

## Disturbance of the Inner Ear Joyce Hackett

### About the Book

*Disturbance of the Inner Ear* is Joyce Hackett's first novel and tells the story of Isabel Masurovsky, a former child prodigy cellist and daughter of a world-famous musician who survived the Theresienstadt concentration camp.

### Discussion Questions

Please note that some of the discussion points below may act as spoilers for the book's content.

1. Isabel does not want to be pitied. Does this create a barrier between her and people who could help her in various situations?
2. Signor Perso tells Isabel 'The past is prologue' – what do you think this means? How accurate is this statement in relation to Isabel's story?
3. Isabel is told 'Either one expels one's emotions or one traps these emotions in the body'. Which does Isabel do?
4. how does Yuri's experiences of Theresienstadt have an impact on Isabel's life?
5. discuss the relationships between Isabel and Clayton, Isabel and Pettyward and Isabel and Giulio.
6. why do you think the prisoners of Theresienstadt would swap their food rations for tickets to concerts?
7. why does Isabel visit Theresienstadt? Does this offer her a chance to change the direction of her life?
8. what does the title *Disturbance of the Inner Ear* mean to you? How is this reflected in the novel?

You can use HMD resources to find out more about life in the concentration camps <http://www.hmd.org.uk/genocides/life-in-thecamps/> and life after the Holocaust <http://www.hmd.org.uk/genocides/life-after-the-holocaust/> .