

Honorable Mention
Fiction Writing, Division I
By Samantha Brinkman, Grade 7
Copley-Fairlawn Middle School
Jennifer Adair, Instructor
Life Book
Word Count: 618

Life Book

The Life Book was the symbol of freedom to children.

It was where all of their memories went.

The fun times with families and friends.

The birthday and holiday parties.

It was a place to record everything that ever mattered to them.

A place to make their life their own.

But the Jewish children who lived from 1933 to 1945 did not get to make it their own.

Hitler wrote their books.

The unlucky ones had their book filled by him.

Others prayed for a chance to take their pen and just write one single word of their own.

September 1st 1933.

That was any Jews' last chance to write.

Last chance of hope.

Last chance at any freedom to have come their way.

“[Hilter]Restricted the number of Jewish students at German schools...sharply curtailed Jewish activity in the medical and legal professions.”

Jews were not allowed to live their regular lives.

No working.

No learning.

No regular lifestyle

but they kept living hoping everything would go back to normal.

Some tried to disobey

but realized later that it would cause more harm than wanted.

Their first chapter was not filled with friends and teachers

or playdates and books.

It was different.

It was wrong.

It should have never been in their books.

And it did not stop there.

“No Jews allowed to be helped in hospitals and courts.”

“No Jews allowed to own a business or work for one.”

The parents could not give their children comfort

Parents could not always feed them.

Could not become cured if sick.

No more depending on your parents.

No more saying everything will be okay.

Some again tried to sneak their way around.

They were taken.

They were killed.

Their books were filled with Worry.

Questions.

Fear.

But the rules kept coming.

Word after word.

Page after page.

Chapter after chapter.

Hilter etched in the words of death.

Nothing ever became better.

It kept getting worse.

Jewish men and women,

boys and girls

had to change their middle names to Israel and Sara.

They had to carry identity cards saying that they were Jewish

And had to have their passports stamped with the letter “J” on it.

Their books had to be renamed.

Their life has been changed.

It was getting to the point where the people who thought could escape,
realized it was real.

There was no escaping now.

Everywhere you go people will hate you.

And they will always be reminded of that.

Embarrassed.

Scared.

Panicked.

The Jews felt these feelings.

Everyone knew who they were.

They could not run.

They could not hide.

Soon.

They would be captured.

It wasn't just hate.

It was violence.

Jews were taken and forced into concentration camps.

Forced into gas chambers.

Forced to be parted from family.

Hardly fed.

Worked in tragic conditions for hours.

Killed if made one wrong move.

Some were killed even when they did not do anything wrong.

Children were not cared for.

Never loved when hurt.

Never cured if sick.

Innocent.

But blamed.

All hope was lost.

No help came.

Until.

There was finally a light in the darkness.

A breath of fresh air.

September 2nd 1945.

Hope was restored.

Prayers were answered.

The sun filled the sky.

The Life Book was given back to the people.

They were free.

Life was restored.

Even though we can not erase what has been put in the books.

We can keep writing.

Keep making memories.

Keep having freedom.

It will not hurt to go back and read about the past.

But you can always keep moving forward.

Always be a better person.

No matter who has been bad to you.

And fill your books with a better ending.

Works Cited

USC Shoah Foundation /, <https://sfi.usc.edu/>. Accessed 13 February 2024.

Holocaust Encyclopedia, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/>. Accessed 13 February 2024.

Bachrach, Susan D. *Tell Them We Remember: The Story of the Holocaust*. Little, Brown, 1994.

Shackleton, Kath, and Ryan Jones, editors. *Survivors of the Holocaust: True Stories of Six Extraordinary Children*. Sourcebooks Explore, 2019.

Stoliar, Joellyn. "How to Get Inscribed in the Book of Life | Jewish Holidays." *Maot Chitim*, <https://maotchitim.org/get-inscribed-book-life/>. Accessed 13 February 2024.