

**Grades: Pre-K - Kindergarten**

**Theme:** Peace

**Vocabulary/Concept:**
Very simple vocabulary, very few words but nice photos and great concept of spreading peace with a simple smile or gesture.

Shows various cultures from around the world.

**Post Reading:**
- Last 4 pages show photos of Peace Around the World and a great ‘Note on Peace’.
- Great Quote:
  “Peace cannot be kept by force. It can only be achieved by understanding,”
  Albert Einstein

“Alley Oops”
Janice Levy

This story is about a boy named J.J. who is very mean to a new boy at school. Listen to the story to see what happens to make J.J. change his behavior.

**Grades: 1 – 3**

**Themes:**
Bullying has serious long-term consequences for both the victim and the bully. Bullies need to understand the impact of their hurtful behavior and change.

**Pre-reading:**
- How would you feel if someone called you mean names? How might this affect you for a long time?
- What advice would you give to a bully?

**Post-reading:**
- Why was Mr. Jax the right person to teach J.J. about bullies? (discuss “Frog Face”)
- How did J.J. and Patrick become friends? How is each boy better off now?
- Explain Grandpa’s story of the two dogs inside us. What can we learn from it?
“All Kinds of Children”  
Norma Simon  

Grades: K – 1  

Themes:  
Children all around the world have much in common.  
Awareness of similarities should help us live together in peace.  

Pre-reading:  
- Display both front and back covers and read title.  
- Have students say what they notice and tell what they think the story will be about.  
- Listen to the story to learn the ways children all around the world are the same.  
- (Stop to discuss colorful, instructive illustrations)  

Post-reading:  
- How are you like children all over the world?  
- Look at the colorful borders on the front and back covers.  
- What do you see? (Colorful paper doll cut-outs).  
- What is the meaning of this border?  
- (paper dolls of different colors holding hands & living in peace)  

“Always Remember Me: How One Family survived WWII”  
Marisabina Russo  

Grades: K-8  

Rachel's Oma (Grandmother) has always kept one photo album secret, but today she shares it with Rachel.  
It chronicles family times in Germany as they slowly grow more and more difficult for German Jews. The simple text and lovely illustrations show how Jews living in Germany were betrayed and persecuted by restrictions and laws and then outright attacks. Attempts to emigrate and the failure to do so are described; the time spent in a concentration camp is mentioned, but not described in detail. Based upon the author's own family experience, this little-known book is a fine introduction to the topic of the Holocaust which celebrates the courage of its survivors. (Also see I Will Come Back for You: A Family in Hiding During World War II by this same author).  

“Am I a Color Too?”  
Cole, Heidi & Vogl, Nancy,  
This book is written in rhyme and has beautiful realistic pictures.  

Grades: Pre-school – 4  

Theme:  
Valuing the traits and uniqueness of all human beings; looking past skin color to the person on the inside.  

Pre-reading:  
- Discuss the cover of the book and the many colors of the children’s faces. Ask them to look at each other’s faces. Ask, “Can you see the person inside the rainbow of different facts?” “Let’s listen to Tyler’s poem.”  

Post-reading:  
- What is Tyler’s message to you?
“Beany and the Meany”  
Susan Wojciechowski  
This book has 5 chapters (102 pages).  
It's too long for a 40 minute Guest Reader visit, but can be used as a  
resource for the classroom teacher or school librarian.  

**Grades: 3 - 5**  

**Themes:**  
- Having respect for others  
- Learning how to compromise

“Benno and the Night of Broken Glass”  
Meg Wiviott  
Illustrated by Josee Bisaillon  

**Grades: K-8**  

Benno the cat lives happily in Berlin, spending his day moving from one generous resident to the next. But things begin  
to change as angry boots walk the streets. Less scraps are offered to Benno, and voices and eyes are lowered in what  
was once a happy, friendly city. Then one night, businesses are looted, glass is broken, and books are burned. But not all  
the businesses are destroyed, and not all of Benno's human friends are affected by this. But others, those with names  
lke Goldfarb and Adler, are never seen again. This child-friendly version of Kristallnacht is followed up by an  
afterword which provides readers with more details of this fateful event.

“Billy the Baaadly Behaving Bully Goat”  
Staci Schwartz  
Delightful rhyming text with word play and bold, colorful, amusing illustrations  


**Grades: K – 3**  

**Theme:** It takes wise action (magic dust in this story) to change mean, bullying behavior to kind, self-  
rewarding behavior.

A bully’s ways can be changed by getting him to “feel” the pain he inflicts on his victims, then by  
experiencing the warm, fuzzy feelings that come with doing something kind.

**Vocabulary:** bully, victim, consequences, respectful

**Pre-reading:**  
- Read the title and have students comment on cover illustration. What do they think the story will be  
  about?  
- Students can share their personal experiences and feelings with bullying—as bully, victim, bystander,  
  upstander.

“*In this story a little goat named Billy is a big bully. He does such mean things that the “kids” in his  
class cry. Listen to the story to find out how Billy changes from being an out-of-control baaadly behaving  
bully to being a kind, sweet friend.*”
Post-reading:
- What were some of the ways Billy bullied the kids in his class? How did his victims feel? How did Billy seem to feel?
- What finally got Billy to change his bad behavior to kind behavior?
- What happened after Billy made Gardenia drop her books? After he made fun of Godfrey’s freckles? How did he feel after he helped Gwen?
- Is there really such a thing as “magic dust?” If magic dust doesn’t exist, how can we change the attitude and behavior of a bully?

“Blue Cheese Breath and Stinky Feet”
Catherine DePino
How to Deal With Bullies

**Grades: 6 - 8**

**Theme:** Bullying

**Synopsis:** A boy is bullied by another boy in his school. The bully, Gus, calls him “Blue Cheese Breath and Stinky Feet”. The victim, Steve, is afraid of Gus and afraid to tell anyone, even his parents, that he is being bullied by Gus. Eventually it gets so bad that his parents and his teacher notice his behavior has changed and he is withdrawn. They confront him and learn about the bullying. His parents give him a check list of appropriate actions to take against Gus, including looking him in the eye, standing straight and tall, talking in a loud voice etc. Steve practices these behaviors and uses them on Gus the following day. The new attitude towards Gus shocks Gus and forces him to back down. The actions his parents told him to use worked against the bully and the bullying stops.

**Follow Up discussion:**
- Go over the check list of appropriate ‘anti-bullying’ suggestions listed on page 37. Role-play some of these actions.
- Discuss how it is not being a tattle-tale to solicit the help of an adult.
- Explain that bullies are really cowards who will often back down when the person they are bullying stands up for himself/herself or solicits help from others.

“Blue Lou and the Bullyfish”
Stephanie Arasin Portnoy
Note: This book comes with a CD of 8 songs related to the story

**Grades: 2 - 5**

**Theme:**
Dealing with bullies, friendship and getting along with others

**Pre-reading:**
- Look at the cover of this book.
- Where do you think this story takes place?
- The two fish in the center are friends.
- Who are the fish on the side?

**Post-reading:**
- What did Octavia suggest as a way to deal with a bully?
How did Shrimpy save Hammer’s life?
What promise did Hammer make to Shrimpy? (p. 36).
Explain your answer.

“Brave Charlotte”
Anu Stohner and Henrike Wilson
A complete lesson plan is inside the book.

Grades: 2 - 4

Themes:
- A simple story about a shy young sheep who shows bravery and independence in the face of danger.
- Be an individual not a follower.

Pre-reading:
- Look at the book’s cover.
- Which sheep is different?
- Why is it different?
- Can you explain the word “different?”
- Are the people also different? In what way?

Post-reading:
- Did you enjoy this story?
- How was Charlotte different?
- How did Charlotte save the farmer?
- Do you think it’s good that people and animals are all different?

“Bullies Are a Pain in the Brain”
Trevor Romain
Note: This is a chapter book with 105 pages. It can be read aloud to younger students, or individually by 4th - 5th graders. In my opinion, every classroom and school library should have this book; it's a wonderful self-help book for children.

Grades: 1 - 5

Themes: Suggestion for dealing with bullies. Understanding why people bully and what children can do to help themselves if they become the victim of a bully
“Bullies Never Win”
Margery Cuyler

Grades: K - 3

Themes:
How words can hurt us
Believing in yourself
How to react to bullying

Pre-Reading:
• What is a bully?
• Have you ever encountered a bully?
• What did you do?
• Let's see what the girl in this story does.

Post-Reading:
• Who was the bully in this story?
• How did Jessica react to the bully?
• What would you have done?
• How grown-ups can help

“Chicken Sunday”
Patricia Polacco
(based on a true story)
Note: Book contains beautiful, detailed illustrations
* Teaching activities available

Grades: 2 – 4

Themes:
Strength of family bonds
Childhood friendship of African American and Russian Jewish family
Pride of heritage and customs

Pre-Reading:
• How can you thank someone who is very nice to you?

Post-Reading:
• How did the three children thank Miss Eula?
• Why did they want to thank her?
• How did they earn enough money for the hat?
• Why did some children throw eggs at the Jewish store owner’s shop?
• How did the storeowner help the children?
“Emotes! Abash and the Cyber-Bully”
Matt Casper

**Grades: 4 - 6**

**Theme:**
Cyber-bullying

**Synopsis:**
This story is about imaginary creatures called Emotes who were created when energy from all the internet users split into these unique beings who each represent a different emotion. One character is bullied by another who captured him falling down and wearing two left shoes on his camera and then posted the pictures on various communication devices in the school. Eventually the bully was “outed” and he apologized. All is forgiven. The vocabulary is very timely and pertinent to the texting language the children use today.

**Post reading:**
- Pages 28 & 29 have good question for class discussion on what Cyber-bullying is and what you can do if you find that you are being bullied.

“Erika's Story”
Ruth Vander Zee
Illustrated by Roberto Innocenti

**Grades: K-8**

Erika's Story is perhaps the shortest book on this list, and also one of the most powerful. It details in a limited number of words, and the most haunting illustrations, how one life is saved when a mother throws her baby from a boxcar, trusting the kindness of strangers to save a single life. You need to see this one for yourself to understand its simplicity and power.

“Flowers on the Wall”
Miriam Nerlove

**Grades: K-8**

Life grows increasingly difficult for Rachel and her family following the German invasion of Poland. This book chronicles everyday changes for Jewish families that result, such as loss of businesses, shortages of food, and denials of freedoms. To cheer up his daughter, Papa brings home paints which he and Rachel use to draw flowers on the wall.

As time goes by, the flowers begin to fade. Mama promises they will repaint them, but Rachel's family, as well as other Jewish families, is moved to the Warsaw Ghetto, and eventually to Treblinka. The book concludes with "Rachel's dreams, along with those of thousands of other Warsaw Jews, faded like the flowers on her apartment walls. And then they were gone forever."
“Forging Freedom”  
Hudson Talbott

A True Story of Heroism During the Holocaust
This book has a Teacher’s Guide with pre-reading questions, time-lines, maps and vocabulary lists.
It is a chapter book that can be read 2-3 chapters at one sitting.

 Grades: 4 – 8

Theme:
The heroism of Jaap Penraat, a young Dutchman who risked his life during WWII to save the lives of over 400 Jews.

“Gifts from the Enemy”  
Trudy Ludwig

Powerful and moving story based on From a Name to a Number: A Holocaust Survivor's Autobiography by Alter Wiener, in which Alter recalls his loss of family at the hands of the Nazis and his internment in five prison camps during World War II.

 Grades: 3 – 8

“Hana’s Suitcase”  
Karen Levine
(based on a true story)
After viewing the suitcase of a Holocaust orphan, children at the Tokyo, Japan Holocaust Education Center want to learn what happened to her.
The curator of the Center searches for answers. In the end the child’s brother is found in Toronto and he is able to share their story.

 Grades: 5 – 8

Pre-reading:
• Why were the children curious about Hana Brady?
• What do you think you’ll learn about her?
• What might be in the suitcase?

Post-reading:
• What happened to Hana?
• Who helped solve the mystery of her life?
• What qualities did Fumiko possess that kept her looking and hoping to find information about Hana?
• How did George survive?

“Hidden Child”  
Isaac Millman

 Grades: K-8

In this autobiography, Isaac Millman describes in simple words and painted compositions how he was saved as a boy of seven when the Nazis invaded France.
Through a series of moves from town to town, he relied upon the kindness of strangers for survival. He hid his Jewish identity, but never gave it up.

“I’m Like You, You’re Like Me”  
Cindy Gainer

**Grades: Pre-school – 3**

*One book from “Free Spirit’s Learning to Get Along” series of 12 titles*

**Theme:**
Tolerance and diversity – celebrating both

**Note:** This book has “A Leader’s Guide” with 20 lessons to reinforce the messages of the child’s book. See back of book for ordering information.

“I Never Saw Another Butterfly”  
Hana Volavkova

**Grades: K-8**

Fifteen thousand children under the age of fifteen passed through the Terezin Concentration Camp, but fewer than one hundred survived. Heart breaking poems and pictures created by the young inmates show the routine daily misery and monotony of these children, while at the same time honoring their courage and optimism and hope. A simple, yet powerful, book for sharing.

“Irena’s Jars of Secrets”  
Marcia Vaughn  
Illustrated by Ron Mazellan

**Grades: K-8**

In Irena's Jars of Secrets, Irena Sendler learns compassion at an early age from her father, a Catholic physician who treated Jewish patients at a time when most Christian doctors would not. When her father contracts typhus treating these same patients, he tells Irena on his death bed to "help someone who is drowning, even if she cannot swim." Irena takes this advice to heart, and begins administering to the Jews imprisoned within the walls of the Warsaw Ghetto by occupying Nazi forces.

Beginning in 1940, Irena smuggles in food, clothing, and medicine for the next two years, but realizes this isn't enough. Joining a secret organization called Zegota, Irena plans to smuggle Jewish children to safety as the Nazis began transporting the Ghetto inhabitants to concentration camps and certain death. But what parent will give up their child? Only after Irena swears to provide new identities and preserve the real names of their children do parents reluctantly release them to her. The book chronicles the close calls as rescues are carried out, and even the capture and near execution of Irena.
“Irena Sendler and the Children of the Warsaw Ghetto”
Susan Goldman Rubin
Illustrated by Bill Farnsworth

Grades: K-8

Another retelling of the Irena Sendler story, with more details and some information not found in the title above. A comparison of the two books would make an interesting study in the classroom.

“It’s Okay to Be Different”
Todd Parr

Big bold bright amusing illustrations
One sentence per page—each beginning with “It’s okay…”

Grades: Pre K – 1

Theme: Being different is okay. How you look and how you feel are okay. Everyone is important and special. Don’t be embarrassed to be yourself.

Pre-reading:
- Talk about the title and cover illustration.
- What are some ways people are different? Why is this okay?
- What would it be like if everyone were the same?

As you read each page, stop to ask students to respond to the illustrations and text.

Post-Reading
- How does this book make you feel good about yourself?
- How does this book help you get along with others?
- What BIG idea did you get from this book?

“Jacob’s Rescue”
M. Drucker & M. Halperin
(based on a true story)

Grades: 5 - 9

Themes:
A Polish couple hides 2 children during the Holocaust, risking their own lives
Fear, hunger, hardships, heroism and goodness

Pre-reading:
- How would it feel to pretend to be someone else?
- Would you leave your family and change your name, religion and behavior if your life was in danger?
- How would you feel?

Post-reading:
- Do you think the Roslan’s were heroes? Why? What did they do?
- Is it difficult or easy to pay attention to another person’s suffering?
  ✓ Explain your answer.
- Did the Roslan family want the medal? Why?
“Just Plain Fancy”  
Patricia Polacco

**Grades: 3 – 5**

**Themes:**  
Customs of the Amish  
A child’s responsibility in the family  
How being “different” can be beautiful

**Pre-Reading:**  
- Do you know about the Amish people from Lancaster, PA?  
- What are some of their customs and rules?

**Post-Reading:**  
- What did everyone learn at the end of the story?  
- Did the Amish families accept this “fancy” bird?  
- Do you think it’s ok to be different?  
- Why?  
- Explain why differences can be beautiful.

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“King of the Playground”  
Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

**Grades: K – 2**

**Theme:** Stand up to bullies who try to scare or threaten you

**Pre-reading:**  
- Look at the cover illustration and title.  
- Discuss what the story might be about.  
- Did you ever feel like one of the 2 boys on the cover? Explain.  
- Discuss the terms “bully” and “victim.”  
- “This story is about a boy named Kevin, who is afraid to go to the playground because a bully named Sammy threatens to hurt him.  
- Listen to the story to see how Kevin’s dad helps him figure out a way to make Sammy stop scaring him.”

**Post-reading:**  
- What were some of the things Sammy said he would do to Kevin?  
- What finally made Sammy stop?  
- How did Kevin’s dad help him figure out what to do?  
- Should there be a “King of the Playground?”  
- How can everyone feel safe and have fun at the playground?  
- What can you do?
“Lily Renee, Escape Artist: From Holocaust Survivor to Comic Book Pioneer”
Trina Robbins
Illustrated by Anne Timmons & Mo Oh
Grades: K-8

Lily Renee, Escape Artist is the exciting biography of a young Austrian Jew who escaped the Nazis via Kindertransport. Her life story, told here in graphic novel format, is truly a series of escapes, finally leading to her emergence as one of America's most successful and influential comic book artists.

Students will be interested to learn that anti-Semitism was strongly felt in England during the war, and that many Jews who sought refuge there were considered "enemy aliens." The book contains additional notes on Kindertransport program, concentration camps, internment camps, and English culture, as well as a photo album of Lily Renee.

“Little Bill”
Bill Cosby
Grades: 2 - 5

Themes:
Dealing with a “mean” child without acting mean or fighting back.
Suggests other ways to cope with someone who is “picking on you.”

Pre-reading:
• Does anyone know a bully? No Names, please.
• How can you stop a bully from being so mean? (Discuss students’ suggestions)

Post-reading:
• How did Little Bill “win the game?”
• Who helped him figure out what to do? Was it a good idea?
• How did Little Bill “reach out” to Michael?

“Luba: The Angel of Bergen-Belsen”
Luba Trysznski-Frederick
Illustrated by Ann Marshall
Grades: K-8

Luba: The Angel of Bergen-Belsen relates the true story of Luba Trysznska-Frederick who discovered fifty-four children abandoned behind the concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen. Since these were children of Dutch diamond cutters brought to the camp to support the Nazi war effort, they became known as the Diamond Children. The book begins with Luba wondering why she was spared when so many she knew and loved had perished; the remainder of the book answers that question as she works tirelessly to care for and protect these children. Her compassion and self-sacrifice encourage others to help, and the fifty-four children survive until British liberation of the camp in 1944. The Epilogue provides answers to many questions students are certain to have upon the book's completion.
“Memories of Survival”  
Esther Nisenthal Krinitz & Bernice Steinhardt

Grades: K-8

At the age of fifteen, Esther Krinitz and her thirteen year-old sister sought refuge from the invading Germans. After being sent away from homes of neighbors, the two girls disguised themselves as Gentile farmhands and worked throughout the war. In this way they survived, only to discover that the rest of their family, and most of their friends, did not. The author tells this story through hand-stitched embroidered panels, which are further explained with commentary written by her daughter. Each panel is richly wrought, with many details to be explored.

“Mr. Lincoln’s Way”  
Patricia Polacco

Grades: 3 - 5

Theme:
A school principal befriends a student and changes his “bullying behavior” by taking an interest in the boy’s love of birds.

Pre-reading:
- How do most bullies act?
- Do you think a bully can change his/her behavior and act nicer to others?

Post-reading:
- Who helped “Mean Gene” change his behavior?
- How did Mr. Lincoln “get through” to Eugene?
- How did Eugene change?
- What did you learn about bullies from listening to this story?

“Mr. Peabody’s Apples”  
Madonna

(Based on a 300 yr. old Kabbalah story by the Baal Shem Tov)

Grades: 2 – 6

Themes:
- It’s hard to undo the damage caused by spreading gossip, rumors, and lies
- Don’t jump to conclusions because something seems true
- Don’t be too quick to judge a person. (p. 28)

Pre-reading:
- What do you notice about the cover illustration? What do you think the story will be about?
- The author of the story is Madonna. What do you know about her? Did you know she writes children’s books?
- What is a rumor? Have you ever spread a rumor or been a victim of one? What damage can a rumor do?
In this story a boy named Tommy Tittlebottom spreads a rumor about Mr. Peabody. Listen to find out how Mr. Peabody teaches Tommy just how hard it is to take back harmful words.

Post-reading:
- What rumor did Tommy spread about Mr. Peabody? Why?
- What might Tommy have done to find out the truth before he jumped to conclusions?
- What did Mr. Peabody have Tommy do to make him understand that once you say something, the damage is done?
- What is the meaning of the illustration on p. 26? What does each feather represent?
- Why do you think Madonna wrote “Mr. Peabody’s Apples?”
- How might this story affect your behavior?

“Mrs. Katz and Tush”
Patricia Polacco
A story about an elderly Jewish widow
and a young African American neighbor with authentic illustrations

Grades: 3 - 5

Themes:
Common history of Jews and African Americans dealing with prejudice.
Knowledge of Passover traditions and foods.

Yiddish words: Bubeleh, Kattileh, Bubee, tush, Shalom, Kaddish, Kugel, Mazel Tov

Pre-Reading:
- Can a young child form a friendship with an older adult (like a grandma or grandpa)?
- What would they talk about?
- What would they have in common?

Post-Reading:
- How did the young boy and the “Grandma” become friends?
- What did the boy learn about the Grandma’s Passover traditions?
- What did the boy do to help the Grandma?
- Did the two characters form a friendship?
“My Secret Camera: Life in the Lodz Ghetto”
Frank Dabba-Smith

Grades: K-8

At great personal risk, Mendel Grossman snapped pictures of life in the Lodz Ghetto of Poland. As was the fate of most of the ghettos inhabitants, Grossman was sent to Auschwitz where he died on a forced march. The few pictures which survived World War II, as well as a subsequent war (the 1948 Israeli War for Independence), are sparsely yet movingly described by Frank Dabba Smith.

“Nina Bonita”
Ana Maria Machado

Grades: K – 3

Themes:
• Diversity – the many colors of animals and the human race
• Race – people’s skin color resembles that of their parents and relatives
• Pride in being black
• Racial bias and racial differences

Vocabulary: glossy, panther

Pre-reading:
• Discuss what children know about skin colors.
  ✓ Is skin color important? Why
  ✓ Should everyone look the same?
  ✓ What are some of the skin colors you see in your school?
• Discuss treating all people equally.

Post-reading:
• What color does the bunny want to be? Why?
• What does the bunny do to change his color? Does it work?
• Who does the bunny meet and “marry?”
• What colors are their baby bunnies?
• Is the white rabbit happy with this family?
• All colors are beautiful, white, black and in between
• Did you like this book? Why?
• What did you learn about skin or fur colors?

“Nobody Knew What to Do – A Story About Bullying”
Becky Ray McCain

Grades: 1 - 3

Themes:
• Bullying
• Being an ‘upstander’ not a bystander
Synopsis:
This book is about a child who observes another classmate being bullied so badly that he doesn’t come to school one day. This child decides to go to his teacher about the problem and tell her what is happening to his classmate. The next day, when the child being bullied returns to school and the bullies approach him, the teacher and principal meet all of them, take their names and call their parents. The children who allowed the bullying to happen, and ‘looked the other way’ learn that there is safety in numbers, and that they need to stick together to prevent others from bullying someone.

Post Reading:
- Back page of book has good information about Bully Prevention

“No Kidding About Bullying”
Naomi Drew
Techniques for the classroom teacher on how to deal with bullying and bullies.

Grades: K – 8

“No One Can Ever Steal Your Rainbow”
Barbara Meislin
Told in rhyme with CD & lyric sheet included.
This book is based on a true story.

Grades: 2 - 5

Themes:
- Even when bad things happen, the “rainbow in your heart” [joy, hope, love] will sustain you.
- Your own rainbow cannot be taken away, it will always be there to bring you hope.

Pre-reading:
- Discuss rainbows. Are they real? When do you usually see a rainbow?
- How do you feel when you see one? Can a rainbow really be in your heart?
- Discuss the author’s use of symbolism in this rhyming story.

Post-reading:
- What did the author mean when she wrote “No one can ever steal your rainbow?”
- When you feel like giving up, think that things will never get better or just want to quit, will you remember the message in this book?
- Ask some students to explain/paraphrase the message [to keep hope, love & joy in your heart].
“Passage to Freedom- The Sugihara Story- a Biography”
Ken Mochizuki
Illustrated by: Dom Lee

Grades: 3 and up

Themes:
- In 1940, Chiune Sugihara wrote visas for hundreds of Jewish refugees from Poland, helping them to escape the Nazi threat.
- Book’s lesson/message: There is a Jewish proverb that “if you save the life of one person, it is as if you saved the entire world.”

Vocabulary: Refugees, upstander

Pre reading:
- Use a world map to show location of Poland, Japan, Lithuania, on the Baltic coast of Russia.
- Chiune’s son Hiroki told this story in his book. This is one of the most important stories to emerge from the Holocaust years. Briefly discuss the Holocaust (age appropriate)

Post reading:
- Discuss Chiune’s bravery and being an “upstander.” What made him decide to help the Jewish people?
- Discuss the family’s amazing act of kindness. Why was this act of kindness so important?
- Sugihara saved the lives of about 10,000 Jews during the Holocaust. Do you think that one person can really make a difference? Would you call him a hero?
- Review the Jewish proverb. Would you stand-up for one person who needed help? Ask for some examples/situations when, why, where, how you could help a classmate or a younger child.
- If time permits, read the “afterword” on the back inside book cover.

“People”
Peter Spier

Grades: 3 - 6

Theme:
Each one of us is a unique individual; celebrate our differences.

Pre-reading:
- Can you name some ways that all people car alike?
- Can you name some ways that all people are different?
- How many people live on the planet Earth?
- Take a guess!
  (Answer: It’s always changing, but over 6 billion -6,000,000,000 – live on Earth)
- Do you think that these 6 billion people are all unique? Let’s read to find out.

Post-reading:
- What did you learn about the people living on Earth?
- What was the most interesting “difference” among the people?
Do you agree with the author when he says our world would be very dull if everybody looked, thought, ate, dressed, and acted the same?
Explain your answer.

“Promise of a New Spring”
Gerda Weissmann Klein
This book presents details and photos; asks children to remember this terrible time in history; and to create the “new spring”. Ms. Klein, the author, is a survivor who lost most of her family in concentration camps during WWII. She wrote this book to teach a lesson about this time in history.

Grades: Ages 5 and above

Theme:
Holocaust: from the destruction comes a “new spring” (a new generation)

Pre-reading:
What have you learned about the Holocaust?

Post-reading:
What is Ms. Klein’s message? What is the “new spring”?

“Rebekkah’s Journey”
Ann E. Burg
Illustrated by Joel Iskowitz

Grades: K-8

Many European Jews were able to emigrate from Europe in order to escape the Nazi regime. An excellent picture book for understanding the refugee experience is Rebekkah's Journey, a meticulously researched historical fiction picture book which describes President Franklin D. Roosevelt's plan to shelter 1000 Jews in upstate New York. The facts are given a human perspective through the eyes of seven year-old Rebekkah.

“Rescuing the Children: The Story of the Kindertransport”
Deborah Hodge

Grades: K-8

Nearly ten thousand Jewish children were transported from Nazi Germany to Britain just before the advent of World War II. This is the story of their rescue, told, in many cases, by the children themselves.
“Rhinos and Raspberries”
Lois Lowry
(Tolerance Tales for the Early Grades)

Grades: K - 6

This collection of short tales covers the topics of cooperation, kindness, giving, peacemaking, conflict resolution and others. Each tale has a lesson plan sample in the back of the book.

Pre-reading the lesson plan will provide the Guest Reader with the objectives presented in the tale and topics for discussion. The classroom teacher may choose to extend the lesson in the days following the visit.

Please note:
This book, along with other wonderful resources, is available at no charge to teachers from the Southern Poverty Law Center’s website, Tolerance.org.

“Say Something”
Peggy Moss
* Teachers’ Choice Award 2005
Includes excellent ideas for discussion with resources/websites listed in back

Grades: K – 6 (simple, limited text & picture book format geared toward K - 2 (but situations apply to all ages)

Themes:
• Being a silent bystander to bullying/teasing isn’t enough; you have to “say something.”
• YOU can make a difference.

Pre-reading:
• Look at the title and cover illustration.
• What do you notice?
• Why might the story be called “say something?”
• Why are some people silent bystanders when they see someone being bullied or teased?
• The narrator in this story is a silent bystander until something happens to make her change.
• Listen to find out what made her change.

Post-reading:
• How were some of the children in the story picked on?
• Describe what happened to make the narrator finally say something. What emotions did she feel when she was teased?
• There is an African proverb on the title page:
  “If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping in a room with a mosquito.”
• What does this mean to you?
• How might you change your behavior after hearing this story?
“Sneetches”
Dr. Seuss

Grades: K - 5

Theme:
The Sneetches learn that they shouldn’t judge others by their outward appearances. This is a lesson on prejudice that can be used on many grade levels.

Pre-reading:
• Discuss how animals can be used in a story to teach a lesson about real people.
• Ask the children if they can explain the saying, “You can’t tell a book by its cover.”

Post-reading:
• Why did the Plain-Belly Sneetches want to look like the Star-Belly Sneetches?
• What did the Sneetches finally learn about themselves and each other?
• Why did Sylvester McMonkey McBean laugh as he drove away?
• More teaching suggestions in New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education: Caring Makes a Difference K-4th Grade

“Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon”
Patty Lovell

Grades: K – 3

Themes:
• Be true to yourself
• Be proud of who you are
• When you stand up to a bully, you make the bully look foolish

Vocabulary/concepts: Walk proudly, buck teeth, fumble-fingered

Pre-reading:
• Look at the cover. What do you notice about Molly Lou Melon?
• What does it mean to “stand tall?”
• How would you handle a bully who makes fun of you?
• “Let’s read to see how Molly Lou Melon handles the bully Ronald Durkin.”

Post-reading:
• How was Molly Lou Melon different from her classmates?
• What advice did her grandma give her?
• How did that advice help her deal with the bully Ronald Durkin?
• How and why did Ronald Durkin change?
“Star of Fear, Star of Hope”  
Jo Hoestlandt  
Illustrated by Johanna Kang  
**Grades: K-8**

In the middle of the night, children wonder about the strange comings and goings they witness in their apartment building. Why the mysterious knocks and whispered exchanges? Why do they never see some of their neighbors again? Told with brevity and illustrated with subdued colors, this book encapsulates the uncertainty and tension of the times.

“Stellaluna”  
Janell Cannon  
**Grades: 1 – 4**

**Theme:**  
Friends can be very different from each other, yet share the same feelings and be very much alike in important ways.

**Pre-reading:**  
- Look at the picture on the cover. What do you notice?  
- Listen to find out how Stellaluna, who is a baby fruit bat, landed in the nest of 3 baby birds. Also listen for the ways bats and birds are different from each other.

**Post-reading:**  
- What caused Stellaluna to land in the baby birds’ nest?  
- How was Stellaluna different from Flap, Flitter, and Pip?  
- How were they alike?  
- What lesson can we learn from Stellaluna and the birds?

“Stop Picking On Me: A First Look At Bullying”  
Pat Thomas  
**Grades: K – 3**

**Themes**  
- Definition of a bully  
- Recognizing a bully when we encounter one  
- Why someone becomes a bully

**Pre-Reading:**  
- What does a bully look like?  
- What makes a person a bully?  
- How can we deal with a bully?

**Post-Reading:**  
- How did you know who the bullies were in the story?
• How does it feel to be bullied?
• What are some ways to deal with a bully?
• How can we get help in dealing with a bully?

“How Swimmy”
Leo Lionni

Grades: Pre-K - 1st

Themes:
• Being different
• Handling adversity
• Dealing with “bullies”

Pre-reading:
• Do you know some of the kinds of plants and creatures that live under the water in the ocean?

Post-reading:
• How was Swimmy different from his brothers and sisters?
• What happened to his brothers and sisters?
• How did Swimmy feel?
• What were some of the animals and plants that Swimmy saw under the water?
• Who did Swimmy find that made him feel happy?
• How did the little red fish feel before Swimmy got his idea?
• What was Swimmy’s idea?
• Did Swimmy’s idea help the little red fish?
• What could you do if someone was mean to you or to a friend?

“Tailey Whaley: A Tale of a Whale with a Whale of a Tail”
Charles Boyle

Grades: K – 2

Theme: It can take time to learn how to be friends
Every friend is different & special.
A true friend is a treasure.

Vocabulary: pod, harpoon boat, bully

Pre-reading:
• Read title and show cover. Ask what students they notice.
• This is a story about bullying and friendship. The other little whales bully TW because he’s different. Discuss bullying—why bully; how does it make the victim feel; what can a victim do…
• Is being different a bad thing? Can children who are different from each other become good friends? How do friendships form?
• “Listen to the story of TW to find out what important lessons the bullies learned from TW.”
Post-reading:
- Why do TW & his mom Kailey leave the pod?
- How did TW save the whales that had once made him sad & lonely?
- What do TW’s decisions & actions tell you about him? Examples.
- What lessons did TW teach the whales who had bullied him?

“Teammates”
Peter Golenbock
This is the true story of how one very courageous man broke the racial barrier in the Major Leagues and what it truly means to be “teammates.” As you listen to this story, think how you would have treated Jackie Robinson if you were on the Brooklyn Dodgers team 60 years ago.

Grades: 3 – 6

Themes:
People should not be judged by the color of their skin.
Courageous upstanders can help eliminate prejudice.

Vocabulary/concepts: Racial prejudice, segregation, Negro, Ku Klux Klan

Pre-reading:
- Look at the cover—what can students tell about the 2 men?
- Briefly explain segregation before the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- How would students feel if subjected to racial prejudice?

Post-reading:
- Why did Branch Rickey choose Jackie Robinson to be on his team? (Jackie not only had the talent, but the courage & self-control to not fight back when attacked—future black players depended on him).
- What was life like for Jackie Robinson in the Major League? Why did he put up with it?
- What kind of man was Pee Wee Reese? Although this happened 60 years ago, what lesson can we still learn from Pee Wee Reese’s actions?

“Terezin: Voices from the Holocaust”
Ruth Thompson

Grades: K-8

Ruth Thompson combines meticulously researched anecdotes and facts with drawings, paintings, stories, and quotes from the inmates themselves to craft a compelling and tragically beautiful picture of Terezin. Originally a ghetto, Terezin was transformed to a transit camp for thousands of Jews, many of them artists. The Nazis held this camp up as a public (and false) example of their benevolent relocation efforts of the Jews.
“The Berenstain Bears New Neighbors”  
Stan & Jan Berenstain  

Grades: K – 3  

Themes:  
Pre-judging can lead to prejudice  
Our words and actions affect others  

Pre-reading:  
• Do you feel excited when new neighbors move to your street?  
• Do you hope they are like you, or different?  
• How would you welcome the new neighbors?  

Post-reading:  
• Which Bear was worried about the new neighbors?  
• Why was Papa Bear worried?  
• What did Papa Bear learn at the end of the story?  

More teaching suggestions in the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education:  
Caring Makes a Difference K-4th Grade Curriculum Guide  

“The Brave Little Boat”  
Stephen Ollendorff & Kenneth Sawyer  

Grades: 3 - 5  

Theme: Danish efforts to save the Jews during the Holocaust  

Synopsis: Two young children ask their grandfather to tell them a story about a hero. He begins a discussion about what it was like to live in Denmark during the war and the rise of Adolf Hitler. He explains that the Nazi’s hated the Jews and that his life and the lives of his family and Jewish friends were in mortal danger. He then told his grandchildren he would introduce them to a hero. He took them to the docks and showed them a little wooden boat. This is my hero, he explained. The children were mystified as to how an old wooden boat could be a hero. He told the story of how the boat, against all odds, managed to save many Jewish families by taking them to safety in Sweden. They agreed that the boat is a hero and should be called “The Brave Little Boat”.  

Follow up discussion:  
• Explain the story of how Denmark was one of the few countries that came to the defense of its Jewish population against the Nazi’s and how many Danes risked their lives to save their Jewish friends and neighbors.  
• Can discuss ‘the righteous among the nations’ and upstanders vs. bystanders etc.
“The Bully Blockers Club”
Teresa Bateman
In this story Lotty Raccoon has a problem. That problem is a boy in her class named Grant Grizzly, who is very, very mean to her. Listen to the story to find out how Lotty feels when Grant bullies her and what she does to try to get him to stop.

Grades: K – 3

Theme:
• By standing together and being part of a caring community (club), children can stop bullies from assuming power over their victims.

Pre-reading:
• Look at the cover. Discuss illustration and title.
• What is a bully? How would you feel if someone tried to scare you? What would you do?
• Discuss what the “Bully Blockers Club” might be.

Post-reading:
• What were some of the ways Grant bullied Lotty?
• How did it make her feel?
• What were some things Lotty did to try to get Grant to stop?
• What finally worked? What did Jerome say to give her this idea?
• Is a “Bully Blockers Club” a good idea for your school?
* Reader can leave a copy of the last page “About Bullying” for teacher to extend discussion.

“The Butterfly”
Patricia Polacco
(based on a true story)
A French family hides a young girl in Nazi France during WWII

Grades: 4 – 6

Themes:
• Friendship, courage and hope
• Knowledge of Holocaust (French underground)

Pre-Reading:
• What things do you do to help your friends?
• Would you help a friend if helping put you in danger?
• What does “courage” mean to you?

Post-reading:
• Was the French family brave? Explain your answer.
• How did the author end the story?
• Did the French family “make a difference” in the lives of the Jews?
“The Cat with the Yellow Star: Coming of Age in Terezin”  
Susan Goldman-Rubin & Ela Weissberger  

**Grades: K-8**

Ela Stein was eleven when she was sent to Terezin, and fifteen when the camp was liberated. This chaptered picture book documents the ominous events that lead to her family and so many others being imprisoned, with chapters describing her time in the camp itself. The "Cat" of the title is a role Ela played in a children's opera performed within the camp. An overall focus of this text is the courage of the adults who tried to raise the children of Terezin in as "normal" and as loving a way as possible.

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“The Cats in Krasinski Square”  
Karen Hesse  

This book is based on an article the author read about cats upsetting a Gestapo raid at the Warsaw Train Station during WWII. It tells about Jewish Resistance (1939-1942) fighters who snuck food, weapons and medicine into the Warsaw Ghetto, risking their own lives to save those trapped behind the Ghetto walls.

**Grades: 4 - 8**

**Themes:**  
Jewish Resistance Fighters' bravery during WWII  
Death and suffering of Jewish population in Warsaw Ghetto

**Vocabulary/Concepts:**

- Some prior knowledge of Holocaust and prejudice  
- Rubble, ghetto, Jewish armband, Poland, smuggle, satchels, groats, prey, vanishes, Gestapo, Nazi  
  (See author's and Historical note in back of book)

**Pre-Reading:**

- Locate Poland on a map and explain the Warsaw Ghetto.  
- Who is the young girl shown on the book cover?  
- How can cats help in saving Jewish lives?

**Post-Reading:**

- Who is the young girl?  (The narrator)  
- How were the cats used to help save Ghetto prisoners?  
- What are Jewish Resistance Fighters?  What character traits did they have?  (brave, caring, upstanders)
“The Champion of Children—the Story of Janusz Korczak”
Tomek Bogacki

Grades: 3 – 5

Theme:
How one courageous man dedicated and gave his life to create a better world for suffering children and how his spirit continues to inspire people all over the world.

Vocabulary/concepts:
Holocaust, orphanage, Jewish, ghetto, concentration/extermination camp, Treblinka

Pre-reading:
• Have students share what they know about the Holocaust
• Locate Germany, Russia, Poland, and Warsaw on a map
• Read the title and examine the cover illustration. What do students notice? (Jewish star, expression on faces…)
• Listen to the story to find out what is happening in this cover picture. Also listen to find out what makes Janusz Korczak a hero. He wanted to be king when he was a little Boy–what did he become?

Post-reading:
• Why did Janusz want to be king when he was a little boy?
• What was life like for the children in Korczak’s orphanage before WWII? What did Korczak teach the children? How did he run the orphanage compared to the schools he attended as a boy?
• How life change for Korczak and the orphans did after the Nazis took control in 1939?
• What happened to Korczak and the children in 1942?
• Why does Janusz Korczak continue to be an inspiring hero for us today?
• What are some of his character traits that you hope to possess?

“The Children We Remember”
Chana Byers Abells

Story told with photos from Yad Vashem Archives and very few words of explanation–many details will need to be filled in. Includes explicit photo of child being shot.

Grades: 3 – 5

Themes:
• Death and loss, along with courage and endurance
• Children who lived and died during the Holocaust were much like children of today–until the Nazis came

Vocabulary: Synagogues, Nazis, Jews, Holocaust (not in text)

Pre-reading:
• Discuss what children already know about the Holocaust
• Locate Europe (Germany, Poland) on map
• Look at title and examine cover photo in detail
Note: Students need to pay close attention to the photos because this story is a photo essay.

**Post-reading:**
- What do the photos tell us about the children’s lives before the Nazis and then when the Nazis took control?
- How are the Jewish children pictured in this book like you?
- How are they different?
- Why must we never forget these children?

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**“The Christmas Menorahs: How a Town Fought Hate”**  
*Janice Cohn, DSW*

The people of Billings, Montana joined together to fight hate crimes against a Jewish family. Cohn’s story is based on real events that took place in 1993 and tell how Billings was inspired to take action by stories of the Danish people helping their Jewish neighbors during World War II.

(See complete lesson plan inside the book cover)

**Grades: 1 – 6**

**Theme:**
Hate crimes, prejudice, taking a stand.

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**“The Colors of Us”**  
*Karen Katz*

Big Book with bold, colorful illustrations

**Grades: Pre-K – 2**

**Theme:**
Celebration of diversity:  
We’re all different shades of brown, and each shade is a beautiful color.  
(Author uses “delicious food” similes & metaphors to describe skin tones—cinnamon, pizza crust, honey…)

**Pre-reading:**
- Read title and ask students to comment on cover illustration—
- What do they see?
- What do they think book will be about?
- Talk about the meaning of “shade” in this context.
- Using a color like blue or green, you may show examples of shades with crayons or papers or sample paint color strips.
- “The narrator of the story is 7 year old Lena.
- Lena & her mom take a walk where they meet many different people.
- Listen to the story to find out what Lena learned on her walk.”
Post-reading:
• What did Lena notice about each person she met on the walk with her mom?
• How did she describe each person’s skin color?
• What did Lena do after her friends left?
• Lena’s mom is an artist.
• What did she teach Lena, so Lena could make each skin shade? (What 4 colors do you need to mix to make any shade of brown?—if you have time & paints, you can demonstrate.)
• Students compare their own skin shade to something good to eat.
• What have you learned from this story?

“The Crayon Box that Talked”  
Shane DeRolf
The author uses crayons to explain how all the different colors create a beautiful picture.

Grades: Pre-K - 1 (See note below)

Theme:  
Everyone is unique, but can work together and get along.

Pre-Reading:
• Discuss the word "unique"
• Who likes to color? What is your favorite color?
• Do you use more than one color crayon when you draw a picture? Why?

Post-Reading:
• What was the story about?
• Why did the crayons complain about each other?
• How did the little girl help the crayons get along and work together?
• What important lesson did the crayons learn?

Note: (For 2nd - 3rd grades, using each color crayon to represent different children would further develop this message).
• e.g. Red--a child wearing glasses
• Blue--a child with a different skin color
• White--a child who is handicapped
“The Featherbed Journey”
Paula Kurzband Feder
Illustrated by Stacey Schuett

Grades: K-8

The author, whose father came from Poland, creates a composite story using many stories related by her mother. The narrative describes how non-Jews helped Jewish families to escape and hide and survive. A simple and non-graphic book for younger readers.

“The Flag with Fifty-Six Stars: A Gift from the Survivors of Mauthausen”
Susan Goldman Rubin
Illustrations by Bill Farnsworth

Grades: K-8

When the American troops liberated the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria, survivors presented the commander with an American flag they had secretly constructed from scraps of cloth found in the camp. The detainees over-estimated the number of stars and added an extra row, hence the book's title. The flag serves as a symbol of their hope, perseverance, gratitude, and optimism. Bill Farnsworth's somber, full-page paintings are accompanied by a detailed and fascinating text. The book provides information about why the camp was built (to mine granite) and why its detainees were chosen. Wonderful biographical anecdotes about the prisoners enslaved there make this title profoundly human and touching. The atrocities of the camp are understated, making this an appropriate book for younger students being introduced to the Holocaust. Wonderful afterword and references, as well as a photograph of the actual flag, conclude the book.

“The Giving Tree”
Shel Silverstein

Grades: 2 - adult

Theme:
A parable of the gift of giving, the joy and happiness the tree feels as it makes the boy happy, and accepts the boy’s capacity to love in return (unconditional love and devotion).

Pre-reading:
• Do you enjoy getting gifts? Why?
• Do you like to give gifts to your family and friends?
• How does gift-giving make you feel? (Discuss)

Post-reading:
• What did the tree give to the boy?
• Did the “gifts” make the tree happy or sad? Explain your answer.
“The Grand Mosque of Paris”
Karen Gray Ruelle and Deborah Durland DeSaix

This book tells the little known story of how Muslims rescued Jews during the Holocaust. Filled with facts and anecdotes, it doesn't read so much as a story as it does an historical account of how the rector of the Mosque, working with fellow Muslims as well as members of the French Resistance, hid and protected Jews from the Vichy and Nazis and helped guide many to eventual safety.

“The Harmonica”
Tony Johnston
Illustrated by Ron Mazellan

Grades: K-8

"I played the harmonica while my parents danced. In our dream we believed the world to be good. Until there in the heart of Poland, Nazi soldiers found us." So began the nightmare lived by Henryk Rosmaryn. His family's love of music was all that saved him from certain death in Dyhernfurth concentration camp, where he was forced to play Schubert for the Nazi commandant. The short, simple text is rich with similes and metaphors, and the illustrations are lush and sculpturesque. What this book lacks in historical details and overall narrative are more than made up for by the lyrical language and beautiful yet haunting artwork.

“The Lily Cupboard: A Story of the Holocaust“
Shulamith Levey Oppenheim
Illustrated by Ronald Himler

Grades: K-8

A simple and beautiful story of a young Jewish girl sent to live with a Gentile family when the Nazis invade the Netherlands. The simple words, easy to understand story line, and traditional illustrations make this the perfect title for younger readers.

“The Man in the Red Bandanna”
Honor Crowther Fagan

When Welles Crowther was a young boy, his father gave him a red bandanna, which he always carried with him. On September 11, 2001, Welles Remy Crowther saved numerous people from the upper floors of the World Trade Center South Tower. "The Man in the Red Bandanna" recounts and celebrates his heroism on that day.

Grades 5 – 12
“The New Bear on the Block”  
Staci J. Schwartz, MD  
A complete lesson plan is inside the book.

**Grades: K – 3**

**Goal: Teaching Tolerance**  
*The New Bear On The Block offers a teaching message of accepting others, the not making premature judgments about people, and an appreciation of diversity.*

The book is about the adventures of a young bear who moves into a small town in the woods. Through a series of mishaps that occur as a result of his poor vision when his glasses are accidentally broken, the bear’s new neighbors decide to ostracize him for his perceived rude behavior. A wise turtle who happens to be an optician and fixes the bear’s glasses, finds him to be a delightful new friend and must correct the false perceptions of his fellow neighbors. In doing so, the turtle teaches them about making snap judgment of others based on first impressions and incomplete facts.

**Theme:**  
Explains to younger children that pre-judging someone before you really get to know them is unfair. The message is about accepting others.

**Pre-reading:**
- Look at the book’s cover.  
- What happened to the bear?  
- How would you describe the expression on his face?

**Vocabulary** – harmony “jump to conclusions”.  
Let’s read to see what happened.

**Post-reading:**
- What was the rabbit’s, the pig’s, the duck’s and the mouse’s first impression of their new neighbors?  
- Why did they feel that way?  
- Who helped the bear solve his problem?  
- How did the turtle help?  
- What did the animals learn about their new neighbor?

**Activity:**

**Ask the question:**
- What is something someone might think about you just from looking at you? Model the question eg: Just because I am a girl, people think that I like the color pink.  
- Have students make a paper plate puppet self portrait.  
- Craft: Paper Plate Puppet (supplies: paper plates, crayons, popsicle stick or tongue depressor for holding)  
- Have students talk about the differences and similarities (diversity). How are they different or similar?
“The Number on My Grandfather’s Arm”  
David Adler

Very simple language and photographs but mature subject matter.  
A brief, simplified explanation of the Holocaust, as told by a survivor grandfather to  
his young granddaughter in response to her question about the number on his arm.

**Grades: 3 – middle school**

**Themes:**
- Hatred, prejudice, and talk can lead to the most terrible crimes
- Survivors shouldn’t be ashamed; Nazis are the criminals

**Vocabulary/Concepts:**
Holocaust (not in story), Jews, concentration camp, Europe, Poland, Adolf Hitler, Auschwitz, Nazis, synagogue,

**Pre-reading:**
- Discuss what students already know about Holocaust
- Locate Europe and Poland on map
- Read title and examine cover photo. Who is telling the story? What do you think it’s about?

**Post-reading:**
- How did Hitler and the Nazis go about their plan to murder all the Jews in Europe?
- Why did the grandfather hide the number on his arm?
- What did the granddaughter do and say to make her grandfather feel better?
- Give examples of how the photographs help you understand the story
- What might have prevented Hitler and the Nazis from murdering 6 million Jewish people?

“**The Peace Book”**  
Todd Parr

**Grades: Pre K - 2**

**Theme:**
Discuss the word "peace" (feeling calm, not fighting, accepting others, showing respect and kindness to others).

**Pre-Reading:**
- What makes you feel peaceful?
- What do you do to show someone you like them or how do you know when someone likes you?

**Post-Reading:**
- How can you help others?
- When you are kind and helpful to others, do you feel good about yourself (like yourself) more?
- Will you try to make your world more peaceful?
- What can you do starting today?
“The Secret of the Village Fool”  
Rebecca Upjohn

Meet the Zeiger brothers, Michael and Shelley, who were never allowed to tease or ridicule Anton Suchinski as many others in the village of Zborow did in the early 1940s. Their mother would go further by inviting Anton to the Zeiger home for dinner, asking him to join them on their front porch in the evening, and generally befriending Anton when others would not. Eventually, Anton volunteered to hide the Zeiger family from the Nazis and enabled their survival. Putting himself at risk, he became their rescuer. Decades later, when Anton was ill and needed help, the Zeiger brothers returned the favor. They cared for him, ensured his comfort as he aged, and successfully worked to have him honored as “Righteous among the Nations” at Yad Vashem, Israel’s Holocaust memorial.

Grades: 2 - 8

“The Stranger and the Red Rooster”  
Victor Villaasenor

This story is also adapted into Spanish. The author heard this story from his father when he was a young boy in San Diego County, CA.

Grades: 2 - 5

Theme:  
Do not judge people by their appearance.

Pre-reading:
- What is a stranger? How does a stranger look?
- The word "barrio" is a Spanish word.
- Does anyone know what it means in English? [town]
- The book cover shows a big, red rooster.
- What part could a rooster play in this story?

Post-reading:
- How do the townspeople react when they first see the stranger?
- Why are they afraid of him?
- What comical event changed the way the townspeople thought of the stranger?
- How did that event "break the ice?"
- How did the parents & children react to the stranger at the end of the story?
- Why did Rudy's horrible scar seem to "disappear"?
- What lesson did the children of that barrio learn?
“The Terrible Things: An Allegory of the Holocaust”
Eve Bunting
This is probably the most widely used picture book to introduce children to the Holocaust

Grades: 3 - middle school

Theme:
• Don’t be a “bystander” - speak up for what is right and help your friends.

Pre-reading:
• Discuss bullies and how you would act if someone bullies you or your friend.
• Explain the word “bystander” and have 3 children role-play (one bully, one friend and a “bystander”)
• Ask: How does it make you feel when your friend is bullied and you do nothing?
• What could you do to help your friend?
• Why should you help?

Post-reading:
What could the animals do differently if the “Terrible Things” came again? (You could use the word “upstander” for “stand up for what is right”).

“The Trees of the Dancing Goats”
Patricia Polacco
(A great Hannukah/Christmas Story)
Teaching Activities available
Knowledge of Hannukah/Christmas traditions necessary
Authentic Illustrations

Grades: 3 – 5

Themes:
• Respect for different beliefs
• Jewish/Christian joy in sharing family traditions and friendship

Pre-Reading:
• What celebrations do you observe with your families?
• How do you prepare for these celebrations?
• Tell children that this story is about friends who celebrate the holidays in different ways.

Post-Reading:
• What customs celebrate Hannukah? What customs celebrate Christmas? or Kwanza?
• How did Trisha’s family work together to help their neighbors? How can you help friends?
“The Yellow Star: The Legend of King Christian X of Denmark”
Carmen Agra Deedy
Illustrated by Henri Sorensen

Grades: K-8

When Denmark is occupied by the Nazis, King Christian X is allowed to remain in office. He faithfully rides, unguarded, through the streets of Copenhagen each day, greeting his subjects. When this popular king learns that the Nazis plan to force Danish Jews to wear stars, the king enlists his tailor to sew a Star of David on his own royal tunic. The following day the king, who is not Jewish, proudly wears the star as he takes his morning ride. His subjects, inspired by this act of bravery and resistance, follow his example. Unfortunately, explains the author at the book’s end, the story did not, in fact, happen in this way. But, she asks, what if it had? What if the king had summoned the courage to do this? And what if everyone in the world, when facing unfairness and prejudice, were brave enough to stand up for what is right? While the story is fiction, what is, indeed, fact is that the Danes were able to save most of their country’s Jewish population by smuggling them to safety in Sweden.

“Tikvah Means Hope”
Patricia Polacco
A story about the Oakland, CA firestorm disaster around 1993-1994. A family builds their Sukkah with help from two non-Jewish neighbors. Beautiful illustrations

Grades: 3 – 5

Themes:
• Community spirit
• “Jewish Thanksgiving”
• Holiday, courage and hope, loss of property, wildlife and family pets.

Pre-Reading:
• Can you think of a recent natural disaster (flood, hurricane, forest fire) where neighbors worked together to help each other?

Post-Reading:
• What holiday did you learn about in this story?
• How did the friends help their Jewish neighbors?
• What lessons did you learn from this story?
• Why did “Tikvah” mean “hope”?
“We Can Get Along: A Child's Book of Choices”  
Lauren M. Payne  
Note: This short book does not tell a story, but introduces "feelings", discusses making friends, individual differences & making good choices.

Grades: K - 3

Theme:  
Teaches social skills to young children, focusing on kindness, respect, tolerance & responsibility; promotes "peaceful behaviors" & positive conflict resolution.

Pre-reading:  
- What are feelings?  

Post-reading:  
- What did you learn today about making good choices?  
- Allow time for individual children to share experiences, tell how they felt & discuss the choices they made at that time.  
- Would you act differently the next time that [event] happens?  
- What would you do?  
- This book can be followed-up with a drawing art project  
  ["Here I Am Helping a Friend", or "I'm Asking an Adult For Help"]  
- Children could also role-play parts of the book  
  [e.g. acting friendly to a new classmate]

“What I Like About Me!”  
Allia Zobel Nolan  
Written in rhyme and has flaps, pull-tabs and touch-and-feel pages – Complete lesson plan is inside the book.

Grades: Pre-school – 3

Theme: This book shows children how being different is what makes them special.

“What White Wash”  
Ntozake Shange  
Illustrated Michael Sporn  

Grades: 3 and up

Theme:  
A street gang attacks a young black girl and her brother, spray painting them with white paint. The girl is traumatized and stays home from school despite her grandmother’s encouragement. Her older brother feels guilty for not defending his younger sister. After overwhelming media coverage of the incident, her classmates voice their concerns and decide to show support by accompanying her to school. This story is based on a true event in New York 1992.
Vocabulary: Respect, bully

Goals: Racism
- Understanding the role of diversity and the importance of shared values on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, language and gender.
- Confronting the alienation of one group from another and the efforts to impose beliefs and customs on others.
- Understanding name calling, prejudice, and discrimination as negative behaviors.

Pre-Reading:
- Some neighborhoods have gangs that bother or attack people because of their race, religion, skin color or beliefs.
- Tell students that the author, Mrs. Shang, is from Philadelphia.
- In this story, a white gang doesn’t respect black people.
- The white gang members are Bullies.

Post reading:
- What did Grandma mean when she told Helene-Angel that she had to be strong?
- How did Helene-Angel’s friends help her?
- What did friend Raphael say? Discuss “upstander.”
- Discuss the story: perceptions of Helene Angel and her classmates.
- Describe what happens when the white gang stops Helene Angel and her brother. Discuss why hate crimes exist.
- Do you think racism and other prejudices are present in school or community? Allow for personal experiences.
- Do students think that ethnic relations will improve in the future?

Activities:
- Role-play or write responses to situations involving racism or prejudice using respectful language to take a stand against prejudice. Eg: One of your friends tells a joke insulting a group of people, should you laugh? What should you do and how?
- Paper Plate Portrait - supplies (paper plate, markers)
  Explain that students will be reflecting on the difference between what others might assume about them and how they truly are on the inside. Students will draw their faces on the outside or “bump” of the plate. They will then write a few words or phrases that they think someone might assume about them. On the inside or “crater” of the plate, students color in a heart and write words or phrases that describe their character/personality—who they really are.

Discussion questions:
- What did students discover?
- Were they surprised by anything?
- Were any connections made between plates?
- How did this activity help understand the meaning of prejudice?
“WINGS”
Christopher Myers
Note: Wings is a simple allegory of few words and illustrated with dramatic cut-paper collages.
The name of Icarus comes from Greek mythology—Icarus flew too close to the sun, so the wax that held his artificial wings on melted, and he fell into the sea and drowned.

Grades: K – 3
Themes:
• Be proud of who you are and what makes you unique.
• Our differences make us amazing and beautiful.
• Don’t be a bystander. Speak up for what you know is right.
Pre-reading:
• What would you do if kids at school were making fun of someone because he was different in some way?
• What is something that makes you unique or different? How does being different make you feel?
• Listen to see who is telling the story and to find out what happens to Icarus Jackson.”
Post-reading:
• Who is telling the story? Why doesn’t she defend Icarus at first?
• How do the kids, teacher, and policeman make Icarus feel? What makes him smile?
• Why the story is called “Wings”?
• What can you do to help your classmates “find their wings and soar?”

“Words Are Not for Hurting”
“Las Palabras No Son Para Lastimar”
Elizabeth Verdick
Book is in English and Spanish; activities and discussion starters in back of book.

Grades: Pre-K – 1
Themes:
• Think before you speak, so you don’t say something mean or hurtful.
• It’s important to say “I’m sorry” when you hurt someone.
Pre-reading:
• How can words hurt?
• How do you feel when someone says something mean to you?
• What can you do?
• What can you do when your words hurt someone?
Post-reading:
• What did you learn about words from this story?
• What are some helpful words?
• Some hurtful words?
• What 2 words can make a big difference? Why?