**Parallel Journeys**- by Eleanor Ayer with Helen Waterford and Alfons Heck

Curriculum developed by Dr. Julia B. Carroll

**Directions:** On a separate piece of paper, write the name and number of the chapter, recopy the question, and write the answer to the question using your own words. Include as many specific details as you can.

**Chapter One: The Power and the Glory:**

1. Who were the Aryans and what was it like in Germany during the 1930’s?
2. Describe the Hitlerjugend (Hitler Youth). What was it? What qualities did it have?
3. Who were the low-class citizens in Germany and why?
4. Why did Alfons Heck consider himself lucky to be a German citizen at the time?
5. What was the economic state of Germany at the time and why?
6. According to this Chapter, who was Adolf Hitler and what did he want to accomplish?
7. Why did he have these goals?
8. What kinds of economic changes came about as a result of Hitler’s leadership? Give specific examples.
9. What kinds of social changes came about as a result of Hitler’s leadership? Be specific.
10. How was education affected as a result of having Adolf Hitler in power? Be specific.

**Chapter Two: The Tightening Noose:**

1. What is anti-Semitism?
2. What were some of the reasons why Jews were hated?
3. What was Helen’s background on her mother’s side and then on her father’s side?
4. Describe Helen’s teenage years in Frankfurt. Be specific.
5. Who was Siegfried and what was his connection to Helen?
6. What were the Nuremberg Racial Laws and how did they affect Jews living in Germany at the time? What did Jews decide to do as a result?
7. What did Helen and Siegfried decide to do? Be specific.
8. In 1937, how what did Hitler decide to do that took the world by surprise, and how did his actions affect Jewish people?

9. What new event happened to Helen and Siefried that they were excited and happy about?

Chapter Three: Serving Mein Fuhrer

1. What was Alfons sworn into and how did he seem to feel about it at the time? Support your answer.

2. What does the Fatherland refer to? How do you think it may be symbolic to young Nazis?

3. How did Adolf Hitler view going to school and why? What did he see to be far more important?

4. How much influence did parents have over their children’s activities during this era and why?

5. Describe girls’ training and duties in the Jungvolk. Provide specific examples.

6. What important event after only five months in the Jungvolk was Alfons chosen for and what kinds of activities took place at this event?

7. What major decision did Hitler decide to carry out and what rationale (reason) did he use to support his decision?

8. How successful were these operations and why?

9. What do you think this shows about what Hitler was thinking/planning? Explain.

10. Describe how Heinz Ermann was affected by the events that were occurring at this time.

Chapter Four: Kristallnacht: The Night of Broken Glass

1. Describe Kristallnacht. What was this and what exactly happened at this time?

2. Why did this event take place? What did the Nazis use as their rationale to support it?

3. How did some ordinary Germans react to this event?

4. Describe specifically how Jewish property was affected. Give some examples.

5. Where were many Jewish people sent? How did Hitler justify the Nazis actions? Explain.

7. Describe how receptive other countries throughout the world were to accepting Jews who were trying to flee Germany. Provide reasons and evidence to support your answer.

8. Where did Helen’s little brother Fred flee to and why? What was the policy of that country?

9. Where did Fred and many other Helen’s other family members eventually end up and how were they able to do this?
Write out the questions again and put the answers in your own words. Use your own paper.

**Chapter Five: Marching Down the Road to War**

1. What were all children required to participate in, and what would happen if parents refused to allow their children to participate?
2. Describe how Alfons Heck spent his summers during 1939.
3. What did the Germans do on September 1, 1939 and how did this affect German teenagers?
4. Describe this event in detail and then describe how the rest of the world reacted to it.
5. How did this affect the lives of ordinary Poles? Provide some examples.
6. How did Alfons Heck describe Christmas that year?

**Chapter Six: The Nazi Net Ensnares Holland**

1. Why didn’t Helen’s housewarming party ever take place? What disrupted this event?
2. How were German citizens who were living in Holland affected by this event?
3. How well did the Holland armed forces do against the Germans and why? Explain and use an example.
5. What very difficult decision did Helen and her husband Siegfried have to make? Why was this decision difficult?
6. What setback did the Germany army experience? And why did this happen?
7. How were Helen and other Jewish people who were living in Holland affected by what was going on at the time? Give specific examples to support your answer.
8. What was the Nazi KZ’s- the Konzentrationslager/ Auschwitz? What was its purpose?
9. What was your reaction after reading this chapter? What went through your mind?

**Chapter Seven: Disaster in the East**

1. What had started happening to Jewish people in Wittlich (where Alfons Heck is from) and how did Heck’s grandmother view this? Provide evidence.
2. How did her view conflict with his? Explain.
3. What was “The Final Solution” that Hitler referred to?
4. What was Operation BARBAROSSA and how successful was it? Provide me with specific description, explanation, and examples in your own words.

**Chapter Eight: A Dark Look into the Future**

1. What did Helen learn from the fortune-teller that she went to visit? How true was it? Why?
2. Describe the important event that occurred on December 7th 1941. How did this event affect what was going on in Europe at the time?
3. How did this event affect life for Jewish people?
4. What was now happening to Jews on a daily basis?
5. Who is Eichman and how did he play an important role in these events?

Chapter Nine: The Kingdom- Forever and Ever?

1. How did young Germans in the Hitler Youth feel about Germany’s future? Why?
2. How was the German army doing in Russia? Why?
3. How did Alfons personally feel about his own involvement in the Hitler Youth? Why?
4. Describe what Alfons was doing during this period of time.

Chapter Ten: Heading Into Hiding

1. What was specifically happening to Jews during this time period?
2. How did Helen and Siegfried temporarily avoid this situation? Explain.
3. What was a Judenrat? What kind of power did it have?
4. What kinds of advantages did people have who served on it and why?
5. After Helen accidentally discover that shocked her and scared her about the future?
6. How did she figure this out?
7. What was the Gestapo?
8. Who were Heinrich Muller and Heinrich Himmler? What were their roles in the Holocaust?
9. Who were the Righteous Gentiles and how did they help Jewish people?
10. What is “The Underground? Describe three of the listed ways they helped Jewish people.

Chapter Eleven: Germany’s Top-Rated Glider Pilot:

1. Describe the KLV Program. What was it and what purpose did it have?
2. How much direct experience was Alfons having with the general war? Explain.
3. At this stage in the war, how well is the German army doing? Explain.
4. Describe the role of younger children and women in the war. Provide examples.
5. Why were younger male teenagers being told that they were needed desperately?
6. What caused Alfons to almost not receive his “C” license? How was he ultimately able to resolve this situation?

Chapter Twelve: Discovery and Deportation:

1. Describe the difficult choices that may Jews needed to make for the futures.
2. How did the Jews who were living in the Ghetto in Warsaw, Poland respond to the Nazis? How successful were they and why? In your opinion, did they make a mistake?
3. Who was Jo Vis and what did he end up doing for Helen and her family?
4. Describe what it was like for Helen and her family while they were hiding.
5. What was Operation Overload? How successful was it and why?
7. What were some of the most difficult aspects of the train ride that Helen described? (In your own words.) How are many Jews beginning to feel?

Chapter Thirteen: A Meeting with Mein Fuhrer:

1. At 16 years old what did Alfons Heck become in charge of? How did he feel about this?
2. What was he later elevated to?
3. What were some of the downsides of holding so much power? Give some examples and explain.
4. What was the Gestapo and what was the problem with it?
5. What important person did Alfons Heck unexpectedly meet? Describe the circumstances of this meeting and how he felt about it. Describe it in your own words.
6. What important piece of information did he learn regarding the war?

Chapter Fourteen: Our Journey to Heaven

1. Where did Helen and Siegfried’s train take them to?
2. Who was Dr. Josef Mengele and what kind of responsibility did he have? What was he in charge of doing?
3. What were some of the crimes that he committed? Provide specific examples.
4. What were some of the reasons why Helen was able to survive? Explain in your own words.
5. What famous person did Helen meet? What was this person worried about and why?
6. Describe the revolt.
7. What were some of the difficult conditions at the camp that Helen had to contend with? Explain.
8. What happened to Helen and did she ultimately survive this?

Chapter Fifteen: The Christmas Eve Air Attack

1. Who was Robert Ley and what did he tell Alfons Heck?
2. How did Heck feel about this?
3. Who was Leiwitiz and how did he feel about Hitler and the war? What important piece of advice did he give to Heck?
4. What was the Battle of the Bulge and how successful was it ultimately?
5. What was the Christmas Eve Air Attack and how did it affect Heck’s hometown?
6. Who did Heck lose that affected him the most emotionally?
7. What was Alfons Heck elevated to at the age of 16?
8. What did Heck ultimately lead and how successful was this? What happened to the young boys?

Chapter Sixteen: Some Small Signs of Hope:

1. Compare Kratzau to Auschwitz. How were the conditions similar and how were they different?
2. Who did Helen have to be the most afraid of at this new camp and why?
3. How clean were the prisoners and why?
4. What made the camp officials slightly improve the conditions at the camp? Explain.
5. What kind of sickness did Helen get and how did she eventually get over it?
Chapter Seventeen: Decline, Fall, and Capture:

1. What was the most important event that happened in this chapter and why?
2. How were young Germans soldiers beginning to feel and what did they do as a result? What could happen to them as a punishment if they did this?
3. What lucky break or lucky experience did Alfons have? Who gave him this opportunity and why?
4. What does he discover after he returns home?
5. How did the American soldiers first react to Alfons? What was Alfons afraid of?
6. What happened to him after the German soldiers first found out about his connection to the German army?
7. What important lesson did Alfons learn from Leutanan Hans Leiwitz?
8. At the end of the chapter, how was Alfons beginning to feel about the war? Why? What are some context clues that lead you to develop this conclusion?

Chapter Eighteen: The Long Trek Home:

1. What was the most important event that happened in this chapter and why?
2. What happened to Adolf Hitler?
3. Describe in detail the main problem that Helen first faced on her long way home. Give specific supporting examples.
4. At the camp for displaced persons, what became another major problem that Helen experienced? Provide evidence of this problem from examples in the book. Make sure to write in your own words.
5. According to this chapter, would say that Anti-Semitism had stopped because the war was over? If so, why? If not, why not? Can you provide specific evidence to support your answer.
6. What was Helen completely unaware of that seemed to confuse her?
7. Who was Helen desperately trying to find?

Chapter Nineteen: “You Will Be Executed By A Firing Squad”:

1. What was the most important event that happened in this chapter and why?
2. How did Alfons feel when he first heard of Hitler’s death? Provide supporting evidence.
3. What kind of job does he get and what happens to him in this situation?
4. What does he decide to do after this experience?
5. To what extent does Alfons believe that many Jews were murdered? Why do you think he holds this view? Provide a rationale to support your answer.
6. What do the Americans discover, especially one photographer?
7. Compare how the Americans treated Alfons to how the French treated him. Provide specific examples in your own words to support your opinion.

Chapter Twenty: One Day At A Time:

1. What was the most important event that happened in this chapter and why?
2. In what condition does Helen find Doris? Describe her lifestyle.
3. What important decision does Helen have to make? Describe why this decision is difficult for her. Provide specific evidence in your own words.
4. Describe how this first meeting went between Helen and Doris. How did they each seem to feel and why?
5. Do you think that Helen made the right decision finally? If so, why? If not, why not?
6. If you had been in Helen’s situation, would you have made the same decision? Why or why not?
7. Describe how this kind of situation was difficult for the children whose Jewish parents had survived and were returning?

8. How did things improve for Helen and Doris? What eventually made their situation better and why?