

Skokie Public Library's Book Discussion Guide

Motherland by Fern Schumer Chapman

- What does the title refer to?
- How would you explain Edith's relationship with her sister?
- Why would Edith want to go back?
- How did Edith's being an escapee define her?
- Hans Herrman – why would he take them to museum, become their tour guide?
- Why is Hans' dead son in the book?
- How did you feel about the reactions to their requests for directions to the Jewish cemetery?
- What was the significance of the red candles Siegmund Westerfeld gave to the children?
- Did Fern have an evolution in her perception of the German people?
- If Edith's foster family had treated her better would she be less traumatized by the separation from her family?
- Mina rebelled against the harsh treatment of the Jews by the Germans, but yet she married a German soldier. Discuss.
- How did you feel about Edith's anger toward her parents? Could you send a child away from the danger?
- The main theme of the book is the mother/daughter relationship. Are there more?
- If it is true that you have to forgive to forget could this be part of the reason why Edith went back to Germany? Was it successful?



Skokie Public Library

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