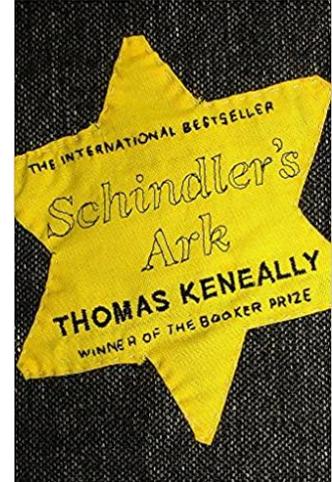


Schindler's Ark

Thomas Keneally

Reading Group Questions

1. Does the novel dispel or reinforce any preconceptions you held about the Holocaust prior to reading it?
2. In a note by the author, Keneally comments that he attempted to 'avoid all fiction', however it was sometimes necessary to make 'reasonable constructs' of scenes that were not recorded. Do you think these reconstructions detract from the novel's claims of being grounded in fact?
3. Is the portrayal of the 'Good German' trope positive or negative?
4. Do you think that focusing on Schindler was an appropriate choice of protagonist, or should the story have been told from a Jewish perspective?
5. Do you believe that Amon Goeth is presented as the epitome of a Nazi official, or as an extreme exception?
6. What is Schindler's motivation throughout the novel? Does it change?
7. Overall, do you consider Schindler a hero or opportunist?
8. Think of the quote "refrain from any individual acts of revenge or terror" in Chapter 37. As someone who was not persecuted during the Holocaust, does Schindler have the right to advise his workers not to seek vengeance?
9. Are there scenes in the novel that struck you as gratuitous, and if so which? Could they contribute to people becoming desensitised to the horrors of the Holocaust?
10. To what extent does *Schindler's Ark* develop your knowledge of the Holocaust? How would you respond to the idea that it tells an unusual story that is not representative of the Holocaust? And how would you compare this particular work of Holocaust fiction to others you may have read?
11. Would you recommend this book? What do you gain from reading it?



12. If you could only choose two quotes to summarise the book, what would they be and why?

A Survivors Perspective

Margaret Kagan

Oskar Schindler is perhaps the most famous of the many thousands who risked everything to save Jewish people from Nazism during the Holocaust. Known as the Righteous Among the Nations, they were often ordinary people who did extraordinary things - as did Vytautas Rinkevicius. He helped Margaret Kagan and her husband Joseph – both Jewish – to escape the ghetto of Kaunas. He helped them get work in a factory outside the ghetto, then hid them in the attic so they didn't have to return. He kept watch, brought them food, and smuggled them to safety when the war drew close. It's a story on smaller scale than the legend of Schindler, but every bit as heroic.



<https://holocaustlearning.org.uk/stories/margaret-kagan/>