**Holocaust Unit Discussion Questions and Journal Prompts**

**Journal 1: Setting**

**Discuss with your group or a partner before writing:**

* What are the clues to the setting? What are the words and phrases that help you picture the setting?
* Did the setting change? If so, how?
* How is the setting affecting the characters? Give examples. How do the characters react to any changes in the setting? What do their reactions suggest?
* What conflicts are the characters facing? What is creating the conflicts? The setting? Society’s values and beliefs? Other characters?
* What is the mood of the book so far?
* Have you seen any examples of compassion or cruelty so far? If so, what did you notice? Add them to your chart.

**Choose one to write about:**

1. What mood does the setting create? What words and phrases does the author use to create that mood? Provide specific evidence.
2. How does the setting create conflicts for the characters? Provide specific examples?
3. How is the setting affecting the characters in the story? (Is it changing their lives or their character traits? Teaching them a lesson? Creating conflicts from them? Motivating them to do something?) Provide specific evidence.
4. How do the characters’ reactions to the setting reveal their traits and/or human nature?

**Journal 2: Character**

**Discuss with your group or a partner before writing:**

* How are the characters reacting to the adversity setting? What impact are the adversities and conflicts having on the characters?
* Which characters are acting cruelly and which are acting compassionately? What is motivating them?
* Are any of the characters changing? If so, how? What is causing them to change?
* Which characters are not changing? Why wouldn’t a character change?

**Choose one to write about:**

1. Choose one character from the book. Give evidence that he/she is acting cruelly or compassionately. What is motivating him or her to act this way? (Concluding sentence hint: what does this reveal about human nature?)
2. How is a character changing? What is causing him/her to change? Is it the setting? A conflict? Another character? Their current circumstances? (Concluding sentence hint: what does this reveal about human nature?)
3. If a character is not changing, give evidence that the main character is static. Why isn’t that character changing? (Concluding sentence hint: what does this reveal about human nature?)

**Journal 3: Point of View**

**Discuss with your group or a partner before writing:**

* Identify the point of view the story is told from. What information does this point of view reveal or hide?
* How would the story change if it was told from another point of view?
* Why is point of view important? Why might the author have chosen to write from this particular point of view?
* From the book’s point of view, what does the author appear to be saying about human nature?

**Choose one to write about:**

1. Identify the point of view of the book. Why did the author choose to write from this point of view? You might think about what information is revealed or hidden because of this point of view, or how the world and/or other characters appear from this point of view.
2. Take a character’s point of view for a moment. What would this character say about human nature? (You’re not giving your opinion; you’re trying to see the world as the main character would.) if you like, you can even write from first-person point of view as if you are the character.