

6th Grade Prompt: *Original Open-Ended Question*

Sadness, Anger, Hatred, and Horror written by: Oren C.

Young people are still influenced by the events of the Holocaust even 73 years later. I am a student at Contra Costa Jewish Day School, and we have speakers come in who survived the events of World War II. Also, we are reading the play, *The Diary of Anne Frank* and excerpts from her real diary. I wanted to know more about other young people who lived and wrote during the Holocaust, and found an excerpt from a young person's diary on the Yad Vashem website. This piece was written by a Jew named Yarden on September, 1939, showing what he witnessed happening against the Jews.

"Violent feelings rage within me... What more will this day bring? Shrieks, terror, blows, abductions, imprisonment, messengers, humiliation and white, green, red, yellow, new ones each day, but always with the same message: Jews are forbidden... to buy, sell, study, pray, gather, eat, etc., a string of prohibitions with no end! Would that the night would never end, that we could have some peace, some balm for the tumult in our hearts... ([Yad Vashem](#))"

Reading this helps me understand the actual reality, of how constantly scared other kids were in the Holocaust. And knowing this is really intense, scary, and sad for me. I looked at pictures of some of the things that happened in the concentration camps. One picture showed a pile of teeth that had been pulled out of prisoner's mouths. Another showed a pile of bodies. I felt not just scared, but angry. I cannot do anything about what happened then, but if I was an adult then, I would have tried to help. Even after all this time, just looking at the pictures affects my feeling. I cannot imagine myself or my friends in this situation.

I also asked my grandmother about how the Holocaust affected her. She said that everyone was affected in some way even if it was less severe than death. My great grandparents lost relatives in Europe, because they were Jews. As a young Jewish person, the death of the Jews who died during WWII has had lasting consequences. I feel frightened when I read about it and see pictures; it is too scary to think that this could happen again. Reading what Yarden says is almost like reading a poem and is bringing the Shoah to life for me. When we discuss the Holocaust in class, some students get really sad, especially those who have lost family members; this is how those events are still affecting young people 73 years later. But it is necessary to educate people of the horrors of the Holocaust, so it can help make people aware and hopefully keep it from happening again. We need to watch for people in power blaming others. We must especially watch out for racism.

Another victim of WWII is Maria Silverman. Maria Silverman was 9 years old when she escaped from the Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland. She travels around telling young people about the Holocaust in order to let younger people know happened. She read a survey that showed that 41% of Americans did not know what the Auschwitz camp was. "-They don't

know about it. Kids read it, it doesn't mean a thing, it's a piece of paper. But when they see me speaking, come up to me and they touch me, it's real to them." ([abcactionnews](#)) Her talks scare people but also enlighten them about what really happened. I don't even want to imagine my family being taken to a camp or killed; for me to imagine my family in this situation is too hard and terrible. This is another lasting effect on young people.

Reading about survivors is not the only way we remember. The memorials and symbols for the Holocaust help create a place where people can go to learn and feel. They are focal points for following generations. They can acknowledge the consequences of racism and hatred. People can go to museums or even the concentration camps. Feelings of sadness, anger, hatred, and horror come up strongly in these places. These feelings make the Holocaust more intense and terrible to us. History has an effect on us even if we were not part of the situation. My classmates and I get sad just hearing about it. Hopefully, this makes us more cautious and scared about similar events and people like Hitler. We need to be cautious about what is happening in our world. We know how the Holocaust was caused because we are educated about it. We need to be sure it won't happen again.