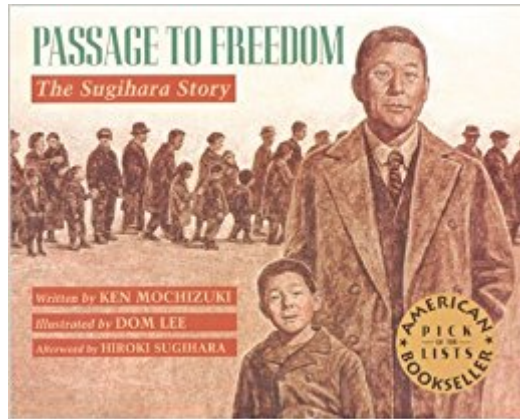


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# Passage To Freedom: The Sugihara Story (Rise And Shine)



## Synopsis

Against the order of his government, a Japanese diplomat in Lithuania issued thousands of visas to Jewish refugees to help them flee the Nazis during World War II.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 6 - 11 years

Grade Level: 1 - 6

## Customer Reviews

Grade 2-6?The story of a Japanese diplomat who saved thousands of Jewish refugees in defiance of official government orders. This little-known Schindler-like account is effectively narrated in first-person style, ostensibly by young Hiroki Sugihara, son of the man who was Japanese consul in Lithuania in 1940. As Nazi soldiers invaded Poland, many Jews crossed the border to Lithuania and hundreds besieged the Japanese consulate for travel visas. Three times, Hiroki's father requested permission from his government to issue visas and was refused. He decided to follow his conscience and obey the dictates of God, rather than his government. For the next month, until he was reassigned to Berlin, he issued and personally signed visas, from dawn to dark, while hundreds stood in line for their passage to freedom. An afterword by Hiroki Sugihara tells of the subsequent history of his family. For children, this story will be a lesson in courage and conscience and a valuable addition to Holocaust materials. For those who have some knowledge of the Japanese/German Axis pact, the remarkable actions of Consul Chiune Sugihara carry an added

dimension of heroism and brotherhood above and beyond political pressures. Lee's dramatic full-page, sepia-colored illustrations focus on the faces of the Japanese consul and his family, the Jewish men and women appealing for help, and the children, whose fate lay in the hands of the adults, men and women of different races and cultures caught in a fearful time. Shirley Wilton, Ocean County College, Toms River, NJ Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Gr. 3<sup>^</sup>-5. Add this to the stories of the Righteous Gentiles. In 1940 Chiune Sugihara, the Japanese consul in Lithuania, saved the lives of hundreds of Polish Jewish refugees. He personally wrote out visas that enabled the Jews to escape the Nazis. To do that, he risked the lives of his own family and disobeyed the instructions of the Japanese government. The story is told in the first person by the consul's son, Hiroki, who remembers himself at the age of five when desperate refugees were crowding at his father's door. He remembers how his father consulted his family and how they all discussed their choice: if they helped those people, the family could be in danger; if they did nothing, all the refugees could die. Lee's stirring mixed-media illustrations in sepia shades are humane and beautiful; they capture the intensity of those days--when the crowds were at the gate and one man wrote and wrote the visas by hand--from the child's viewpoint. The immediacy of the narrative will grab kids' interest and make them think. And yet, this story cries out for fuller historical treatment than a picture book can give it. So many questions are left unanswered: What happened to the refugees? What happened to the consul's family? A brief afterword just hints at the astonishing drama. Hazel Rochman --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Righteous Gentiles are recognized at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. These heroes risked their life as well as their family's during the dark days of the Holocaust. *Passage to Freedom: The Sugihara Story*, is one of the few picture books that documents this part of history. The back cover highlights both Jewish and Japanese culture by citing two prominent proverbs. The Jewish proverb- "If you save the life of one person, it is as if you saved the world entire." Japanese Proverb- "Even a Hunter cannot kill a bird that comet so him for refuge." The book includes an afterword by the son of the hero. Reading about the positive efforts of Righteous Gentiles provides a different perspective to the Holocaust. Sugihara had to decide whether he would follow his heart or follow his government's wishes. Few Holocaust era diplomats and leaders were willing to risk their job and their family's security. This book speaks directly to the choices that all people make. Standing up for what one

believes is a character trait that should not be dismissed. This story raises many important questions that can be addressed at various age levels. I recommend that Sugihara's story be included in introductory discussions of the Holocaust.

The story of Mr. Sugihara's involvement in helping Jewish people in WWII is compelling and little known. I am especially interested in the nation/people of Japan but had never heard of this historic event. After reading the book I saw the video and found it fascinating as well. The book is written in a manner especially appropriate for school age children to read of one who chose costly courage, diligence, and compassion over personal safety and promotion at a tragic time in world history. In the Sugihara story, one also sees a family involvement in difficult decision making.

Everyone knows about Schindler, no one knows about Mr. Sugihara. This is a wonderful story that should make the rounds. We can use more heroes, and Mr. Sugihara was most definitely a hero. The holocaust was an unspeakably terrible time in world history. Too many countries and too many people were complicit by action or inaction when Jews, Gypsies, Poles, political dissidents and homosexuals were slaughtered. The few people who followed their conscience are so amazing.

I didn't realize this was a children's book until it came. I was thinking it was a full biography. It's well done and tells a great story!

Even though this is a "comic book" it tells the seemingly unknown story of Chiune Sugihara, who seemingly was a real hero for the Jewish community before World War II. As a member of Japan's consulate in Lithuania he issued thousands of travel visas for people who would have otherwise been trapped by the approaching soldiers of the third reich. Going against his government's instructions, he was able to save somewhere between 5,000 and 10,000 folks from a sure death. Why haven't we ever learned of him in History Classes? Here is a man who was able to do all of this and never fired a shot in World War II. A very worthwhile book!

This book is an excellent way for anyone wanting a quick explanation about the Fugu plan and how one Japanese man saved thousands of Jewish lives during the Holocaust. I bought the book to read to the children in my religious school class and made sure to read it myself first, thinking also that I would buy an "adult" version of the story as well. However, the illustrations and the recounting of the events are very well done and easy to understand without being condescending. There are also

additional notes at the end which are very informative.

Moving story of a figure I had previously not known of. Nothing graphic, just a brave man sacrificing for others. It's in my "Orthodox hero" shelf for the kids.

Story of brave man who saved many lives during WWII. Will use during Holocaust study.

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