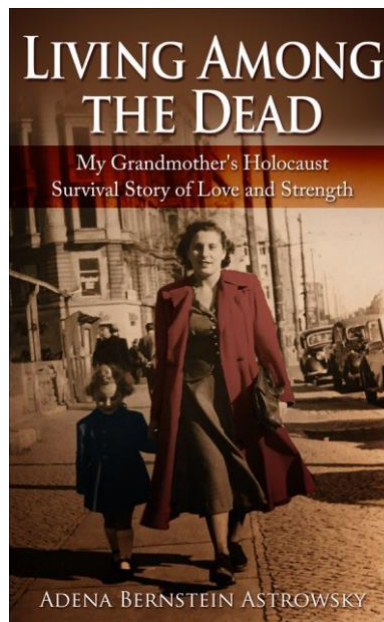




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Teaching with Adena Bernstein Astrowsky's
Living Among the Dead: My Grandmother's
Holocaust Survival Story of Love and Strength



Suggested Background Resources:

USHMM Timeline Activity <https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/USHMM-Timeline-Activity-Instructions.pdf>

Echoes & Reflections: Antisemitism and Rise to Nazi Power units (echoesandreflections.org; go to “Teach” section.

Holocaust Encyclopedia (USHMM)

USHMM Voices of Antisemitism podcast <https://www.ushmm.org/antisemitism/podcast>

Introduction

Looking at the photograph on the first page, what do you notice? Does the photo look similar to any in your family’s collection of photos? This is a great place to help students make connections and add relevancy to studying the Holocaust. Often, students see black and white pictures and think they are old and have nothing to do with them. But many of our students might have a photo (probably on their phones) taken at a beach or with a family member. You could even ask students to share a photo that reminds them of this one (literally, or the spirit of the photo) and discuss how people in earlier times and different places did many of the same activities we do today. (There is a similar activity with Chapter 3).

To get students thinking about writing about an older relative, ask students to interview an older person they know (related or not). You may suggest questions or assign them to write them. This could be a video project or a written report or reflection. An alternative assignment could be writing a letter to an older relative or friend.

The author says of her grandmother, “Writing was her therapy” (xxiii). Ask students: Does writing help you in any way? Can it help you work through problems? If not, is there something else that helps you, such as drawing, exercising, etc.?

Why is it important to write and/or record the stories of survivors of tragedies?

The link to Bubbie’s testimony is: <https://1drv.ms/u/s!AocfEjfVzQ9-hDC4YRnCN5odVQEM?e=Nbdwgc>. (Please note: it starts about 20 seconds into the recording).

Play a part of it for students now, as you start the book, so they see this is a real person and can hear her voice. Then, feel free to play other parts as they read. It is also interesting to note the process the Shoah Foundation took to conduct these interviews. You can share the information with students at <https://sfi.usc.edu/collecting>; this might also be helpful for students who are conducting their own interviews.

Discuss refugees today. Depending on the grade level of your students, you might discuss this in different ways. The author brings up Syria, so you could focus on that, and discuss the process for getting to the US from Syria, or any other place of crisis. You might ask students to research

organizations that help refugees, such as HIAS, IRC, Catholic Charities, or JWS, or have them look in their own communities, like The Welcome to America Project in Phoenix. Discuss the connections the author sees between the Syrian family she meets and her grandmother's story. This is also a great place to suggest involvement on students' parts with one of these organizations.

If your students have studied other Holocaust stories, discuss how fate or luck is often a factor.

After reading the poem "Why," ask students to answer (using sources from the book) "Why did they do this to us?"

Chapter 1

Vocabulary: Bar Mitzvah, Bat Mitzvah, Shabbat

1. The author says her grandmother was "a daughter, sister, wife, mother of two, grandmother of five, great-grandmother of ten" (1). Why is it important to consider all of a survivor's life, and to think about the different roles they played? Why is it important to not only see them as a victim?
2. Discuss the "presence of absence" (2). Do you identify with this, or are you surrounded by family? How did the Holocaust affect families for generations?
3. The author has fond memories of time spent with her grandmother. If you have relatives you have grown up around or have known, share a story about memories you have with one of them. Or, write a letter to that person, if they live far from you, thanking them for the time they spent with you.
4. Discuss why having children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren is so significant for Bubbie.
5. The author is upset with her children when they say they are "starving" (6). Why does this bother her? Have your parents said similar things to you? Explain how trauma caused by hunger, etc. can be passed on through generations.
6. Discuss Bar and Bat Mitzvahs and what they mean, for non-Jewish students. A good article is here: <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/bar-and-bat-mitzvah-101/>
7. Reading the great-grandchildren's eulogies, what do you take away as the most salient characteristics of Bubbie?
8. Discuss the Jewish practice of leaving rocks on a grave. This article explains it: <https://www.jewish-funeral-home.com/why-do-jews-place-stones-or-pebbles-on-a-grave/>
9. Explain Shabbat. A quick video can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vimjZWHXKFY>.
10. The author ends this chapter with this: "By knowing your roots and remembering your history, it is my hope that we will all do our part to help achieve peace and to prevent further genocides" (13). How can knowing your roots and history help in a more peaceful future?

Chapter 2

Vocabulary: Hasidic, orthodox, kosher, pierogies, *gymnasium*

1. Discuss and analyze the poem at the beginning of the chapter.
2. What did Bubbie do as a young girl that probably helps her later as a writer?
3. Discuss the role of men at the beginning of this chapter. What attributes are “signs of the times” that are different now?
4. What does Bubbie continue to feel guilty about in regards to her mother? Can you relate to this?
5. The author describes the meals her grandmother’s family ate for Shabbat, and the preparation that went into them. Describe a meal your family or someone close to you has prepared, whether it was for an occasion or just a meal that stands out to you.
6. Describe how Katya is both traditional and modern at the same time.
7. Bubbie states, “Having sisters makes you important and makes you belong somewhere” (20). Explain what this means.
8. Describe Rivka, and what Bubbie admires about her. How is Rivka like her mother, Katya?
9. Why do you think the author chose to include a description of Rivka in Bubbie’s words (pages 21-22)? What does this add to the story so far? When was it written, and why is the date significant?
10. Describe Nechamka. How is her relationship with Bubbie different from Rivka’s?

Chapter 3

Vocabulary: Yahrzeit glass

This chapter opens with what looks like a school photograph of Nechamka. This would be a great place for students to bring in an old school photo of themselves to share or display on a wall (getting permission first from parents). You could discuss that even though Nechamka’s photo is in black and white and seems old, we still pose in similar ways and take photos each year, marking our growth and progress through school. This is one way for students to find relevancy and connections to history.

1. Bubbie again brings up sunflowers. Have students research the symbolism of sunflowers and what they represent. Ask them to find the origin story for sunflowers (beginning in what is now Arizona and New Mexico, with the Native Americans).
How and why have they been a symbol of happiness?
2. This chapter is again, in Bubbie’s voice, so discuss the difference and why the author chose to include her grandmother’s own words.

3. The chapter ends with two humorous stories about Nechamka. Why is humor important, even in a book about the Holocaust? Ask students to recall funny stories from their own childhoods and share, if they are comfortable doing so. Although we are reminded of Nechamka's death at the young age of 22, why does the author include these stories?

Chapter 4

Vocabulary: Kaddish, mikvah

1. The author mentions the preference in families for male children. Do we still see this in cultures today? What is the reasoning behind it? What do you think about this?
2. What game did Bubbie play with her grandmother, Henie?
3. Why doesn't Bubbie recall much about Henie?
4. Later in life, how does Bubbie relate to her bubbie?
5. Discuss how difficult it must have been for Bubbie to not have answers to so many questions about her family, such as why her father only took her on the train to visit her parents.

Chapter 5

Vocabulary: shtetl, Passover, seder, Yitzkor, gefilte fish, challah, Haggadah, Purim, grogger, Sukkot, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, antisemitism, Russian Matryoshka doll

1. How many Jews lived in Wlodzimierz, Poland, when Bubbie was there? Look at a map of Poland at the time that shows how many Jews lived in the country. Now look at a similar map of Germany at the time, and discuss the differences. Students will note how relatively few Jews lived in Germany, and may ask if it was such a small number, why were they forced out? You might also want to discuss how German Jews were more assimilated than their Polish neighbors.
2. How did the meaning of the phrase "Next year in Jerusalem" change from before and after World War II?
3. Describe Bubbie's elementary school. How did the Christian boys treat the Jewish girls? Why didn't the girls tell anyone?
4. Describe the toys that Bubbie and her family and friends play with. How are they similar to and/or different from toys you played with as a child?
5. Play the song "Tumbalalaika" for the students so they can get a sense of the music of the time. It can be found on You Tube, performed by The Barry Sisters.
6. What does Bubbie enjoy describing most from her childhood?
7. Why does Bubbie use the word "magic" to describe her garden in her poem?

8. The author mentions a lot of holidays in this chapter. Which holidays are important to you and why? What traditions do you observe on these holidays? Why are traditions important to families?
9. Show the map at <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/map/german-invasion-of-poland-september-1939> to discuss how Poland was taken over and divided by the Germans and Russians.
10. Discuss how difficult it would be for the language at your school to suddenly change, as Bubbie's changed to Russian. What obstacles would you face? How did Bubbie adapt? Why is it easier for children to adapt to such events than adults?
11. What does the radio provide for Bubbie and her family?
12. To discuss the role of the Hitler Youth, see the article at <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/indoctrinating-youth>.
13. Why would children want to join the Hitler Youth? A good testimony to use with this can be found at <https://echoesandreflections.org/unit-3/?state=open#content>, where a Roma woman talks about her desire to be in the Hitler Youth when she was a child.
14. This is also a good point to utilize the USHMM timeline, if you haven't already. The author points out that while Hitler came to power in 1933, it didn't affect Bubbie or her family until much later. It is important to contextualize the history of the book against what was happening in Nazi Germany and elsewhere in Europe, as well as to look at US and world reaction to these events.
15. What is the play about that Bubbie's family attends at Christmas time? What does this tell us about the attitudes of most people at Rivka's school?
16. When her family begins to worry about the antisemitism they see in their town, discuss some of the reasons they don't leave.
17. As a child, how did Bubbie feel about the war?

Chapter 6

1. See the article at <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/ministry-of-propaganda-and-public-enlightenment>.
2. To study more about propaganda, see the activity using propaganda directed toward children at <https://echoesandreflections.org/unit-2-antisemitism/?state=open#content> and/or the propaganda online exhibit at <https://www.ushmm.org/propaganda/>, which includes many images and some activities for the classroom.
3. Why would a German at the time be surprised, when talking to a Jewish person, to find them "normal"?
4. Again, show the students the map of divided Poland. Why did Hitler agree to giving part to Stalin?
5. What are some of the good things Bubbie enjoys under the Russian rule? What are some of the bad and some of the changes she and her family face?

6. Why did Bubbie's town become overpopulated? What remedy did the Russians find for this?
7. What happens to Bubbie's father's store? What does he next do for work? How is that a hardship on his family?
8. What happens to Rivka's husband?

Chapter 7

Vocabulary: pogrom, ghetto, pfennigs, *Judenrein*.

1. Discuss the importance of having the first section of this chapter in Bubbie's own words. What is she describing?
2. Here you might want to look at the ghetto system. You might check Echoes & Reflections' unit on the ghettos (<https://echoesandreflections.org/unit-04-the-ghettos/?state=open#content>), which includes lessons, activities, primary resources, and survivor testimony on the ghettos. There is also an excellent article students can read at <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/types-of-ghettos>.
3. You might also want to discuss the term "Holocaust by Bullets," coined by Father Patrick Desbois. His work can be found in the book, *The Holocaust by Bullets*, or on the website yahadinunum.org.
4. Discuss the setup of the ghetto in Wlodzimierz. What is the difference between the "living ghetto" and the "dead ghetto"? How does Bubbie's home change? (If students have read Elie Wiesel's *Night*, they may see the similarity he experienced).
5. What kind of jobs are done in the ghetto?
6. Why was giving up candlesticks so significant?
7. Why does Bubbie's mother get taken to the police station?
8. What are the Jews forced to wear, and why? Show students a picture of the armbands, such as those at <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/artifact/krakow-ghetto-armband> (there are several examples).
9. What size of graves were the Jews forced to dig?
10. Discuss the role of the Jewish police. See the article at https://www.yadvashem.org/odot_pdf/Microsoft%20Word%20-%206386.pdf. This is an interesting place to discuss why men would choose to be ghetto policemen, and why they were reviled for this role later, adding to the complexity of the topic.
11. Why was the armband later changed?

Chapter 8

Vocabulary: payos/sidelocks, Orthodox, barbarism

1. Discuss daily life for Bubbie and her family in the ghetto. What changes have taken place? How is the family adapting to those changes? What creative ways do the sisters find to spend their time?
2. Why do you suppose their parents “numbly looked down at us hopelessly”? (57)
3. How does the family get a place in the living ghetto?
4. When the young boy from a neighboring village tries to tell the news of the slaughters he has witnessed, why do people believe he is lying? (Students who have read Wiesel’s *Night* might connect this to Moishe the Beadle).
5. Discuss Bubbie’s work in the fields and the hardships she faces.
6. Discuss the symbolism of the pickle from Bubbie’s grandmother. How can something of such seemingly insignificance be so important?

Chapter 9

Vocabulary: *Einsatzgruppen*, genocide, Torah, Kedushah service

1. Why is Bubbie not with her family when they are taken? What is she worried about at first?
2. What happens to Bubbie’s family?
3. This is a good place to reference yahadinunum.org again. You could assign certain areas where the *Einsatzgruppen* were active, and/or ask them to listen to some of the witness testimonies.
4. Show the short video clip of the opening of the *Einsatzgruppen* trials here: <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/film/einsatzgruppen-trial-us-prosecution-opens-case-against-einsatzgruppen-members> and read the articles at <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/subsequent-nuremberg-proceedings-case-9-the-einsatzgruppen-case> and <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/mobile-killing-squads> .
5. Discuss the use of euphemisms by the Nazis, such as “resettlement.”
6. Learn more about Babi Yar: <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/kiiev-and-babi-yar>.
7. When rounding up the Jewish people of Kiev, what were they told to bring with them? Why?
8. Using the testimony on pages 64 and 65, and testimony from Yahad in Unum, describe the typical process for the mass shootings.
9. Why is it important to have eyewitness accounts of these events?
10. Why were the Ukrainians angry with the Jews?
11. When she returns to the ghetto, what does Bubbie find?
12. Where does Bubbie hide and for how long? What are the conditions as they hide?
13. What happened to those in the living ghetto?
14. What is the significance of the last prayer they say?

15. Discuss how historians are able to arrive at the numbers of those killed; for example, historians at Yad Vashem named 15,000 from Włodzimierz. Why is it important to know such numbers?
16. Discuss the poem at the end of the chapter. How old was Bubbie when she wrote it? What does it tell us about her memories? What is the “silence” she hears? Discuss the irony of the title.

Chapter 10

Vocabulary: zwieback

1. Discuss the bravery shown by both those in hiding and the owners of the home where they are hiding.
2. Discuss some of the fate or luck that Bubbie has.
3. Again, the story of the girl at the bottom of page 71 is a good connection to Wiesel’s *Night*.
4. What ends the pogrom?
5. How long did Bubbie and the others hide in the attic? What is their condition when they come out?
6. After the pogroms, how many Jews are left? What do the Nazis do with those remaining?
7. What happened to some who had been hiding, such as Rivka’s father-in-law?
8. You might talk a bit about Ivan the Terrible. Here is a helpful article: <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/john-demjanjuk-prosecution-of-a-nazi-collaborator>. Some of your students may have seen *The Devil Next Door* on Netflix and may be interested in this topic.
9. What job is Bubbie forced to do? What does she find as she is working?
10. Why does Bubbie think of her deceased family members as “lucky”?
11. Why do you think Bubbie and Sania attempt to find their family members’ bodies? Why would this be important?
12. How many pogroms does it take to make Bubbie’s hometown *Judenrein*?

Chapter 11

1. Discuss the new ghettos created. With whom does Bubbie live?
2. How does fate once again play into Bubbie’s survival?
3. Discuss Bubbie’s piece, “The Little Brown Shoe.” What job is she doing when she finds the shoe? Why were they forced to do this job? Why were the Nazis not worried about her being a witness?
4. Clothes taken from executed Jews and others was sometimes sent to Germany for Aryan use and sometimes was auctioned in the communities where they were killed.

- This is a good place to talk about complicity among those who helped facilitate such collections and auctions. You might look at the online exhibit from USHMM's *Some Were Neighbors*. One lesson for this exhibit is at <http://somereneighbors.ushmm.org/education/lesson/deconstructing-the-familiar>, and it includes a photo of one such auction.
5. This is also a good place to look at other works around shoes. One is a poem written about the shoes (which is excerpted at the exhibit of shoes in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's permanent exhibition) that can be found in this article: <https://www.jta.org/2010/08/26/opinion/op-ed-the-shoes-of-majdanek>. You could also discuss the poignant monument of shoes in Budapest (article at <https://www.yadvashem.org/articles/general/shoes-on-the-danube-promenade.html>).

Chapter 12

Vocabulary: partisan

1. How does the candle maker help Bubbie? What does she have to change on the paper?
2. What does Bubbie dream about as she knits?
3. Why do you think the tomato tasted so good to Bubbie? Think about your favorite food. Is it more special because you don't always have it?
4. What does Bubbie find when she visits her family's home? What does she notice about her garden that makes her feel better? (Note: Students who have read Gerda Weissmann Klein's *All But My Life* may notice some connections to the way Gerda felt about her garden and the knitting).
5. What does Bubbie do to emotionally get through the "dirty job" she is assigned?
6. How does Bubbie describe the third pogrom? Where does she hide? How many people hide with her?
7. Who is Janina Zawadzka? What arrangement had been made with her?
8. How does Bubbie differentiate the Poles and Ukrainians from the Germans? What does this mean?
9. Why would Janina's neighbors be suspicious that she locked her door? You may need to point out to students that this was not the custom, especially in small villages and rural areas.
10. Describe hiding in the stables.
11. Why had Janina taken in German soldiers at Christmas? What does this tell us about her character?
12. What is the plan to get past the German guard?
13. Here you might want to discuss the role of partisans during the war. The Jewish Partisans Educational Foundation (<http://www.jewishpartisans.org/>) has some

excellent resources. Using JPEF's materials, Facing History has a lesson at <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/resistance-during-holocaust/jewish-partisans-resistance>. Echoes & Reflections also has a unit on Jewish Resistance, including partisans (<https://echoesandreflections.org/unit-6/?state=open#content>).

14.

Chapter 13

Vocabulary:

1. According to Bubbie, why were the Poles “tolerant” of the Jews?
2. Why do Bubbie and Popa think of the Lichtenstein brothers as family? In describing this family, why does she always refer to “we” or “us”?
3. Why is it important for the group to move farther into the woods?
4. What do they hear the Russians saying?
5. Why are the Russians they meet angry with the Jews? Discuss the need people have to place blame on others in a crisis, even if it isn't that person or group's fault. Why is this? What are the dangers?
6. Why are the boys arrested? Why does the Russian captain release them?
7. Look at the poem in Polish (top of page 91). Discuss the language: Does anything look familiar? (probably not). Just by looking at it, how do you know it is a poem? Try reading some of it out loud—just try 😊
8. Looking at the poem in English, think of a younger Bubbie writing this. Discuss her thoughts and feelings as she wrote this poem. How does she feel about spring? What is the irony of the beauty of spring? Depending on the age group of the students, you might discuss the concept of survivors' guilt here. An interesting testimony can be found at <https://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2014/09/09/selfhelp-home-oppenheimer>.

Chapter 14

Vocabulary: artillery

1. As they enter the liberated city, what do they expect? How are they treated?
2. Discuss the concept of liberation and freedom at the beginning of this chapter. How is Bubbie now both free and not free?
3. Discuss Bubbie's thoughts about “tomorrow.”
4. Many students believe that the war ended at one time for everyone, and that victims and prisoners of camps simply went home. A great resource to help you teach the correct version of events is at <https://echoesandreflections.org/unit-8/?state=open#content>, where you will find 3 lessons that address this topic, told from both survivors' and liberators' points of view, using primary source materials, visual history testimonies, and activities.

5. Bubbie knows her family is gone, so why does she go back to her hometown? How are they treated there by the Poles? An interesting article about the return of Jews to Poland (including the Kielce Pogrom) can be found at <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-survivors>.
6. Describe the circumstances of Mania (Bubbie) and Joseph's wedding.

Chapter 15

Vocabulary: salon

1. This chapter flashes back to the pogroms in the ghetto. Why did the family have so much powder in the house? Why did Bubbie find the photographs (why were they left?).
2. What did Bubbie find when she left the ghetto in search of her old house? What is the irony she described seeing?
3. How does the tone of this chapter differ from those told from the author's point of view?

Chapter 16

1. Why does the group now go to Lodz?
2. Why is the group thinking more as a "we" than many "I's"?
3. Why does the group want to leave Europe? What drives their decision on where to go next?
4. Many students are interested in looking at how the world reacted to the Jews and victims of the Holocaust after the war was over. A good article about UNRRA can be accessed at <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/united-nations-relief-and-rehabilitation-administration>.
5. When the group is rejected admittance to Palestine, ask students if this surprises them. (Many will assume that what they know as Israel today would have been open to receiving Jewish Holocaust survivors). Find more information at <https://www.ushmm.org/exhibition/displaced-persons/emigrate.htm>.
6. What is life like in Europe for the group? How are they treated in Germany?
7. Discuss the purpose of Displaced Persons Camps. Again, utilize Echoes & Reflections (Lesson 8) for a full lesson on this.
8. Bubbie has her first child in the DP camp, a common occurrence in the quest for a "Return to Life." Many also got married. Here is an article about one wedding and dress: <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn13648>. And here is one on the children born in DP camps: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/for-bergen-belsen-babies-fond-memories-amid-a-scarred-landscape/>.

Chapter 17

1. The author's mother is born in Germany. Why do Bubbie and Joseph decide they need to leave Germany?
2. Discuss the poem "Dreams." What does Bubbie dream about? What are her hopes and wishes?
3. Discuss the photo of the author's mother with Bubbie on page 107. What do you notice in the photograph? What stands out to you? What does the author notice about it?

Chapter 18

1. How do Goldie and Misha help the others get to Canada? Why did they have to lie?
2. Why does the author's mother eventually change her name?
3. Many Holocaust survivors immigrated to Canada. There is an interesting exhibit at <http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/virtual-exhibits/exhibit/building-new-lives-stories-of-holocaust-survivors-immigration-to-canada/> where students can discover some of the stories.
4. What did people have to say about the war? Why do you think this was the case?
5. Discuss the various jobs Moishe works at. What does this tell us about him?
6. After Joseph dies, what does Bubbie do for work?
7. Discuss the wedding photo on page 113, and Moishe's role in the author's family.
8. Why does the author believe Moishe and Colette did not have children? Again, if that is the case, what does that tell us about Moishe's character?
9. The author shares the story of Moishe being on *The Price is Right*. Why does she include this information? What does it add to his character?

Chapter 19

Vocabulary: chuppa-kedoshim blessing, L'Chaim

1. Looking at the title of this chapter, what do you think might have made a wedding day "odd"?
2. What is Bubbie feeling at the author's bridal shower? Discuss how a Holocaust survivor would probably see everything from a different perspective.
3. Why is a new couple included in Bubbie's wedding? What is their role, and why would it not have been allowed in "normal" times?
4. Which aspects of a traditional wedding were carried out? Which were different?
5. What do the Russian soldiers do on the wedding day? Why was Bubbie's dress a good choice?

6. Again, discuss the thoughts and feelings Bubbie must have had about her granddaughter's wedding and thinking back to her own.
7. Discuss the metaphor of the tree in the poem at the end of this chapter. Why do we call it a "family tree"? How is that an appropriate description, and especially for the author, who was pregnant at the time?

Chapter 20

1. Why do you suppose Bubbie and Popa fell out of touch?
2. Learn more about the Righteous Among the Nations. The list of criteria and a list of people who have been deemed "Righteous" is at https://echoesandreflections.org/wp-content/themes/twentyxteenechoes/fileview.php?source=1&file_nm=2019/02/07-02-03_StudentHandout_YadVashemCriteriaRighteousAmongNations_2_27_19.pdf. There is also an activity through IWitness that uses testimony from both survivors and Righteous, which is at <https://iwitness.usc.edu/SFI/Activity/Detail.aspx?activityID=1875>.
3. Discuss why the author felt the need to nominate Janina Zawadzka and Maria Domovsky as Righteous.
4. Thinking back to the discussion on survivor's guilt, consider the feeling of shame and the inability to laugh that survivors like Bubbie face. Besides fate, what else does the author realize helped her grandmother? Think back on what you have read and list some of those "good decisions" and "desperate measures" Bubbie took.
5. The author mentions the lack of relatives Bubbie has. Blu Greenberg wrote a poem, "Kindergarten, the Bronx" on this very topic in her collection *Black Bread: Poems, After the Holocaust*. It is reprinted here, with permission from the author:

Kindergarten, the Bronx

by Blu Greenberg

Fives and sixes
 And a four-year-old pushed ahead
 Innocent young things
 Beginnings of a pack.

Suzie, home from school
 "Look, mom, I can hop"
 As she hops
 To the kitchen table
 For a snack and rerun
 Of kindergarten intrigue.

"Mom," says the little voice

With a milk moustache
And pink-ribboned ponytails
“What does ant mean?”
“A tiny bug
That crawls in the dirt.”
Says mom smartly
Small knot of fear
Tightening in her belly
“No, Aunt is a lady
Tammy has Aunt Judy
And Michael. . .and Lauren. . .
Do I have an Aunt?”
“No,” says mom
Sensing her neat charade
Is now in danger
“Why not?”

The beribboned ponytails
Press relentlessly forward.

Three aunts
And
The beginning
Of the end
Of Innocence.

Discuss the poem and its connections to both Bubbie and most Holocaust survivors.

6. Discuss Bubbie’s advice to future generations. Ask students to choose one and to write a paragraph about it, and how they can utilize this advice in their own lives. Or you might have them consider what Elie Wiesel said, “When you listen to a witness, you become a witness.” Explain how, after reading this book, you are a witness.
7. Discuss the other Wiesel quote on page 125, and how that helps a prosecutor, like the author.
8. Discuss the terms “upstander” and “bystander” with the students. What does being an upstander look like? Brainstorm actions they can take in their everyday lives. The author mentions standing against injustice. What examples do you see in your own school or community that you could stand up against and speak out? If your school is not involved in ADL’s No Place for Hate program, check it out at adl.org.
9. Looking at the end of this chapter, discuss again why the author wrote this book. What does she want us to learn from it?

Chapter 21

1. What does the pickle mean to Bubbie?
2. Discuss the need for water during the pogrom. Why is it inconceivable to us, today, that it would be so difficult to obtain water? Where else in the world today do we see this problem?
3. Discuss the sacrifice of Bubbie's sister's father-in-law. How can he be seen as a hero?
4. Discuss the poetic devices in "Memories that won't go away." Why would Bubbie choose poetry as a form to write about her feelings? How is writing a poem like "plac[ing] at their graves a wreath"/ (131)?
5. Discuss the paradox in the poem "Life" and how we can relate to it.
6. After reading "1942—A Flashback," discuss again Bubbie's purpose for writing. What does it provide her?
7. We notice repetition in Bubbie's thoughts; for example, in "1942—A Flashback," she once again mentions the lack of water during the pogrom. What does this tell us about her memories and flashbacks? Think about how our memories work and which thoughts may come back to us often, and why. This is a good time for some personal, reflective writing for students, not necessarily shared with the teacher or class.
8. Divide students into groups and assign each group one of Bubbie's poems. Ask each group to look at their assigned poem from two lenses: one, as writers look at what Bubbie did poetically (metaphors, similes, symbols, etc.) and two, as a survivor discuss what event(s) prompted her to write the poem, her purpose for writing it (catharsis, to commemorate, etc.), and what this adds to the story we already know from the rest of the book.

For questions/comments about the book or lesson plans, please contact the author, Adena Astrowsky at: adena.astrowsky@yahoo.com