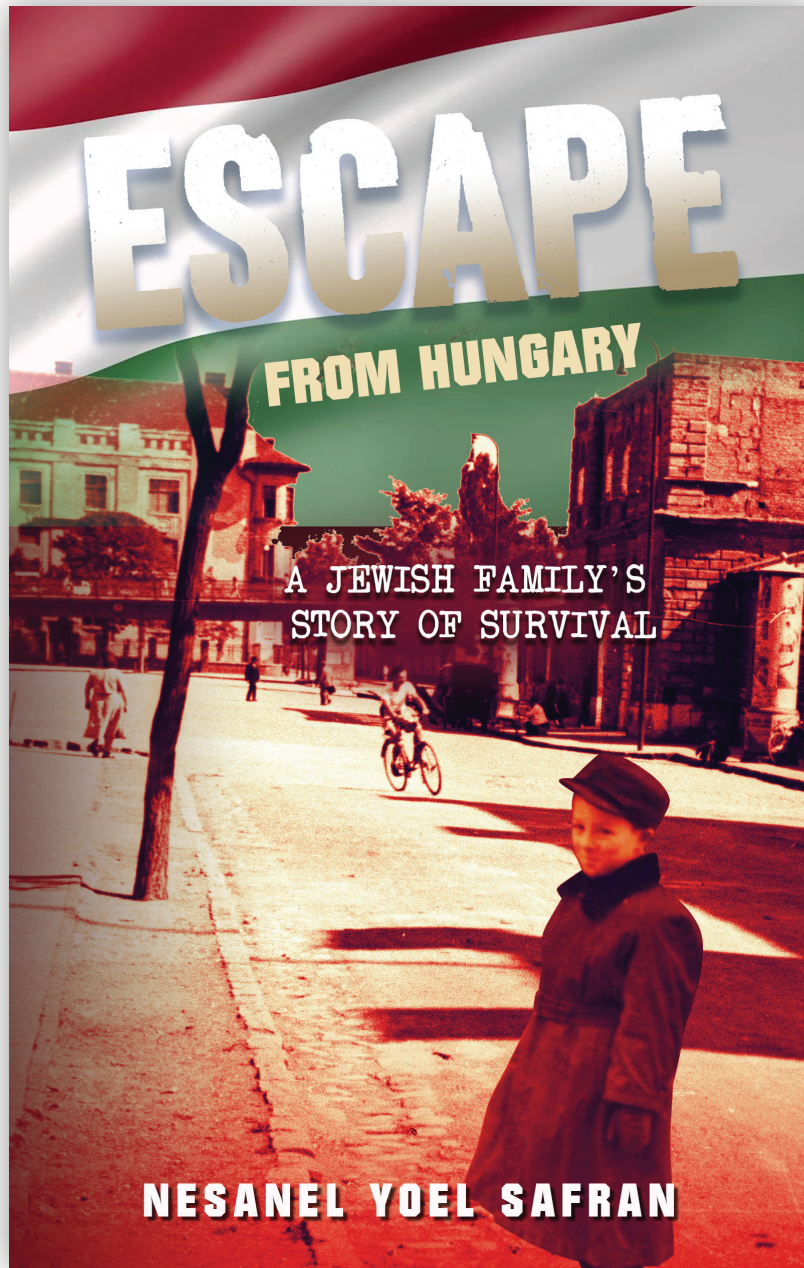


Educator's Guide



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FOR THE TEACHER

This guide consists of lessons to assist you in using *Escape from Hungary: A Jewish Family's Story of Survival* in your classroom. The guide is written in a chapter-by-chapter format and includes a synopsis, pre-reading activities, and comprehension questions, as well as supplementary activities to be used at the end of the book.

The book and its accompanying guide can be used in a number of ways. Students reading at the same level might participate in a small-group guided reading of the book, returning to it over several weeks as they read and discuss it with the teacher. The entire class might read the book and discuss it in small groups using literature circles or reciprocal teaching. The teacher can then use the suggested questions to guide students in their discussions. Comprehension questions can be answered orally or in writing. Students should be encouraged to support their answers with evidence from the text. Students might keep a notebook of their responses throughout the year, which can then be used for progress monitoring and assessment purposes.

This teacher's guide includes many document-based questions. These questions focus on utilizing critical-thinking skills. Students are also asked to make comparisons, draw analogies, and apply historic analysis using primary and secondary sources from this time period. Source material for questions include photographs, maps, and documents. The questions can be used to teach students how to analyze source documents and deepen their understanding of the life and times of the people featured in this book.

Using this guide can help you as a teacher create more active readers. Students who are encouraged to think about their reading, make inferences, compare and contrast events and characters, and notice authors' language will read more closely and carefully. They will become more thoughtful readers, and their reading comprehension will improve. Working on this in the context of authentic literature helps to inspire a motivation and love for reading.

SYNOPSIS Gyuri and his family escape Hungary after the Hungarian Revolution on a journey fraught with danger.

Pre-Reading Activities

Use one or more of the following activities to introduce the book.

1. **Predictions:** Preview the book by reading the title, the author, and looking at the picture on the cover. What do you think this book will be about? Have you read any other books in this series? What clues can you gather from the photograph on the cover?
2. **Building Background:** This book tells the escape story of a boy living in Hungary after World War II. Discuss with students the historical background of the story, including the communist takeover of Hungary.
3. **Genre Focus:** *Escape from Hungary: A Jewish Family's Story of Survival* is a true story. Students can read the disclaimer on the copyright page and discuss: Why are some conversations and minor episodes changed in the book?
4. **Geography:** Study the map on the inside front spread of the book to acquaint yourself with the route Gyuri and his family traveled on their escape journey. Refer to it while you read the book, and trace the route as it develops.
5. **Predict:** What hardships might Gyuri and his family have faced on the way?

PROLOGUE

1. What are some questions you now have about Gyuri's story? Note these questions and leave space to record their answers as you read the rest of the book.
2. Why was Gyuri outside if it seemed so scary to be there?
3. Explain Gyuri's conflicting feelings about the revolution.



CHAPTER 1: A JEWISH BABY IN HUNGARY

SYNOPSIS Baby Gyuri grows up in a time of unrest, with the German conquest of Hungary forcing its Jews to worry about the future.

→ **Prompt:** Read to find out what life is like for Hungarian Jews in 1942.

Guided Questions


1. Keep track of the Orosz family by creating a family tree with important information about each family member based on what you have read in this chapter.
2. Explain why Mamuka is confused about the German invasion of Hungary and what Apuka explains to her.
3. Describe the conditions for the Jews in Hungary from World War I until the German invasion in World War II.
4. How did Mr. Farkas's interactions with Apuka change?

CHAPTER 2: SEARCH FOR HELP

SYNOPSIS When young Gyuri needs a doctor, it's hard to find someone willing to treat a Jew.

→ **Prompt:** Read to find out some of the ways Hungarian Jews suffered at this time.

Guided Questions

1. List some of the anti-Jewish laws that were enacted by the Germans.
2. Who were the Arrow Cross patrols, and why was Apuka so scared to meet them?
3. Explain what the hospital watchman meant when he said about the neighboring doctor, "We never spoke about it, but I think he sees things the way I do."
4. Apuka thanked the doctor and said, "You have not only healed my grandson, but you have also healed my soul by showing there still exist some kind and righteous people in this world." What does this mean?
5.  **Document-based question:** Study the photograph on page 20. What details do you notice in the picture?

Vocabulary

hoisted (p. 19): *With that, Apuka **hoisted** Gyuri onto his shoulder and hurried down the stairs.*



brutal (p. 19): *It was made up of **brutal** thugs just waiting for any excuse to hurt Jews.*

CHAPTER 3: DANGEROUS TIMES

SYNOPSIS The Orosz family is forced into the Budapest ghetto but manages to receive a certificate giving them entry to a Swiss protected house.

→ **Prompt:** Read to find out how life for the Orosz family changes.

Guided Questions

1. Describe what life was like in the Budapest ghetto.
2. Explain what a Swiss protected house was and how it could help the Orosz family.
3. Explain how Apuka saved Mama from the Arrow Cross. What was the “true miracle” they experienced?
-  4. **Document-based question:** Study the photograph on page 25. What details do you notice in the picture?
-  5. **Document-based question:** Study the documents on page 28. What details do you notice?

Vocabulary

meager (p. 23): *He held a basket filled with the **meager** offerings he hoped to feed his large household.*


inconspicuous (p. 28): *Apuka tried his best to remain **inconspicuous** as he hurried along the sidewalk ahead of the slow-moving parade.*

CHAPTER 4: A GREAT FAVOR

SYNOPSIS The Hungarian army surrenders to the Russians, and Mama remarries Andor Weisz, who becomes Gyuri's loving stepfather.

→ **Prompt:** Read to find out how life for Gyuri changes after the war is over.

Guided Questions

1. How did Mama escape the Arrow Cross surprise search of anyone outside the Swiss safe house?
2. Describe how Andor ended up in a concentration camp.
-  3. **Document-based question:** Study the photograph on page 33. Use the caption and events in this chapter to explain what's happening in the picture.

Vocabulary

tinkering (p. 33): He was **tinkering** with a watch that one of the soldiers had asked him to fix.

warily (p. 34): "Is something wrong?" Andor asked **warily**.



heirloom (p. 34): "It's a family **heirloom** and I thought it had broken beyond repair."

CHAPTER 5: TOO LATE!

SYNOPSIS After the war, Gyuri's parents try unsuccessfully to leave Communist Hungary, and Gyuri begins to grow up.

→ **Prompt:** Read to find out what happens to Gyuri's family after the war.

Guided Questions

1. Describe some of the changes in Hungary after the war.
2. What were some of the steps taken by the communist Hungarian government to make sure its citizens remained loyal to communism?
3. Explain how Gyuri knew all about his school building on his very first day there.
-  4. **Document-based question:** Study the documents on page 38. What details do you notice? If you've ever traveled to a foreign country, compare and contrast these visas to visas of today.
-  5. **Document-based question:** Study the photograph on page 39. Describe the people seen in the picture and explain what they're doing.

Vocabulary

emigrate (p. 38): *There was a long line in front of the building of people who also hoped to **emigrate**.*



propaganda (p. 42): *They also tried to brainwash the students with communist **propaganda**.*

CHAPTER 6: TROUBLE

SYNOPSIS Stalin dies, but the cruel communist government continues to make life difficult for Gyuri and his family.

➔ **Prompt:** Read to find out how life continues to be difficult for Gyuri and his family.

Guided Questions

1. Why was Gyuri so shocked when he heard that Stalin had died?
2. How did life change in Hungary after Stalin's death?
3. Why were the communist officers particularly suspicious of someone like Papa?
-  4. **Document-based question:** Study the photograph on page 45. What details do you notice in the picture?
-  5. **Creative writing:** Write a diary entry for Gyuri describing a typical evening at home. Use details from this chapter in your entry.

Vocabulary

repressive (p. 48): *Yet while things were better in Hungary, it was still a **repressive** regime.*

savory (p. 48): *...Its **savory** aroma made everyone's mouth water.*


interrogated (p. 50): *They **interrogated** me all night.*

CHAPTER 7: REVOLUTION

SYNOPSIS The Hungarian Revolution breaks out as citizens fight for freedom from communism.

➔ **Prompt:** Read to find out what happens when Gyuri is in high school.

Guided Questions

1. Compare and contrast Gyuri's gymnasium to an American high school today.
2. Gyuri said to his mother, "...there's an even bigger, wider world right in these shelves!" Explain what he meant by that.
3. Why were Gyuri and his family surprised by what Khrushchev was saying on the radio?
4. Explain the reasons for the struggle in Hungary after the removal of Rákosi.
5. How did the government try to break up the political protests?
6. Why did the Hungarian government call for Soviet help in breaking up the revolution?
7. According to Apuka, no matter who won the revolution, it wouldn't be good for the Jews. Why not?
8.  **Document-based question:** Study the photograph on page 57. Use details from this chapter to explain what the people are doing and what they might be feeling in this picture.

Vocabulary

intensely (p. 53): He was **intensely** looking into one of them.

sheepishly (p. 53): Gyuri smiled **sheepishly**.


staunch (p. 54): "Khrushchev is a **staunch** communist, too."

CHAPTER 8: THE DECISION

SYNOPSIS Gyuri and his family realize that no matter who wins the revolution, things will not get better for the Jews, and they decide to escape Hungary.

→ **Prompt:** Read to find out what Gyuri discovers on his walk outside that night.

Guided Questions

1. How do you think Gyuri may have felt when he saw the colorful poster hanging outside? Why?
2. Describe some of Gyuri's feelings as he walked home after exploring the streets.
3. Explain why Gyuri's parents decided to leave Hungary.
-  4. **Creative writing:** Write a letter from Gyuri to an old childhood friend describing his family's decision to escape Hungary. Include the reasons for this decision. Be sure to remind him to keep it a secret!

Vocabulary

pogrom (p. 64): *"The man told him that since the revolution started, there have been **pogroms**."*

CHAPTER 9: CAN WE STILL GO?

SYNOPSIS The escape is detained due to Mama's cough, and Soviet troops defeat the Hungarian revolutionaries, but Papa still wants to attempt escape.

→ **Prompt:** Read to find out how the family's escape plan develops.

Guided Questions

1. Why did the family think they would be able to escape to Austria?
2. Why did Apuka and Mamuka decide not to escape with the rest of the family?
3. Refer back to the family tree you started in chapter 1. Update the information based on details provided in this chapter.
4. When the Soviets defeated the Hungarian revolutionaries, Mama and Papa debated whether or not they should still try to escape. Explain why they were no longer sure of their decision.
5. Explain the title of this chapter: "Can We Still Go?"

Vocabulary



refugee (p. 67): *During the revolution, Austria had allowed **refugees** from Hungary to escape into their country.*

CHAPTER 10: TROUBLE AGAIN

SYNOPSIS The family heads to Austria and is stopped by Soviet soldiers.

→ **Prompt:** Read to find out how the family heads to Austria.

Guided Questions

1. According to the woman whom Mama spoke to on the train, why would the train continue straight into Austria?
2. Why did Papa and the family decide to get off in Gyor, according to their old plan?
3. Describe some of the difficulties the family faced on their way to Austria.
-  4. **Predict:** What might happen in the next chapter?
-  5. **Creative writing:** Write a diary entry for Mama as she leaves her parents. What might she be thinking and feeling?

Vocabulary

disoriented (p. 77): *They were totally lost and **disoriented**.*

CHAPTER 11: THE BORDER

SYNOPSIS The Soviet soldiers wait for transport for Gyuri and his family, and they are ultimately smuggled into Austria.

→ **Prompt:** Read to find out what the Soviet soldiers do to Gyuri and his family.

Guided Questions

1. The family was very upset about meeting the Soviet soldiers, but they were also relieved. Why?
2. What did the soldiers plan to do with the family, and why was it taking so long?
3. Gyuri told Matyas that, according to his grandfather, things could always get better. What are some examples up to this point in the story where Gyuri saw this come true?
4. Describe the Divine Providence (*hashgachah pratis*) that took place for the thirteen Jews that day.

Vocabulary

dejected (p. 80): *Papa and the others felt **dejected** at having been caught.*


surly (p. 84): *"It's about time!" the **surly** Hungarian guide said to the soldiers.*

CHAPTER 12: ENGLISH LESSONS

SYNOPSIS The family travels to England and then decides to leave Europe entirely.

→ **Prompt:** Read to find out how the family settles in Austria and where they travel next.

Guided Questions

1. Describe the scene in Austria when Gyuri and his family arrived.
2. Use the map located on the front inside cover to trace the route traveled by Gyuri and his family up to this point.
3. Describe Gyuri's personality. Use evidence from the text to support your ideas.
4. Why did Papa decide that he wanted to leave Europe?
5.  **Creative writing:** Design a welcome sign for the Eisenstadt Refugee Center welcoming the refugees to Austria and giving them instructions for their next steps.

Vocabulary


prosperous (p. 88): *Switzerland was located next to Austria and known to be a free and **prosperous** country.*

CHAPTER 13: LIFE AFTER EUROPE

SYNOPSIS The family leaves Europe for Canada and settles in Montreal.

→ **Prompt:** Read to find out where the family finally settles.

Guided Questions

1. Why did the family decide to go to Argentina?
2. Why did Papa change his mind about going to Argentina, and what does this show about his personality?
-  3. **Creative writing:** Write a dialogue between Gyuri and the Canadian immigration officer in which Gyuri accepts the job as a translator.

Vocabulary

grimace (p. 98): *He heard his father describe the problem and then saw him **grimace** as he listened to the answer.*

simultaneously (p. 98): *"What?" Mama and Gyuri gasped **simultaneously**.*

EPILOGUE

SYNOPSIS Gyuri returns to a life of Torah, marries, and settles in Israel, where he raises a large family.

→ **Prompt:** Read to find out what happens as Gyuri becomes a man.

Guided Questions

1. The author writes, "Gyuri always felt a strong connection to being Jewish..." Prove this with details from the story up to this point.
2. Gyuri tells his family, "I can tell you a lot about miracles. I've seen quite a few." Explain what he means by this statement.
3. According to Gyuri, what was "the biggest miracle of all"?

SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

Use one or more of the following activities to conclude the book.

Life Lessons

Read the author's note at the back of the book. What prompted the author to write this book? What lessons can we gain from reading the Varnai family story?

Art

Create a poster to advertise this book so people will want to read it.

Creative Writing

- Interview a Jew of Hungarian descent. Ask them to tell you their family's escape story.
- Write a speech Gyuri may have delivered to his extended family on the anniversary of his escape from Hungary. Reflect on the lessons he learned from his life story and the message he'd want his family to take from that.
- Compare this story with another one in the Escape series. How are the stories similar? How are they different?