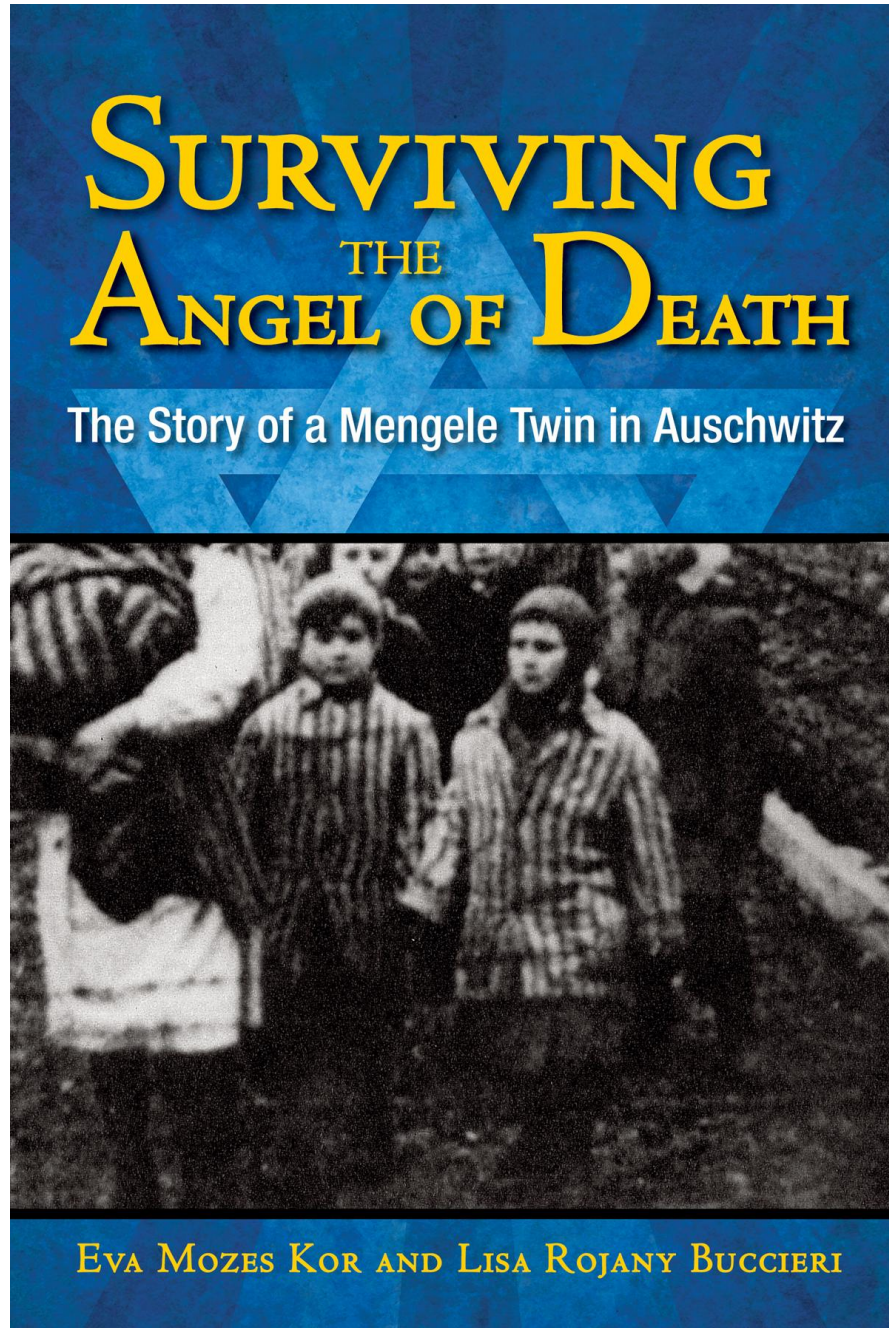


A Teacher's Guide to
SURVIVING THE ANGEL OF DEATH
THE STORY OF A MENGELE TWIN IN AUSCHWITZ
Written By Eva Mozes Kor and Lisa Rojany Buccieri



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PRAISE FOR SURVIVING THE ANGEL OF DEATH

“Eva Mozes Kor has written a moving and vivid account of an extraordinary and horrific experience. It is an important document showing the strength of the human spirit and the capacity of forgive.”

~*Archbishop Desmond Tutu*

“I found the book to be compelling reading and in fact read it at one sitting. The strength of *Surviving the Angel of Death* lies in its simple style and the clear picture of life before the Holocaust and after liberation, which adds a very important dimension to the testimony. This remarkable story is an important entry point in the teaching of Holocaust History and the many issues which emerge from it, not least of all the triumph of the human spirit.”

~*Richard Freedman, National Director, South African Holocaust Foundation*

“With all this biographical information, besides just the time at Auschwitz, the reader really gets to know and relate to Eva and Miriam. This will help children put a face on the Holocaust, bringing their history lessons to their hearts as well as their minds.”

~*Jen Fitzgerald, Associate Director, Rutgers University Project on Economics and Children*

“Eva Kor’s *Surviving the Angel of Death* redefined my understanding of suffering. That one so young could triumph over such grotesque evil and still celebrate life and goodness is both a mystery and an inspiration. If this book doesn’t move you, nothing will.”

~*Philip Gulley, bestselling author of Front Porch Tales and Harmony series*

STORY SUMMARY

Eva Mozes Kor was 10 years old when she arrived in Auschwitz. While her parents and two older sisters were taken to the gas chambers, she and her twin, Miriam, were herded into the care of the man known as the Angel of Death, Dr. Josef Mengele. Subjected to sadistic medical experiments, she was forced to fight daily for her and her twin's survival. In this incredible true story written for young adults, readers will learn of a child's endurance and survival in the face of truly extraordinary evil.

The book includes an epilogue on Eva's recovery from this experience and her remarkable decision to publicly forgive the Nazis. Through her museum and her lectures, she has dedicated her life to giving testimony on the Holocaust, providing a message of hope for people who have suffered and working for causes of human rights and peace.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



EVA MOZES KOR is a resident of Terre Haute, Indiana. She is a recognized speaker, both nationally and internationally, on topics related to the Holocaust, human rights, and medical ethics. She has been covered in numerous media outlets and is the subject of a documentary, *Forgiving Dr. Mengele*. Learn more about Eva at the CANDLES Holocaust Museum that she founded: <http://www.candlesholocaustmuseum.org>.

LISA ROJANY BUCCIERI has written over 100 children's books, including several award-winning and bestselling titles. She is also a publishing executive and editor with over 20 years of experience in the industry. Lisa lives with her family in Los Angeles. For more on Lisa's work, see her website at www.EditorialServicesofLA.com.



TEACHER'S GUIDE CONTENTS

1. Pre-Reading Activities

Activities and discussion starters to activate students' prior knowledge and build background knowledge of the Holocaust.

2. Chapter Guides

Chapter guides may be used to encourage whole class discussions, lead teacher-guided reading groups, or to provide structure for students working either in cooperative small groups or independently. **The guide is not meant to be assigned to students in its entirety.**

Each chapter guide includes:

- ▶ **Vocabulary** that might be new for your students. Choose a few words from each list and guide students in using context clues to infer meanings.
- ▶ **Discussion Starters** inspired by Bloom's Taxonomy that lead students from basic comprehension to higher-level thinking skills.
- ▶ **Predictions** that encourage students to make predictions based on their analysis of the subjects' traits and the setting.

The chapter guides address the following curriculum standards:

Students will:

- √ Build background by activating prior knowledge through questioning what they already know about the form in which the story is presented and the period in which it was written
- √ Read, view, and respond independently to literary works that represent a range of social, historical, and cultural perspectives
- √ Form opinions and make judgments about literary works by analyzing and evaluating texts from a critical perspective
- √ Share reading experiences with a peer or adult; for example, read together silently or aloud or discuss reactions to texts
- √ Write and share personal reactions to experiences, events, and observations, using a form of social communication
- √ Express a point of view, providing supporting facts

- √ Express opinions and support them through references to the text
- √ Research violations of basic civil and human rights and case studies of genocide
- √ Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone
- √ Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience from outside the United States reflected in a work of literature
- √ Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text
- √ Compare the varying perspectives of victims, survivors, bystanders, rescuers, and perpetrators during the Holocaust.

3. Culminating Activities

Following the chapter guides, you'll find suggested culminating projects that address the eight multiple intelligences identified by Dr. Howard Gardner: Bodily-Kinesthetic, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal, Logical-Mathematical, Musical, Naturalistic, Verbal-linguistic and Visual-spatial. Consider having students choose a culminating activity that best matches their learning styles.

4. Author Interviews with Eva Mozes Kor and Lisa Rojany Buccieri

PRE-READING

1. Look at the title and cover. What is happening to whom in the photograph on the front cover? What feelings does the photograph on the back cover elicit?

Which terms in the title are familiar to you? Which terms are not familiar?

2. Read the book summary on the inside jacket flap. What is this story about? Make a t-chart with the background knowledge you'll bring to the story and questions you have before reading (see below):

What I already know about the Holocaust:	Questions and predictions I have about Eva's story:

3. Depending on the extent of your background knowledge of the Holocaust, visit this page from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.: <http://www.ushmm.org/outreach/en/>. The sections titled *The "Final Solution"* and *Nazi Camp System* will be especially useful in building background knowledge related to the book.

4. Have you ever been separated from your family? Write or tell about your experience. What were the pros and cons?

PROLOGUE

Word Study

crammed	cattle car	desperate	platform	release
nipping	barbed-wire	SS patrols	rabid	clenched
actuality	concentration camp	labor camp	digest	jostled
jammed	escalating	selection	erupted	pandemonium
bedlam	chaos	despair	grimy	abruptly

Discussion Starters

1. From which country did Eva's family come? Where did they think they were going on the train? Where did the train take them? (*knowledge*)
2. When the SS soldier asked Eva's mother if the girls were twins, why did she hesitate before answering? (*comprehension*)
3. Compare the maps on pages 52 and 53 with a map of Germany in 1944 (go to <http://www.ushmm.org/> and search for "Greater Germany 1944," then click on "map"). What had happened to Poland by the time Eva and her family arrived there in 1944? (*application*)
4. How does the author describe light in this chapter? How does each description reflect the mood in each scene? (*analysis*)
5. Eva says that Dr. Josef Mengele "...selected those on the platform who were to live and those who would die." How did he make his selections? Why might he have separated Eva and Miriam from the rest of their family? (*synthesis*)
6. Why do you think Eva and the others on the train were not told where they were going? What might have happened if they had known beforehand? (*evaluation*)

Predict

Will Eva and Miriam stay together, or will they be separated? Will Miriam survive?

CHAPTER ONE

Word Study

admonished	perils	excessive vanity	peruse	cemented
to skirt unwittingly	anti-Semitism	exile	persecution	deported
squalor	fretted	courtly	blithe	disquiet
slurs	caricatures	depicting	propaganda	inflamed
leering	juvenile delinquents	progressively	venture	swastika

Discussion Starters

1. What language did Eva's parents speak to each other when they did not want the children to know what they were saying? (*knowledge*)
2. When and how did Eva's neighbors' attitude towards Jews begin to change? Use evidence from the text to support your answer. (*comprehension*)
3. Referring to the map on page 53, explain what happened when Hitler gave the northern part of Transylvania to Hungary. How did the state of Israel come into being? How were both events significant to the Jews? (*application*)
4. How were Eva and Miriam different? Why did Eva emerge as an outspoken leader among her siblings? Why did she often argue with her father? Describe how their disagreements later prepared her for survival. (*analysis*)
5. When Eva and Miriam were mistreated at school, what advice did their parents offer? Was it effective? What advice would you have given? Why? (*synthesis*)
6. Why did Eva's mother refuse to leave Portz to live in Palestine? Considering she did not know what the future would hold, did she make the right decision at the time? Why or why not? Would you have left your home under similar circumstances? Explain your reasoning. (*evaluation*)

Predict

Will Eva or one of her family members fight back against those who mistreat them? Why or why not?

CHAPTER TWO

Word Study

typhoid fever	house arrest	abrupt	harassment	run-down
interrogation	valuables	rations	gnawing	deprivation
withdrawn	circulating	stifling	exposed despair	solemnly

Discussion Starters

1. Why didn't Eva and Miriam get to celebrate their tenth birthday? (*knowledge*)
2. Why were Eva and the others terrified to hear German spoken at their final destination? (*comprehension*)
3. How did the villagers react when Eva and her family were taken away by the Nazis? How did her best friend, Luci, react? Why wasn't Eva surprised? If you had lived in Eva's village at the time, what might you have done as the Mozes family was taken away? (*application*)
4. When the Mozes family was forced to leave camp to board the train, they each took "a few valuables" from their tent. Why did Eva and Miriam choose to bring their matching dresses? Why might they have considered these dresses valuable? (*analysis*)
5. How does Eva's view of her parents shift? Find examples from the text to support your answer. How will this shift affect Eva's actions from now on? Give examples of how Eva might handle herself now compared with how she might have reacted a few months earlier. (*synthesis*)
6. The Nazis put Eva's father "in charge" of the people in the cattle car, saying that anyone caught trying to escape would be shot. Discuss why the Nazis did this. Was it possible for anyone to escape? If it had been, would anyone have tried to escape? Why or why not? (*evaluation*)

Predict

What will happen now that Eva and the others have stepped out of the cattle car and onto the platform? List a few possible scenarios and how Eva might react to each one.

CHAPTER THREE

Word Study

foul	singe	barking	resounded	strode
quaking frame	proximity	barreled	pleas	ponder
privileged	fumigated	anti-lice	barracks	reside
ventilation	suffocating	latrine	triple-decker	briefed
crematorium	conducted	conducted	perch	dominate

Discussion Starters

1. Why are Eva and Miriam chosen by the guard? (*knowledge*)
2. What “privileges” do twins receive? How does Eva feel about these privileges? (*comprehension*)
3. About the rest of her family, Eva says, “Deep down, I knew without being told that they had been pushed into the line that had gone to the gas chamber. Against that feeling, I allowed myself to hope that maybe they were still alive.” List the reasons why Eva thinks her family may not have survived, and reasons why she still has hope. (*application*)
4. How does the author use the sense of smell, sound and sight in this chapter? What effect does this sensory description have on you as a reader? (*analysis*)
5. What was the turning point for Eva in this chapter? What are the various ways this incident could have affected her? How does her personality contribute to the resolve she finds after this incident? (*synthesis*)
6. How do Eva’s and Miriam’s reactions to the tattoos reflect their individual character? Was it wise for Eva to react as she did? Why or why not? (*evaluation*)

Predict

How will Eva be able to protect both Miriam and herself? How might Miriam end up protecting Eva? Will having the Csengeri twins in the same barracks be an advantage or disadvantage for Eva and Miriam?

CHAPTER FOUR

Word Study

instinctively	disposed of	procedure	twitchy	entourage	escorted
petrified	baton	rations	intervened	guinea pigs	abnormalities
genetic mutation	dehumanizing	meager	phooey	swine	taunting

Discussion Starters

1. Who arrives in the barracks? (*knowledge*)
2. What do Eva and Miriam learn about the “routines” of barracks life? (*comprehension*)
3. Compare and contrast the experience of the male and female twins. (*application*)
4. Why didn't the girls in the barracks know each others' names? What effect, positive or negative, might this have had on their survival? (*analysis*)
5. What were Dr. Mengele's public goals in conducting the experiments? What do you think his personal reasons for conducting the experiments may have been? Explain your answer. (*synthesis*)
6. How does the staff react when Dr. Mengele enters the room? How do the twins react? Why do they react this way? Give examples from the chapter to support your answers. Why was Dr. Mengele so powerful? (*evaluation*)

Predict

What kinds of experiments will Eva, Miriam and the other twins have to endure?

CHAPTER FIVE

Word Study

infested	coped	pathetic	melded
withdrew	vial	anguish	crescendoing
sedative	perish	punctuated	pervasive

Discussion Starters

1. Describe the twins' weekly schedule. (*knowledge*)
2. Why doesn't Eva see herself as "skinny and pathetic" like the boys? (*comprehension*)
3. When Eva is given the shots, why doesn't she cry out in pain? Tell or write about a time in which you refused to show pain. Why did you react the way you did? If you had it to do over, would you react in the same way? Why or why not? (*application*)
4. What does Dr. Mengele call the twins? What do some of the twins call him? Why do you think they call him this? Why doesn't Eva do the same? How might this name for Dr. Mengele help or hinder the twins' ability to cope with life in the camp? (*analysis*)
5. How do the twins in the barracks help each other? If Eva or Miriam become sick, how could the others help? What options do ill prisoners have? (*synthesis*)
6. Eva is reminded of her parents and older sisters only when she sees a cart roll by carrying dead prisoners. Why do you think she hasn't thought of them until now? Is this an effective way of coping with her situation? What might have happened if Eva had kept her family in her thoughts daily? (*evaluation*)

Predict

Will either Eva or Miriam be injected with an illness? Will they be separated? If so, how will they cope?

CHAPTER SIX

Word Study

fatigue	infirmery	air raid sirens	putrid stench
willpower	silhouette	devoured	humane
solitary confinement	pathologist	autopsies	simultaneous

Discussion Starters

1. What effect does the shot have on Eva? (*knowledge*)
2. Why doesn't Eva want to tell anyone besides Miriam about her symptoms? (*comprehension*)
3. Why does Miriam tell Eva to leave her alone once they're reunited? Rewrite or narrate this chapter as it may have looked from Miriam's point of view. (*application*)
4. How does Eva react when she hears Dr. Mengele say that she'll be dead within two weeks? How does her determination factor into her survival? (*analysis*)
5. Considering Eva's and Miriam's personalities, what could Eva do that would help Miriam? (*synthesis*)
6. What does Eva later learn about Dr. Mengele's experiments? For whom does he claim he was conducting these experiments? How does the world view his methods? (*evaluation*)

Predict

Will Eva's efforts to help Miriam turn out to be successful? Why or why not?

CHAPTER SEVEN

Word Study

incessant	victorious	imperative	gallows
deliberately	tongue-lashing	cache	brigade

Discussion Starters

1. What do Eva and the other twins believe will cure their dysentery? (*knowledge*)
2. What does “organizing” mean? Why do you think the prisoners used this term? (*comprehension*)
3. Eva says, “...my sister would have died then if it had not been for me. And in turn, taking care of Miriam had helped me become sturdier and more forceful, too.” Tell or write about a time when helping someone else reaped positive effects for you. (*application*)
4. When Eva and the other twins were made to witness a hanging as a deterrent to escape, Eva thought: “Yes, life is so wonderful here. Why on earth would we try to escape?” What does this reveal about her character? (*analysis*)
5. What went through Eva’s mind before she stole her first potato? This illustrates a type of conflict called *character vs. self*. Name other examples of this type of conflict, as well as others including: character vs. character, society and nature. Which type do you think was the hardest for Eva and the twins? Why? (*synthesis*)
6. Eva says, “At Auschwitz dying was so easy. Surviving was a full-time job.” Why would she say this? Do you think the other twins would agree? Why or why not? (*evaluation*)

Predict

Since American planes have already flown over the camp, how much longer will the twins need to survive before they are freed? What percentage of them will survive the camp?

CHAPTER EIGHT

Word Study

incinerated	dread	atrocities	abundance
rummaged	searing	surged	jostled
inexplicably	emaciated	garb	stupor
lurch	scrawny	savored	entwined

Discussion Starters

1. Why do Eva and the other twins have to endure an eleven-hour roll call?
(*knowledge*)
2. What are the signs that the war was coming to an end? Why do the prisoners have mixed feelings? (*comprehension*)
3. Tell about a time when you were accidentally separated from a loved one. How did you feel? How did you react? (*application*)
4. What saves Eva from the shooting? What is her first reaction when she awakes? What is her first priority? How might her reaction have differed if the shooting had taken place a year earlier in her hometown? (*analysis*)
5. How has their 24-hour separation changed Eva and Miriam? How will this experience impact their mode of survival from now on? (*synthesis*)
6. Eva tells Miriam, "This is our lucky barracks!" Is she right? Why or why not? (*evaluation*)

Predict

Where are the prisoners now? Are they more or less likely to be freed by the allies?

CHAPTER NINE

Word Study

luxurious	delectable	sauerkraut	scrounging	unleavened
bloated	scavenging	inconceivable	raged	indiscriminately
bunkers	liberation	pall	smirks	welled

Discussion Starters

1. What are Eva's and Miriam's daily tasks in the "lucky barracks?" (*knowledge*)
2. Why have the Nazis left behind a table full of food in their headquarters? (*comprehension*)
3. Write or narrate the scene by the river from the schoolgirl's point of view. (*application*)
4. Discuss the symbolism of the baking of the bread in this chapter. (*analysis*)
5. If Eva could have spoken to the girl by the river, what might their exchange have been like? (*synthesis*)
6. Based on the last page of the chapter, how do you think the Soviet soldiers will treat the prisoners? Support your answer with evidence from the text. (*evaluation*)

Predict

What will become of Eva and the others now? Where will they go next? What will be the joys and challenges of freedom?

CHAPTER TEN

Word Study

merriment	mused	reverie
to take stock	Shirley Temple	fascists

Discussion Starters

1. How does the crowd celebrate their freedom that first night? (*knowledge*)
2. What makes Eva temporarily “tune out” of the celebration? (*comprehension*)
3. Read the “No more” list that Eva and Miriam compile. Make another list of things they’ve experienced at the camp that they may still have to endure now that they are free. (*application*)
4. Why do the Soviets have the prisoners repeat their march out of the camp over and over? Who is at the front of the line? Why? Look at the photo on the front cover of the book (seen in full on page 99). Does this photo elicit the emotions that the Soviets had hoped? (*analysis*)
5. How will Eva’s and Miriam’s experiences in the camp help them survive outside of the camp? (*synthesis*)
6. What are the “treasures” that Eva and Miriam carry out of the camp? How do these compare with the treasures the family carried when they left their tent to board the cattle car? (*evaluation*)

Predict

Will Eva and Miriam be allowed to stay together? How will they travel to the next place? How long will it take?

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Word Study

monitored	monastery	convert	displaced
conceal	khaki	tunics	ruble

Discussion Starters

1. Why doesn't Eva know about countries like Poland and the Soviet Union?
(*knowledge*)
2. Why does the Soviet soldier fire his gun when Eva tries to take the flour? Why does she think he fired? (*comprehension*)
3. Why does Eva finally feel that she and Miriam are part of a family again with Mrs. Csengari and Mrs. Goldenthal? What makes you feel "at home" when you are not with your family? (*application*)
4. How does Eva react to the items that the nuns have put in her room at the monastery? Why does she react this way? (*analysis*)
5. Back in the camp, Eva was sure her parents and older sisters had perished in the camp. Why has her hope been renewed? What influenced her change in thinking? (*synthesis*)
6. Evaluate Mrs. Csengari's character. Give evidence from the text to support your view. (*evaluation*)

Predict

What will Eva and Miriam find when they reach Portz? How will their former neighbors react?

CHAPTER TWELVE

Word Study

testify	rumble	communist rule	displaced persons
disheveled	untilled	neglected	abandoned
looted	remnants	wadded up	traced

Discussion Starters

1. Who do Eva and Miriam meet at their house? (*knowledge*)
2. What do Eva and Miriam find when they return home? How do the villagers react? (*comprehension*)
3. Compare and contrast this ride in the cattle car with the one the Mozes family took to Auschwitz. (*application*)
4. On the train ride, why do you think Eva and Miriam choose not to talk about their feelings or this trip? What might have happened if they had discussed it? (*analysis*)
5. What does Eva find crumpled on the floor of her home? Why might they have been crumpled? Find images of these photos in the book. How do you know which ones they are? (*synthesis*)
6. As Eva, Miriam and Shmilu leave the village, their former neighbors watch them go. Eva is angry but says nothing. Should she have said something? Why doesn't she? What might she have wanted to say? How would the villagers have reacted if Eva had voiced her thoughts? (*evaluation*)

Predict

What will life in Cluj with Aunt Irena be like for Eva and Miriam?

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Word Study

extensively	perished	possessions	yearned
porcelain	malnutrition	veranda	raided
seized	persecuted	Zionist	ravaged

Discussion Starters

1. How long do Eva and Miriam live with their aunt? (*knowledge*)
2. When Eva reflects back on life with Aunt Irene, she says, "...we were not really a family." What does she mean? (*comprehension*)
3. When Eva and Miriam leave Romania for Israel, why do they only take the clothing they are wearing and the family photos? If you were in a similar situation, what clothing would you take? Which three photos would you bring with you? Why? (*application*)
4. How has communism changed life in Cluj? Cite examples from the text to support your answer. (*analysis*)
5. In what ways does the family manage to get enough food to eat? Is this part of the communists' plan? Why or why not? (*synthesis*)
6. Eva thinks that Aunt Irene's pre-war possessions mean more to her than her own nieces. Do you agree? Why or why not? (*evaluation*)

Predict

What will life in Israel be like for Eva and Miriam? After reading letters from her uncle Aaron in Haifa, Eva thought Israel sounded like a paradise. Will she be disappointed? Why or why not?

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Word Study

dormitory	housemother
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Discussion Starters

1. Describe Eva's daily schedule. (*knowledge*)
2. What is the purpose of the Youth Aliyah Villages? What does Eva do there? (*comprehension*)
3. Eva learned a few phrases in Hebrew the first night she and Miriam spent in the village. Visit a site such as http://www.linguanaut.com/english_hebrew.htm and learn some basic Hebrew phrases. Which ones do you think Eva might have learned first? (*application*)
4. What does Eva discover about her favorite cousin, Aunt Irene's son? Why didn't Irene tell the girls the truth? Should she have? Why or why not? (*analysis*)
5. Eva says that not all of the youth in the village are Holocaust survivors, yet they all became friends. What challenges and rewards might Eva have experienced when forming friendships with those who had not suffered in the concentration camps? (*synthesis*)
6. Throughout her story, Eva has searched for a true sense of family. Does she find it in Israel? Explain your answer. (*evaluation*)

Predict

How will Eva and Miriam do in school? How long will they stay in Israel? How will freedom change them?

EVA'S EPILOGUE

Word Study

drafted	draftsperson	liberator	engrossed
proceeded	hermetically	orifice	intermingled
affidavit	perpetrator	germinate	amnesty

Discussion Starters

1. What jobs did Eva hold in Israel? (*knowledge*)
2. Describe Eva's courtship with Michael. (*comprehension*)
3. Eva says that coming from Israel to Indiana was like "landing on the moon." What does she mean? List ways to help someone who has recently moved to a new country. How might your suggestions have changed Eva's early experiences in the United States? (*application*)
4. Why did Eva and Miriam found the CANDLES support group? Why did Eva found the CANDLES Holocaust Museum and Education Center? Whom has the museum benefitted? In what ways? (*analysis*)
5. What is Eva's message to you, the reader? What is your message to her? (*synthesis*)
6. Why did Eva write a letter of forgiveness to Dr. Münch? What effect did it have on Eva? Whom else did Eva forgive? Do you agree with her decision? Why or why not? (*evaluation*)

Predict

How will Eva's story continue to affect people? How has it affected you?

CULMINATING ACTIVITIES

The following projects incorporate Dr. Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. Consider having students choose a culminating project that best matches their learning styles.

Hava Nagila

(Bodily-Kinesthetic, Musical)

When Eva and Miriam arrive in Israel, they are invited to dance the *hora* with their new friends. Although this dance originated in Eva's and Miriam's home country of Romania, the girls did not know how to dance the steps with their new Israeli friends. Find out why here: <http://www.eliznik.org.uk/RomaniaDance/hora.htm>

Research and compare different versions of the *hora* beginning with the following websites:

http://www.horaband.com/Hora_Dance.html

http://www.ehow.com/how_4287_hora.html

<http://www.yiddishdance.com/hora.html>

Read about the history of the *hora* dance here:

<http://www.yiddishdance.com/hora.html> and here:

<http://www.jewish.ro/hora/index.html>

Perform the different versions with classmates. Which one did you like best? Which one does your audience prefer? Why?

Forgiveness

(Intrapersonal, Interpersonal)

Read through Eva Mozes Kor's thoughts on forgiveness at the CANDLES Holocaust Museum site: <http://www.candlesholocaustmuseum.org/index.php?sid=7> and in Eva's epilogue at the end of the book.

Why might Eva's decision to forgive be controversial? Do you agree with her decision? Why or why not?

Come up with your own personal definition of forgiveness. Write your definition on an index card, and place it in a box. Have your classmates do the same. Create a "wordle" here: <http://www.wordle.net/>. First, click on "create," then type in the

definitions from all the cards into the same text box. The more often a word is mentioned on the cards, the larger the font will be in the wordle.

Analyze the wordle. What do the definitions have in common? Which words are mentioned only once or twice?

Write your own letter of forgiveness to someone who has had a negative impact on your life. Your letter of forgiveness could even be to yourself. Jot down your answers to the following questions using a different color card for each response:

1. How did you feel when you finished writing the letter?
2. If you decided to send the letter, how did you feel once the letter was sent?
3. Did the recipient respond? If so, how did you feel?

Answers may be anonymous. As a class, group the cards by color and read through the responses in each pile. Analyze common themes that emerge.

Remembering

(Naturalistic, Verbal-Linguistic, Visual-Spatial)

Many Holocaust survivors, including Eva Mozes Kor, believe that the key to preventing another Holocaust is in remembering.

Students discuss the importance of remembering in this PBS documentary: <http://www.pbs.org/auschwitz/understanding/remember.html>.

View examples of Holocaust memorials here: <http://fcit.usf.edu/holocaust/arts/artRespo.htm>. Which one makes the biggest impact on you? Why? Use a chart like the one on the following page to record your responses.

Design your own Holocaust memorial. Write a description of the memorial that includes the following:

- ▶ theme(s) you want the memorial to convey
- ▶ materials for building the memorial (with an explanation of why you chose this material, what it symbolizes and how it contributes to the theme)
- ▶ the impression you want viewers to take away from the memorial
- ▶ the site on which the memorial would be constructed, including reasons for choosing this site (how the site's climate and setting—natural, urban, etc.—contribute to a viewer's overall impression of the memorial)

Create a class museum to present the memorials.

MEMORIAL NAME:	LOCATION:	SKETCH:	MATERIALS USED:	MY IMPRESSIONS:

Six Million Paper Clips (Logical-Mathematical)

Read about a project called One Clip At A Time, where rural middle school students learn about tolerance and diversity:

<http://www.oneclipatatime.org/subpage.php?pageId=505>.

Students at Whitwell Middle School in Whitwell, Tennessee learned that, during World War II, Norwegians wore paper clips to symbolize their resistance to the Nazis. Whitwell students decided to collect six million paper clips, approximately one for every life cut short in concentration camps across Europe. Their collection has become a memorial for Holocaust victims as well as a symbol of tolerance and diversity.

How heavy would this paper clip collection be? How much space would be needed to house this collection? If your school were to do a similar project, what would you collect? Calculate the logistics to determine the project's feasibility.

For more lesson ideas, visit the following websites:

From Eva Mozes Kor's CANDLES Holocaust Museum:

<http://www.candlesholocaustmuseum.org/index.php?sid=5>

From the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum:

<http://www.ushmm.org/education/foreducators/> and
<http://www.ushmm.org/outreach/en/>

From the United Nations:

<http://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/educational%20Footprint.shtml>

Other Holocaust books for children and young adults:

<http://www.flashlightworthybooks.com/The-Holocaust-in-Fiction-for-Children/603>

AN INTERVIEW WITH EVA MOZES KOR



1. You have written books for adults, but this is your first book for teens. Why did you choose this audience for your story?

Young people face many difficulties in life. Growing up is always very hard. I thought if I could give them an example of my own life, which was a lot more difficult than many of theirs, and I overcame it, that it would serve as a good example of how to overcome adversity.

2. How did you decide which parts of your story to tell?

I did not want to include anything that was too gruesome. I did want to include topics that were meaningful and appealing to young people. I feel that most of my life story, because it happened when I was very young and I remember it as a young child, would be appropriate except for describing dead bodies and gruesome detail that I feel have no value. I don't really want young people to be scared, so I felt if I could remember and cope with it from my perspective, they would be able to cope with it too. I did not include a lot about religion, because I did not think it was a book about religious beliefs or faith – it was more a book about perseverance. And it does not really matter what religion a young person is in order to learn about perseverance.

3. How did you decide where to start and end this story?

I started with my birth as a twin and how that not only affected my survival at Auschwitz, but also how it affected my life at home. I was born a girl and my father wanted a boy, so I had to overcome the difficulties in my relationship with him. That is very important to the story, because it helped me become stronger before I got to Auschwitz. Without going through that prior challenge, I don't think I would have survived Auschwitz. I ended the book with the lessons I have learned from life, because why tell a story if there are no important lessons learned? So I wanted to share these lessons with young people, and even older people, hoping that they can use them in their lives. I have always looked up to people who have overcome tremendous difficulties and made something of their lives, rather than dwelling on the tragedy, because they have risen above it and set a good example.

4. What was the biggest challenge in telling your story? What has been the biggest reward?

The biggest challenge was in trying to relay the information as correctly as I possibly could without scaring anybody, and yet hoping that by reading it, they would be inspired to live their lives in such a way that they don't give up. I know from the many, many people I meet – young people who contact me after reading my story – that it has two things that they often refer to: The idea of never, ever giving up, and the idea of forgiveness. I hope as they read the book they research the idea of forgiveness and try it for themselves. The biggest reward is the fact that I know, from their letters to me, that it is directing their attention to forgiveness and they try hard not to give up when they are facing difficulties.

5. How long did it take to tell this story?

Four or five years, I think. It took a longer time because we had a hard time finding the right co-writer.

6. How did your story become a published book?

It became a book because the publisher liked it and wanted to publish it. You cannot make a publisher publish a story, so she saw merit in it and we worked very hard to publish it.

7. How did your family and friends react when the book was released? How do you think Miriam might have reacted?

My friends liked it. My family liked it. Miriam probably would have liked it because in many ways I am sure that she felt herself to be a survivor who worked hard to survive and was brave as a child, and that the book was a true portrayal of us and some of the other child survivors. I have not received any bad comments, and I hope that is the way it's going to continue.

8. How did telling this story affect your decision to forgive? Did it strengthen your resolve, or weaken it at times?

Telling my story had very little to do with my forgiveness. It had a lot to do with healing myself, but the forgiveness came about in a very unusual way – that I met a Nazi doctor, and I wanted to thank him for his willingness to document the gas chambers, and I couldn't find anything to give him as a meaningful gift. I searched for that gift for over a year, and then that idea of forgiveness popped into my mind. And by that idea, I discovered something that was a life-changing experience for

me. I do not know if it would have ever happened if I did not meet Dr. Munch, and I'm not sure if it would have happened if Dr. Munch had been a good old nasty Nazi, so his kindness and demeanor must have had something to do with it. But it did not have much to do with my story, because I have been giving speeches about my survival since 1978, and the forgiveness happened 17 years later, and it was only because of Dr. Munch.

9. What advice do you have for young writers who want to tell their own stories?

They should try to write an honest a book as they possibly can. They have to have a message, because there is a message in everyone's life, and they should include that message at the end. It is a struggle to do the right thing and to give all the right information correctly and attractively, but with the help of professionals, they can figure that out. But they might be surprised what they come up with if they just try it.

AN INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR LISA ROJANY BUCCIERI

**1. How did you become involved with writing *Surviving the Angel of Death: The Story of a Mengele Twin in Auschwitz*?**

The publisher contacted me to see if I knew a good writer who could help Eva write her story. I suggested a writer who was very versed in the historical period and had written other books about the Holocaust. She created a wonderful outline, but for personal reasons did not want to finish the book. Now a deadline was looming, the printer dates had been set, and the publisher was at a loss. So she called me since we had a great working relationship based on my having edited quite a few of her YA and middle-grade novels; I guess she called me to brainstorm. But by the time I got off the phone with her, I had already committed to writing the book. We had reviewed the materials that she had accumulated so far, and I agreed to take on the job and get it done in a very short period of time. I was so interested in Eva's story that I did not even feel like it was going to be *work*, so much as a journey of discovery that I would get to share in.

2. What was the most challenging part of writing this book? The most rewarding?

The most challenging things were making sure not to insert myself too much into the book and recreating Eva's voice at ten years of age. I remember at one point in the story where Eva looks across the river after the camps have been liberated and sees a little German girl with her neat little braids and her school bag and her clean clothing on her way to school. I assumed that Eva would have had a lot of questions about this moment besides the one question that she did pose, which was: How could this little girl even exist, was she a mirage? Considering what was going on across the river, how was it that anyone had a normal life like this little German girl seemed to have.? That's what went through Eva's mind and what ends up in the book. But I thought that Eva would have asked even more questions, taking the inquiry even further, such as: If normal life *did* exist beyond the gates of the camps, why were those people allowing what was going on in the camps to go on? Didn't the ordinary German citizens smell the bodies being cremated? Didn't they hear the gunfire? Why weren't they doing anything about the concentrations camps and the people who were suffering in them? But those were my questions, not Eva's. And so they were ultimately removed from the book because they did not reflect the way

Eva thought. See, Eva is unlike many other Holocaust survivors: She has chosen to forgive the Nazis. This is quite an unusual choice to make. I think that she chose to forgive them so that she would not have to live the rest of her life in the shadow of bitterness and anger, so that she could move on and fashion her life into the one she wanted to live, not the one she might have lived if she had chosen (understandably) to remain angry and bitter. But it was a challenge for me to understand at first and we had many conversations, Eva and I, about that forgiveness and how she got to that point.

The most rewarding part of writing the book was having nailed Eva's voice. When she approved 90% of what I had written after the first draft, I knew that we had a winner on our hands. Somehow, it was so easy for me to get inside her head, to be that ten-year-old girl, and write her story based on the facts that had been shared with me through the transcripts and through talking with Eva. Friends and family asked me during this writing period why I was not depressed about having to put myself into this mindset, that of a prisoner of a concentration camp, a *child* who was undergoing the worst kind of torture under the threat of imminent death *every single day that she was in that camp*. But the fact was that I was tremendously *happy* to be writing this story for Eva; I felt that it was an important job—perhaps the most important writing job I would ever have—to share Eva's story with children all over the world. For as it is said: Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it. I wanted children to know about the Holocaust and be able to understand it from a very up-close and personal point of view from someone who was close in age to them. It was, all in all, a very rewarding experience. Perhaps the best part was being able to meet Eva and get to know her. She is a formidable force of a woman—a true tornado of achievement and fierce determination.

3. Was it difficult to write in first person from another person's point of view? How did you "find" Eva's voice?

Somehow, after I read the transcripts and talked to Eva, I really did not have any trouble getting into her head and writing her story. My friends say I am a child trapped in an adult's body. Perhaps that's why I have published so many children's stories—perhaps that time of my life, my childhood, is still very much alive inside me.

4. Besides Eva, what other primary and secondary sources were used for this book?

I used the Internet and other books about the Holocaust. I had to get three sources to confirm each fact's veracity, so I did. Most of the time all I had to do was call Eva for answers to any questions I had. But, for example, I thought that readers would be interested in the type of gas used in the chambers and how it worked, because I was curious about that. Not hard to find that information on the Internet—there was a lot more information than one might expect about such a specific detail about a grisly subject.

5. How does writing non-fiction differ from fiction? How is it similar?

Well, if you are talking about this book, I'd classify it more as narrative nonfiction, which is nonfiction that reads like good fiction: or that's the goal. I find writing nonfiction tons of fun because you have to turn facts and figures into something readers will be interested in; you have to make the facts exciting and compelling and worth turning the page—much like you have to do with fiction, in that sense. But when writing nonfiction, you do not get to play God like you do with fiction; you have to stick to the facts.

With fiction, you get to make everything up: characters, story, drama, pacing—all of it. A very different exercise. I like to say that when I am writing nonfiction, the left side of my brain is dominant; when I am writing fiction, the right side of my brain is the one firing all on cylinders.

6. What is your writing process typically like? How did this project differ from other books you've done?

Usually I have to do the interviewing myself, create the outline myself, do the research all by myself, fact-check all by myself. In this case I was given what was basically an outline and my job was to make it read like the dramatic, emotional, incredible story that it was. Then I had Eva for fact checking and Peggy Tierney, the publisher, for the editing and feedback process.

7. What other types of writing do you do?

I am basically a publishing Jack (Jill?) of all trades. I do everything from proofreading (which is simply comparing an old version of the story to the newer version and making sure they match before going to press—super easy, no-brainer-type work) to ghost-writing (which is writing an entire book for someone from start to finish and putting their name on it instead of yours so they get the credit—of

course, I get paid a lot for that type of writing!). I also do book doctoring, which is an intensive type of editing, in which I go into a book and fix the character development myself, the dramatic pacing myself, the descriptions and integrations of the environments, the plot development—all of it, basically, but I have to do it invisibly, in the original writer's voice or point of view so that no one can tell that I have been in there massaging the words and making them sing. I also love to do plain, old line editing, which is to mark up everything on a manuscript from grammar to plot to pacing to character development and help the writer through the process of fixing it themselves; this is the best process for a writer who plans to continue writing beyond just one book, because they have to learn the process sometime or another if they are ever going to be successful on their own.

8. How did you become a writer?

I started “writing” when I was four, only I would just create the pictures and dictate the text to my mother. Later, I became a voracious reader, literally eating up 14 books every week or two (the maximum I was allowed to check out from the library). I think that I learned to write first from absorbing all that reading and coming to recognize how a story was made memorable by deconstructing that experience to a certain extent, though much of that happens almost unconsciously. Then, later in life, I wrote some really bad children's stories that I tested on children and found that even they thought they were stinky. So I started taking classes, joining writer's organizations, getting involved in PEN Center USA West and SCBWI, and really immersing myself in and learning about the differences between all the different children's book formats and all the different children's and grown-up book genres. I got my first byline in college for newspaper writing. Then my first full-time job before graduate school was a writing job for *TV Guide*. After graduate school, I started my publishing career at publishing houses in Los Angeles and New York, eventually reaching the title of V.P. & Publisher. And even though I had a full-time job, I kept writing and getting things published. (That was back in the day before I had children and my weekends and evenings were my own.) Now it's a juggling act. Because I have three young children, I now only have time to write and edit books that I get paid for in advance. Once in a blue moon I will get so inspired I simply *have* to write a story—but it's rarely longer than a picture book these days. When the kids go off to college (sob!) that's when I will have the time to devote to unpaid writing.

9. What advice do you have for young writers?

Read, read, read, and read some more. Take writing classes and workshops—even

after you “learn” how to do it, you can always grow into a better writer than you are today. When I look back at some of my early books I want to cringe and rewrite them, or at the very least, edit most of them to some extent. But that was where I was way back then. Today I know as well as any other professional writer that writing is like a muscle: You have to exercise it (and all the muscles around it) to keep it strong and healthy, flexible and youthful. To extend the analogy, all the muscles around writing involve reading like a fiend, participating in the arts, trying out other creative endeavors such as drawing or painting to learn about perspective from other angles, using your hands to create something other than words, and never forgetting to listen, really listen—helps with writing dialogue—and learn (read read read) to live your life to the fullest. The more people you meet, the more activities you get involved in (even if for just a day), the more you LIVE, the more you have to write about. And never give up. You are going to get rejected 99% of the time, but you still have to keep learning and taking classes and getting feedback and writing and reading and submitting your projects because one day, one will hit—and then you just have to do it all over again and make sure you have your NEXT project in some other editor’s inbox. Like I say on my website (www.EditorialServicesofLA.com): Hope is always having something in someone’s inbox.

10. When you aren’t writing, what are some of your favorite things to do?

Let’s see: I assistant coach two softball teams (one for my twins and one for my youngest daughter); I drive 25,000 miles a year going nowhere but in circles, ferrying my children to dance and Hebrew school and games and afterschool activities; I run my own business full-time; I love to hang out with my kids, my husband, my friends—just like everyone else! But here’s the thing: I am super organized so that I do not have to give up anything I love; I just keep myself to a very rigid schedule so everything gets its due attention. I suppose if I had my druthers, I would be able to read a book from cover to cover every weekend on the front porch of my beach house as I glance up now and again to watch my children frolicking in the waves. . . But I’m just not there yet! Give me time! I’ll get there!