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Yellow Star

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Roy, Jennifer. *Yellow Star*. Marshall Cavendish, 2006. ISBN 076145277X. \$16.95. 227 p.

Reviewer: Thomasania Leydsman

Reading Level: Intermediate

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Historical fiction;

Subject: Jews--Persecutions--Poland--Lodz--Juvenile fiction; Holocaust (1939-1945)--Jewish--Juvenile fiction; Family life--Poland--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Yellow Star is a story of fear, terror, mayhem, and a child's attempt to understand the incomprehensible. It tells of a child's experience during the Holocaust and is brought to life by the incredible writing of Jennifer Roy.

This story is told through the eyes of a young girl, Sylvia Perlmutter, who speaks to us in a powerful first person narrative. Roy's phenomenal use of free verse, allows us to see, hear, and feel the Holocaust through a child's consciousness. She manages to slip into the mind of a child and to grow with her as she tries to make sense of and comprehend her world and its madness. Based on the story of Roy's own Aunt Sylvia, one of 200,000 Jews forced into a Polish ghetto during WWII, this book does for intermediate age children what Anne Frank's diary has done for older children.

Sylvia enters the ghetto in Lodz, Poland with her family in the year 1939 at age four and a half. She narrates the story of her family, the children, and others who attempt to survive the Nazi occupation. As family members and childhood friends disappear, Sylvia's voice allows the reader to share the horror in an incredible, real, and moving way. Six years later, at the end of the war, Sylvia is one of eight hundred survivors, which include only twelve children.

Though Roy writes a text that can be successfully read and comprehended by younger children, the easy readability in no way diminishes its powerful message. This book could be paired with *The Big Lie: A True Story*, by Leitner, Leitner, and Pedersen and *When the Soldiers Were Gone* by Propp, to create a commanding text set to study and better understand the Holocaust and WWII.