THE LIGHT OF DAYS – Young Readers' Edition
The Untold Story of Women Resistance Fighters in Hitler's Ghettos

Discussion Questions

1. How significant was it that Renia was born into a mid- dle-class Jewish family that prioritized education (3)? What advantages did this offer her?

2. Why did the Kukiełka family decide to move to Chmielnik (8)? Why return to Jędrzejów to settle under German rule, instead of pressing forward to freedom (11)?

3. Frumka and Zivia shifted their focus from helping only Freedom members to helping all Jews (17). Why was this important, and did it align with Freedom's values?

4. Why would the Nazis pit Jew against Jew by creating the "Judenrats" (18)? What did the Jewish people who were selected as Judenrat officials hope to achieve?

5. Freedom and other organizations prioritized giving Warsaw ghetto residents access to education, sports opportunities, and theatrical performances (30). Was this an act of resis- tance? Why, or why not?

6. Why were books so important to Freedom and similar organizations (31)? What was significant about the books and plays that Freedom started to print?

7. What impact did the stories about the Nazis' behavior have on Jewish people living in the Warsaw ghetto (37)? How did those stories lead to the establishment of the Jewish Fighting Organization?

8. Renia met escapees from a nearby village who were spared by a Nazi soldier after their mother hid them around the house (42). What reason did the Nazi soldier give for spar- ing their lives?

9. The Nazis rounded up the Jewish people of Będzin and tried to divide them into three lines, but the Jewish peo- ple fought back by creating chaos (60). What were some of the other things that the Jews of Będzin did to prevent the Nazis from taking people during the selection? Did their actions help save lives?

10. There were several aspects to Kraków's "Fighting Pioneers" pledge (67). What were some of the ways that it addressed the many types of resistance?

11. How did the uprising at the Warsaw ghetto that was led by the Jewish Fighting Organization (75), challenge the Nazis' perspective of the Jewish people? Why was the effort, which only lasted a short time, considered a success?

12. Renia's role as a *kasharit*, or courier, meant that she was responsible for carrying news (90). Why was Renia's mission of witnessing and reporting the things that were happening to Jewish people so important?

13. Like many of the women who fought in the resistance, Zivia felt a great deal of guilt for the comrades that she wasn't able to save (109). How did emotional trauma play a role in Zivia's actions during the war, and how did it impact the rest of her life?

14. The couriers were able to smuggle weapons, bribe officers, and meet secret contacts (116). How did they use their gen- der to avoid suspicion?

15. Chajka befriended German soldiers in Będzin and told them about the horrific things that were happening to the Jewish people (157). Why did she do that, and what impact did she hope to have?

16. Bela and Lonka were able to reconnect after they were both captured and brought to the Pawiak prison (171). Why was it dangerous for Jewish women to identify each other when they were imprisoned in jails or at concentration camps?

17. Gusta wrote her memoirs using scraps of toilet paper sewn together with thread (195). Was that an act of resistance? Why?

18. Renia worried that Jewish people in Palestine wouldn't be able to understand what European Jews went through in the Holocaust (210). Why was this a concern? How did the lack of understanding impact the way the couriers and resistance fighters assimilated into the new land?

19. How were the women like Faye Schulman (218), who spoke publicly about their experiences during the war, still partic- ipating in the resistance even after the war was over?

20. What were some of the reasons that it was hard for women like Zivia (220) to adjust to post-war life?

21. What was the brigade of the Avengers (233) hoping to achieve by continuing their work after the war?