

Connecting Stories and Legacies: A Conversation with author Gordon Korman and Rachelle Goldstein

These suggested No Place for Hate[®] activities are differentiated for elementary, middle and high school students. The activities can be used as a follow-up to watching the webinar, “Connecting Stories and Legacies: A Conversation with Author Gordon Korman and Rachelle Goldstein” which aired on 2/11/25. To make this a NPFH activity towards designation, watch the video, engage students in a discussion using the discussion questions and do one of the additional activities included below.

Webinar Description

Renowned author Gordon Korman and Rachelle Goldstein of the Hidden Child Foundation delved into the role of storytelling in understanding antisemitism—past and present. Gordon Korman, author of over 100 books for children and young adults, read from *Linked*, his middle-grade (ages 8–12) novel. *Linked* follows the story of a middle school rocked by the appearance of swastikas—and the students’ efforts to turn division into unity through a school project. Rachelle Goldstein, a hidden child during the Holocaust, shared excerpts from the narratives of the youngest Holocaust survivors, bringing to light the resilience found in their stories. These narratives connect in surprising and meaningful ways, illuminating the power of storytelling to confront hate and foster understanding.

What’s Included in This Guide

- [Webinar Video Link](#)
- [About Gordon Korman and Rachelle Goldstein](#)
- [Elementary Activities](#)
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*This resource is offered as general guidance only. Please review the materials and inquire with your own legal counsel as to the appropriateness of a resource, to ensure compliance with state or local laws.

Watch the Webinar Video

Watch the video of the webinar by using this link:

[Korman Goldstein Webinar On-Demand](#)

About Gordon Korman and Rachelle Goldstein

Share with students the following biographical information about Gordon Korman and Rachelle Goldstein.

Gordon Korman

Gordon Korman was born in Montreal, Canada, and grew up mostly in the Toronto area. His writing career began virtually by accident when he was in 7th grade. His English class was taught by a P.E. (gym) teacher who gave their class the freedom to work on whatever they wanted. As a result, Gordon wrote his first novel, *This Can't Be Happening at MacDonald Hall*. The book was published by Scholastic when he was a freshman in high school.

Gordon has been writing for more than three-quarters of his life and has written more than 100 children's and young adult books. His books have been translated into 32 languages and have sold over 35 million copies worldwide. Several have appeared as number one on *The New York Times* Best Seller list. Gordon has a BFA from New York University with a major in Dramatic Writing and a minor in Film and TV. He now lives in Long Island, NY, which is outside New York City, with his family. When he's not writing, he can usually be found on the road, appearing at schools, libraries, and bookstores, meeting his readers.

To learn more about Gordon Korman, visit his website at:

<https://gordonkorman.com/>

Rachelle Goldstein

Rachelle Goldstein was born in Brussels, Belgium, in June 1939. When she was nine months old, her family attempted to escape the impending German invasion by fleeing to any French port that would allow them to leave the Continent. This proved to be futile and the family returned to their apartment in Brussels, where they lived a near-normal existence until the Spring of 1942 when the SS began the mass deportations of Jews. Then, along with her older brother and two cousins, she was first hidden in a Protestant orphanage in Uccle. In March 1943, she was placed alone in a Franciscan convent in Bruges. Her parents survived the war through the kindness and heroic efforts of neighbors, and the family immigrated to the U.S. in 1950. They settled in the Bronx where Rachelle entered the 6th grade at P.S. 95 and later attended Walton High School. She obtained her BA from Lehman College (CUNY).

Since its creation in 1991, Rachelle has been involved with the Hidden Child Foundation/ ADL, an organization of child survivors of the Holocaust, first as a Vice-President, and later as Co-Director. Since the organization's inception, she has also edited *The Hidden Child*, an annual hard-copy newsletter (until 2020) and now an emailed edition. The mission of the Hidden Child Foundation is "to educate all people about the consequences of bigotry and hatred so that never again will anyone suffer the atrocity, the injustice and the agony of the Holocaust."

To learn more about the Hidden Child Foundation, visit their website at <https://www.adl.org/holocaust-education/hidden-child-foundation>.

Elementary Activities

Discussion Questions after Watching the Webinar (Grades 3-5)

After watching the webinar live (on 2/11/25) or its video recording, engage students in a discussion by asking some or all of the following questions:

- What thoughts and feelings came to mind as you watched the webinar?
- Had you ever read any Gordon Korman books before? If so, which ones?
- What did you think about what Gordon Korman read and talked about from his book, *Linked*?
- What did you think of the hidden child stories that Rachelle Goldstein read?
- What connects *Linked* and the hidden child stories?
- What did you learn about antisemitism, both past and present?
- What did you learn from the webinar?
- How does the book and the themes of *Linked* connect to No Place for Hate?
- Can you use what you learned from the webinar to build a No Place for Hate Activity this year? How so?

Grades 3-5: One Book, One School

Use the [One Book, One School](#) No Place for Hate Activity to read the book *Linked* (for ages 8-12) together as the upper elementary classrooms in the school. Use the "Core Activities" in the NPFH Activity to (1) read the book together as a school, (2) use ADL's [Linked](#)

Educator Discussion Guide to engage students in a discussion about the book, using the questions provided in the guide and (3) engage students in doing one of the extension activities in the discussion guide (reader's response writing activity, explore hate symbols and/or reflect on antisemitism).

Art Activity

Invite students to create a drawing, painting, collage or cartoon/graphic design to illustrate a part of the webinar or a scene from the book that they found to be particularly enjoyable, important, compelling, relevant or meaningful. Have them write a caption/blurb that explains their work of art. Display the artwork on bulletin boards around school and consider organizing a whole school art exhibition.

[Note: If any of the images contain hate symbols, be mindful not to display them around school. Without proper context, they could be viewed as perpetuating hate and bias, rather than challenging it.]

Grades K-2: Symbols and Hate Symbols

For students in grades K-2, be mindful that much of the material covered in the webinar will not be developmentally appropriate for this age group. Instead, you can have students in grades 3-5, after reading the book, partner up with the K-2 classes in the school and read age-appropriate excerpts of the book to them, explaining to the younger students what the book is about and share their experience reading *Linked*, including what they felt, what they learned, etc.

In addition, you can use the elementary *No Place for Hate* Activity, *Hate Symbols and Their Impact*, to explore with K-2 students about symbols in general, hate symbols and their impact. Using the "Variation for Students in Grades K-2" strategies in the Activity, engage K-2 students in the following ways:

1. Read aloud a picture book that includes a symbol—see the activity for book examples.
2. Explain/elicit what symbols are and share some familiar symbols with students,
3. Share symbols that express sadness, anger, hate and other negative symbols and inviting them to reflect on how they feel when they see them. Explore the impact those symbols have on others and how they feel.

You can also invite students to draw or create their own symbol that that is about and expresses the opposite of what hate symbol express, including love, friendship, belonging, being included, equality, allyship and empathy. Display those symbols around the school.

Middle School Activities

Discussion Questions after Watching the Webinar

After watching the webinar live (on 2/11/25) or its video recording, engage students in a discussion by asking some or all of the following questions:

- What thoughts and feelings came to mind as you watched the webinar?
- What did you learn about Gordon Korman and Rachelle Goldstein that you didn't know before?
- How is the story in Gordon Korman's *Linked* connected to the hidden child stories that Rachelle Goldstein shared?
- What did you learn about the Holocaust? What did you learn about antisemitism?
- Has your school ever experienced something like what happened to the school in *Linked*? What happened? How did you feel? What did you do?
- What's your biggest takeaway from the webinar?
- How do the discussion and readings during the webinar connect to No Place for Hate?
- Is there anything you learned from the webinar and the stories that were shared that can be used to build a NPFH activity this year? Please explain.

One Book, One School

Use the [One Book, One School](#) No Place for Hate Activity to read the book *Linked* together as the upper elementary classrooms in the school. Use the "Core Activities" in the NPFH Activity to (1) read the book together as a school, (2) use ADL's Linked Educator Discussion Guide to engage students in a discussion about the book, using the discussion questions provided in the guide and (3) engage students in doing one of the extension activities in the discussion guide (reader's response writing activity, explore hate symbols and/or reflect on antisemitism).

Children of the Holocaust

Use the lesson plan, [Children of the Holocaust: A Discussion Guide](#), to explore more stories like the ones that Rachelle Goldstein of the Hidden Child Foundation shared during the webinar. Share with students that until recently, the stories of the children of the Holocaust were rarely told. In the lesson plan, the stories of three child survivors are shared five-year-old Lili, who was separated from her family and

hidden in a convent; seven-year-old Krystyna, who lived for 14 months in a sewer, never seeing the light of day; and fourteen-year-old Alexander, who learned about death on a fateful day in the ghetto.

Follow the lesson plan by engaging students in a discussion (1) Before Reading the Stories, (2) Reading one or more of the stories aloud together or have students read them silently (you can also have students choose one of the three stories and read and discuss together in small groups and (3) After Reading the Stories. Before reading the stories, explain to students that “the children’s stories are filled with fear and suffering, both emotionally and physically. Every Jewish child was marked for destruction simply because he or she was Jewish.” Therefore, prepare students emotionally for reading these stories and be sure to provide time and space for students to process their feelings following the reading.

Art Activity

Invite students to choose one of the following themes (from the webinar, the book *Linked* and/or the hidden child stories) and create an art project around it. As an alternative, you can select a theme for the class to all create.

- Hate Symbols and their Impact
- The Holocaust and Hidden Children
- The Power of Social Media
- Taking Action about Bias
- Antisemitism and Other Forms of Bias

The art projects can be drawings, paintings, collages, poetry or other creative writing, sculpture, photographs, slogans/messages with drawing, videos or another idea. After all the art projects are completed, create an art gallery for all in the class or school to view and consider posting an online gallery of the students’ creations.

[Note: If any of the images contain hate symbols, be mindful not to display them around school. Without proper context, they could be viewed as perpetuating hate and bias, rather than challenging it.]

High School Activities

Discussion Questions after Watching the Webinar

After watching the webinar live (on 2/11/25) or on video, engage students in a discussion (either in small groups or whole class/group) by asking some or all of the following questions:

- What thoughts and feelings came to mind as you watched the webinar?
- What did you learn about Gordon Korman and Rachelle Goldstein that you didn't know before?
- How is the story in Gordon Korman's *Linked* connected to the hidden child stories that Rachelle Goldstein shared?
- What did you learn about the Holocaust? What did you learn about antisemitism?
- Has your school ever experienced something like what happened to the school in *Linked*? What happened? How did you feel? What did you do?
- What's your biggest takeaway from the webinar?
- How do the discussion and readings during the webinar connect to No Place for Hate?
- How can you help make your school No Place for Hate this year?

Invite students to use one of these questions as a writing prompt and have them write a short essay that responds to one of the questions. Then display the essays around school or have students record themselves reading their essays and share with the whole school.

Children of the Holocaust

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Follow the lesson plan by engaging students in a discussion (1) Before Reading the Stories, (2) Reading one or more of the stories aloud together or have students read them silently (you can also have students choose one of the three stories and read and discuss together in small groups and (3) After Reading the Stories. Before reading the stories, explain to students that "the children's stories are filled with fear and suffering, both emotionally and physically. Every Jewish child

was marked for destruction simply because he or she was Jewish.” Therefore, prepare students emotionally for reading these stories and be sure to provide time and space for students to process their feelings following the reading.

What Are Hate Symbols? No Place for Hate Activity

Use the No Place for Hate Activity, [What Are Hate Symbols?](#) to help students reflect upon the power and significance of symbols in our society; learn about specific hate symbols like the swastika and noose, the impact they have on people and what can be done; and create their own symbol that reflects the opposite of hate, namely love, respect, diversity, inclusiveness, equity or justice.

Keywords and Definitions

For definitions of anti-bias words and terminology used in the following activities, see ADL’s online [Education Glossary Terms](#). Note that many of the words include differentiated definitions for elementary age students.

Additional Resources for Educators, Students and Families

- [No Place for Hate Activity Library](#) (Collection of NPFH activities that qualify towards designation)
- [Linked Discussion Guide](#) (Discussion Guides for Educators and Parents/Families)
- [When Hateful Symbols Cause Hurt and Harm](#) (Elementary/MS Lesson Plan)
- [Children of the Holocaust: A Discussion Guide](#) (MS/HS Lesson Plan)
- [Swastikas and Other Hate Symbols](#) (HS Lesson Plan)
- [Awareness to Action](#) (Digital Course on Challenging Antisemitism for MS/HS Students)
- [Hate Symbols](#) (Table Talk Parent/Family Discussion Guide)
- [Resources to Address and Challenge Antisemitism](#) (Collection Page of resources)