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*Dave at Night* by Levine • *The War Within* by Matas

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*Mitzvah Magic* by Siegel • *Molly's Pilgrim* by Cohen

*David and Max* by Provost • *Mr. Blue Jeans* by Weidt

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*As Good As Anybody: Martin Luther King, Jr. and Abraham Joshua Heschel's Amazing March Toward Freedom*  
by Michelson • *Light* by Zalben

*Christmas Menorahs: How a Town Fought Hate* by Cohn • *Across the Alley* by Michelson

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## SOCIAL ACTION SEFER SACK FOR 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> GRADERS

*Dave at Night* by Gail Carson Levine – When orphaned Dave is sent to the Hebrew Home for Boys where he is treated cruelly, he sneaks out at night and is welcomed into the music- and culture-filled world of the Harlem Renaissance. (281pp)

*The War Within* by Carol Matas – In 1862, after Union forces expel Hannah's family from Holly Springs, Mississippi, because they are Jews, Hannah is forced to reexamine her views regarding slavery and the war. (151pp)

*Bottle in the Gaza Sea* by Valerie Zenatti – Sydney Taylor Award Winner – This honest yet hopeful story about the relationship between an Israeli girl and a Palestinian boy via e-mail and instant messaging conveys the confusion, anger, exhaustion, and depression felt by many young people during the 2003 Intifada. (149pp)

*Confessions of a Closet Catholic* by Sarah Littman – To be more like her best friend, eleven-year-old Justine decides to give up Judaism to become Catholic, but after her beloved Bubbe suffers a stroke and dies, she realizes that she needs to seek her own way of being Jewish. (193pp)

*Hana's Suitcase – A True Story* by Karen Levine – A biography of a Czech girl who died in the Holocaust, told in alternating chapters with an account of how the curator of a Japanese Holocaust center learned about her life after Hana's suitcase was sent to her. (111pp)

*Real Time* by Pnina Moed Kass – While going to work on a kibbutz in Israel, sixteen-year-old Thomas Wanninger is determined to find out the truth about the role his grandfather played as a Nazi officer in World War II, yet an unexpected event puts his plans on hold as he and a diverse group of people are forced to deal with a modern day catastrophe of their very own. (186 pp)

## SOCIAL ACTION SEFER SACK FOR 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> GRADERS

*Brooklyn Bridge* by Karen Hesse – Ike wants night-time blue for his once-a-year Passover suit but when Mama takes him and thirteen neighborhood boys shopping, he figures the chances of getting it are slim. (47pp)

*Memories of Babi* by Aranka Siegal – On her yearly visit to her grandmother Babi at her farm in a Ukrainian village, Piri learns valuable lessons about life as she works hard on the farm, witnesses the struggles of the less fortunate, and comes to realize that some of the simplest pleasures are the most treasured. (116pp)

*Mitzvah Magic – What Kids Can Do to Change the World* by Danny Siegel – Twenty-one stories that recount the “mitzvahs” (literally *mitzvot*, plural of *mitzvah*, “commandments,” used synonymously with “kind deeds”) of ordinary children who are “Mitzvah Heroes” and suggest ways young people can help others. (64pp)

*Molly's Pilgrim* by Barbara Cohen – Told to make a doll like a pilgrim for the Thanksgiving display at school, Molly's Jewish mother dresses the doll as she herself dressed before leaving Russia to seek religious freedom – much to Molly's embarrassment. (28pp)

*David and Max* by Gary Provost – During summer vacation, twelve-year-old David becomes caught up in the search for a man believed to have died in the Holocaust who is somehow connected to his beloved grandfather Max and his World War II experiences. (163pp)

*Mr. Blue Jeans: A story about Levi Strauss* by Maryann Weidt - Traces the life of the immigrant Jewish peddler who went on to found Levi Strauss & Co., the world's first and largest manufacturer of denim jeans. (64pp)

**THE BOOKS AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS IN THIS LIST MAY BE PURCHASED BY COMPLETING THE ATTACHED ORDER FORM AND MAILING, FAXING, OR EMAILING IT TO DEBBIE COLODNY AT SEFER, SO GOOD. GRANDPARENTS FOR SOCIAL ACTION WILL BENEFIT FROM A PERCENTAGE OF YOUR PURCHASE! DEBBIE SELECTS ALL MATERIALS AND WRITES ALL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS. SHE WILL BE HAPPY TO SPEAK WITH YOU ABOUT OTHER TITLES YOU MIGHT WANT. PLEASE CALL.**



Debbie Colodny is a children's librarian, bookseller, and certified Early Childhood, Elementary and Learning Disabilities teacher and supervisor. She is in charge of children's programming at the public library in Libertyville, IL. Debbie served as Director of Education for over 20 years in synagogues. Debbie's articles about using literature to teach values, social action, and Bible have appeared in educational publications and she has presented numerous teacher workshops, adult education programs, and Family Education Days focusing on those topics. With the establishment of her book and music company, *Sefer, So Good*, in 2002, Debbie combined her life-long love

and expertise in children's literature with her knowledge and experience in education. In January of 2008, Debbie was honored with appointment to the prestigious national committee of the Association of Jewish Libraries that selects the “best of the best” in Jewish children's literature – the *Sydney Taylor Book Awards Committee*.

Debbie Colodny

*Sefer, So Good* 1141 Garfield Avenue Libertyville, IL 60048  
847/680-8016 • [SeferSoGood@AOL.com](mailto:SeferSoGood@AOL.com) • FAX 847/680-8881

# SOCIAL ACTION SEFER SACK FOR 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> GRADERS

*As Good As Anybody: Martin Luther King, Jr. and Abraham Joshua Heschel's Amazing March Toward Freedom* by Richard Michelson – Sydney Taylor Award Winner – This fictionalized parallel biography of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, presents a beautiful and inspiring tribute to a little known alliance in American history with the message of persistence, justice, and brotherhood, to life. ( 32 pp)

*Light* by Jane Breskin Zalben – Sydney Taylor Honor Book – The concept of repairing the world, making the world a better place by acts of kindness, is explained simply yet lyrically in this beautiful picture book. ( 32 pp)

*Christmas Menorahs: How a Town Fought Hate* by Janice Cohn – Sydney Taylor Honor Book – Retells a true story that describes how people in Billings, Montana joined together to fight a series of hate crimes against a Jewish family. This is an incredibly powerful story for any age, but it is best read aloud together as a family. ( 32 pp)

*Across the Alley* by Richard Michelson – Abe, who is Jewish, and Willie, who is black, live across the alley from each other, and, at night, open their windows and are best friends until Abe's grandfather catches them, forcing them to take a stand against prejudice. ( 32 pp)

*The White Ram* by Mordecai Gerstein – A white ram, made on the sixth day of creation, waits patiently in the garden of Eden until the time is right, then runs to save a certain child in fulfillment of God's plan. ( 32 pp)

*Cain and Abel: Finding the Fruits of Peace* by Sasso – Retells the biblical story of the two brothers who, after years of sharing everything, became angry enough to lose control and bring violence to the world. Invites conversation about dealing with anger positively. ( 32 pp)

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