

Study Guide for *March to Freedom: A Memoir of the Holocaust* by Edith Singer

151 Questions for Thought, Discussion, and Writing

Pre-reading

1. What did Adolf Hitler think about the Treaty of Versailles that ended WWI?
2. What caused World War II?
3. When did World War II begin and end?
4. What were the two sides called?
5. Which countries were the most powerful on each side?
6. What is the difference between a memoir and an autobiography?
7. What do you now know about the Holocaust?

"Prologue"

1. What does "Holocaust" mean?
2. What does "genocide" mean?
3. What are examples of genocide in history?
4. On page 9, Edith Singer writes, "When I was liberated by the Russian Army on May 8, 1945 in a small German village, I promised myself that I would not talk or think about concentration camps ever again." For how many years did she keep this promise to herself? What type of experience would a person not be willing to discuss for this period of time?
5. On page 10, Singer notes, "As the years passed, fewer and fewer survivors remained." How many years has it been since WWII ended? Are there any survivors of the Holocaust alive today? About how old would survivors be now?
6. On page 10, Singer explains, "By writing down my experiences, I let go of some of the painful memories." How can writing be therapeutic?
7. On page 10, Singer says, "I hope that the readers of this book will gain a better understanding of the Holocaust and will unite in the struggle against evil so that it may never happen again." What are Singer's two objectives in writing this book? How are the two objectives related?
8. In the family photograph on page 10, which child is Edith? What do you find interesting about this picture?

"The Ghetto in Chust"

1. What is a "ghetto"? What is the history behind this word? What is your sense of the meaning of this word today? What are the key characteristics of "ghettos"?
2. What does "gentile" mean?
3. What are the top priorities in Edith's family? What are the top priorities in your family?

4. Based on your reading of the first two pages of this chapter, what can you infer about the history of political instability in the Carpatorusse region?
5. How many languages did Edith speak?
6. What is "anti-Semitism"? Are you aware of any instances of anti-Semitism in recent years?
7. What acts of discrimination toward Jews are described in this chapter? What acts of discrimination against other minorities do we see today?
8. What is affirmative action? Do you support it? Why?
9. What does "propaganda" mean? What are examples of it in WW II? What are examples of it today?
10. Some people deny that the Holocaust happened. Why would someone do that? What events do some people deny today? Why do they do so?
11. How would you feel if someone collected all of your valuables and distributed them to others?
12. What exactly does the Star of David look like? What do the Star of David and the color yellow symbolize?
13. Why did the Nazis require that a yellow Star of David be sewn on clothing worn by Jews? What does the yellow patch symbolize today, as we look back on the Nazi period?
14. What does "kosher" mean?
15. On page 20, as the Jews are being herded toward the trains bound for Auschwitz, Singer writes, "The non-Jewish population of Chust hid inside their houses. Our neighbors-- people we had worked with, grown up with, gone to school with, and played with-- became invisible." Why did these neighbors become invisible? If the minority to which you belong was rounded up and taken away, would your neighbors defend you? If this were happening to your neighbors, would you defend them? Edmund Burke said words to this effect: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men [and women] to do nothing." Evaluate the accuracy of this statement.
16. The Christian pastor, Martin Niemoller (1892–1984), who was sent by Hitler to the Sachsenhausen and Dachau concentration camps, is said to have remarked, "In Germany, they came first for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist; and then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist; and then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew; and then . . . they came for me . . . and by that time there was no one left to speak up." Relate this remark to Edmund Burke's statement, above.
17. On page 20, before boarding the train, Edith encountered some of her former classmates from junior high school, and she writes, "None of the girls looked at me, showed recognition, or gave me reassurance. They just sat, joking, smiling, laughing, and taking our names. " Why do these girls behave this way? How can you tell who your real friends are? How committed are you to your friends?
18. Authors sometimes use the technique of "foreshadowing" to hint at later events in the story. Can you find any examples of foreshadowing in this chapter?

"Arrival in Auschwitz"

1. On page 23, Singer describes a sign at the entrance to the camp: "Under 'Auschwitz' were the words 'Arbeit Macht Frei' (Work Makes You Free). It made no sense to me." How is this an example of propaganda? What are the Nazis hoping to accomplish by saying, "Work makes you free"?
2. The footnote on page 23 states, "Auschwitz may have been the best kept secret in Europe." Examine the relationship between unethical behavior and secrecy. Can you think of any examples of personal actions or governmental policies that have been covered up in more recent times?
3. On the first half of page 24, we learn that the "old timers" are encouraging the newly arrived mothers to give up their children to their older relatives. Are the "old timers" being helpful or not? If you were in the mothers' position, what would you do? With little information, mothers must make a decision quickly. How informed are our decisions? Do we consult with "old timers" prior to making important decisions?
4. On page 25, we find a description of a high-ranking SS officer. Singer writes, "Tall, with dark hair, wearing white gloves and an impeccable SS uniform, he talked little. . . . He was the most handsome man I had ever seen--he was Dr. Mengele, 'the Angel of Death.'" What is ironic about his appearance and his behavior? Why does he dress so fastidiously?
5. Who survived initial selections? How did the Nazis determine the value of a person? How do you determine the value of a person? How do you determine your own value?
6. On page 26, we learn that prisoners received "one pair of underwear and one dress." Prisoners have to wake up and go outside at 3:00 a.m., the coldest part of the night. In what month did Edith arrive in Auschwitz? What is the average temperature for this time and this month in Germany?
7. On page 27, Edith, the Blockälteste, screams, "You were still in your homes with your families when I was already here. You had enough food when I was hungry." Why does she treat her own people like this? Can we control our reactions to horrible situations? If so, how?
8. By the end of this chapter, the Jews who had been deported to Auschwitz had been robbed of nearly everything they had. Describe the steps in this process, from page 13 through page 27. (You can describe the process in terms of physical possessions, and also in terms of a progressive loss of freedom.)
9. From pages 1-27, create a timeline of events, beginning with 1939 and ending with May, 1944. Include broad historical events and local events experienced by Edith Singer, her family, and her community. Be specific in your listing, and include specific dates.

"Appell"

1. On page 28, Singer writes, "My mother always said to the people in our line, 'I will stand at the end of our line as long as you let my two daughters stay in the middle.'" Why is the mother behaving in this way? Do you predict that the mother will survive? Why or why not?
2. On page 30, Singer explains that the Nazis make the prisoners write home: "'You will write that you are doing fine. You are working and receiving good food. Your families are together, and everyone is taken care of.'" What are the Nazis trying to accomplish through this propaganda? How effective is this propaganda?
3. On page 31, Singer says, "Ever since then, I have had an aversion for standing in lines, especially for anything that is not essential, such as movies, amusement parks, and restaurants." What is an aversion? How is an aversion created? Do you have any aversions? How might someone overcome an aversion? Why are they sometimes difficult or impossible to overcome?

"Lunch"

1. On page 32, Singer explains, "In this soup, the Germans put bromide, a tranquilizer." What were the two effects of this tranquilizer? Why did the Nazis put bromide in the soup instead of addressing these issues in another way?
2. On page 33, Singer says, "My mother forced herself to eat her soup and some of ours. She told us that she like it so that in the evening she could give us half of her bread, saying she had eaten enough at lunch." Would you be able to do that?
3. On page 33, Singer explains what happened at lunch: "Some prisoners snuck into other lines to try to get a second helping. If the SS who watched us during lunch time caught them, they beat them. The guards walked among the prisoners with their whips ready. They enjoyed seeing how far a hungry person would go for a little extra watery soup." Why do some people "enjoy" seeing others suffer?
4. On page 34, Singer explains, "The hardest thing to endure in Auschwitz was the constant, unsubiding hunger. . . . No words in any language could describe this hunger." Why is hunger so painful? Is having enough food to eat a basic human right? What is today's world population? How many people in the world today are hungry, malnourished, or starving? What solution can you propose for this problem?
5. On page 34, Singer thinks, "I will not listen to people who are pessimistic and who do not believe in a future." What is the value of being optimistic? How does optimism promote success? Give examples of Edith Singer's optimism in the chapters you have read so far.
6. On page 34, Singer refers to "Germans." What is the difference between a "German" and a "Nazi"? Is this an important distinction to make? If so, why?

"Sleeping"

1. On page 35, we hear a description of the sleeping conditions in Auschwitz. Sketch a drawing of the sleeping conditions. How many levels are on each bed? How many people are on each level? What is the total number of people per bed?
2. On page 36, Singer says, "In spite of the terrible sleeping conditions, we could only escape the reality of Auschwitz through sleep." Do people try to escape reality today? If so, how, and for what reasons?
3. On page 36, Singer explains how many young women thought about their own romantic futures: "Would we live to meet a young man, to know what love is, to get married and have children?" When we are 16 and 17, what value do our notions of our romantic futures hold?
4. On page 37, a palm reader tells Edith, "You will live a long time, eighty or ninety years." How important is hope when we find ourselves in a difficult situation? How does hope help us?
5. On page 37, Singer documents, "Eitu stood in the open doorway with a large club in her hand, pushing, shouting, and hitting us as we ran out. . . . No SS guards stood around at this time. Eitu did not have to impress them with her cruelty, yet she hit us anyway." Why is Eitu brutal to members of her own ethnic group?

"Latrine"

1. On page 40, Singer notes the benefits of work: "I don't care what kind of work it is, I thought to myself as I shoveled excrement. It was better to work than to languish in the barracks dreaming of food, waiting for the next order, and wasting away." Why is working better than doing nothing? How do we feel after we work hard on something? How is time a function of interest?
2. On page 40, Singer explains how she disobeyed the Nazis to help Margitneni. What would the consequence have been for disobedience had Edith been caught? If you were in Edith's situation, would you disobey the Nazis to help someone?

"Organizieren"

1. On page 42, Singer explains out how much food the Nazis fed the prisoners; "We received two meager meals a day: for lunch, a bowl of watery vegetable soup, and for dinner, a small piece of dark, coarse bread, one thin slice of salami, and a square of margarine. This food--between 450 and 500 calories--nourished us for 24 hours. We felt hungry all the time." How many calories are needed per day to sustain health? For prisoners in Auschwitz, what are the consequences of this diet?
2. On page 43, we learn about Edith's wishes: "I had a little prayer: if I am to die here, I would rather die today than tomorrow so that I will be hungry one day less. My other prayer was: if I have to die, just once more I would like to have enough food to remember

what it is like not to be hungry. I had another wish too. If I could live through the war and be liberated, I wanted two dresses, so that I could wear one and wash the other." What are your three most important wishes? How do your wishes compare to Edith's wishes?

3. On page 43, Edith writes, "When I saw the guards taking people away to be killed, I always felt so bad for them because they were suffering for so many weeks or months, and then the guards killed them anyway." As you look around society today, for whom do you feel the most sympathy? How can you assist these people?
4. On pages 43-44, Edith explains "organizieren." Is it okay ethically for prisoners to steal from Nazis? If so, why? Can two wrongs make a right?
5. On page 44, Singer explains, "I never saw anyone going to the wires to commit suicide, but I am sure that there were people who just couldn't take the suffering anymore. The fence provided a way out, to run to the wires and to end the suffering." Is suicide right or wrong? Are there any situations in which you feel it is justified? What are the disadvantages of suicide? If Edith had committed suicide in Auschwitz, how would her decision have affected her family, you, and the thousands of others who have read her story? What advantages exist in working through our most difficult experiences instead of giving up?
6. On page 45, a stranger approaches Edith and gives her a piece of bread because her father once did a big favor for her family. Do you agree or disagree with the statement that "what goes around comes around"? What are examples of this happening or not happening?
7. On pages 47-48, Edith explains that she stole potatoes from the Nazis at night, traded the potatoes for bread, and shared the bread with her mother and sister. What does "altruism" mean? Why do people sometimes exhibit altruistic behavior? What motivates them to behave in this way? What are examples of altruistic actions in your life?
8. Rabbi Tzvi Freeman has written a brief article in which he answers the question, "What Is the Jewish Law on Cremation?" He writes, "Cremation has always been looked upon with horror by every sector of Jewish thought. The body is sacred, because it is the 'temple of the soul' and because it is the medium by which we do goodness in this world" (www.chabad.org). On pages 49-50, Edith Singer states, "Cremating is against the Jewish religion." Based on this belief, how do you think the prisoners would regard the crematoria at Auschwitz?

"Selections"

1. In this chapter, we learn about Dr. Mengele, "the Angel of Death." Who was this man? What role did he play in the Nazi regime? On page 50, we learn that "he smiled faintly" at Edith. What is he smiling about?
2. On page 51, Singer says, "Mengele . . . wanted to know how a German woman could have twins instead of one child," so he experimented on twins. Why does Mengele want

to know how a German woman can have twins? What kind of people does Hitler want to create?

3. On page 51, Singer writes, "I know some stories that I still cannot share." What do you think she is talking about? Would you like to read these stories, or are you content not to know some things about the Holocaust?
4. The footnote on page 52 mentions Oskar Schindler. After researching Oskar Schindler briefly, what more have you learned about him? Evaluate his character.

"Tattoo"

1. On page 54, Edith explains how she feels when she learns that she will be tattooed with a number in Auschwitz; "I felt furious. They took away my family, they took away my belongings, and they took away my hair. They keep me cold, hungry, and miserable, and now they are going to put a number on my arm, just as though they were branding a cow. I felt so humiliated." Her thoughts then shift on page 55: "But I couldn't afford to be upset because it wouldn't help me. . . . I had to find a way to go on, so I tried to find something positive. If the Germans bother to give me a tattoo number, then they must have some plans for me--some living plans. To send me to the gas chamber, they don't need a number. Perhaps they will send me away to work--away from this hell called Auschwitz. I am not going to die here!" Can we control our attitudes? How beneficial is a positive attitude? Have you ever changed your own negative attitude to a positive attitude?
2. On page 55, Singer writes, "After they finished tattooing me, I did not feel humiliated at all. I felt hopeful. I will live! They could not take away my will to live. They could not take away my human dignity. As long as I am alive, I am a human being." What is human dignity? What is the source of human dignity? Can it be taken away? If so, how? If not, why not?

"Sundays"

1. On page 56, Singer writes, "Sundays in Auschwitz in Camp B were different from the rest of the week. . . . These small changes from the usual routine made all the difference to us, and we waited for Sunday all week long." Historically, what is the origin of the change of routine on Sunday? What is the Sabbath of the Jews? Does your routine change on Sunday or another day? If so, how? If so, what purpose do these changes serve? If so, do you look forward to these changes? If so, what do you appreciate about them?
2. On page 57, Singer explains, "This random killing of a prisoner occurred repeatedly every Sunday. I knew that the same SS guard in the tower was shooting prisoners, entertaining himself on a Sunday afternoon." Edith assumes that the SS guard is entertaining himself. Do you agree with Edith's assumption? If Edith's assumption is correct, what is entertaining about shooting prisoners?

"My Last Day in Auschwitz"

1. What is a miracle?
2. On page 60, after Edith has been selected to leave Auschwitz for work, she explains how much she wanted to communicate with her mother and sister: "Suddenly, from the corner of my eye, I saw someone running alongside of me on the other side of the fence, a little woman trying hard to keep up with us; I looked again and recognized my mother. Nobody was outside in Camp C--only my mother. It was a miracle seeing her at this crucial time." Was this a miracle or coincidence? What does your answer tell you about yourself?
3. On page 61, Singer explains how she saw a young girl crying for help from behind a window with iron bars. Singer says, "There was nothing I or anyone else could do." Could anything be done to help this young girl? What? What would you do in that situation?
4. On page 62, Singer writes, "The SS officers in charge of the gas chambers had extra room for a few hundred more women." Why are the SS officers seeking more women for the gas chambers? Why do they want to function at capacity? What does that tell you about them?
5. On page 62, Singer explains what others told her about the prisoner revolt in Auschwitz on October 7, 1944. The text should say "prisoners," not "male prisoners," because of the role that women played in that revolt. Research one of these women to learn about her contribution: Rose Meth, Anna Heilman, Estusia Wajcblum, Alla Gaertner, Roza Robota, and Regina Saperstein. Did these women survive the Holocaust? Would you participate in a revolt in such a situation?

"Sabotage"

1. On page 64, Singer explains that she considered escape: "If I managed to escape to the village or to the countryside, I would be instantly recognized by my odd clothing and shaved head. No German would have helped me; an escape would have been sure suicide." Do you agree that escape would have been suicide? In that situation, would you have tried to escape?
2. What does "irony" mean? On page 65, Singer notes how the German foreman at Taucha complains by saying to Edith, "You do not produce as much as the other girls." Despite this accusation, he moves her from the night shift to the day shift, which the prisoners prefer. Why does he apparently reward her for being a poor worker?
3. On page 66, Edith and her partner at the welding machine play a game to pass the time: "We fantasized that after the war, we would visit each other, and we imagined what food we would serve in our homes." What purpose may dreams serve? Consider the poem "Dreams" by Langston Hughes:

Dreams

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.

What is Langston Hughes saying in this poem about the significance of dreams in our lives? What significance did Edith's food game play in her survival?

4. On page 67, an officer asks, "Who is sabotaging in this factory?" What does "sabotage" mean? If you were in Edith's situation, would you be willing to sabotage the factory? What would have been the consequence for Edith if caught? Do the prisoners have a responsibility to sabotage?
5. On page 68, Singer writes: "I resisted the Nazis, but I was not alone. Whether it was intentional sabotage or quiet suffering, it was resistance. Not giving in to the hunger and cold, not breaking down from the grueling work, enduring every imaginable pain, anguish, and torture--that was resistance. Every one of us who survived--and many who did not--resisted." What do you think about Edith's definition of resistance? With what do you agree or disagree? What specifically do we have a responsibility to resist today?

"The Gypsies"

1. Who are the Gypsies? How were they often treated throughout history?
2. On page 70, Singer says, "Many of the Gypsy women traded their bread for cigarettes. After the women finished smoking their precious cigarettes, they still felt hungry. With nothing left to trade but their bodies, they slept with the male prisoners for a piece of bread. This was very risky, for guards sent prisoners caught together to a death camp." Why does Edith use the term "precious cigarettes"?
3. On page 70, Singer explains that the Gypsy girls danced, sang, and performed acrobatic tricks. She then comments, "I felt so grateful to them that afterwards I went up to the performers and thanked them." In our culture today, do we express gratitude? Who did you thank last, and what was it for?
4. On page 70, one Gypsy tells Edith, "You Jews caused the war." Who or what caused World War II? This creates a conflict between the Gypsy and Edith, who later says, "From that day on, I kept my distance from the Gypsies." How are prejudices formed? How are prejudices overcome? What minorities did Hitler target? What minorities are targets of discrimination today?

5. If you saw someone driving irresponsibly on the road and making multiple mistakes, and you drove up to take a closer look, what type of person would you expect to see?
6. If you have one negative experience with a member of a minority, what would be fair to assume?
7. At the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles, visitors are confronted with two doors: one is marked "prejudiced" and the other is marked "non-prejudiced." The "non-prejudiced" door is not real; although many people try to pass through it, it does not open. What is the Museum of Tolerance trying to show people? Of what value is recognizing our own prejudices?

"The Gray Woolen Socks"

1. This chapter is set in Taucha, Germany in December. What is the weather like there at this time? When does the sun rise and set in this situation?
2. What is the one medical instrument in the infirmary?
3. On page 73, we learn that the camp's one doctor was a Hungarian Jew who "showed compassion for every person." What does "compassion" mean? Why is compassion important? How valuable is this trait compared to other traits? Who has the most compassion in the book? Who has the least? Who do you know who has compassion? What is the evidence of this person's compassion? How compassionate are you?
4. What happened to Zlate on page 74? What happened to Klari on page 36? How are these two young women similar? How are these two young women different? What can we learn from Zlate?
5. On page 74, Singer says, "I never heard of a Jewish girl getting syphilis." What does this statement tell you about Edith?
6. On page 75, the doctor hypnotizes Vera. What is hypnosis? Is it real? How does it work? How is hypnosis used today? Have you ever seen someone hypnotized? If you were in Vera's situation, would you agree to this primitive surgery?
7. On page 76, Singer attributes the appearance of a second pair of socks to a miracle. What is a miracle? How can you tell if an event is a miracle or a coincidence? Do you agree or disagree with Edith? When we describe something else, how and to what degree are we describing ourselves?

"Rachel's Siddur"

1. On page 78, Rachel says, "We all pray for the same things." What is Rachel talking about?
2. On page 78, Singer notes that Rachel traded her bread for a Siddur, a Jewish prayer book. Singer then says, "How strong she must be to give up her bread. Bread meant life for every prisoner." What is as important as life to Rachel? What is as important as life to you?

3. On page 79, Singer asks, "Why are we here in the first place? Where is God?" If you were in a concentration camp and Edith asked you this question (regardless of your belief or disbelief in God), how would you answer her? Do people ask this question today?
4. On page 79, Rachel responds to Edith by saying, "God is here. . . . You must not lose hope." How does hope contribute to success and survival?
5. On page 79, Singer writes, "Suddenly, I had a revelation." What is a revelation? What was Edith's revelation?
6. On page 79, we read, "Rachel stayed away from bread for the entire eight days of the Passover." What does the Passover celebrate? Why do some Jews stay away from bread during the entire eight days of the Passover?

"Yossele"

1. What is a Laufer?
2. Why did the SS shoot prisoners when the war was about to end?
3. After Singer hears about the massacre, she says, "I wished I had never asked." Have you ever wished that you didn't know something that you know?
4. This chapter is particularly tragic. What positive ideas can we take from it?

"March to Freedom"

1. On page 85, Singer explains, "We marched twenty to twenty-five miles a day," and on page 87, we learn, "During the march the guards gave us only one piece of bread every three or four days." What is the farthest distance you have ever walked in one day? How many miles did the prisoners walk before receiving one piece of bread? What city or landmark is that distance from your home? Could you walk that distance before receiving one piece of bread? Could you walk that far after losing weight each week in a concentration camp for one year? How does the death march compare to running a marathon? How far is a marathon? What is the diet and training schedule like? What are the specific hardships of each type of experience?
2. What does "diatribe" (page 85) mean?
3. Throughout this memoir, Singer engages in risky behavior. In this chapter, she steals blankets and hides in wagons. Is she brave or naïve? What other risky behavior has she engaged in? If you were in her situation, how much risk would you take?
4. On page 86, Singer meets Magda, an old friend, and says, "I wanted to ask her for some food, but in spite of my painful hunger, my pride would not let me. I did not want her to see me in my condition." Evaluate Edith's reaction to Magda. Would you feel pride and respond similarly if you were in Edith's situation?
5. On page 87, Singer notes, "I saw a dead horse lying on the ground. The prisoners were tearing off pieces of the carcass and eating it raw." Would you participate in this activity? Why or why not?

6. On page 87, Singer escapes to a small stream. She describes her long drink of water as being "like a taste of freedom." Do we appreciate our freedom, or do we take it for granted? What freedoms do you appreciate? From what source do our civil liberties come in the United States? Why do we often have to lose something before we understand its value? What is the relationship between laughter and freedom?
7. On page 88, the Nazis ask the prisoners to lie for them: "Joli, will you tell the Russians that I was good to you?" How are lying and unethical behavior related?
8. On page 90, Edith and Irene receive dog food to eat. What was dog food like in 1945?
9. On page 90, the plump German girl "smiles mockingly" as she gives the dog food to the skinny Jewish girl. What does it mean "to mock" someone? After eating the food, Singer says, "I knocked on the door, gave her back her dish, and thanked her." These two young women stand juxtaposed at the same door. Compare and contrast these characters.
10. On page 90-91, Singer writes, "We opened the door and saw a cement floor, a roof, a window, and a huge kettle with hot water. . . . We washed ourselves and our dresses in hot water--a luxury we had not experienced since we were taken away from our homes a year before." Singer continues, "It was like a good hotel because there was no rain. . . . We felt very lucky." Have you ever been grateful for very little? Do we need less to appreciate more? How long have you gone without taking a shower?

"Avremele"

1. Based on the description that Edith gives of herself on page 93, draw a picture of her.
2. On page 93, when Avremele discovers Edith, he says, "Are there other Jews who are alive too?" What does this question tell you about Avremele's understanding of the destruction of the Jews?
3. On page 94, Singer notes, "He [Avremele] put his hand in his pocket and pulled out a bar of soap. 'Please, take it. I don't have anything else to give you.'" Do you think that Edith still has this bar of soap? What is the value of this gift? Have you ever received a similar gift--something inexpensive but significant?

"The Journey Home"

1. On page 95, Singer writes, "Another Jewish officer came and started talking to me. I told him that I was a Jewish girl, and he cornered me in the stairway. He wanted to kiss me. " What tactic did Edith use to escape the advances of the officer?
2. On page 96, after being liberated, Singer reflects, "In every German home we found an abundance of food--smoked meats, sausages, cheeses, eggs, roasted chickens, and lots of bread. I could not understand why these German civilians did not give us something to eat when they had so much." What is your explanation for the behavior of the Germans?
3. On page 96, a man approaches Edith and introduces himself. After Edith introduces herself in return, he says, "'Oh, your mother is alive,' just like that." Edith responds,

"Why are you doing this to me?" I said angrily." Why does Edith believe her mother is dead? Ironically, she is angry at hearing the good news. Why is that the case?

4. On page 97, Singer describes her reoccurring dream. What does she dream? Have you ever had a reoccurring dream?
5. Why is the last sentence of the chapter by itself. In whose memory is this book written?

"Epilogue"

1. On page 99, Singer says, "Europe was soaked with Jewish blood." How many Jews were killed in World War II? What percent of the world population of Jews was killed in the Holocaust?
2. On page 99, Singer writes, "The United States had a quota system which involved years of waiting." What is a quota system? How many Jews were granted entrance per year? Do we have an open-border policy today? Are you for or against U.S. entrance restrictions today? Why?
3. On page 100, Singer explains that people married quickly in displaced persons camps because so many had lost family members. One couple, Singer recalls, "walked under the canopy and got married before they knew each other's names." Why do you think they married so quickly? How long should people date before marrying? How valuable is marriage to you? Create a rubric for evaluating a potential husband or wife. What criteria would you include?
4. On page 100, Singer explains that her husband, Michael, is not called "a survivor." Why is he not called a survivor? How would you define a "survivor" of the Holocaust?
5. On page 101, why does Edith's mom want Edith to get married? Do your parents feel similarly?
6. On page 101, Singer describes how disappointed she felt after being told that she was too old to become a teacher at the age of 28. Then, Singer says, "But I overcame it." How do most people respond to disappointment? How do you respond to disappointment? Compare what happens to us with how we react to what happens to us. Which has a greater impact on our lives?

Post-Reading Questions

1. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights emerged directly from World War II in 1948 and has been described as the "most translated document in the world" by the *Guinness Book of Records*. It documents 30 articles or rights. What are the three most important rights to you and why?
2. Name, describe, and evaluate each person in the book. Arrange the people in the book in order from least admirable to most admirable.
3. How do you define "hero" or "heroine"? Does Edith Singer qualify as a hero? Why or why not?

4. What stories can you find about gentiles saving Jews during World War II? See texts like *Rescuers: Portraits of Moral Courage in the Holocaust* by Gay Drucker.
5. What do the images in the book have in common? What are the three most important images for understanding Edith's story?
6. What role does chance play in Edith's survival of the Holocaust? What role does choice play?
7. What is one positive lesson that we can acquire by reading this memoir?
8. This book describes one of the darkest periods in world history. What are some positive reasons to study this negative period through this memoir?
9. Are we beyond discrimination today? Create a plan for reducing prejudice and discrimination and promoting tolerance.
10. Compare and contrast discrimination in World War II with discrimination today.
11. Read "I Have a Dream" by Martin Luther King, Jr. Has King's dream been fulfilled? How so? How not?
12. Many readers have asked Edith if she has forgiven the Nazis. What do you think her answer is? What would your answer be if you were a survivor who lost family members in the Holocaust?
13. Evaluate the quality of writing in *March to Freedom: A Memoir of the Holocaust* by Edith Singer.
14. Evaluate *March to Freedom: A Memoir of the Holocaust*. What are its strengths? What are its weaknesses?
15. Compare and contrast *Night* by Elie Wiesel and *March to Freedom: A Memoir of the Holocaust* by Edith Singer.
16. Could something like the Holocaust happen today? Discuss more recent genocides, such as the situation in Rwanda in the 1990s and the ongoing conflict in Sudan. Does *March to Freedom* teach us anything about how we can react to these atrocities?
17. How could the Germans, cultured Europeans, commit such barbaric acts? What are the motives of the perpetrators?
18. Edith Singer has left the next generation with her memoir of the Holocaust. What impact does she have on readers? What is Edith's impact on her posterity? What does Eve's letter reveal about this impact? What will your impact be on the following generation?
19. In Eve's letter to her grandmother (Edith Singer) from Auschwitz in 2006, Eve writes, "I am lucky enough to get freedom without the fight, and I will not put it to waste." Have you fought for your freedoms? Who has fought for our freedoms? How will you not waste your freedom? Which freedoms do you appreciate the most? Do we have to lose our freedoms to appreciate them? How can we try to ensure that the Holocaust is not repeated?