



## Recommended Fiction & Nonfiction about World War II A Bibliography Compiled by the Pelham Public Library Teen Department

Are you interested in reading about World War II and the Holocaust? Take a look at these fiction and nonfiction titles that we offer in Pelham Public Library's teen section! (Please note: not all titles will be appropriate for all teens.)

### Fiction

**Boyne, John**

*The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*

**Gr 8 Up.** "Berlin, 1942: When Bruno returns home from school one day, he discovers that his belongings are being packed in crates. His father has received a promotion and the family must move to a new house far, far away, where there is no one to play with and nothing to do. A tall fence stretches as far as the eye can see and cuts him off from the strange people in the distance. But Bruno longs to be an explorer and decides that there must be more to this desolate new place than meets the eye. While exploring his new environment, he meets another boy whose life and circumstances are very different from his own, and their meeting results in a friendship that has devastating consequences." (Publisher's summary)

**Similar titles by this author:**

- *The Boy at the Top of the Mountain*

**Grant, Michael**

*Front Lines (#1)*

**Gr 9 Up.** "1942. World War II. The most terrible war in human history. Millions are dead; millions more are still to die. The Nazis rampage across Europe and eye far-off America. The green, untested American army is going up against the greatest fighting force ever assembled—the armed forces of Nazi Germany. But something has changed. A court decision makes females subject to the draft and eligible for service. So in this World War II, women and girls fight, too. As the fate of the world hangs in the balance, three girls sign up to fight. Rio Richlin, Frangie Marr, and Rainy Schulterman are average girls, girls with dreams and aspirations, at the start of their lives, at the start of their loves. Each has her own reasons for volunteering. Not one expects to see actual combat. Not one expects to be on the front lines. Rio, Frangie, and Rainy will play their parts in the war to defeat evil and save the human race. They will fear and they will rage; they will suffer and they will inflict suffering; they will hate and they will love. They will fight the greatest war the world has ever known." (Publisher's summary)

**Gratz, Alan**

*Grenade*

**Gr 6 Up.** "It's 1945, and the world is in the grip of war. Hideki lives with his family on the island of Okinawa, near Japan. When WWII crashes onto his shores, Hideki is drafted into the

Blood and Iron Student Corps to fight for the Japanese army. He is handed a grenade and a set of instructions: Don't come back until you've killed an American soldier. Ray, a young American Marine, has just landed on Okinawa. This is Ray's first-ever battle, and he doesn't know what to expect—or if he'll make it out alive. He just knows that the enemy is everywhere. Hideki and Ray each fight their way across the island, surviving heart-pounding ambushes and dangerous traps. But then the two of them collide in the middle of the battle... And choices they make in that single instant will change everything.” (Publisher's summary)

**Similar titles by this author:**

- *Allies*
- *Prisoner B-3087*
- *Refugee*

**Hesse, Monica**

***The Girl in the Blue Coat***

**Gr 7 Up.** “In 1943 Nazi-occupied Amsterdam, teenage Hanneke—a ‘finder’ of black market goods—is tasked with finding a Jewish girl a customer had been hiding, who has seemingly vanished into thin air, and is pulled into a web of resistance activities and secrets as she attempts to solve the mystery and save the missing girl.” (Publisher's summary)

**Similar titles by this author:**

- *The War Outside*

**Hughes, Dean**

***Missing in Action***

**Gr 7 Up.** “While his father is missing in action in the Pacific during World War II, 12-year-old Jay moves with his mother to small-town Utah, where he sees prejudice from both sides, as part-Navajo himself and through an unlikely friendship with Japanese American Ken from the nearby internment camp.” (Publisher's summary)

**Similar titles by this author:**

- *Soldier Boys*

**Iturbe, Antonio**

***The Librarian of Auschwitz***

**Gr 9 Up.** “Fourteen-year-old Dita is one of the many imprisoned by the Nazis at Auschwitz. Taken, along with her mother and father, from the Terezín ghetto in Prague, Dita is adjusting to the constant terror that is life in the camp. When Jewish leader Freddy Hirsch asks Dita to take charge of the eight precious volumes the prisoners have managed to sneak past the guards, she agrees. And so Dita becomes the librarian of Auschwitz. Out of one of the darkest chapters of human history comes this extraordinary story of courage and hope.” (Publisher's summary)

**Sepetys, Ruta**

***Salt to the Sea***

**Gr 8 Up.** “Winter 1945. WWII. Four refugees. Four stories. Each one born of a different homeland; each one hunted, and haunted, by tragedy, lies, war. As thousands desperately flock to the coast in the midst of a Soviet advance, four paths converge, vying for passage aboard the *Wilhelm Gustloff*, a ship that promises safety and freedom. But not all promises can be kept...” (Publisher's summary)

**Similar titles by this author:**

- *Between Shades of Gray*

**Wein, Elizabeth**

***Code Name Verity (#1)***

**Gr 9 Up.** “Oct. 11th, 1943. A British spy plane crashes in Nazi-occupied France. Its pilot and passenger are best friends. One of the girls has a chance at survival. The other has lost the game before it’s barely begun. When ‘Verity’ is arrested by the Gestapo, she’s sure she doesn’t stand a chance. As a secret agent captured in enemy territory, she’s living a spy’s worst nightmare. Her Nazi interrogators give her a simple choice: reveal her mission or face a grisly execution. As she intricately weaves her confession, Verity uncovers her past, how she became friends with the pilot Maddie, and why she left Maddie in the wrecked fuselage of their plane. On each new scrap of paper, Verity battles for her life, confronting her views on courage, failure and her desperate hope to make it home. But will trading her secrets be enough to save her from the enemy?” (Publisher’s summary)

**Zusak, Markus**

***The Book Thief***

**Gr 8 Up.** “It is 1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier, and will become busier still. Liesel Meminger is a foster girl living outside of Munich, who scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can’t resist—books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement.” (Publisher’s summary)

## Nonfiction

**Anderson, M.T.**

***Symphony for the City of the Dead: Dmitri Shostakovich and the Siege of Leningrad***

**Gr 9 Up.** “In September 1941, Adolf Hitler’s Wehrmacht surrounded Leningrad in what was to become one of the longest and most destructive sieges in Western history—almost three years of bombardment and starvation. Trapped between the Nazi invading force and the Soviet government itself was composer Dmitri Shostakovich, writing a symphony to rouse, rally, eulogize, and commemorate his fellow citizens: the *Leningrad* Symphony. This is the true story of a city under siege, the triumph of bravery and defiance in the face of terrifying odds. It is also a look at the power—and layered meaning—of music in beleaguered lives.” (Publisher’s summary)

**Boas, Jacob**

***We Are Witnesses: Five Diaries of Teenagers Who Died in the Holocaust***

**Gr 8 Up.** “The five diarists in this book did not survive the war. But their words did. Each diary reveals one voice, one teenager coping with the impossible. We see David Rubinowicz struggling against fear and terror. Yitzhak Rudashevski shows us how Jews clung to culture, to learning, and to hope, until there was no hope at all. Moshe Ze’ev Flinker is the voice of religion, constantly seeking answers from God for relentless tragedy. Eva Heyman demonstrates the

unquenchable hunger for life that sustained her until the very last moment. And finally, Anne Frank reveals the largest truth they all left for us: Hitler could kill millions, but he could not destroy the human spirit. These stark accounts of how five young people faced the worst of human evil are a testament, and an inspiration, to the best of the human soul.” (Publisher’s summary)

**Frank, Anne**

***The Diary of a Young Girl***

**Gr 8 Up.** “In 1942, with the Nazis occupying Holland, a thirteen-year-old Jewish girl and her family fled their home in Amsterdam and went into hiding. For the next two years, until their whereabouts were betrayed to the Gestapo, the Franks and another family lived cloistered in the ‘Secret Annexe’ of an old office building. Cut off from the outside world, they faced hunger, boredom, the constant cruelties of living in confined quarters, and the ever-present threat of discovery and death. In her diary Anne Frank recorded vivid impressions of her experiences during this period. By turns thoughtful, moving, and surprisingly humorous, her account offers a fascinating commentary on human courage and frailty and a compelling self-portrait of a sensitive and spirited young woman whose promise was tragically cut short.”

**Hersey, John**

***Hiroshima***

**Gr 9 Up.** “On August 6, 1945, Hiroshima was destroyed by the first atom bomb ever dropped on a city. This book, John Hersey’s journalistic masterpiece, tells what happened on that day. Told through the memories of survivors, this timeless, powerful and compassionate document has become a classic ‘that stirs the conscience of humanity’ (*The New York Times*).” (Publisher’s summary)

**Hillenbrand, Laura**

***Unbroken (The Young Adult Adaptation): An Olympian’s Journey from Airman to Castaway to Captive***

**Gr 7 Up.** “In this captivating and lavishly illustrated young adult edition of her award-winning #1 *New York Times* bestseller, Laura Hillenbrand tells the story of a former Olympian’s courage, cunning, and fortitude following his plane crash in enemy territory. This adaptation of *Unbroken* introduces a new generation to one of history’s most thrilling survival epics.” (Publisher’s summary)

**O’Reilly, Bill**

***Hitler’s Last Days: The Death of the Nazi Regime***

**Gr 8 Up.** “By early 1945, the destruction of the German Nazi State seems certain. The Allied forces, led by American generals George S. Patton and Dwight D. Eisenhower, are gaining control of Europe, leaving German leaders scrambling. Facing defeat, Adolf Hitler flees to a secret bunker with his new wife, Eva Braun, and his beloved dog, Blondi. It is there that all three would meet their end, thus ending the Third Reich and one of the darkest chapters of history... a gripping account of the death of one of the most reviled villains of the 20th century—a man whose regime of murder and terror haunts the world even today.” (Publisher’s summary)

**Rauch, Georg*****Unlikely Warrior: A Jewish Soldier in Hitler's Army***

**Gr 7 Up.** “As a young adult in wartime Vienna, Georg Rauch helped his mother hide dozens of Jews from the Gestapo behind false walls in their top-floor apartment and arrange for their safe transport out of the country. His family was among the few who worked underground to resist Nazi rule. Then came the day he was drafted into Hitler’s army and shipped out to fight on the Eastern front as part of the German infantry—in spite of his having confessed his own Jewish ancestry. Thus begins the incredible journey of a nineteen year old thrust unwillingly into an unjust war, who must use his smarts, skills, and bare-knuckled determination to stay alive in the trenches, avoid starvation and exposure during the brutal Russian winter, survive more than one Soviet labor camp, and somehow find his way back home. *Unlikely Warrior* is Rauch’s true account of this extraordinary adventure.” (Publisher’s summary)

**Sheinkin, Steve*****The Port Chicago 50: Disaster, Mutiny, and the Fight for Civil Rights***

**Gr 7 Up.** “On July 17, 1944, a massive explosion rocked the segregated Navy base at Port Chicago, California, killing more than 300 sailors who were at the docks, critically injuring off-duty men in their bunks, and shattering windows up to a mile away. On August 9th, 244 men refused to go back to work until unsafe and unfair conditions at the docks were addressed. When the dust settled, fifty were charged with mutiny, facing decades in jail and even execution... a fascinating story of the prejudice and injustice that faced black men and women in America’s armed forces during World War II, and a nuanced look at those who gave their lives in service of a country where they lacked the most basic rights.” (Publisher’s summary)

**Wiesel, Elie*****Night***

**Gr 9 Up.** “Born in the town of Sighet, Transylvania, Elie Wiesel was a teenager when he and his family were taken from their home in 1944 to Auschwitz concentration camp, and then to Buchenwald. *Night* is the terrifying record of Elie Wiesel’s memories of the death of his family, the death of his own innocence, and his despair as a deeply observant Jew confronting the absolute evil of man.” (Publisher’s summary)