

## The Complete Maus Art Spiegelman

### About the Book

Maus: A Survivor's Tale is an autobiography by Art Spiegelman, in the form of a graphic novel. The complete story was published in two volumes: the first in 1986 (My Father Bleeds History) and the second in 1991 (And Here My Troubles Began). The story recounts the experiences of Spiegelman's father during the Holocaust and how these experiences impacted on his father's later life and relationships. All people are presented as anthropomorphic animals – all Jews are portrayed as mice, while Germans appear as cats.

Maus was awarded a Pulitzer Prize in 1992.

### Discussion Questions

Please note that some of these questions will act as spoilers for the book.

1. what are your initial thoughts about a Holocaust narrative in graphic novel format? Does this change?
2. why does Artie disregard his father's wishes and write about his affair with Lucia?
3. do you think the graphic novel format makes the inclusion of graphic scenes such as the execution of Cohn more or less effective?
4. why did Spiegelman choose the animal representations of mice for Jews and cats for Germans?
5. is there a reason for Artie's father to be more attached to possessions than people?
6. can you understand the actions of Haskel and other Jews who helped the Nazis maintain order in the ghettos? Is there a difference between Vladek's later actions teaching the Kapo English and repairing Gestapo shoes and that of the Jewish police in the ghettos?
7. why does Artie call his father a murderer when he discovers that Vladek has destroyed Anja's diary and other possessions?

8. Vladek claims that there was no such thing as friendship in the ghetto or Auschwitz - does the narrative support this assertion?
9. why do Vladek and Mala stay together? Do they hate each other as much as they appear to?
10. what is the relationship between Artie and Vladek?

You can use HMD resources to find out more about life in the concentration camps, including Auschwitz –Birkenau <http://www.hmd.org.uk/genocides/life-in-the-camps/>, the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau <http://www.hmd.org.uk/genocides/the-holocaust/liberation-resistance-and-rescuers> and experiences of survivors Freddie Knoller <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/survivor-stories/holocaust-testimony-freddie-knoller> and Kitty Hart-Moxon <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/survivor-stories/holocaust-testimony-kitty-hartmoxon>.