

**A Teaching Unit
for
The Devil's
Arithmetic**

Jane Yolen



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Teaching Unit
The Devil's Arithmetic
Jane Yolen

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www.elacoreplans.com

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Pre-reading

On the following page, you will find pictures of Stars of David. Cut each star out. On the day that you plan to begin the unit, tape the stars on random desks throughout your classroom.

As students enter the classroom the next day, begin to treat those students who have a star on their desk differently than you do the other students. For example, make them stand instead of sit. Have them remove their shoes and put them under their desks. Take away their pencils and give them to those students who do not have stars. Tell them that they cannot talk, but allow those without stars to talk all they want, etc. Your point is to make the "the have nots" experience just a "pinch" of what it feels like to be mistreated for no reason at all, and to allow the "haves" to experience what it feels like to watch others be mistreated for no apparent reason.

Once you can tell that your point has been made, hold a discussion allowing both students with stars and without to talk about how they felt. This discussion can then lead you into the beginning of your Holocaust unit.

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Pre-reading



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Pre-reading

Objective: Students will read about topics relevant to the novel to gain background information about the Holocaust. Students will use the jigsaw grouping technique so that they can learn from one another.

Research topics:

Passover

Seder

Holocaust

Concentration Camps

Nazis

The Final Solution

Hitler

Divide students into five "jigsaw" groups. Within each group, assign each student one topic to become familiar with. Then, form temporary "expert groups" by joining the students who were assigned the same topic. While in expert groups, students should be given (or find) books or Internet articles on their topic. They should discuss main points of the topic and decide what to present to their original "jigsaw" group. Next, have students return to their original groups and present their findings. Use the group evaluation form provided in this book to have students evaluate each member of their jigsaw group.

Helpful Resource:

Tell Them We Remember: The Story of the Holocaust by Susan D. Bachrach
ISBN# 0-316-07484-5

Smoke and Ashes: The Story of the Holocaust by Barbara Rogasky
ISBN# 0-439-56121-3

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Jigsaw Peer Evaluation Forms

Cut out the following group evaluation charts, and give one to each student.

Jigsaw Peer Evaluation: List each person's name and rate them from 1 to 5. 1 being *not at all*, and 5 being *all the way*.

Group Member's Name	Effectively told about his/her topic (scale of 1-5)	Listened to other members (scale 1-5)

Jigsaw Peer Evaluation: List each person's name and rate them from 1 to 5. 1 being *not at all*, and 5 being *all the way*.

Group Member's Name	Effectively told about his/her topic (scale of 1-5)	Listened to other members (scale 1-5)

Jigsaw Peer Evaluation: List each person's name and rate them from 1 to 5. 1 being *not at all*, and 5 being *all the way*.

Group Member's Name	Effectively told about his/her topic (scale of 1-5)	Listened to other members (scale 1-5)

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Chapter Titles

Jane Yolen does not include chapter titles in her novel. After you read a chapter, create a title for it using the following chart.

Chapter	Title
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	

14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	

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Chapter 2 ~ Hannah's Family Tree & Flashback

Sometimes, at the beginning of a novel, it is easy to lose track of who's who. After reading chapter two, complete the chart to keep track of Hannah's family.

Name	How this person is related to Hannah
Grandpa Will	
Aunt Eva	
Grandpa Dan	
Grandma Belle	

A **flashback** occurs when a story is interrupted for a character to remember something that happens in the past. Summarize the flashback that occurs in this chapter.

What does this flashback reveal about Hannah?

What does the flashback reveal about Grandpa Will?

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Chapter 3 ~ Symbolism and Foreshadowing

Jane Yolen's novel is full of symbolism, and it is introduced in this early chapter.

Symbolism

A symbol is something that stands for something else, like the American flag stands for freedom, and a dove represents peace. It is any object, person, place, or experience that means more than what it is.

A literary symbol has literal meaning in a story but stands for something else.

If something is symbolic, it will most likely

- *be repeated in the book*
- *be written in a memorable or vivid way*
- *be emphasized with imagery*
- *mean something else than what it is*

Opening the door to Elijah is symbolic. What does this ritual symbolize?

What other symbolism can be found in this chapter?

Be on the look out for more symbolism in this novel.

Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing is a clue or hint of what is to come later. Authors use this literary technique to add suspense and affect the tone. Answer the following questions about foreshadowing in this chapter.

At the beginning of the chapter, we read *A full moon was squeezed between two of the project's apartment buildings.* (page 13) When Hannah opens the door for Elijah, we read again about the moon. This time, it states, *The moon hung ripely between two heavy gray clouds.* (page 20) What does the moon foreshadow the second time it is mentioned in this chapter?

At the end of this chapter, Hannah sees a shadowy figure, and hears him singing a song. What does this song foreshadow? What does it seem to mean? Can you use it to predict what will happen next to Hannah?

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Chapter 4 ~ Indirect & Direct Characterization

Discussion

Who is Chaya? In your answer, include what you have learned about her past.

1. **DIRECT CHARACTERIZATION** - The writer makes direct statements about a character's personality and tells what the character is like.

2. **INDIRECT CHARACTERIZATION** - The writer reveals information about a character and his personality through that character's thoughts, words, and actions, along with how other characters respond to that character, including what they think and say about him.

Complete the following charts with as many personality traits as you can about each character, and then decide if the author used direct characterization or if you concluded something about a character through indirect characterization.

<i>Gitl's Traits</i>	<i>Evidence</i>	<i>Type of characterization</i>

<i>Schmuel's Traits</i>	<i>Evidence</i>	<i>Type of characterization</i>

<i>Reb Boruchs Traits</i>	<i>Evidence</i>	<i>Type of characterization</i>

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Chapter 5 ~ Figurative language

Figurative language is often used to create emphasis, freshness of expression, or clarity. Hyperbole, idioms, metaphors, personification, and similes are five types of figurative language. Let's examine some of the different types of figurative language in this chapter.

First, complete the chart on the different types of figurative language.

Type of Figurative Language	Definition	Your Original Example
Hyperbole		
Idiom		
Metaphor		
Personification		
Simile		

Read each of the following examples, and answer the questions that follow.

"Do you think it strange, little Chaya, that I - Shmuel Abramowicz - with an arm like a tree and, as Gitl says, a head like a stone, should be afraid of getting married?"

- In this passage, what type of figurative language is used?
- What does it reveal about Shmuel?
- Why do you think the author included this example of figurative language?
 - a. to create emphasis
 - b. for freshness of expression
 - c. for clarity

He reached out and patted Hannah on the head. "What a strange little bird you are indeed, who has found her way into our nest."

- In this passage, what type of figurative language is used?
- What does it reveal about Hannah?
- Why do you think the author included this example of figurative language?
 - a. to create emphasis
 - b. for freshness of expression
 - c. for clarity

You know so much, my little yeshiva bocher, telling you anything more is carrying straw to Egypt.

- In this passage, what type of figurative language is used?
- What does it mean?
- Why do you think the author included this example of figurative language?
 - a. to create emphasis
 - b. for freshness of expression
 - c. for clarity

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Chapter 6 ~ Chaya and Her New Friends

Name _____

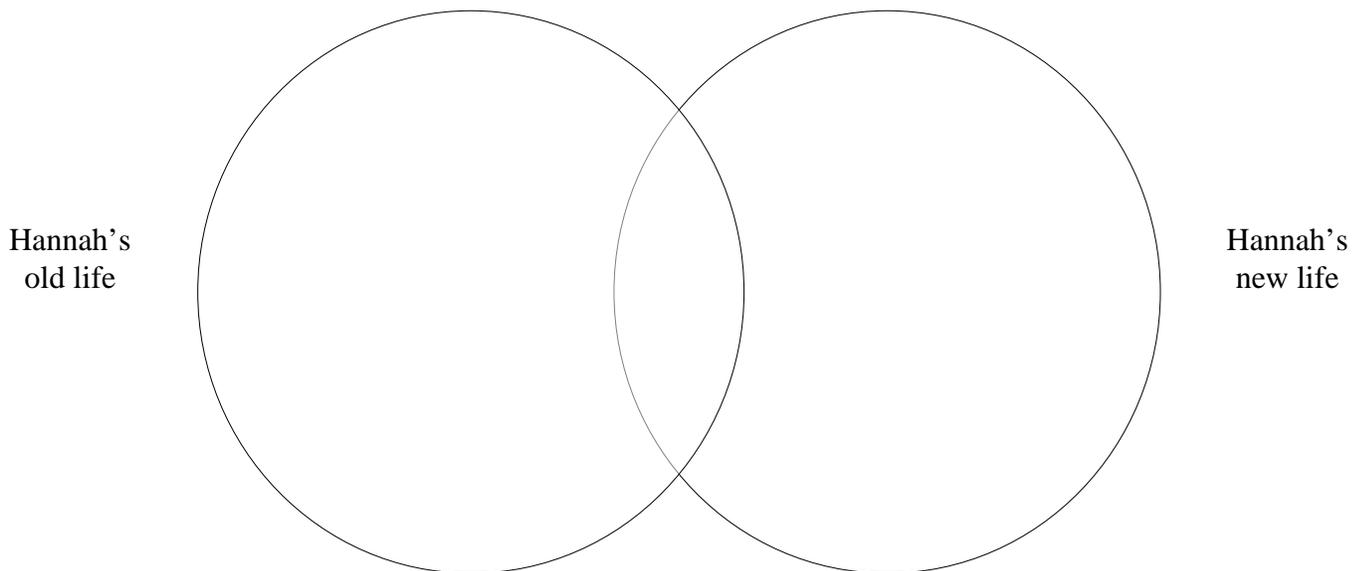
Date _____

Complete the following chart to help you keep track of the new characters in this chapter.

Chaya's (Hannah's) New Friends

Name	What we know about this girl

Use the following Venn diagram to compare and contrast Hannah's old life in New Rochelle to the life that her new friends have where she is now.



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Chapter 7 ~ The Badchan's Poem

Name _____

Date _____

In this chapter, we meet the very interesting Badchan. Reread the following poem that he says to Hannah, and then answer the questions about the poem.

*Pretty girl, with faraway eyes
Why do you look with such surprise?
How did you get to be so wise?
Old girl in young girl disguise.*

Let's analyze the poem by looking at each line of it. On the following lines, write what you think the badchan may mean. Put it in your own words, and try to "read into" what the badchan sees in Hannah and is trying to say to her. Do not be afraid to write what you are thinking. There are no wrong answers.

My thoughts:

Line 1: _____

Line 2: _____

Line 3: _____

Line 4: _____

What is the rhyme scheme of this short poem? _____

Write a short poem that the badchan could recite to Gitl or Shmuel. Use the same rhyme scheme that is used in the badchan's poem to Chaya.

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Test Chapters 1-7

Name _____

Date _____

1. What is Hannah's attitude about going to the Seder at the beginning of the book?
 - a. She is looking forward to it.
 - b. She is sorry that she is going to miss it.
 - c. She does not want to go and is dreading it.
 - d. She is overly excited about going.

Hannah rolled her eyes up and slipped farther down in the seat. Her stomach felt heavy, as if the argument lay there like unleavened bread.

2. What type of figurative language is used in this passage, and why did Jane Yolen most likely use this figurative language?
 - a. A simile used most likely to create emphasis
 - b. a metaphor used most likely to draw attention
 - c. a simile used most likely for freshness of expression
 - d. an idiom used most likely to create suspense

3. Hannah was named after _____.
 - a. her grandmother
 - b. Aunt Eva's dead friend
 - c. Aunt Rose
 - d. her mother's sister

4. Why did Hannah once use a ballpoint pen to write a string of numbers on the inside of her left arm?
 - a. She wanted to know what it would feel like to have a tattoo.
 - b. She wanted attention from her parents.
 - c. She wanted to upset her grandfather.
 - d. She wanted to please her grandfather.

5. How is Aunt Eva related to Grandpa Will?
 - a. They are cousins.
 - b. They are brother and sister.
 - c. They are in-laws.
 - d. They are old friends.

During the endless seder dinner and the even more endless explanations from the Haggadah, Hannah frequently glanced out the window. A full moon was squeezed between two of the projects apartment buildings.

6. Which of the following might the moon in the passage symbolize?
 - a. Hannah because she has squeezed in some time for her grandparents
 - b. The night sky and how dark it is
 - c. Hannah because she feels uncomfortable at the Seder
 - d. Aaron because he has to recite the four questions

Grandpa Will had a voice that buzzed like the plague of locusts.

7. What does this simile reveal about how Hannah views her grandfather's speeches about the past?
- She views his stories as long and boring.
 - She views his stories as exciting and suspenseful.
 - She views his stories in a sad and emotional manner.
 - She views his stories as pointless and silly.

8. How old is Hannah?

- ten
- twelve
- thirteen
- sixteen

9. What is the afikoman?

- a book
- a block of wood
- bread
- tea

A black stove, pouring out heat, squatted against the far wall.

10. What type of figurative language is used in this sentence?

- idiom
- metaphor
- personification
- simile

...just then the bearded man marched into the house, having dropped his hoe somewhere outside. He grabbed Hannah before she could protest and spun her around.

"Hallo, little niece. Give your almost-married Uncle Shmuel a hug."

11. What can the reader infer about Shmuel from his actions and words in this passage?

- He is timid and hardworking.
- He loves Gitl very much.
- He is playful and affectionate.
- He is easily angered.

"I would not go to America for Avrom Morowitz even if he sent a thousand letters. I will live and die in this shtetl, as did our parents and as did their parents before them. That is how it should be.

12. Gitl's words in this passage allow the reader to infer that she is _____.

- determined and proud of her home
- caring and compassionate
- wealthy and dependent
- sad and lonely

"What a strange little bird you are indeed, who has found her way into our nest."

13. Why is this metaphor effective?
- a. It describes Hannah as being a strange person.
 - b. It describes Hannah being in a strange place and time.
 - c. It describes Hannah's strange sense of humor.
 - d. It compares Hannah to a bird.
14. In the beginning of the novel, Hannah struggles to make sense of what is happening to her. This conflict is mostly _____.
- a. internal
 - b. external
 - c. neither of these

"There, there, child, forgive me. I am crazy with all this wedding business, and my tongue is sometimes quicker than my heart. Put on the dress." (page 43)

15. What does the underlined portion of this passage mean?
- a. I sometimes speak before I can think about what I should do.
 - b. My tongue moves much faster than my heart beats.
 - c. I sometimes think too much before speaking.
 - d. I tend to reason too much when I say something.
16. Which of the following is not a contrast in Hannah's old life in New Rochelle and the one she finds herself in now?
- a. marriage arrangements
 - b. bathrooms in houses
 - c. school
 - d. the need for friends

*Pretty girl, with faraway eyes
Why do you look with such surprise?
How did you get to be so wise,
Old girl in young-girl disguise*

17. What is the rhyme scheme in this poem spoken by the badchan?
- a. abab b. aaab c. aaaa d. abba
18. What is meant by the last line of the badchan's rhyme?
- a. Hannah looks old in her dress, and that is why she is wise.
 - b. Hannah tries to act like she is grown.
 - c. Hannah looks young but has the wisdom of someone much older.
 - d. Hannah is dressed like an old woman.
19. What does the name Chaya mean?
- a. love b. life c. wisdom d. luck
20. What does the badchan remind Hannah of?
- a. a clown
 - b. a prince
 - c. a cowboy
 - d. a court jester

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Answer Keys Chapters 1-7

Chapter 2

Name	How this person is related to Hannah
Grandpa Will	Hannah's father's father
Aunt Eva	Grandpa Will's sister – Hannah's great aunt
Grandpa Dan	Hannah's mother's father
Grandma Belle	Grandpa Will's wife – Hannah's grandmother

Summarize the flashback that occurs in this chapter. Hannah remembers as a child writing a number on her arm with an ink pen. She did this to try and gain attention from her grandfather because he also had a number on his arm. Grandpa Will became enraged, however, when he saw the number, and Hannah has never forgotten his reaction.

What does this flashback reveal about Hannah? This flashback lets us know that Hannah is still a little frightened by her grandfather, and she doesn't really understand why he acts the way he does sometimes. She sees him as unstable.

What does the flashback reveal about Grandpa Will? This flashback shows us that Grandpa Will is still haunted by the Holocaust and that the memories can be triggered in his mind and torment him.

Chapter 3

Opening the door to Elijah is symbolic. What does this ritual symbolize?

This could symbolize the family's way of becoming prepared to remember. It symbolizes an invitation to think on their ancestors. It may also be symbolic of the coming of the Messiah.

What other symbolism can be found in this chapter?

The afikoman can symbolize the knowing and not knowing of life.

Be on the look out for more symbolism in this novel.

Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing is a clue or hint of what is to come later. Authors use this literary technique to add suspense and affect the tone. Answer the following questions about foreshadowing in this chapter.

At the beginning of the chapter, we read *A full moon was squeezed between two of the project's apartment buildings.* (page 13) When Hannah opens the door for Elijah, we read again about the moon. This time, it states, *The moon hung ripely between two heavy gray clouds.* (page 20) What does the moon foreshadow the second time it is mentioned in this chapter?

At the beginning of the chapter, the moon is squeezed between two of the project's apartment buildings. This could represent how Hannah feels at this point. She does not want to go to the Seder and is not looking forward to any of it. Later, when the moon is hung ripely between two heavy gray clouds, this could represent Hannah again. Once the door is opened, Hannah is transported to another world. Like the moon, she is now "ripe" and ready to embark on a journey. The gray clouds may also symbolize how what is ahead may not be positive. The change of the moon can foreshadow the changes that are coming up for Hannah.

At the end of this chapter, Hannah sees a shadowy figure, and hears him singing a song. What does this song foreshadow? What does it seem to mean? Can you use it to predict what will happen next to Hannah? *This song seems to foreshadow evil and death.*

At the end of this chapter, Hannah sees a shadowy figure, and hears him singing a song. What does this song foreshadow? What does it seem to mean? Can you use it to predict what will happen next to Hannah? *Accept reasonable predictions.*

Chapter 4 **Sample answers**

Gill's Traits	Evidence	Type of characterization
hard worker	<i>...wore a smudged apron, sleeves rolled up, flour covered her arms</i>	indirect

concerned	"What is it child?" "Are you all right? Does anything hurt?"	indirect
traditional	I will live and die in this shtetl, as did our parents and as did their parents... That is how it should be.	indirect
Schmuel's Traits	Evidence	Type of characterization
playful	...grabbed Hannah...spun her around	indirect
sympathetic	...you know how you and I and Moishe were when our parent's died...	indirect
optimistic	...we'll put weight on her and color in her cheeks. The laughter will return."	indirect
Reb Boruchs Traits	Evidence	Type of characterization
Solemn	...Reb Boruch is a solemn man...	direct

Chapter 5

Type of Figurative Language	Definition	Your Original Example
Hyperbole	Extreme exaggeration	
Idiom	Says one thing but means another	
Metaphor	Calls one thing another	
Personification	Giving human traits to something non-human	
Simile	Comparing two things using like or as	

Read each of the following examples from chapter five, and answer the questions that follow.

"Do you think it strange, little Chaya, that I – Shmuel Abramowicz – with an arm like a tree and, as Gitl says, a head like a stone, should be afraid of getting married?"

- In this passage, what type of figurative language is used? **simile**
- What does it reveal about Shmuel? **He is strong and hardheaded**
- Why do you think the author included this example of figurative language?
 - a. **to create emphasis**
 - b. for freshness of expression
 - c. for clarity

He reached out and patted Hannah on the head. "What a strange little bird you are indeed, who has found her way into our nest."

- In this passage, what type of figurative language is used? **metaphor**
- What does it reveal about Hannah? **She feels and seems out of place and is in a strange place. Not only does Hannah realize this, but so do Shmuel and Gitl**
- Why do you think the author included this example of figurative language?
 - a. **to create emphasis**
 - b. for freshness of expression
 - c. for clarity

You know so much, my little yeshiva bocher, telling you anything more is carrying straw to Egypt.

- In this passage, what type of figurative language is used? **idiom**
- What does it mean? **Anything more is useless**
- Why do you think the author included this example of figurative language?
 - a. to create emphasis
 - b. **for freshness of expression**
 - c. for clarity

Chapter 6

Chaya's (Hannah's) New Friends

Name	What we know about this girl
Shifre	pale freckled face, very light eyelashes
Esther	plump, rosy cheeks, a mouth that rests in a pout
Yente	"ferrety" face – sharp chin and nose, yellowish complexion
Rachel	Chaya's best friend in the shtetl, talks in a breathless manner

Suggestions for the Venn diagram:

Hannah's Old life – goes to school, has a brother, parents are alive, has braces, is called Hannah, eats cereal for breakfast, lives in a large city

Things alike in both lives – Jewish, heart-shaped face, slightly crooked smile, gray eyes, brown hair

Hannah's New life – is an only child, parents are dead, is called Chaya, she lives in a small shtetl

Chapter 7

My thoughts: Accept reasonable responses.

What is the rhyme scheme of this short poem? **aaaa**

Write a short poem that the badchan could recite to Gitl or Shmuel. Use the same rhyme scheme that is used in the badchan's poem to Chaya. **Accept reasonable poems.**

Test

Question #	Answer
1	C
2	A
3	B
4	D
5	B
6	C
7	A
8	B
9	C
10	C
11	C
12	A
13	B
14	A
15	A
16	D
17	C
18	C
19	B
20	D

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Chapters 8 ~ Tone & Foreshadowing

Name _____

Date _____

Tone is the attitude that a writer takes toward the audience, a subject, or a character. Tone is conveyed through the writer's choice of words and details.

Let's take a look at tone in this chapter, and analyze how the author creates the different tones.

Read the following passage from page 61.

*When Hannah looked up again, she could see Viosk laid out at the far end of the meadow, **picture-postcard pretty**. Small houses **nestled** in a line, and the larger buildings, none higher than three stories, stood behind, **like mothers with their children**.*

*As the horses pulled them closer, Hannah could distinguish a central open market with stalls, surrounded by stores. There was a pharmacy topped by a large black sign, a barbershop with its **familiar** peppermint stick, a glass-fronted tavern, and a dozen other shops. In the middle of the market, a tall wooden pole supported a bell. Behind the open market was a towering wooden building with four separate roofed sections and fenced in courtyards. The dominant color was **brown**: brown wooden buildings, brown **sandy** streets, as if it were a **faded photograph**. Yet it was real.*

- Look at the bolded words and details from this passage. These words and details help to create a tone. What words would you use to describe the tone of this passage?

There is a contrasting tone on the same page when Fayge sees the automobiles and trucks in front of the shul.

Hannah looked where Fayge was pointing. In the middle of the brown landscape, like a dark stain, were three black old-fashioned cars and twelve army trucks strung out behind. She gave an involuntary shudder.

- What is the tone in this passage? _____
- Underline the words, details, or descriptions that contribute to this tone.

Foreshadowing contributes to tone.

Somehow the badchan materialized in front of the wagon. He pointed to the man with the medals and cried out, "I see the malah ha-mavis. I see the Angel of Death."

What does this foreshadow? _____

How does it contribute to the tone? _____

As they moved closer, more men in dark uniforms got out of the cars and truck cabs. They made a perfect half circle in front of the synagogue doors, like a steel trap with gaping jaws ready to be sprung.

What does this foreshadow? _____

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Chapters 9 ~ Allusion

Name _____

Date _____

An allusion is a reference to a person, a historical event, or a fictional character or story. Writers usually expect the readers to recognize an allusion.

"Your words will fly up to heaven and call down the Angel of Death, Lilith's Bridegroom, with his poisoned sword." (page 67)

In this passage, Lilith's Bridegroom is an allusion. There is a myth about Lilith. According to Jewish folklore, Lilith was the first wife of Adam. She was told to be evil and was banished from the Garden of Eden. Some of these folktales describe how Lilith captured Jewish babies in the night and ate them.

There is another allusion on page 67. What is it? _____

What do these allusions on page 67 foreshadow?

Go back to page fifty. List the allusions that are included on that page.

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Chapters 10 ~ Bringing to Life the Harsh Reality

Using Word Choice, Dialogue, and Details

Name _____

Date _____

This chapter brings to life some of the harsh realities of the Holocaust. Let us examine how the author brings these horrific events to life for the reader.

First, write about your reactions to this chapter. Free write about what you thought and felt as you read what happened to the characters on the train.

Now, let's take a look at what Jane Yolen does to capture these events and relate them to us in a realistic way. She does this through word choice, details, and dialogue.

What is the tone of this chapter? Some words to describe the tone of this novel are dreadful, appalling, and terrible. Do any other words come to your mind when thinking of the tone?

Reread pages 77-83. Look for words, details, and dialogue that create such a realness and contribute to the tone. Complete the chart with the words, details, and dialogue that you choose.

Words that contribute to the tone	Details that contribute to the tone	Dialogue that contributes to the tone
<i>Hurt</i>	<i>One of the women smelled of garlic</i>	<i>"We're locked in!"</i>

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Chapters 11 ~ Writing Opportunity

Name _____

Date _____

At the end of this chapter, Hannah loses her memory when her head is shaved.
Debatable Question: Do you think it is better for her to know what is happening to her at the camp, or do you think it is better for her not to know?

Use the T-chart on this page to list the pros of both sides of the debate. Then, choose a side to defend. Write an essay explaining your choice and defend your answer with reasons and examples. Make sure your essay includes an introduction, body, and conclusion.

It is better to know.

It is better not to know.

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Chapters 11 & 12 ~ Irony

Name _____

Date _____

Verbal irony involves a contrast between what is said or written and what is meant. Example: if you call a really tall person, "Shorty"

Situational irony occurs when what happens is very different from what is expected to happen. Example: A man who has been afraid to fly in a plane all of his life finally gets the courage to do it, and then the plane crashes.

Dramatic irony occurs when the audience or the reader knows something a character does not know. Example: The reader knows who the criminal is, but the characters do not know.

After reading the definitions of the three types of irony, complete the following chart. Read each passage, decide which of the three types of irony is used, and then explain how you know that the type of irony you chose is correct.

Passage	Type of irony used	Explanation
<i>"Down there!" a soldier shouted, gesturing with his rifle. Part of the moon still hung in the sky, a pale halo over his blond head.</i>		
<i>To the side of the barracks was a small, pretty house where early spring flowers were opening. A wrought iron gate stood in front of the buildings, and over the gate was a sign proclaiming in large black letters: ARBEIT MACHT FREI</i>		
<i>"I'll give them this!" She couldn't think who it was or what he was giving to whom.</i>		
<i>That is my daughter's dress you are wearing, Chaya Abramowicz. My Chaya. I brought it as a present for her in Lublin. ... "The same name, too. God is good. Your name means life."</i>		

The Devil's Arithmetic
Chapter 13 ~ Discussion Questions

Name _____

Date _____

This chapter continues to tell of the shocking and horrendous events of the Holocaust.

Write about your response to little Tzipporah's death. If you feel anger toward the Nazis, express it in what you write.

How does Jane Yolen make Tzipporah's death so unforgettable and real? What details will linger in your memory?

On page 110, we read the following passage: *Above them, a quartet of swallows dipped and circled, twittering madly as they plunged after insects. There was a drone of machinery somewhere off to the right. In the distance, beyond another long row of barracks, Hannah could see a single strand of smoke rising against the bright spring sky, curling endlessly out of a tall chimney stack.*

What might the swallows symbolize?

Why do you think the author included the contrast of the smoke and the bright spring sky?

The Devil's Arithmetic

Chapter 14 ~ Elaborate on a Quote & Know the Language

Name _____

Date _____

Elaborate on a Quote

Choose one of the following passages from chapter fourteen to write about. On a separate sheet of paper, explain how the quote that you choose is relevant to Chaya and those like her who were part of the Holocaust. You may write your response as prose or as poetry.

- If you are alive now, this minute, it is enough. (page 112)
- It is a brutal arithmetic. (page 113)
- This is the Devil's place. (page 113)
- As long as we can remember, all those gone before us are alive inside us. (page 113)
- We count our luck with a different measure here in the camp. (page 119)

Know the language

What do the following terms mean?

Musselmen

Sonderkommando

Organize

Midden

The Devil's Arithmetic

Test Chapters 8-14

Name _____

Date _____

Somehow the badchan materialized in front of the wagon. He pointed to the man with the medals and cried out, "I see the Malah ha-mavis. I see the Angel of Death."

1. Which of the following words describe the tone in this passage?

- a. foreboding
- b. anxious
- c. encouraging
- d. clever

"Yes, Gitl," Rachel said. "And there is a witch who shoves little boys into ovens and eats them!"

2. This reference to the fairy tale "Hansel and Gretel" is called a(n) _____.

- a. euphemism
- b. allusion
- c. paradox
- d. symbol

"Nevertheless," the colonel continued, smiling, "in this matter, we will make the ruling.

When you get to your new homes, anyone who wants to work will be treated humanely. And you will be happy among your own people, just as we will be happy you have followed the government's orders."

"The snake smiles but it shows no teeth," murmured the badchan.

3. What does the statement made by the badchan in this passage mean?

- a. The colonel is deceiving them.
- b. The colonel looks like a snake.
- c. The colonel will bite if they do not obey.
- d. The colonel is telling them the truth.

4. Which of the following best describes the badchan?

- a. sneaky and conniving
- b. unhealthy and sluggish
- c. cruel and angry
- d. telepathic and wise

Raising his hands, the rabbi began to speak. "The colonel has assured me that some of his soldiers will remain billeted here to guard our stores and houses and schools from harm while we are gone. At my request, the soldiers will pay special attention to the shul to make sure the peasants do not desecrate it."

"Better the fox to guard the hens and the wolves to guard the sheep," the badchan said.

5. What does the badchan's statement in this passage mean?

- a. He means that the shul won't be guarded; it will be destroyed.
- b. He means that the shul will be in good hands.
- c. He means that the colonel will get wolves and foxes to guard the shul.
- d. He means that the shul will be rebuilt.

6. When Chaya and her family and friends are in the truck, Gitl begins to sing a song. One verse of the song is: *Sir, give me a piece of bread, Look at me so pale and dead.* What literary device is used in this verse?

- a. a euphemism
- b. foreshadowing
- c. a flashback
- d. alliteration

Two wooden boxcars squatted on a nearby siding.

7. What type of figurative language is used in this sentence?

- a. idiom
- b. metaphor
- c. personification
- d. simile

The rabbi cleared his throat loudly. "These are just rumors and gossip. The proverbs say 'He who harps on a matter alienates his friend.'(page 81)

8. Which of the following literary techniques is used in this passage?

- a. an allusion
- b. a euphemism
- c. symbolism
- d. irony

9. Which of the following does Gitl constantly call the Nazis?

- a. Strangers
- b. Murderers
- c. Monsters
- d. Killers

10. Who are *zugangi*?

- a. the Nazi soldiers
- b. those in charge of the barracks
- c. the newcomers
- d. those who give out food

11. What happened to Rachel?

- a. She died on the train because she had trouble breathing.
- b. She was killed by the Nazis in the gas ovens.
- c. She died of hunger two days after arriving at the camp.
- d. She escaped when the train arrived at the camp.

12. What happened to Hannah when her hair was shaved?

- a. She began to cry and could not stop.
- b. She prayed that it would grow back soon.
- c. She lost her ability to feel any emotion.
- d. She could no longer recall anything from the past.

"Yes, child," Gitl answered. "But promise me you will cry no more before these monsters. We will never cry again."

13. What can we infer about Gitl from these words that she spoke to Chaya?

- a. Gitl has pride and refuses to let the guards have the satisfaction of seeing them hurt.
- b. Gitl is angry and wishes to laugh in the guards faces instead of cry.
- c. Gitl is afraid and vows not to cry for fear that she will be killed.
- d. Gitl is a coward and refuses to cry because she doesn't want anyone to know it.

Hannah suddenly heard a child's voice, as if from far away, saying, "Hannah, look where I hid..." She couldn't think who the child was. Or who Hannah was. Her head hurt with trying to remember.

14. What type of irony is used in this passage?

- a. Dramatic irony
- b. Situational irony
- c. Verbal irony
- d. All of the above

Little Tzipporah was next, and Hannah held the child on her lap, covering her eyes with ice-cold hands and crooning a song into her ears. It was a wedding song, the only song she could come up with, something about a madness forced upon them.

15. Why is this "wedding song" appropriate for the situation?

- a. It describes someone's hair being shaved.
- b. It is a very sad song and emphasizes how sad they are in the camp.
- c. It talks about a madness forced upon them, which is what they are facing.
- d. It reminds little Tzipporah of the wedding that they were going to attend.

16. Who is Mr. Unsward?

- a. Hannah's uncle
- b. The badchan
- c. Hannah's teacher
- d. A Nazi guard

17. What is the midden?

- a. the kitchen
- b. a jail cell
- c. the place behind the barracks
- d. the garbage dump

18. What is Lilith's cave?

- a. the Midden
- b. the place where the gas chambers are
- c. a dark cave
- d. the Nazi's headquarters

19. Which of the following best describes Rivka?

- a. caring leader
- b. dependent
- c. selfish friend
- d. timid

"We count our luck with a different measure here in the camp."

20. What does Rivka mean by this?

- a. Just being alive is luck in the camp.
- b. It takes much more than usual to call yourself lucky in the camp.
- c. There is no luck in the camp.
- d. You can only call yourself lucky if you work in the kitchen at the camp.

Read the following passage and answer questions 21 and 23.

Just then Reb Boruch cleared his throat loudly and all the little knots of people who had been talking fell silent.

21. What does this passage reveal to the reader about Reb Boruch?

- a. He has a cold.
- b. He is somewhat rude and often interrupts other people's conversations.
- c. He is highly thought of by others and greatly respected.
- d. He is very talkative and enjoys hearing himself talk.

22. What type of characterization is this?

- a. direct
- b. indirect
- c. both of these
- d. none of these

23. Which of the following meanings is for *knot* as it is used in the passage?

- a. the base of a woody branch enclosed in the stem from which it arises
- b. a tight constriction
- c. a division of the log's line serving to measure a ship's speed
- d. a cluster

24. What type of figurative language is used in the following?

And the blood on the snow, my Uncle Moishe who was there said, was like rose petals falling.

- a. hyperbole
- b. idiom
- c. metaphor
- d. simile

25. - 28. Match each of the following words with their English translation.

25. Schnell

26. Malach ha-mavis

27. Sonderkommando

28. Shmatte

- a. angel of death
- b. rag
- c. hurry
- d. walking dead

29. Which word(s) in the following passage is an example of onomatopoeia?

Shifre's two pale braids came off whole, landing with a soft thud-thud on the floor.

- a. landing
- b. pale
- c. thud-thud
- d. came off

30. - 32. Discussion / Constructed response Questions: Answer these questions in complete sentences.

30. What conclusions can you draw about Gitl at this point in the novel? How does her character differ from Fayge?

31. *Chaya* means life. Do you feel that is an appropriate name for Hannah in her "new world"? Why?

32. Based on what we have read so far, what do you think is the most brutal thing that has happened to the Jews? Explain why you feel this way.

The Devil's Arithmetic

Answer Keys Chapters 8-14

Chapters 8

Read the following passage from page 61.

When Hannah looked up again, she could see Viosk laid out at the far end of the meadow, **picture-postcard pretty**. Small houses **nestled** in a line, and the larger buildings, none higher than three stories, stood behind, **like mothers with their children**.

As the horses pulled them closer, Hannah could distinguish a central open market with stalls, surrounded by stores. There was a pharmacy topped by a large black sign, a barbershop with its **familiar** peppermint stick, a glass-fronted tavern, and a dozen other shops. In the middle of the market, a tall wooden pole supported a bell. Behind the open market was a towering wooden building with four separate roofed sections and fenced in courtyards. The dominant color was **brown**: brown wooden buildings, brown **sandy** streets, as if it were a **faded photograph**. Yet it was real.

- Look at the bolded words and details from this passage. These words and details help to create a tone. What words would you use to describe the tone of this passage?

nostalgic peaceful soothing

There is a contrasting tone on the same page when Fayge sees the automobiles and trucks in front of the shul.

Hannah looked where Fayge was pointing. In the middle of the brown landscape, like a dark stain, were three black old-fashioned cars and twelve army trucks strung out behind. She gave an involuntary shudder.

- What is the tone in this passage? ugly, harsh, frightful
- Underline the words, details, or descriptions that contribute to this tone.

Foreshadowing contributes to tone.

Somehow the badchan materialized in front of the wagon. He pointed to the man with the medals and cried out, "I see the malah ha-mavis. I see the Angel of Death."

What does this foreshadow? a death of some sort

How does it contribute to the tone? It makes it more mysterious and frightful.

As they moved closer, more men in dark uniforms got out of the cars and truck cabs. They made a perfect half circle in front of the synagogue doors, like a steel trap with gaping jaws ready to be sprung.

What does this foreshadow? It foreshadows the fact that the Jews are about to be placed in the "jaws" of the Nazi soldiers.

Chapters 9

There is another allusion on page 67. What is it? the famous fairy tale story of Hansel and Gretel

What do these allusions on page 67 foreshadow? These allusions foreshadow the death that is imminent for many of the Jews traveling with Chaya.

Go back to page fifty. List the allusions that are included on that page.

Conan the Barbarian, Star Wars, Fiddler on the Roof, Little Women, Barbara Streisand

Chapters 10

First, write about your reactions to this chapter. Free write about what you thought and felt as you read what happened to the characters on the train. **Accept reasonable responses.**

What is the tone of this chapter? Some words to describe the tone of this novel are dreadful, appalling, and terrible. Do any other words come to your mind when thinking of the tone?

horrific, gruesome, ghastly, melancholy, revealing, profound

Reread pages 77-83. Look for words, details, and dialogue that create such a realness and contribute to the tone. Complete the chart with the words, details, and dialogue that you choose.

Words that contribute to the tone	Details that contribute to the tone	Dialogue that contributes to the tone
Hurt	One of the women smelled of garlic	"We're locked in!"
tears	...ran their fingers across their throats	"Help! Help us"
screaming	Hannah wept.	"Oh my God...The child is dead."
helpless	...a nightmare	"The children will hear you and be afraid."
hot	...exhausted by all the screaming and tears...	"They were beaten."

Chapters 11

Accept reasonable responses.

Chapters 11 & 12

After reading the definitions of the three types of irony, complete the following chart. Read each passage, decide which of the three types of irony is used, and then explain how you know that the type of irony you chose is correct.

Passage	Type of irony used	Explanation
"Down there!" a soldier shouted, gesturing with his rifle. Part of the moon still hung in the sky, a pale halo over his blond head.	situational	It is unexpected that an evil, sinister soldier such as this would have a halo. halo = goodness Nazi soldier = evil
To the side of the barracks was a small, pretty house where early spring flowers were opening. A wrought iron gate stood in front of the buildings, and over the gate was a sign proclaiming in large black letters: ARBEIT MACHT FREI	situational	Pretty things surrounding an awful place are unexpected. It is a contrast between the pretty house and the awful concentration camp. The sign says "Work Makes You Free" – but the large majority of the Jews were never free again – even after so much hard work was forced upon them.
"I'll give them this!" She couldn't think who it was or what he was giving to whom.	dramatic	We, the reader, know that it was said by Grandpa Will.
That is my daughter's dress you are wearing, Chaya Abramowicz. My Chaya. I brought it as a present for her in Lublin. ... "The same name, too. God is good. Your name means life."	situational	They have the same name and dress. Her names means life and God is good but they are all surrounded by evil and death.

Chapter 13

Write about your response to little Tzipporah's death. If you feel anger toward the Nazis, express it in what you write.

Accept reasonable responses.

How does Jane Yolen make Tzipporah's death so unforgettable and real? What details will linger in your memory?

Sample answers: The image of little Tripporah is unforgettable.

...lay curled in a ball, her finger in her mouth like a stopper in a bottle.

...a fly was on her cheek.

What might the swallows symbolize? (Sample answers)

life- the indifference of nature to the struggles that those in the camps faced

hope- life will return to normal

life goes on regardless of evils and hardships people face every day

Why do you think the author included the contrast of the smoke and the bright spring sky To show that even with all of the evil in the camps, the world around them continued as normal. Life is often a contrast of good and evil.

Chapter 14

Elaborate on a Quote **Accept reasonable responses. Sample poem:**

As long as we can remember,
 all those gone before us are alive inside us.
 Inside our hearts and our minds,
 We will keep them safe.
 We will always know that you were forced out
 of your homes and villages
 without the chance for good-byes.
 We will remember the train rides,
 the numbers forced upon you,
 and the hunger and cold you had to endure.
 You were treated without respect –
 less humanely than animals.

Know the language

Musselmen – **those who have given up the will to live**

Organize – **find/steal items needed for surviving in the camps**

Sonderkommando – **walking dead**

Midden - **garbage or sewer pile**

Test

Question #	Answer
1	a
2	b
3	a
4	d
5	a
6	b
7	c
8	a
9	c
10	c
11	a
12	d
13	a
14	a
15	c
16	c
17	d
18	b
19	a
20	a
21	c
22	b
23	d
24	d
25	c
26	a
27	d
28	b
29	c
Discussion Questions (30-32)	Accept reasonable answers.

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Chapter 15 ~ Imagery & Euphemisms

Name _____

Date _____

Imagery is language that creates a sensory impression within the reader's mind. It allows the reader to see, hear, feel, smell, or even taste what is happening in the story. Imagery makes the reader feel like he/she is there, in the story, experiencing the same things that the character is experiencing.

Reread the following description of the midden from page 123. Underline the words and phrases that create imagery in this passage.

She waded through a mixture of old rags, used bandages, the emptied-out waste of the slop buckets. The midden smell was overwhelming. Though she'd already gotten used to the pervasive camp smell, a cloudy musk that seemed to hang over everything, a mix of sweat and fear and sickness and the ever-present smoke that stained the sky, the smell in the midden was worse. She closed her eyes, and lowered herself into the garbage, the baby clutched in her arms.

What other passages do you remember from this book that contain imagery?

Euphemisms

A euphemism is a substitution of a mild or less negative word or phrase for a harsh or blunt one. For example, "pass away" is a euphemism for "die".

The Nazis and Jews used euphemisms in the concentration camps. Tell what each of the following euphemisms really mean. The first one has been done for you.

Word or phrase used	Is a euphemism for...
Pieces of drek, shmattes	rags
Processed	
Chosen	
Organized	

Why did they use these euphemisms? _____

The Devil's Arithmetic

Chapter 16 ~ The Werewolf Whose Heart was Satan's & Sentence Fluency & Discussion

Name _____

Date _____

Sentence Fluency

Sentence fluency is what makes a text sound good and flow and makes reading aloud easy. Effective sentence fluency occurs when there are variations in structure and length.

Authors sometimes use sentence fluency to create suspense or to add meaning to what they are writing. Such is the case in chapter sixteen of *The Devil's Arithmetic*.

*And so one day eroded into the next. Her memories became camp memories only: **the day a guard gave her a piece of sausage and asked for nothing in return. The morning a new shipment of zungari arrived. The morning a new shipment didn't arrive. The afternoon Gitl organized a rope and the children all played jumping games after dinner. And that same night when redheaded Masha from Krakow hanged herself with the jump rope, having learned that her husband and seventeen-year-old son had gone up the smokestack.***

Notice how the bolded sentences are all about the same length, and they all start with the word *the*. She most likely did this on purpose to mimic the monotony of the days in the camp. The last sentence is a long sentence, most likely to pick up the flow, and to add emphasis and draw attention to this horrible act in the midst of all of the monotony.

Discussion

1. Write about Rueven's death. What did you feel as you read this part of the book? Describe your feelings.

2. Which of these statements do you think is true? Hannah's ("We are all monsters...because we are letting it happen.") or Rivka's ("We are all heroes here.")? Defend your answer.

3. Go back and read page 143 where Fayge tells the story about how young Israel led a small band of children against a werewolf whose heart was Satan's.

Work with a partner to determine the meaning of this story.

This story is about:

This story means:

The symbolism in this story:

The Devil's Arithmetic

Chapter 17 ~ Suspense

Name _____

Date _____

Suspense is the uncertainty or anxiety you feel about what will happen next in the story. It is what puts you on the edge of your seat and makes you want to keep reading.

In this chapter, Gitl and Chaya are part of an escape plan. It is the perfect place for suspense, and Jane Yolen does not let us down. Reread the following passage from page 147:

Hannah looked up. There was no moon. Above them, in the cloudless sky, stars were scattered as thick as sand. A small, warm breeze blew across the compound. Night insects chirruped. Hannah took a deep breath. The air was sweet-smelling, fresh, new. A dog barked suddenly and a harsh voice quieted it with a command.

Gitl pulled Hannah back against the barrack's wall. Hannah could feel the fear threatening to scream out of her, so she dropped the shoes and put both hands over her mouth, effectively gagging herself. There was a wetness under her arms, between her legs, down her back. She moaned.

Yolen has definitely created suspense in this passage. Let's try to figure out how she did it. Answer the following questions.

1. As you can see by the bolded sentences, many of the sentences in this passage are short. How does Yolen's use of this type of sentence fluency create suspense?

2. What details or sentences are included in this passage to slow the action down for this event?

3. What else contributes to the suspense in this passage?

The Devil's Arithmetic

Chapter 18 ~ Discussion

Name _____

Date _____

"Silence!" Breuer said, his voice hardly raised at all. "If you are silent, I will let you watch."

They were all silent. Not, Hannah thought, because they wanted to watch, but because they wanted to be witnesses. And because they had no other choice.

- What is the difference in watching and witnessing in this passage? Why would it be important to witness what happened to Shmuel and the other five men?

*The guards dragged the men to a solid wall that stood next to the gate. The wall was pocked with holes and dark stains. To the right and above, the sign **ARBEIT MACHT FREI** swung creakingly in the wind. **Birds cried out merrily from the woods and the tops of the trees danced to rhythms all their own.***

- Why do you think the author chose to include the bolded part of this passage?

- What do you think happened to Yitzchak?

- What happens at the end of this chapter to Hannah (Chaya)? How is she changing?

The Devil's Arithmetic
Chapter 19 & Epilogue ~ Discussion

Name _____

Date _____

Who is Rivka? _____

What happened to Yitzchak? _____

What happened to Gitl? _____

In the epilogue, there is an allusion to Winston Churchill. He is quoted as saying, "*There is no doubt that this is probably the greatest and most horrible single crime ever committed in the whole history of the world.*"

Do you agree with this statement? Why?

Also in the epilogue, we read this statement: *There are some people in the world who deny such things actually happened.*

What are your reactions to this?

Reread the last paragraph from the Epilogue:

Fiction cannot recite the numbing numbers, but it can be that witness, that memory. A storyteller can attempt to tell the human tale, can make a galaxy out of the chaos, can point to the fact that some people survived even as most people died. And can remind us that the swallows still sing around the smokestacks.

What is Jane Yolen trying to say in this last paragraph?

What does she mean by a story teller *can make a galaxy out of the chaos*?

Again, we see the swallows mentioned here, as they are mentioned throughout the book. What do the swallows symbolize? _____

The Devil's Arithmetic
Character Analysis

Character	Traits	Round/flat	Static/dynamic
Hannah			
Aaron			
Gitl			
Shmuel			
Yitzchak			
Fayge			
Rivka			
Ester			
Shifre			

The Devil's Arithmetic

Final Test

Name _____

Date _____

- Which of the following describe the overall tone of this novel?
 - angry, mysterious, and harsh
 - festive, anxious, and encouraging
 - profound, revealing, and hopeful
 - melancholy, humorous, and sarcastic
- What point of view is used in this novel?
 - first person
 - second person
 - third person limited
 - third person omniscient
- What genre is this novel?
 - historical fiction
 - science fiction
 - nonfiction
 - drama
- Which of the following is the best theme for this novel?
 - The Holocaust was a horrible event.
 - Sometimes it is those who endure hardships that are heroes.
 - Swallows are birds who eat insects.
 - Hannah and her friends were brave.
- Who is the protagonist (main character) in this novel?
 - Gitl
 - Hannah
 - Rivka
 - Yitzchak
- Which of the following is part of the resolution of the novel?
 - Shifre and Ester are saved by Chaya.
 - Rivka tells the girls about the "Every Bowls".
 - Chaya returns to her old life as Hannah.
 - Chaya follows Gitl as they try to escape.
- Hannah can best be described as being _____.
 - a round and static character
 - a round and dynamic character
 - a flat and static character
 - a flat and dynamic character
- Rivka's brother's name in the camp was Wolfe. Yet he was very gentle and kind. His name is an example of _____.
 - dramatic irony
 - situational irony
 - verbal irony
 - none of these

9. Who is Rivka at the end of the book?
- Aunt Eva
 - Her grandmother
 - Aunt Eva's dead friend
 - Hannah's cousin
10. Hannah's struggle to remember the past would be considered an _____ conflict.
- internal
 - external
 - exposition
 - all of the above
11. When thinking about the writer's style, Jane Yolen used all of the following except_____.
- imagery
 - symbolism
 - foreshadowing
 - monologues

"Maybe we could do something to help the blokova balance her hand. Three is such an unlucky number," Shifre said.

12. Which of the following literary devices is used in this passage?
- flashback
 - symbolism
 - foreshadowing
 - irony

Like spawning fish, the children came from everywhere to dive into the pile.

13. What type of figurative language is used in this passage?
- idiom
 - metaphor
 - personification
 - simile

14. What happened to Reuven?
- He escaped with Yitzchak.
 - He was sent to Lilith's Cave.
 - He became the commandant's helper.
 - He was sent to another camp.

"We are all heroes here."

15. What does Rivka mean by this statement?
- All of the people at the camps are heroes, including the Nazis.
 - The prisoners at the camp are heroes because they endured the pain and hardships.
 - They are all heroes because they fight back.
 - Rivka and her friends are heroes because they stick together.

The guards dragged the men to a solid wall that stood next to the gate. The wall was pocked with holes and dark stains. To the right and above, the sign ARBEIT MACHT FREI swung creakingly in the wind. **Birds cried out merrily from the woods and the tops of the trees danced to rhythms all their own.**

16. Why does the author include the bolded part of this passage?
- To show that things were alright during the Holocaust.
 - To show that life goes on no matter if things are horrible or not.
 - To show that birds are always merry and trees are a part of nature.
 - To show that the guards were like the birds and the trees.

Her voice held a note of hysteria. The hand with the spoon didn't rest, but her other hand was held stiffly by her side. It was wrapped in a broad bandage, the white stained with fresh blood.

17. The above passage is about the blokova. What can the reader infer from this passage?
- The blokova has lost all of her fingers.
 - The blokova has burned her hand.
 - The blokova has lost another one of her fingers.
 - The blokova wants everyone to think that she has lost a finger.

18. According to the epilogue, what did Gitl do after the camp was liberated in 1945?
- become a teacher
 - marry Yitzchak
 - become a politician
 - organize a rescue mission

"Dr. .. Dr. Mengele," she said suddenly. "The Angel of Auschwitz," As suddenly as she knew it, the reference was gone.

19. This reference to someone in history is a(n) _____.
- allusion
 - euphemism
 - symbol
 - metaphor

20. Which of the following could be the climax of the Devil's Arithmetic?
- when Hannah goes back in time and first meets Gitl
 - when Hannah tries to escape with Gitl
 - when Hannah realizes that she is from the future and will return
 - When Hannah returns to Aunt Eva's house

She and Shifre were set to work with Rivka in the kitchen hauling water in large buckets from the pump, spooning out the meager meals, washing the giant cauldrons in which the soup cooked, scrubbing the walls and floors.

21. What does the underlined word mean in this passage?
- delicious
 - disgusting
 - plentiful
 - tiny

22. "Chosen" is a(n) _____ for murder.
- Symbol
 - allusion
 - euphemism
 - flashback

Breuer wears a lady's shoe,
What a cock-a-doodle-do.

23. What is the rhyme scheme of this chant?
- aa
 - ab
 - bb
 - none of these

"Not ever," Hannah muttered to herself as she watched the smoke curling up, writing its long numbers against the stone-colored sky."

24. Which of the following literary techniques is not used in this passage?

- a. dialogue
- b. personification
- c. imagery
- d. irony

25. Which of the following sentences from the book do not contain onomatopoeia?

- a. They crept to the door, and Hannah could feel her heart thudding madly.
- b. They slipped through the door, shut it, and locked it from the outside with a too-loud snick.
- c. And, yet, when it finally happened, Hannah was surprised that she hadn't known, hadn't even suspected.
- d. From all over the camp came the same clicking as if crazed crickets had invaded the place.

They sat for a long moment in silence while the talk and laughter at the table dipped and soared about them like swallows.

26. Which of the following literary devices are used in this passage?

- a. Symbolism and a simile
- b. Allusion and a simile
- c. Irony and a metaphor
- d. Symbolism and a metaphor

Hannah slipped into the chair, knowing it was the one the family reserved for the prophet Elijah, who slipped through the centuries like a fish through water.

27. What type of irony is used in this passage?

- a. dramatic
- b. situational
- c. verbal
- d. all of the above

Discussion Questions

Write your answers on a sheet of notebook paper. Use complete sentences.

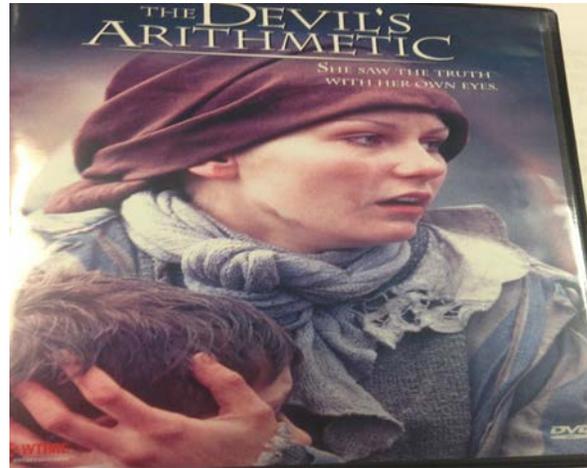
1. Explain what the title of this novel means.

2. What will you remember most vividly from this novel? Explain your answer.

3. List three characteristics of Jane Yolen's writing style or craft. Explain how each of these contributes to the story, and provide evidence from the text to support your answers.

4. Identify a theme of this novel. Give at least three examples from the novel to support your answer

After reading the novel *The Devil's Arithmetic* by Jane Yolen, show your students the movie based on this book . The movie can be ordered on Amazon. Below is a picture of the DVD. It is 97 minutes long.



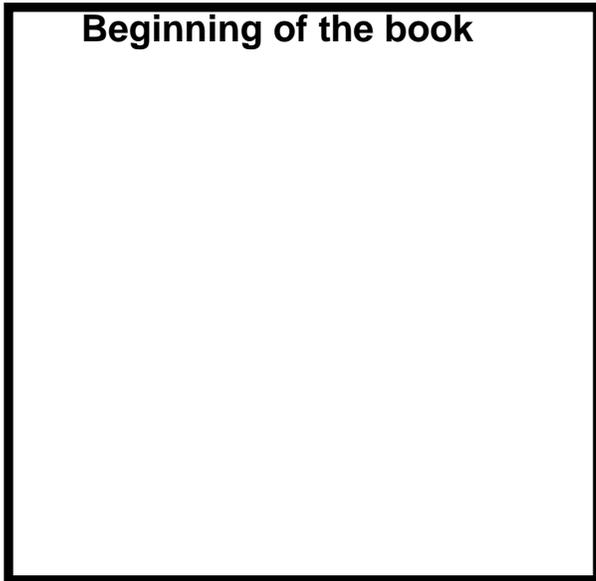
There are several differences between the novel and movie. As your students view the movie, allow them to jot down similarities and differences using the “Movie Watching Notes” handout. Students can also complete a Venn diagram.

After watching the movie, students can take the test. You may want to allow them the option of looking back in the novel if needed.

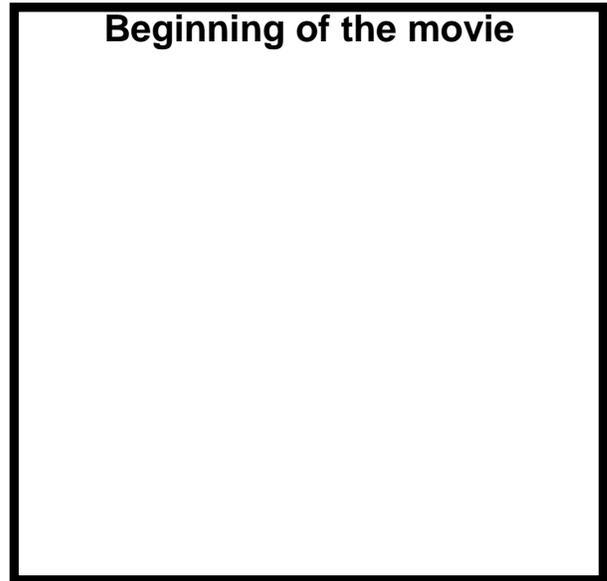
Movie Watching Notes

The movie and the book both begin differently. Before watching the movie, write what happens at the beginning of the book. As you watch the movie, jot down how things are different in the beginning of the movie. Pay attention to the characters.

Beginning of the book

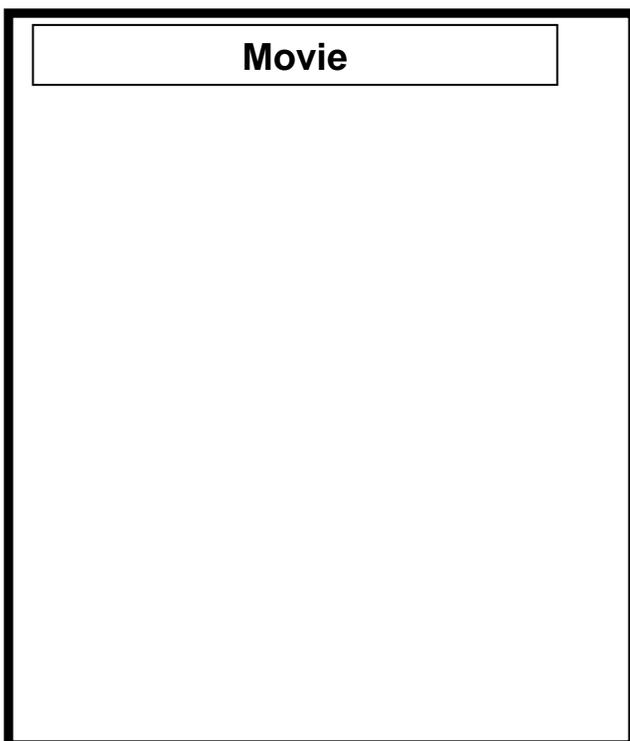


Beginning of the movie

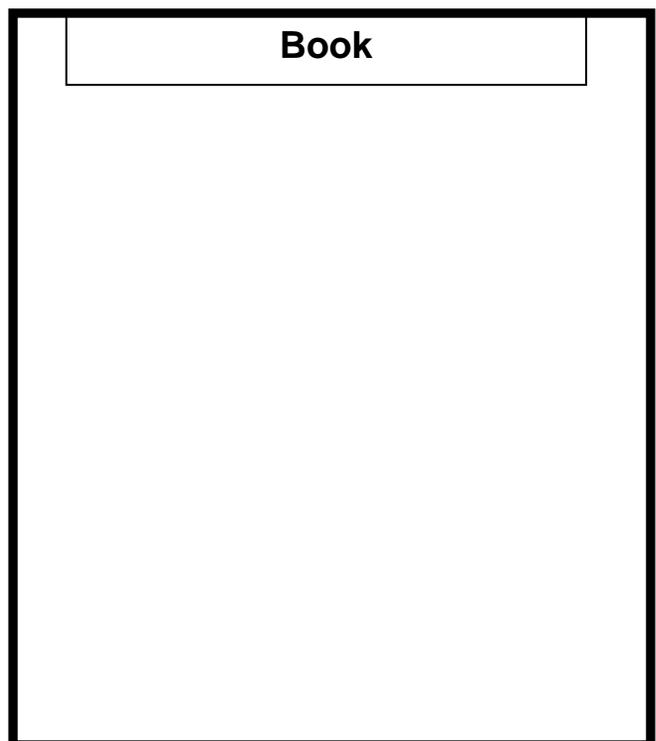


As you watch the movie, continue to take notes on differences. Take note of the characters that are in the book but not in the movie.

Movie



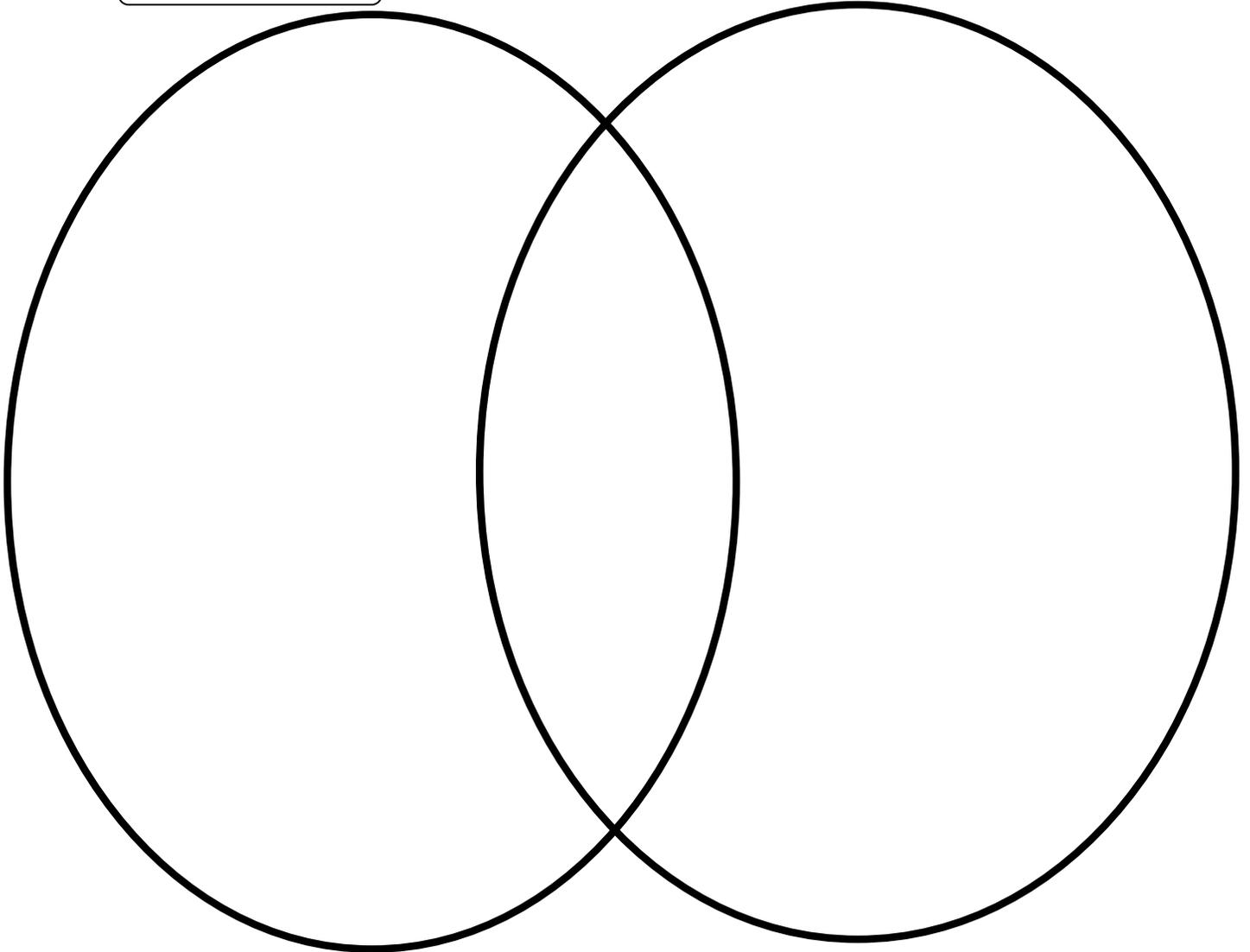
Book



The Devil's Arithmetic

Book

Movie



Extra Notes:

The Devil's Arithmetic
Novel vs. Movie Test

Name _____ Date _____

1. How is the setting at the beginning of the book different from the setting at the beginning of the movie?
 - a. The book begins with Hannah getting into the car with her mother, and the movie begins with Hannah in a tattoo parlor.
 - b. The book begins with Hannah and her family at the Seder, and the movie begins with Hannah and her family at home.
 - c. The setting at the beginning of the book is in the past during the Holocaust, but in the movie, the setting at the beginning is in present day.
 - d. The beginning of the novel is set in the concentration camp, but the beginning of the movie is set at the Seder.

2. True or False? In both the movie and the book, Hannah has a poor attitude about the Seder and listening to her family members.
 - a. true
 - b. false

3. Which of the following characters is in the novel but not in the movie?
 - a. Rivka
 - b. Hannah
 - c. Aaron
 - d. Shmuel

4. In the novel, Hannah meets Rivka at the camp, but in the movie, Rivka is Hannah's _____.
 - a. friend
 - b. mother
 - c. grandmother
 - d. cousin

5. There is an allusion to which of the following in both the movie and the book?
 - a. *Star Wars*
 - b. *The Wizard of Oz*
 - c. *Little Women*
 - d. *Fiddler on the Roof*

6. Which of the following happens in both the novel and the movie?
 - a. Fage and Shmuel get married.
 - b. Hannah meets a young boy on the train ride to the concentration camp.
 - c. The blokova loses her fingers.
 - d. Chaya is believed to be from Lublin and to have been overcoming a sickness.

7. Which of the following is in the movie but not in the novel?
 - a. Hannah places her handkerchief on Rivka's head.
 - b. The women hold a Seder ceremony in the concentration camp.
 - c. The Jews have their heads shaved and numbers tattooed on their arms.
 - d. Some of the Jews try to escape, but the plan fails.

8. Which of the following is a significant difference between Hannah's memory in the movie and in the novel?
- Hannah loses her memory in the movie as soon as she enters the concentration camp, but in the book, she loses her memory shortly after entering the camp.
 - Hannah loses her memory when her head is shaved in the book, but this does not happen in the movie.
 - In the book, Hannah's memory becomes cloudy, but in the movie, all of her memory is clear the entire time.
 - It is the number on her arm that causes Hannah's memory to fade in the movie, but it is her shaved head that causes her memory to fade in the novel.
9. In the novel, Tzipporah dies, and Reuven is taken by Commandant Breuer. The deaths of these two innocent children portray the profound evil of the Holocaust. These characters are not in the movie. What event in the movie most shows this harshness in the same way?
- soldiers choosing those with typhus to go to the gas chambers
 - Rivka's mother being taken by a soldier
 - the newborn baby and its mother being taken to the gas chambers
 - the public hanging of those who tried to escape
10. In the novel, the characters must choose their outfits once arriving at the camp. How are the characters dressed in the movie?
- They wear the clothes that they arrived in.
 - They wear striped pajamas.
 - They choose their own clothes daily from a pile of used ones.
 - They wear orange jumpsuits.
11. True or false? In the end, Hannah takes Rivka's place in both the movie and the novel.
- true
 - false
12. In the book, Hannah does not realize that her Aunt Eva is Rivka until after she returns from the past. When does Hannah realize who Rivka is in the movie?
- Hannah realizes it while they are still in the camp.
 - It is the same as the book. She realizes once she returns to the Seder.
 - At the beginning of the book, as soon as Hannah sees Rivka, she knows it is her Aunt Eva.
 - She realizes it when Rivka remembers seeing Hannah from the future, and she tells her she is her Aunt Eva.
13. In the movie, what does Hannah do before the escape plan takes place?
- She bribes a guard on their behalf.
 - She wears someone else's shoes.
 - She tries to warn them that it is a trap.
 - She hides in the camp kitchen.

The Devil's Arithmetic

Answer Keys Chapters 15-Epilogue

Chapter 15

Imagery is language that creates a sensory impression within the reader's mind. It allows the reader to see, hear, feel, smell, or even taste what is happening in the story. Imagery makes the reader feel like he/she is there, in the story, experiencing the same things that the character is experiencing.

Reread the following description of the midden from page 123. Underline the words and phrases that create imagery in this passage.

She waded through a mixture of old rags, used bandages, the emptied-out waste of the slop buckets. The midden smell was overwhelming. Though she'd already gotten used to the pervasive camp smell, a cloudy musk that seemed to hang over everything, a mix of sweat and fear and sickness and the ever-present smoke that stained the sky, the smell in the midden was worse. She closed her eyes, and lowered herself into the garbage, the baby clutched in her arms.

What other passages do you remember from this book that contain imagery?

Accept reasonable responses.

Euphemisms

A euphemism is a substitution of a mild or less negative word or phrase for a harsh or blunt one. For example, "pass away" is a euphemism for "die".

The Nazis and Jews used euphemisms in the concentration camps. Tell what each of the following euphemisms really mean. The first one has been done for you.

Word or phrase used	Is a euphemism for...
pieces of drek, shmattes	rags
processed	killed
chosen	selected as one who will be put death due to be unable to work
organized	stealing

Why did they use these euphemisms? To help them survive the horrible conditions of the concentration camps

Chapter 16

Discussion

1. Write about Rueven's death. What did you feel as you read this part of the book? Describe your feelings. Accept reasonable responses.

2. Accept reasonable responses.

3. Go back and read page 143 where Fayge tells the story about how young Israel led a small band of children against a werewolf whose heart was Satan's.

Work with a partner to determine the meaning of this story. What exactly is she talking about? What symbolism is included in this story?

This story is about: Accept reasonable responses.

This story means: **Accept reasonable responses.**

The symbolism in this story: **Accept reasonable responses.**

Chapter 17

Suspense is the uncertainty or anxiety you feel about what will happen next in the story. It is what puts you on the edge of your seat and makes you want to keep reading.

In this chapter, Gitl and Chaya are part of an escape plan. It is the perfect place for suspense, and Jane Yolen does not let us down. Reread the following passage from page 147:

Hannah looked up. There was no moon. Above them, in the cloudless sky, stars were scattered as thick as sand. A small, warm breeze blew across the compound. Night insects chirruped. Hannah took a deep breath. The air was sweet-smelling, fresh, new. A dog barked suddenly and a harsh voice quieted it with a command.

Gitl pulled Hannah back against the barrack's wall. Hannah could feel the fear threatening to scream out of her, so she dropped the shoes and put both hands over her mouth, effectively gagging herself. There was a wetness under her arms, between her legs, down her back. She moaned.

Yolen has definitely created suspense in this passage. Let's try to figure out how she did it. Answer the following questions.

1. As you can see by the bolded sentences, many of the sentences in this passage are short. How does Yolen's use of this type of sentence fluency create suspense? **Possible response: The short sentences cause the reader to pause and think about what may be about to happen; they slow the action down.**
2. What details or sentences are included in this passage to slow the action down for this event? **Possible responses: no moon, no clouds, insects are silent, dog barks, a harsh voice, fear threatening to scream out of her, gagging...**
3. What else contributes to the suspense in this passage?
Possible response: The use of the imagery – appealing to the reader's senses of sound, touch and smell adds to the suspense because the reader feels as if he/she is there, or as if he/she is Chaya.

Chapter 18

"Silence!" Breuer said, his voice hardly raised at all. "If you are silent, I will let you watch."

They were all silent. Not, Hannah thought, because they wanted to watch, but because they wanted to be witnesses. And because they had no other choice.

- What is the difference in watching and witnessing in this passage? Why would it be important to witness what happened to Shmuel and the other five men?

sample response:

Watching implies that one is simply wanting to see what is happening for the sake of seeing – being nosy. If you are a witness to something you are making somewhat of a promise that you make sure others know what happened. In this case, witnessing will be important so that others will know what happened to the men and share how brave they were. Watching serves no purpose in this case, but witnessing serves a great purpose.

The guards dragged the men to a solid wall that stood next to the gate. The wall was pocked with holes and dark stains. To the right and above, the sign ARBEIT MACHT FREI swung creakingly in the wind. Birds cried out merrily from the woods and the tops of the trees danced to rhythms all their own.

- Why do you think the author chose to include the bolded part of this passage? **Accept reasonable responses. Sample response: The author includes to show that the men are being killed but that the world continues as normal.**
- What do you think happened to Yitzchak? **Accept reasonable predictions. Sample response: Yitzchak most likely escaped.**

- What happens at the end of this chapter to Hannah (Chaya)? How is she changing? Accept reasonable responses. Sample response: She is becoming more mature and understanding how important it is to remember the past. Chaya is selected for death.

Chapter 19 & Epilogue

Who is Rivka? Hannah's Aunt Eva

What happened to Yitzchak? He escaped and lived in the woods. He helped fight against the Germans. After the end of the war, he emigrated to Israel. He became a politician – he was a member of the Israeli senate.

What happened to Gitl? She remained at the camp until it was liberated at the end of the war. She also emigrated to Israel. She organized a rescue mission to help young Holocaust survivors find their remaining family members. It later became an adoption agency – she named it CHAYA.

In the epilogue, there is an allusion to Winston Churchill. He is quoted as saying, "There is no doubt that this is probably the greatest and most horrible single crime ever committed in the whole history of the world."

Do you agree with this statement? Why? Accept reasonable responses.

Also in the epilogue, we read this statement: *There are some people in the world who deny such things actually happened.*

What are your reactions to this? Accept reasonable responses.

Reread the last paragraph from the Epilogue:

Fiction cannot recite the numbing numbers, but it can be that witness, that memory. A storyteller can attempt to tell the human tale, can make a galaxy out of the chaos, can point to the fact that some people survived even as most people died. And can remind us that the swallows still sing around the smokestacks.

What is Jane Yolen trying to say in this last paragraph? Sample answer: Fiction can not tell the entire horrific story; however, fiction can make the events of the Holocaust more personable and "real" to us on humanitarian level. The fiction can make sure that the victims are never forgotten. It also reminds us with the swallows that wherever evil resides, there is also life.

What does she mean by a story teller *can make a galaxy out of the chaos*? Sample answer: It means that a teller of the Holocaust story can make some meaning of the awful events, yet it is still a far cry from the reality of it all.

Again, we see the swallows mentioned here, as they are mentioned throughout the book.

What do the swallows symbolize? Sample answer: They symbolize the hope that for generations to come all will remember the past and that life does make it through indescribable events and continues to go on always.

Character Analysis

Character	Traits	Round/flat	Static/dynamic
Hannah	whiney, unappreciative	round	dynamic
Aaron	Innocent, naive	flat	static

Gittl	organized, harsh, firm, efficient, practical, brave, determined, proud	round	static
Shmuel	playful, loving, humorous, caring, hard-working, loyal, respectful, brave	round	static
Yitzchak	Brave, hard-working	flat	static
Fayge	kind, weak	flat	static
Rivka	organized, efficient, practical, brave, determined, proud, logical	round	static
Ester		flat	static
Shifre		flat	static

Answer Key for Final Test

Question #	Answer
1	C
2	D
3	A
4	B
5	B
6	C
7	B
8	C
9	C
10	A
11	D
12	C
13	D
14	B

15	B
16	B
17	C
18	C
19	A
20	C
21	D
22	C
23	A
24	D
25	C
26	A
27	B
Discussion Questions	Accept reasonable answers.

Answer key for movie vs. novel test

1. A
2. A
3. C
4. D
5. B
6. D — If students put A, explain that in the book, they did not actually get fully married. The Nazis come before the ceremony begins. In the movie, however they do.
7. B
8. B — If students put C, explain that this is not the best answer because in the movie, Hannah's memory is not always clear. She says several times that she has trouble remembering.
9. C
10. B
11. A
12. A
13. C
14. A
15. B
16. Accept reasonable answers.

Holocaust "I Am" Poems

Directions: Follow the pattern of the "I Am" poem to write a poem about the Holocaust.

I Am

I am (choose something from the Holocaust...A Jew, A Blokova, The Midden, A Nazi Soldier, Lilith's Cave, etc.)
I wonder (something you would be curious about if you were that person or thing)
I hear (a sound (real or imaginary) you would hear if you were that person or thing)
I see (a sight (real or imaginary) you would see if you were that person or thing)
I want (an actual desire that you would want if you were that person or thing)
I am (the first line of the poem restated)

I pretend (something you would actually pretend to do)
I feel (a feeling you would have about something imaginary)
I touch (if you were this person, what is something you imaginarily touch)
I worry (something that would really bother you)
I cry (something that would make you very sad)
I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

I understand (something you would know is true)
I say (something you would believe in)
I dream (something you would actually dream about)
I try (something you would really make an effort about)
I hope (something you would actually hope for)
I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

The Devil's Arithmetic
Discussion After the Novel

1. What part of the story was the most frightening? Why?
2. What part of the story was full of the most action? Why?
3. What part of the story was the saddest? Why?
4. What part of the story was the most believable? Why?
5. What part of the story was the most meaningful to you? Why?

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