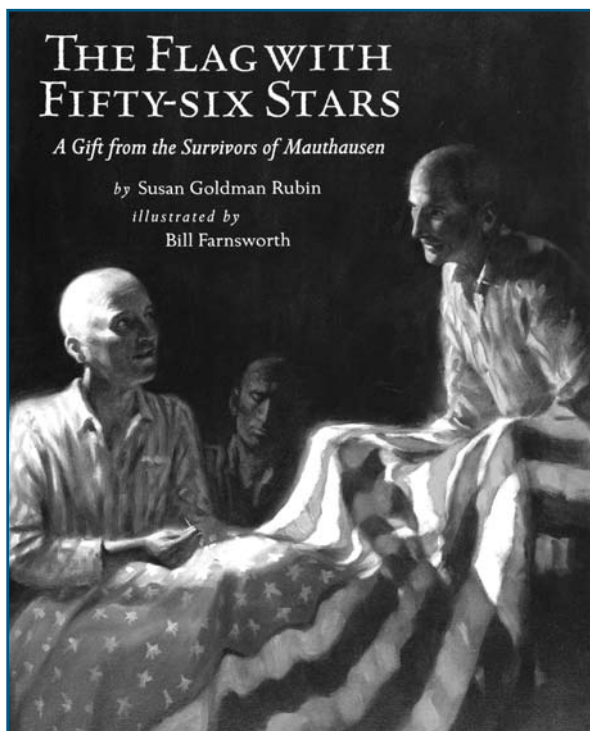


EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



The Flag with Fifty-six Stars *A Gift from the Survivors of Mauthausen*

by Susan Goldman Rubin

illustrated in full color by Bill Farnsworth

8½ x 11 • Reinforced Hardcover

ISBN 0-8234-1653-4 • \$16.95

40 pages • Ages 6–10

ABOUT THE BOOK

On May 6, 1945, when members of the 11th Armored Division of the U.S. Army marched into Mauthausen concentration camp, they were presented with an extraordinary gift. A group of prisoners had surreptitiously pieced together a U.S. flag with an extra row of stars. This inspiring account of the liberation of one of the Third Reich's most infamous camps is a tribute to the humanity and hope preserved by the survivors.

ABOUT THE GUIDE

This educator's guide is designed to incorporate *The Flag with Fifty-six Stars* into an already established curriculum about the Holocaust. It can also be used as a supplemental text to a discussion about concentration camps. Educators may choose to follow the lesson plan exactly, or they may choose to include activities that tie in closely with their planned curriculum.



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MAUTHAUSEN'S PLACE IN HISTORY

Mauthausen was set high on the hills above the Danube River, near where Adolf Hitler grew up in Linz, Austria. The area had once been popular with hikers, but was chosen for its granite quarries. The quarries provided granite to build streets and buildings. Mauthausen was known for its harsh labor conditions. The 186 steps of the *Todessteige*, or Stairs of Death, were the nightmare of many poorly fed and physically weakened prisoners, who were required to carry blocks of granite up the stairs. Approximately 199,404 people passed through Mauthausen; 119,000 died, of whom 38,112 were Jews. Many of the buildings still stand today. The Mauthausen Memorial includes a museum, a library, and archives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The prisoners at Mauthausen mined granite. What would the granite be used for in a war?
2. Why did Heinrich Himmler want to keep Mauthausen a secret from the world?
3. What kind of work did the prisoners do in the labor camps?
4. Mauthausen was considered a concentration camp. What is the difference between a ghetto, a labor camp, an extermination camp, and a concentration camp?
5. When the Mauthausen prisoners first saw warplanes over their camp, how did they feel?
6. What were the living conditions like at Mauthausen?
7. How did the prisoners get information about the war?
8. Why might the prisoners have wanted to create an American flag? How did the prisoners get materials to create the flag with fifty-six stars?
9. What did Himmler plan to do before the Allies arrived at Mauthausen?
10. How did the International Red Cross intervene on behalf of the prisoners?
11. What did the prisoners do when they first saw Americans in the camp? How did they react? Why didn't they give the troops the flag with fifty-six stars?

12. When Colonel Richard Seibel arrived in Mauthausen, how did he react? Why did the prisoners give him the flag with fifty-six stars?
13. What did the flag with fifty-six stars symbolize to Colonel Seibel? To the prisoners? To Simon Wiesenthal? What does it symbolize to you?

VOCABULARY

This is a small team (pair) activity. Many of the words, terms, and places related to World War II and the Holocaust will not be known to many students at this age level. A vocabulary list could be distributed to each team. Homework or class time could be used for each student to look up meanings for each term. The meanings would be shared by each team with the class and recorded. The teacher could then circulate a study sheet with all the terms and assess the students' vocabulary skills with a term-and-definition–matching test. Here is a sample list of terms.

Allies	Gypsies
Anti-Semitism	Holocaust
Aryan	Kapos
Auschwitz-Birkenau	Nazi
Axis	Pogrom
Bergen-Belsen	SS (<i>Schutzstaffel</i>)
Final Solution	Swastika
Genocide	Third Reich
Gestapo	Underground
Ghettos	Yellow star

IDENTIFICATIONS

Some of the people mentioned in *The Flag with Fifty-six Stars* are historical figures. Provide students with this list; they should research a brief description of the individual, providing simple information such as their role in the story and their nationality. Information can be found throughout this book, as well as in reference books in the library or on the Internet. Students should be supervised during research outside of this book, as they may come across graphic images and text.

Heinrich Himmler (p. 7)

Adolf Hitler (p. 7)

Mike Jacobs (p. 12)

Simon Wiesenthal (p. 15)

Jack H. Taylor (p. 16)

Přem Dobíáš (p. 19)

Louis Haefliger (p. 22)

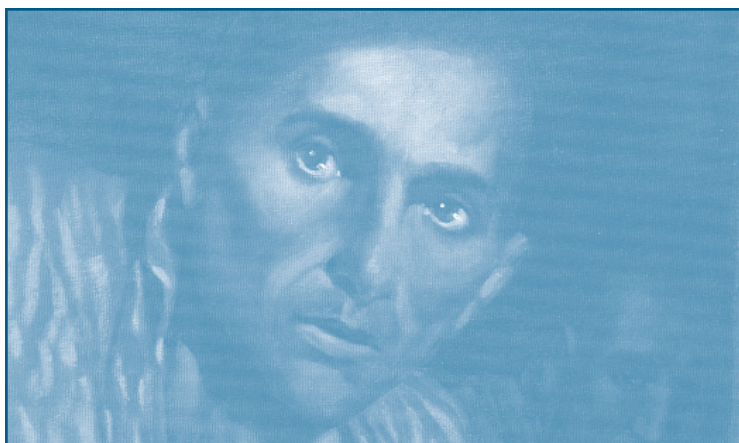
Al Kosiek (p. 22)

Louis Biagioni (p. 26)

Lionel Romney (p. 26)

Richard R. Seibel (p. 26)

SPECIAL NOTE: *Simon Wiesenthal, who survived Mauthausen, agreed to the use of his name for the Simon Wiesenthal Center—Museum of Tolerance founded by Rabbi Marvin Hier in Los Angeles, California. Simon Wiesenthal is illustrated on page 17.*



RESEARCH PROJECT

This is another team project with teams of more than two students. The purpose of the research project is to give students more knowledge of the Holocaust. Here, multiple forms of assistance should be made available to the students—a trip to the library, advice from the librarian. If a class does take a trip to the library, the teacher should be present to answer questions and make inquiries about each group's progress.

Students should form mixed-level teams. They should choose a research topic and be instructed on how to locate materials for their projects. Students could create a poster together to use as part of a presentation of their findings to the class. A list of possible research topics would be provided.

- Research the life story of one of the following people: Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Oskar Schindler, Winston Churchill, Douglas MacArthur, Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, Elie Wiesel, Simon Wiesenthal, Irene Gut Opdyke, Janusz Korczak.
- Create a world map and mark major cities: Amsterdam, Berlin, Paris, London, Washington, D.C., Honolulu, Tokyo, Rome, St. Petersburg, Warsaw, Vienna, New York, etc.
- Create a European map and mark major German concentration camps: Mauthausen, Buchenwald, Bergen-Belsen, Treblinka, Dachau, Auschwitz, Westerbork, etc.
- Create a grid of the members of the Axis powers and the Allies, listing the countries and their wartime leaders.
- Create a time line with some of the major events of the war.
- Find a local stadium with a large number of steps—perhaps the high school's football field. Count the steps and have your students walk up 186 steps, just as the prisoners of Mauthausen did.

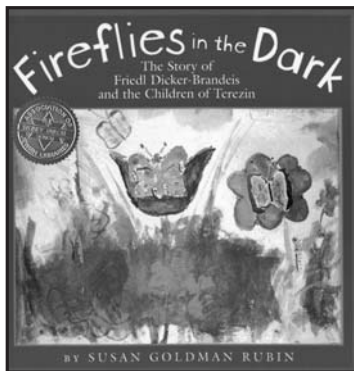
NOTE: *The Mauthausen flag—The Flag with Fifty-six Stars—is on permanent exhibition at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles, California.*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Susan Goldman Rubin grew up in the Bronx, New York, and dreamed of becoming an artist and illustrating children's books. She began writing to give herself something to illustrate and in recent years has turned to nonfiction. She lives in Malibu, California. This book grew out of her research experience with Adaire J. Klein, Director of Library and Archival Services for the Simon Wiesenthal Center–Museum of Tolerance, Los Angeles, California.

OTHER TITLES BY SUSAN GOLDMAN RUBIN:

Fireflies in the Dark: The Story of Friedl Dicker-Brandeis and the Children of Terezin



Ages 8–12 • 48 pages

Hardcover ISBN:

0-8234-1461-2 • \$18.95

Paperback ISBN:

0-8234-1681-X • \$8.95

Bauhaus-trained Friedl Dicker-Brandeis utilized art as a tool of survival for children imprisoned with her in the

Terezin concentration camp.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Bill Farnsworth has illustrated numerous books for children, most notably *A Hero and the Holocaust: The Story of Janusz Korczak and His Children*. As a 1980 graduate of the Ringling School of Art and Design, he has worked creating paintings for magazines, advertisements, children's books, and fine art commissions of portraits and landscapes. He lives in Florida.

RELATED BOOKS

A Hero and the Holocaust: The Story of Janusz Korczak and His Children

by David A. Adler

illustrated by Bill Farnsworth

Hardcover ISBN: 0-8234-1548-1 • \$16.95

Author, teacher, doctor, and director of a Jewish orphanage in Warsaw, Poland, Janusz Korczak went to Treblinka with the children under his care.

Hilde and Eli: Children of the Holocaust

by David A. Adler

illustrated by Karen Ritz

Hardcover ISBN: 0-8234-1091-9 • \$16.95

The story of two young victims of the Holocaust, eighteen-year-old Hilde Rosenzweig and nine-year-old Eli Lax. Neither has a particular claim on public memory—Hilde's brother escaped from Germany to England in 1940, while three of Eli's sisters survived various concentration camps; these siblings told Hilde's and Eli's stories to Adler.

Smoke and Ashes: The Story of the Holocaust

by Barbara Rogasky

illustrated with photographs and maps

Hardcover ISBN: 0-8234-1612-7 • \$27.50

Paperback ISBN: 0-8234-1677-1 • \$14.95

This edition has been extensively revised, updated, and expanded based on materials available since the first edition was published in 1988. Rogasky presents information about the causes, ghettos, concentration and death camps, non-Jewish victims, resistance, “rescuers,” fate of the most notorious of the Nazis, and anti-Semitism and hate groups today. The text incorporates numerous quotations and photographs that support and extend the information.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT

THE MUSEUM OF TOLERANCE

The Museum of Tolerance is a high-tech, hands-on experiential museum that focuses on two central themes through unique interactive exhibits: the dynamics of racism and prejudice in America and the history of the Holocaust—the ultimate example of man's inhumanity to man. The museum, the educational arm of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, was founded to challenge visitors to confront bigotry and racism, and to understand the Holocaust in both historic and contemporary contexts.

VISIT THE MUSEUM OF TOLERANCE

<http://teachers.museumoftolerance.com>

Museum of Tolerance

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9786 West Pico Blvd.

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