

# Temple Israel 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys Book Club

## Suggested Reading 2005-2006

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(unless otherwise noted, all books are in-print & available in paperback as of September 2005)

### CONTEMPORARY:

**Arrick, Fran. *Chernowitz!* New York: New American Library, 1990. ISBN: 0451162536 (reissue edition). \$5.99**

A ninth grader who is bullied by an anti-Semitic classmate makes a plan to fight back.

**Cormier, Robert. *Tunes for Bears to Dance To.* New York: Laurel Leaf, 1994. ISBN: 0440219035 (reissue edition). \$5.50**

When Henry and his parents move to a new town after his brother's death, he befriends an elderly Holocaust survivor, but this new friendship is threatened by the arrival of the powerful Mr. Hairston. Sydney Taylor Honor Book, 1992.

**Mack, Tracy. *Birdland.* New York: Scholastic Press, 2003. ISBN: 0439535913. \$5.99**

Fourteen-year-old, tongue-tied Jed spends winter break working on a school project filming a documentary about his East Village, New York City, neighborhood, where he is continually reminded of his older brother, Zeke, a promising poet who died the year before. Sydney Taylor Honor Award 2003. (2004/2005 Selection)

**Meyer, Carolyn. *Drummers of Jericho.* San Diego: Gulliver Books Paperbacks, 1995. ISBN: 0152001905. \$6.00**

As a Jew, Pazit Trujillo objects when she and the rest of the Jericho High School band are instructed to play hymns and march in a cross, turning the whole town against her, except for one brave friend.

**Miklowitz, Gloria. *The Enemy Has a Face.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2003. ISBN: 0802852610. \$8.00**

Netta and her family have relocated temporarily from Israel to Los Angeles, and when her seventeen-year-old brother mysteriously disappears, she becomes convinced that he has been abducted by Palestinian terrorists. (2004/2005 Selection)

**Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. *Walker's Crossing.* New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1999. ISBN: 0689842619. \$4.99**

While living on his family's ranch in Wyoming where he hopes to someday be a cowboy, Ryan faces conflicts with his older brother, who becomes involved in a militia movement.

### ISRAEL:

**Carmi, Daniella. *Samir and Yonatan.* New York: Arthur A. Levine Books, 2000. ISBN: 0439135230. \$4.99**

Samir, a Palestinian boy, is sent for surgery to an Israeli hospital where he has two otherworldly experiences, making friends with an Israeli boy, Yonatan, and finding peace about his brother's death in the war.

## HISTORICAL FICTION:

**Avrech, Robert J. *The Hebrew Kid and the Apache Maiden*. Los Angeles: Seraphic Press, 2005. ISBN: 0975438212. \$14.95 (HC)**

In the years following the Civil War, twelve year old Ariel Isaacson and his family, Jewish immigrants from Russia, are kicked out of their Arizona town by an anti-Semitic mayor and townspeople, and are forced to embark on a difficult and dangerous journey through the unsettled Arizona territory.

**Hesse, Karen. *Witness*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2001. ISBN: 0439272009. \$5.99**

A series of poems expresses the views of various people in a small Vermont town, including a young black girl and a young Jewish girl, during the early 1920s when the Ku Klux Klan is trying to infiltrate the town. Discussion guide available at [www.scholastic.com](http://www.scholastic.com).

**Lasky, Kathryn. *Broken Song*. New York : Viking, 2005. ISBN: 0670059315. \$15.99 (HC)**

In 1897, fifteen-year-old Reuven Bloom, a Russian Jew, must set aside his dreams of playing the violin in order to save himself and his baby sister after the rest of their family is murdered. See also *The Night Journey*.

**Levitin, Sonia. *The Cure*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1999. ISBN: 038073298X. \$5.99**

A sixteen-year-old boy living in 2407 collides with the past when he finds himself in Strasbourg in 1348 confronting the anti-Semitism that sweeps through Europe during the Black Plague. (2003/2004 Selection)

**Meyer, Carolyn. *Gideon's People*. San Diego: Gulliver Books, 1996. ISBN: 0152003045. \$6.00**

Torn between youthful rebellion and their traditional heritages, two boys from very different cultures--one Amish, one Orthodox Jew--discover just how similar they really are. (2003/2004 Selection)

**Napoli, Donna Jo. *The King of Mulberry Street*. New York: Random House, 2005. ISBN: 0385746539. \$15.95 (HC)**

After being sent alone on ship by his mother to New York City to start a new life in 1892, young Dom, an Italian Jew, must find a way to survive in the new world with the rest of the homeless children in Manhattan's Five Points in order to become the success his mother was certain he would be.

**Talbert, Marc. *Star of Luis*. New York: Clarion Books/Houghton Mifflin, 1999. ISBN: 039591423X. \$15.00 (HC)**

A Hispanic boy, raised as a Roman Catholic, struggles to understand and to be reconciled with his newly discovered Iberian-Jewish ancestry.

## WORLD WAR II & THE HOLOCAUST:

**Ayer, Eleanor H. *Parallel Journeys*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1995. ISBN: 0689832362. \$5.99**

Presents the stories of Eleanor Ayer, a Jewish girl who hid in the Netherlands before she was arrested and sent to Auschwitz, and Alfons, a Nazi boy who became a commander at age sixteen, in a dual tale that demonstrates Hitler's impact on German youth.

**Bat-Ami, Miriam. *Two Suns in the Sky*. Chicago: Cricket Books/Front Street, 1999. ISBN: 0812629000. \$6.99**

After being moved from Yugoslavia to a refugee camp in New York during World War II, one Jewish boy is befriended by a local girl, but when their special friendship turns to romance, their parents demand they end the relationship. (2002/2003 Selection)

**Chotjewitz, David. *Daniel, Half-Human and the Good Nazi*. Trans. Doris Orgel. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2004. ISBN: 0689857470. \$17.95 (HC)**

In 1933, best friends Daniel and Armin admire Hitler, but as anti-Semitism buoys Hitler to power, Daniel learns he is half Jewish, threatening the friendship even as life in their beloved Hamburg, Germany, is becoming nightmarish. Sydney Taylor Honor Award Winner for Older Readers, 2004.

**Holm, Anne. *I Am David*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 2004. ISBN: 0152051600. \$5.95**

After escaping from an Eastern European concentration camp where he has spent most of his life, a twelve-year-old boy struggles to cope with an entirely strange world as he flees northward to freedom in Denmark. Previously published as *North to Freedom*; also available on DVD.

**Kerr, M. E. *Slap Your Sides*. New York: HarperCollins, 2001. ISBN: 0064472744. \$5.99**

Life in their Pennsylvania hometown changes for Jubal Shoemaker and his family when his older brother witnesses to his Quaker beliefs by becoming a conscientious objector during World War II.

**Levitin, Sonia. *Room in the Heart*. New York: Penguin USA, 2003. ISBN: 0142403393. \$7.99**

After German forces occupy Denmark during World War II, fifteen-year-old Julie Weinstein and fifteen-year-old Niels Nelson and their friends and families try to cope with their daily lives, finding various ways to resist the Nazis and, ultimately, to survive.

**Napoli, Donna Jo. *Stones in Water*. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1997. ISBN: 0141306009. \$5.99**

Best friends Roberto, a non-Jew, and Samuele, a Jew, find themselves in a brutal Nazi work camp. They vow to stay together no matter what, keeping Samuele's identity secret. If his identity is revealed, it will cost both boys their lives. With strength and wit, the boys protect and defend each other and learn deep lessons about friendship. 1998 Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner.

**Orlev, Uri. *The Island on Bird Street*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1992. ISBN: 0395616239 (reissue edition). \$6.95**

During World War II a Jewish boy is left on his own for months in a ruined house in the Warsaw Ghetto, where he must learn all the tricks of survival under constantly life-threatening conditions. 1984 Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner.

**Warren, Andrea. *Surviving Hitler: A Boy in the Nazi Death Camps*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2001. ISBN: 0060007672. \$6.99**

An inspiring account of the Holocaust experiences of Jack Mandelbaum, who survived three years as a teen in several camps. His zest for life and ability to form friendships enabled him to begin a new life in the United States.

**Yolen, Jane. *The Devil's Arithmetic*. New York: Puffin, 1990. ISBN: 0140345353 (reprint edition). \$5.99**

Hannah resents the traditions of her Jewish heritage until time travel places her in the middle of a small Jewish village in Nazi-occupied Poland. 1988 Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner.

#### BIOGRAPHY:

**Berkow, Ira. *Hank Greenberg: Hall-Of-Fame Slugger*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2001. ISBN: 0827606850. \$9.95**

A biography of the powerful home-run hitter who became the first Jewish player elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame. (2000/2001 Selection)

**Grey, Vivian. *Moe Berg: The Spy Behind Homeplate*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996. ISBN: 0827606206. \$9.95.**

A major league baseball player fluent in nine languages, an Ivy League scholar, and an attorney, Moe Berg led a life of mystery and intrigue as a top secret spy who helped the United States win the race against Nazi Germany to build the atomic bomb. He used baseball as a cover to make significant intelligence contributions to the United States. (1999/2000 Selection)

**Speregen, Devra Newberger. *Ilan Ramon: Jewish Star*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2004. ISBN: 0827607695. \$9.95**

A biography of Israel's first astronaut ending with his tragic death aboard the Space Shuttle Columbia in 2003.

**Speregen, Devra Newberger. *Yoni Netanyahu: Commando at Entebbe*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1995. ISBN: 0827606427. \$10.95**

Few rescue missions have succeeded like "Operation Thunderbolt," the Israeli plan led by Yoni Netanyahu on July 4, 1976, to rescue 105 hijacked Jewish passengers held captive in Uganda's Entebbe Airport.

OTHER RESOURCES:

Odean, Kathleen. *Great Books for Boys*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1998. ISBN: 0345420837  
More than 600 books that will make boys want to read!

Tuffs, Allan C. *And You Shall Teach Them to Your Sons: Biblical Tales for Fathers and Sons*.  
New York: UAHC Press, 1997. ISBN: 080740635X

A project of the North American Federation of Temple Brotherhoods, this is a collection of Bible tales that can be used as a vehicle for discussions between fathers and sons about the fundamental issue surrounding Jewish masculinity.