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Determined to find definitive proof that Anne Frank's diary was authentic, Simon Wiesenthal began a five-year-long search for the Gestapo officer who arrested the Frank family. This inspiring and suspenseful account testifies to the difference that one person's dedication can make.

The Anne Frank Case: Simon Wiesenthal's Search for the Truth Details

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Shel says

The Anne Frank Case

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Appetizer: Set in Linz, Austria, a Nazi hunter named Simon Wiesenthal seeks to prove that Anne Frank really existed and that her diary was not a forgery by finding the Gestapo officer who arrested her. As Sion commits to his search, the narrative shares his own background as he eluded death during the Holocaust.

Let me be honest here. This is an important story to share. VERY IMPORTANT! And while the the writing is well done, and the paintings are very beautiful and realistic. This picturebook is also VERY text heavy and serious. The illustrations don't incorporate a lot of action. That pretty much eliminates the idea of trying to get kids to think of this book as being anything but educational. Ever. Also, the fact that there are some huge amounts of historical information piled on to the reader as backstory can be a little daunting.

Having said that though, as far as historical biographical sketches go, this one is tops. It incorporates a lot of quotes that flow easily and naturally.

Dinner Conversation:

"One night in October 1958 at nine thirty, the phone rang in Simon Wiesenthal's apartment in Linz, Austria. "Can you come at once to the Landes Theater?" asked a friend, who sounded upset. Simon's friend told him that he was attending a performance of The Diary of Anne Frank. But it had been disrupted."

"After the war ex-Nazis had returned to their teaching jobs in Austria and Germany. some remained silent about their past. Others boasted. Many ex-Nazis and Nazi sympathizers taught that the Holocaust had either never happened or that it had been greatly exaggerated. The adults were passing along a heritage of bigotry and ignorance to their children."

"If we could prove to you that Anne Frank existed, would you accept the diary as genuine?"

"At that very moment Simon took on a new case. "I had to find the man who had arrested Anne Frank fourteen years before."

To Go with the Meal:

The Anne Frank Case would be an excellent book to share with middle grade or young adult students who

grew up in a culture or family who denied the Holocaust occurred. The book could be used to extend a history lesson on the Holocaust and the Nazi invasion of Poland

The picturebook would also be a good introduction to learning about Anne Frank before reading her diary.

To try to increase student interest in the book, a teacher could present it as a detective or investigative story.

Tasty Rating: !!!

Amy Whipple says

Genre: Informational Text

Copyright Date: 2009

This informational text was written in the form of a narrative. The overall story was focused on the controversy involving the validity of Anne Frank's diary. Some people denied she ever even existed. This book explains how Simon Wiesenthal worked to prove Anne Frank did exist. It also describes Wiesenthal's amazing life story and how he found ways to work against the Nazi regime, even after the war. This book was so informative and since it is written in a narrative, it is very enjoyable. I shared it with a coworker and she really loved sharing it with her students.

Amy says

This story ought to be required reading along with Anne Frank. I had no idea that the neo Nazis were present and influential in such a short time after the war. No wonder it's so easy for holocaust deniers to get a foothold in the public consciousness. It started almost at the same time as the Allies were still standing on the threshold of concentration camps.

Thank goodness Simon Wiesenthal started gathering documentation while it was so fresh and recent. Imagine how easy it would have been to brush it under the rug at the time and how hard it would be to chase down records now when nearly all of the witnesses are gone.

How has all the denial and confusion shaped the European identity and narrative?

Vivian says

Simon Wiesenthal, a holocaust survivor, was disturbed to learn that the neo-nazi movement was discrediting the Anne Frank story and others like it as mere fiction, created to drum up more restitution money. Following a conversation with one of these youth, Simon felt a call to find the gestapo member who actually arrested the Frank family, as proof that the story was factual.

The spare text introduces the reader to Simon and his own journey, and then to the dramatic conclusion. Simon did not seek out Anne's father. He knew he was committed to forgive and therefore would be inclined to not push the case any further. Simon, however, felt it very important to persuade youth that these travesties actually occurred.

Crystal says

I have sometimes wondered if people ever argued about the authenticity of Anne Frank's diary. This historical picture book helps to show that Anne Franke's story really did happen.

This book really is more about Simon Wiesenthal's devotion to tracking down war criminals than just the issue of Anne Franke's Diary though. It goes beyond that one case. Wiesenthal was determined that people never forget and his passion for justice never waned.

Carolynne says

When Simon Wiesenthal encounters Austrian teenagers who were convinced _The Diary of a Young Girl_ by Anne Frank was a forgery, he determines to prove them wrong by hunting down the officer who arrested the occupants of the Annex. It took him years and numerous false leads, but he found Karl Silberbauer in 1963. This is an absorbing picture book about an incident with a satisfactory ending. Because the focus of the book is Wiesenthal's life and his relentless hunt for Nazi war criminals, there is very little about the Holocaust itself, making it usable in elementary school classrooms. There is a biographical note at the end of the book. A good supplement to the diary.

Alex (not a dude) Baugh says

I am familiar with Anne Frank and also with Simon Wiesenthal, but I had no idea that Wiesenthal had spent years tracking down the Gestapo officer who arrested Anne and all the other people who had been hiding from the Nazis on the upper floors of her father's business for over 2 years. It is a fascinating story.

After having survived time in a Polish ghetto, several Nazi concentration camps and a forced march, in part because of his artistic skill was needed by the Gestapo, Simon Wiesenthal felt compelled to hunt down the Nazis responsible for the cruel and deadly treatment of Europe's Jews. It quickly became his life's work, at which he was quite successful.

Then, one night in 1958, Wiesenthal was asked to come to the Landes Theater in Linz, Austria. A performance of The Diary of Anne Frank had been interrupted by some local teenager who claimed that Anne Frank had never existed, that her diary was a forgery, just made up to get more restitution money.

Wiesenthal's challenge to these teens - if he could find the Gestapo officer who had arrested Anne and the others in the attic fourteen years ago, would that convince them that she had indeed existed and that her story was true? Little did he know that it would take him five years to find a man who was living a mere 10 minute walk from Wiesenthal's office.

The Anne Frank Case is a fascinating look at the life and work of Simon Wiesenthal, and how he tracked down Nazi criminals. Wiesenthal had a photographic memory, which helped him remember many of the names of Nazi officers involved in the Holocaust, plus excellent investigative skills. Yet, finding the arresting officer of the Franks was a long and arduous process. He frequently interviewed people from the

Netherlands, including the people who were hiding the Franks, and luckily, one remembered being questioned by someone named Silvernagel. Having a place to start, Wiesenthal began searching telephone books, looking for variations of that name. But everywhere he looked led to a dead end. He thought about asking Otto Frank, but decided not to, afraid he would ask Wiesenthal to stop the search.

By the time Wiesenthal found the person he was looking for, there was just not enough evidence to prove Karl Silberbauer was guilty of the arrest despite his admission that he had done it, and so he was never brought to trial. And ironically, Otto Frank did know his name and the reason he didn't help will just knock your socks off. I know it did mine.

The hunt for Anne Frank's arresting Gestapo officer is not a something I was aware of before, so I found this to be doubly informative book - an excellent introduction to Simon Wiesenthal's life as well as his investigations. Altogether, he brought more than 1,100 criminals to justice.

Bill Farnsworth's full page realistic paintings are done in haunting dark hues, adding to the somberness of the subject.

There is a more detail biography about Wiesenthal in the back matter, complete with photographs, as well as additional resources and a glossary.

The Anne Frank Case is a picture book for older readers that will certainly appeal to anyone interested in the Holocaust and Anne Frank. It is also an excellent addition to books used for introducing the Holocaust in the classroom or home school setting.

A Teaching Guide is available from the publisher, Holiday House.

This book is recommended for readers age 8+

This book was borrowed from the NYPL

This review was originally posted at The Children's War

Jessica says

Simon Wiesenthal devoted his life after WWII to finding Nazis in order to hold them accountable for their war crimes. I've always found his story fascinating, but what I didn't realize was that he spent a number of years tracking down the Gestapo that took Anne Frank away. His goal was to do so in order to obtain a confession that it occurred in order to prove that Anne Frank existed to disprove those who claimed that her story was fabricated. It's a fascinating story (spoiler: he was successful after years of trying). The art in this book is well done, and fitting with the tone of the story. An important story to read and share.

CuriousLibrarian says

I sat down at work to flip through this F&G (advanced unbound copy), and I got completely sucked into the story. It talks about Wiesenthal's life and work, but particularly how he managed to track down the police officer who arrested the Frank family to prove that she was indeed a real person. In an age where the number

of Holocaust survivors is dwindling and the deniers are on the rise, this is an important story to tell. And this children's book does a wonderful and absorbing job of doing it.

Now I'm tempted to find a good adult biography of Wiesenthal to learn more about his life.

Toby says

Simon Wiesenthal survived incarceration in 12 different concentration camps and lived to the age of 96. This book tells the story of his reaction to some neo-Nazi teenagers who disrupted a play about Anne Frank, shouting that the diary was a fraud & that she'd never existed. Wiesenthal then set out to find the SS officer who'd arrested the Franks and eventually succeeded many years later. A small story that speaks volumes about Wiesenthal and his life work of bringing Nazi war criminals to justice.

Zazzu says

Rather wish this had been a longer book. I recently picked up *Diary of A Young Girl* after meaning to read it since I saw the Anne Frank house last fall! Very short book but interesting information.

Alicia says

1) Fiction twin text: *Grandpa's Third Drawer* by Judy Tal Kopelman, 2014

2) Rationale: Both of these books deal with the topic of the Holocaust. They also have a similar theme--the importance of sharing stories of the past. In *The Anne Frank Case*, the reader is told of a Holocaust survivor, Simon Wiesenthal, who makes it his mission to expose Nazi war crimes and bring the criminals to justice. He takes on the Anne Frank case when a play reenactment of Anne Frank's story is interrupted by Nazis who claim that she never existed. Simon then makes a point to find the Gestapo officer who arrested the Frank family to prove otherwise. Simon feels that it is important to bring these Nazi war criminals to justice because, otherwise, people may go on believing that the Holocaust never happened, or will forget the pain and suffering that the Jews endured. I feel that *Grandpa's Third Drawer* is a great companion text. This book is told from the point of view of a granddaughter of a Holocaust survivor. She tells the reader about the third drawer in her grandpa's desk that is locked up and off limits. Of course, as a young girl, she is curious about what is in the drawer. One day, when she is left alone, she opens the drawer and is caught in the act. Her grandpa is angry at first, but then decides to tell her about the objects she has found--mementos from the Holocaust. At the end of the book, the granddaughter reflects on how she never knew her grandfather was so brave and she loves him even more now that she knows his story. I think that is such a powerful message to send to kids. The stories of Holocaust survivors should be shared as a reminder of how brave those people were to endure such horrific treatment.

3) Text structure: Description, chronological sequence, problem and solution

Nonfiction strategy: I would use the KWL strategy when presenting these texts. I would probably present these texts after we read *Night* by Elie Weisel, so my students would have a pretty good understanding of this time in history. I would have them complete the chart based on this question: "What do you know about what happened to Nazis officers or Jewish survivors after WWII ended?" I think many students are under the

impression that once Allied Forces liberated the concentration and death camps, Jewish prisoners got on with their lives easily. So, getting them to think about that more in depth and then presenting these books might make them realize that it didn't get easy for them right away.

4) (2009, March 1). Booklist. <http://www.booksinprint.com.leo.lib.u...>

Amanda says

Okay I'm not giving this book five stars because it was written amazingly or because the pictures were awesome. (Even thought they were.) I'm giving this book five stars because of what Simon Wiesenthal did, how he survived the holocaust and was still prosecuting Nazis till he died in 2005. It shocked me that at there were still people that thought the holocaust was fake! How can that much death and destruction be fake? I mean really? I believe that Anne Frank is one of the many true cases of the holocaust. I know there are so many other cases out there other than Anne Frank I don't know how hers is the most famous but it is real. The Holocaust was real and has always been I just hope that it is never repeated. I don't know how people can think the Nazis were right. How can Death, torture, destruction, be right?

Lisa Vegan says

I've always admired Simon Wiesenthal and the Simon Wiesenthal Center.

This is a book about his life, his experiences as a young person then, after the Nazis invaded his homeland, in various concentration camps, his dedication after WWII to hunting down Nazis who participated in atrocities and bringing them to justice. He also recorded names of Nazi officers who behaved well and helped him or were otherwise less brutal than they could have been.

The title of this book refers to an incident that took place in 1958, when teens caused a commotion at a performance of The Diary of Anne Frank, claiming the diary was a hoax, saying that Anne Frank had never lived or been murdered by the Nazi regime. Wiesenthal made it his mission to find the man who arrested Anne Frank and her family as proof against this claim. But, this book is about so much more than just that one search.

This is a gripping tale, very suspenseful, very moving. I am in even more awe of Wiesenthal. He was remarkable, brilliant, and he was very lucky to have survived. It's a compelling true story. Because of its graphic description of violent atrocities I can't really recommend this for children younger than eleven.

This book was researched thoroughly and in the back of the book there are various resources listed and a glossary and an index. It's a wonderful, and well deserved, tribute to Wiesenthal and his life's work.

I really appreciated the photographs that are in the back of the book. The overall look of the book's illustrations is pleasing and they have an appropriate atmosphere about them, but I really didn't enjoy the way Anne Frank looked in any of the pictures of her.

Ed says

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Simon Wiesenthal's name is synonymous with Nazi Hunter. Persecuted and tortured by the Nazi's, Wiesenthal believes it is his duty to remember the people who died and to devote his life to bringing them justice. Consequently, when Wiesenthal confronts a group of neo-Nazi teens whose family and friends have brainwashed them into disrupting a performance of an Anne Frank play—because the play perpetuates the hoax of the Holocaust—Wiesenthal makes a deal with one of the youth to find the guard who arrested Anne Frank, which is the proof required of Wiesenthal by this neo-Nazi youth. Rubin uses this case as a prototype, of sorts, to show the persistence and determination of Wiesenthal throughout his life documenting the history of Jews in danger of being lost forever, and tracking down Nazi war criminals. What I find notable is the way in which Rubin ties this search into something more than simple anger and revenge. Readers will come away from this book understanding the reverence with which Wiesenthal holds his fellow Jewish prisoners and their families.
