

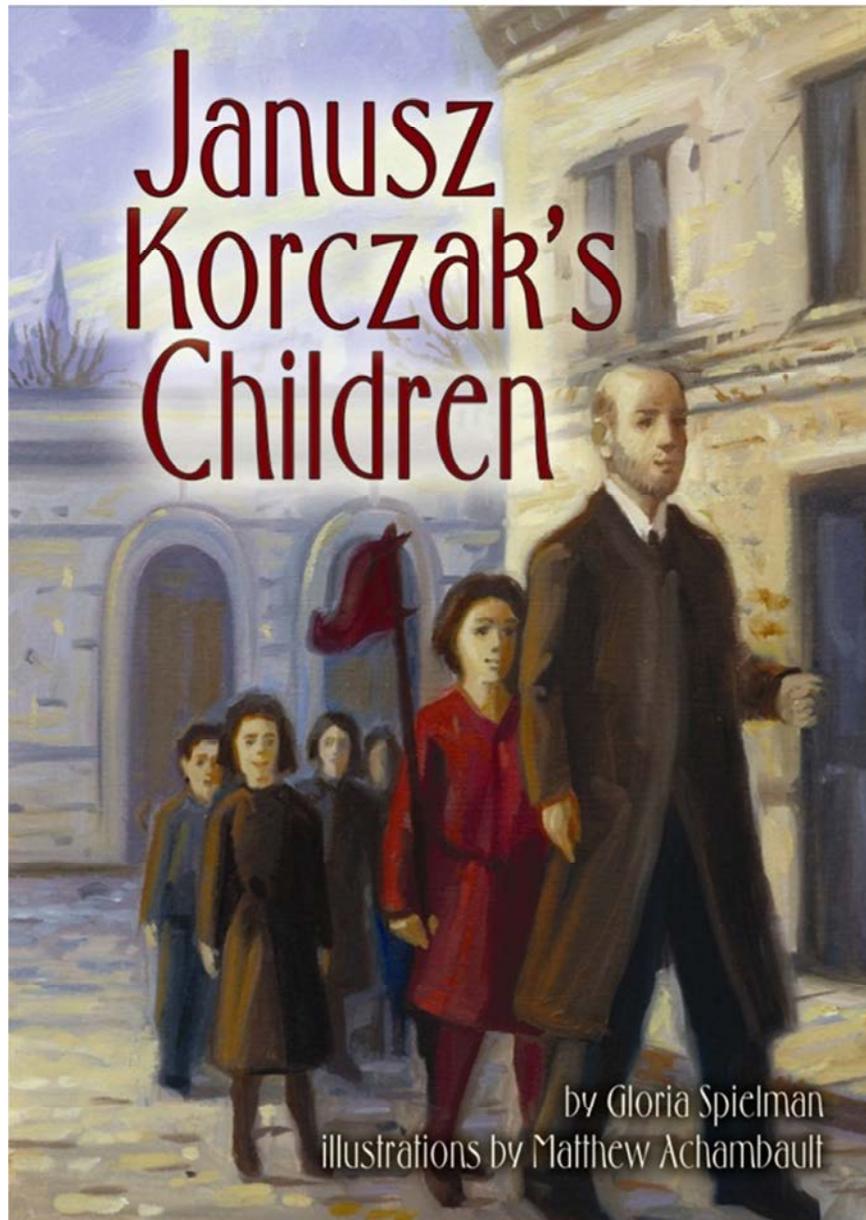
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Resources for Teachers and Students



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Why Teach About the Holocaust?

The Holocaust was the systematic and deliberate murder of groups, primarily Jews, disliked by the Nazis in Europe between the years 1933-1945. Hitler and his followers convinced Germany and its allies that the murder of innocent people was necessary to create a New World Order.

The study of the Holocaust provides one of the most effective tools to discuss prejudice and cultivate appreciation of diversity. A structured study of the Holocaust provides lessons for an investigation of basic morals and human behavior. Within classroom investigation of the Holocaust, students can realize that the Holocaust was personal, not just an historical event, and they can recognize the importance of democratic values and personal freedoms, as well as the responsibilities of citizenship in the world.

How to Use This Guide

As younger students learn about the Holocaust, it can be difficult for them to understand how this level of human tragedy occurred. This book demonstrates how people still showed goodness in a terrible situation, and how the challenges in a person's life do not have to influence them negatively. The remarkable life and work of Janusz Korczak is inspirational, and is an interesting biographical addition to other historical figures often studied in the context of World War II.

Additionally, the book can be used with upper grades as supplemental material when teaching a unit about the Holocaust. Older students can benefit from thinking critically about the way a historically inspired story is presented. Students can read actively and deeply, making inferences and interpretations based on the text and visuals (and their interplay) in a picture book.

About the Book

About the Author



Gloria Spielman was born in London. She spent much of her childhood reading stories and writing her own. She has a Bachelor's degree in Hebrew and Jewish History and a Master's degree in Linguistics. She is the author of *Marcel Marceau: Master of Mime* (Kar-Ben). She lives in Israel with her five children, her American husband, David, and many books.

About the Illustrator

Matthew Archambault graduated from the School of Visual Arts in New York City, with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, where he continues to teach. He has illustrated hundreds of book covers with an emphasis on historic books for young people. He works in oil on illustration board.

Context

Janusz Korczak was born in 1878, so this book, a biography, spans a large amount of time, including World War I and World War II. During this time, Poland experienced unrest and violence. After World War I, as the Nazi regime rose to power and invaded Poland in 1939, the livelihoods and lives of Jewish people were increasingly endangered, and eventually the Nazi plan for the complete extermination of the Jewish people was put into action.

Vocabulary and Allusions

pupil – a student

clod – unkind word meaning stupid person

furious – very, very angry

antics – playful or funny actions

republic – a form of government where people have a say in what happens

salary – money earned by doing a job

dictate – to say something aloud so someone else can write it down

Adolf Hitler – leader of the Nazi regime

Nazi Party – ruling party of Germany that waged war with England, France, Poland, Belgium, and the United States. They believed that all Jewish people and others they disliked should be killed.

Warsaw Ghetto – area of the city of Warsaw in Poland where all Jewish people were forced to live by the Nazis. The conditions were very bad.

Concentration camps – military prisons built by the Nazis with the purpose to enslave or kill their prisoners, mostly Jewish people who lived in Europe.

Questions:

For before reading:

1. What is empathy?
2. How do you think facing challenges can change a person?
3. Why would someone sacrifice him or herself for someone else?
4. What is bravery?

For reading together:

1. Why couldn't Henryk play with the other children?
2. What didn't Henryk understand about grown-ups?
3. As Henryk grew older, how did his parents treat him?
4. Why did Henryk become a doctor?
5. What did Henryk start writing about? What did people think of his writing?
6. Describe the orphanage that Dr. Korczak helped create.
7. What are some ways that Dr. Korczak helped children?
8. How did the Nazis treat the Jewish people? What was life like in the ghetto?
9. What offer does Dr. Korczak refuse?

For post-reading discussion:

1. What happened to Dr. Korczak and the children?
2. Why do you think Dr. Korczak refuses to escape?
3. Is Dr. Korczak a hero?

Suggested activities:

Research Poland:

What are the culture, history and people of Poland like? Research Poland to learn more about it and present your findings to the class.

Children's Authors:

Janusz Korczak was an author of books that children loved to read. Research an author of one of your favorite books. Make a poster telling about the author and their books.

Create a Play:

As a class, write a play of a "children's republic" trial mentioned in the story. What would the children say to Dr. Korczak? What punishment might they give him?

Imagine a Monument:

A memorial statue of Dr. Korczak and his children is on display at Yad Vashem. Go online and view a picture of it. Then, draw your own memorial. How would you design a memorial to honor the memories of these real people?

Be Inspired by King Matt:

Dr. Korczak wrote a novel called *King Matt the First*, about a boy who solves problems in the world. Draw a picture that shows a problem and how you would solve it.