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Sachiko: A Nagasaki Bomb Survivor's Story

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Book Review

Title: Sachiko: A Nagasaki Bomb Survivor's Story

Author: Caren Stelson

Reviewer: Bethany Stevens

Publisher: Carolrhoda Books

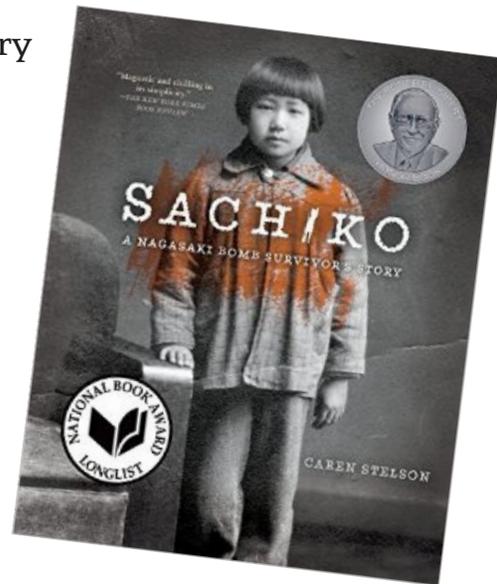
Publication Year: 2016

ISBN: 9781467789035

Number of Pages: 113

Interest Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Excellent



Review

Sachiko is six-years-old when the bomb falls from the sky, forever altering her life's trajectory. Her two-year-old brother, Toshi, dies immediately in the blast. twelve-year-old Ichiro and fourteen-year-old Aki soon follow, suffering from the affects of radiation poisoning that know one understands or knows how to treat. Next is Uncle. Sachiko, Mother, and Father survive the initial destruction and attempt to rebuild the life that was so suddenly torn away from them. Years down the road, cancer from the radiation takes Father away. Sachiko survives as a silent witness, always keeping in remembrance those who didn't make it. Bolstered by the words of inspirational leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr., Helen Keller, and Mahatma Gandhi, whom her father greatly admired, Sachiko eventually finds the courage to raise her voice and share her experiences so that what happened to her never happens again to anyone else.

Sachiko: A Nagasaki Bomb Story is the perfect book for both adults and youth alike who are interested in learning more about this important piece of history. Special pages interspersed throughout Sachiko's story provide context about the creation of and events leading to the dropping of the atomic bombs, the racial underpinnings to the war with Japan, the political leaders involved, and the affects of radiation poisoning. Pictures are present on almost every page and offer a personalized touch that draws the reader into the unfolding events and allows the reader to connect with Sachiko's family and to better understand the extreme level of destruction caused by the bombs. Though this book avoids extremely graphic imagery, there are images of the bomb destruction and it does not shy away from discussing death and suffering. It would likely be best suited for high school readers. Told through extensive interviews with Sachiko Yasui, this book offers a unique perspective on the suffering of war, its aftermath, and the road to healing.

*Contains discussions about the violence of war, death, and the affects of radiation and atomic bombs on victims.