

HISTORY

*Wider reading
assignment*

The Holocaust



Forgotten Voices of the Holocaust

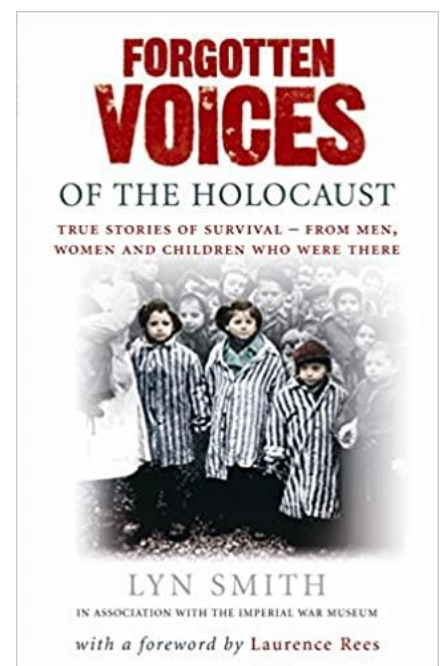
- Lyn Smith

Forgotten Voices of the Holocaust tells the story of how the Nazi regime murdered over six million Jewish people.

The great majority of Holocaust survivors suffered considerable physical and psychological wounds, yet even in this dark time of human history, tales of faith, love and courage can be found. As well as revealing the story of the Holocaust as directly experienced by victims, this book also illustrates how, even enduring the most harsh conditions, degrading treatment and suffering massive family losses, hope, the will to survive, and the human spirit still shone through.

Author, Lyn Smith uses the oral accounts preserved in the Imperial War Museum Sound Archive, to reveal the sheer complexity and horror of one of human history's darkest hours. Over 100 contributors provide a raw and moving picture of how events snowballed into a world of ghettos, camps and death marches to ensure their voices and experiences are never forgotten.

For this assignment, you will read the true stories of survival from the men, women and children who were there. After each chapter, you will provide a summary of what you have learnt and the key stories which really stood out to you. This assignment will culminate in a 500 word review of the book: *Forgotten Voices of the Holocaust*.



Author's Preface

Read the author's preface (introduction) and respond to the following reflection questions:

1. Do you think the term 'Holocaust' should only refer to Jewish people, or is it right to also include those who were witnesses also?

1. Why is the Holocaust so complex?

1. Why did so many survivors remain silent for so long after the Holocaust?

Prologue

“The life was very good and we lived like one of the Germans.”

To fully grasp what the Holocaust was like, Lyn Smith’s prologue (p.5-21) outlines what Germany was like for minority groups before the Holocaust, and before they were really considered minority groups. A prologue is a separate introduction, and Smith starts with the quote; *“The life was very good and we lived like one of the Germans.”*

1. Read 3-4 entries from the prologue (you can of course read more!)
 2. What evidence is there in support of Smith’s starting quote?
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1. Do any of the entries suggest otherwise; that life was not good or equal to that of Germans?

Main tasks

As you work through each chapter, you will need to select a minimum of 5 entries to read from each section and then summarise your reading in the subsequent grid. Each one has been started off for you to provide an example of how to fill these in and to suggest a particular entry worth reading, but of course you can read more, or even all, of the entries in each chapter. The more you read, the more understanding you will have of people's experiences during the Holocaust and why the Holocaust is so complex.

After completing the grid for each chapter, where you record the entries which really stood out to you, you will need to complete a chapter reflection where you provide supporting evidence for the two views Lyn Smith aims to cover in her book: the negative, dark side of the Holocaust, and the positive, where love and hope thrived. At set intervals throughout this assignment you will be asked to submit these chapter reflections to Ms Jacob via email.



1933-1936: Persecution

“After 1933 it was just accepted that if you were a Jewish child you were liable to be beaten up, bullied or whatever else they chose to do with you.”

Contributor:	Page:	Key quotes:	Questions/reflections:
Ruth Foster	27	“One particular teacher made my life a misery ... she arranged that I would sit right at the back of the class, two rows were left vacant and I sat against the wall.”	Did this teacher really see this school child as such a threat and/or any different to the other children?
Dr Edith Bulbring	29-30	“‘We gather from your questionnaire that you are of part-Jewish origin. Therefore we no-longer have any use for your services’. There were no other doctors left in that hospital.”	This must have had an equally detrimental impact for German people. Who did they now think would treat them?
Bea Green	30-31	“... outside the bathroom, I saw my father’s tattered and blood-soaked clothes.”	This must have been really frightening for a young child to witness.

Chapter Reflection 1: Persecution

Summary of the chapter *1933-1936: Persecution*

Evidence these years were a “dark time of human history”:

Evidence there was “faith, love and courage” during these years:

Key questions/reflections/learning takeaways from this chapter:

1937-1939: The Search for Refuge

“...it’s no good staying, they’re going to kill us. Survival in the life threatening sense was the only thing that mattered.”

Contributor:	Page:	Key quotes:	Questions/reflections:
Susan Sinclair	54	“But it was awful and the details of the awfulness he didn’t tell us... Someone had died and two or three fought over his toothbrush.”	The humiliating and degrading nature of the experience, yet so desperate at the same time.



Chapter Reflection 2: Search for Refuge

Summary of the chapter 1937-1939: *The Search for Refuge*

Evidence these years were a “dark time of human history”:

Evidence there was “faith, love and courage” during these years:

Key questions/reflections/learning takeaways from this chapter:

1939: War

“That was my first sight of a German uniformed pilot and his crew and I thought they looked very nice young boys ... I couldn't see any problem”

Contributor:	Page:	Key quotes:	Questions/reflections:
Helen Stone	76	“They burned our synagogue <i>with</i> the people inside”	What drove the Nazis to think this was acceptable? Didn't they consider this as gross murder?

Chapter Reflection 3: War

Summary of the chapter *1939: War*

Evidence these years were a “dark time of human history”:

Evidence there was “faith, love and courage” during these years:

Key questions/reflections/learning takeaways from this chapter:



Self-reflection task

Before progressing any further, this is a good point to take a moment to reflect on your work so far, whilst you await feedback on the chapter reflections you have just submitted.

1. How have you found this book so far?

1. Which types of entries have been of most use or interest to you and why might this be?

1. What new knowledge are you gaining about the Holocaust?

1. So far, what have you enjoyed the most/least about this assignment?

1940-1941: The Third Reich Expands

“I saw my mother and four sisters lined up and before I had a chance to say, ‘Mother!’ they were already dead.”

Contributor:	Page:	Key quotes:	Questions/reflections:
Janine Ingram	82	“...wearing the Star of David was a challenge, so rather than wear it and lower my head, I wore it proudly.”	People always ask ‘why didn’t they just stop being Jewish’ but this shows how proud people were of their race and religion.
Fritz Moses	86	“People knew what had happened - you know, this euthanasia, the deportation of Jews; but people excluded it from their minds.”	Why? Why didn’t they challenge or question it? Why didn’t they do anything to stop it?

Chapter Reflection 4: The Third Reich Expands

Summary of the chapter *1940-1941: The Third Reich Expands*

Evidence these years were a “dark time of human history”:

Evidence there was “faith, love and courage” during these years:

Key questions/reflections/learning takeaways from this chapter:

1939-1942: The Ghetto (i)

“At first it was a relief when we went into the ghetto ... a sense of security”

Contributor:	Page:	Key quotes:	Questions/reflections:
Halina Kahn	115	“as I took it out my star fell down; there was a young <i>Hitler Jugend</i> nearby and he put his boot down so that the conductor couldn't see the star... he had saved my life and he was a <i>Hitler Jugend</i> ”	Even those who at face value appeared to be supportive of the Nazis were perhaps only doing so to spare their own lives.

Chapter Reflection 5: The Ghetto (i)

Summary of the chapter 1939-1942: *The Ghetto (i)*

Evidence these years were a “dark time of human history”:

Evidence there was “faith, love and courage” during these years:

Key questions/reflections/learning takeaways from this chapter:

1943-1944: The Ghetto (ii)

“I felt elated that the Jews had fired the first shots ... we wanted to bring down as many Germans as possible”

Contributor:	Page:	Key quotes:	Questions/reflections:
Halina Kahn	150	“Later I heard they had to dig seven graves for the seven hundred of us that remained, each grave for a hundred of us.”	How did Kahn escape these graves and survive to tell her story?

Chapter Reflection 6: The Ghetto (ii)

Summary of the chapter 1943-1944: *The Ghetto (ii)*

Evidence these years were a “dark time of human history”:

Evidence there was “faith, love and courage” during these years:

Key questions/reflections/learning takeaways from this chapter:

Work submission

At this point in your assignment, please submit your chapter reflections for the next three chapters:

4. The Third Reich Expands
5. Ghettos (i)
6. Ghettos (ii)

These need to be submitted to Ms Jacob at: k.jacob@arkputneyacademy.org



1940-1944: The Camps (i)

“Where are my parents? When will I see them again?’ And they started screaming with laughter, ‘You stupid idiot, they are in the chimney by now!’ ”

Contributor:	Page:	Key quotes:	Questions/reflections:
Jan Hartman	162	“some days it had been raining and you would see how the water was coated with a matt film of ashes, greenish-grey. By that time I knew what it was.”	Did the Jewish people understand why they were being killed by the Nazis in this way?

Chapter Reflection 7: The Camps (i)

Summary of the chapter *1940-1944: The Camps (i)*

Evidence these years were a “dark time of human history”:

Evidence there was “faith, love and courage” during these years:

Key questions/reflections/learning takeaways from this chapter:

Resistance

“They were not led like sheep to the slaughter; they were taken like human beings to be murdered, and they could do absolutely nothing.”

Contributor:	Page:	Key quotes:	Questions/reflections:
Jerry Koenig	191	“We actually went into the shelter in the winter of 1942/43 and stayed there twenty months until liberation came.”	Who took these people into hiding? Did they get caught? How many people did they manage to help?

Chapter Reflection 8: Resistance

Summary of the chapter *Resistance*

Evidence these years were a “dark time of human history”:

Evidence there was “faith, love and courage” during these years:

Key questions/reflections/learning takeaways from this chapter:

1944-1945: The Camps (ii)

“You were under-ridden by this ghastly twenty-four hour stench from the ovens and the chimneys - twenty-four hours a day this sickly smell!”

Contributor:	Page:	Key quotes:	Questions/reflections:
Leon Greenman	229	“One day I looked out of the window and saw a SS man cuddling a rabbit.”	What possessed people to become so inhumane towards people? Was this SS man ever brought to justice?

Chapter Reflection 9: The Camps (ii)

Summary of the chapter 1944-1945: *The Camps (ii)*

Evidence these years were a “dark time of human history”:

Evidence there was “faith, love and courage” during these years:

Key questions/reflections/learning takeaways from this chapter:



Your Review of *Forgotten Voices of the Holocaust* - Lyn Smith

Now that you have completed the required chapters of this book for this assignment, you need to write a 500 word review.

Your review should address the following:

- A synopsis of the book
- A discussion of the points which really stood out to you in this book and why they interested you
- A discussion of any areas you didn't enjoy or understand as much, and why
- The different views covered in the book: the positive and negative
- Your overall rating and recommendation of this book

Complete the summary plan on the next page first, to help collect and structure your thoughts, before writing up your 500 word review and submitting to Ms Jacob at k.jacob@arkputneyacademy.org.

Summary Plan

What is the book about?

Which parts interested you the most and why?

Which parts of the book did you enjoy the least and why?

How successfully has Smith tried to show both the struggles and the stories of hope?

What is your overall rating for this book? Would you recommend it? Why?