

# DEAR CANADA

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

### **Pieces of the Past**

#### **The Holocaust Diary of Rose Rabinowitz**

By Carol Matas

1. What do you think would happen if your parents had special laws passed against them, such as not allowing them to work in many professions, or hold money in bank accounts? Do you think that laws such as those the Jews in WWII Poland faced could still exist today?
2. What might have been going through Papa's mind if he wanted to take the family out of Poland but was barred by law from travelling? What other considerations might have kept him in Warsaw?
3. Why would Rozia want to take Abe's place smuggling in food? Would you have done the same? Why or why not?
4. What pros and cons might have been part of Abe's decision whether or not to return to the ghetto after he escaped from Auschwitz?
5. Can you imagine not having enough food to eat? If you had often been hungry, as Rose often was, what might you do to be sure you would never be hungry again? How do you think this would be regarded by someone who has always had enough to eat?
6. Why would Terry and her friends not try to be friends with Rose? Why would they treat her the way they did? What would you have done if you were in Rose's shoes? Or Terry's?
7. Why would Rose finally decide to write in her diary about the war years? Why does she find it so much easier to talk to Oscar and Jakub versus Terry, or even Saul?
8. Why would Rose not run away from the fence when the truck arrived at the farm where she was hiding, even though Mama had told her she *must* run when she heard the whistle? What made her wait for Mama? Is it ever "more right" to disobey?
9. What do you think made Uncle Morris decide to leave the bedroom when the Germans came, and face them alongside Papa?