

## Reading Group Guide

1. *Last Stop Auschwitz* is the true story of Eddy de Wind's experiences in Auschwitz, but most of it is written in third person because it felt too traumatic to write in first person. What effect did that have on you while reading?
2. Doubt and disbelief run throughout the memoir. For example, on their way to Auschwitz, Eddy describes how his wagon-mates laughed off the SS coming for their valuables, and even when they arrive in the camps they "still didn't believe" (12) that they would lose everything. Why do you think they held on to this doubt, despite what they had seen and heard?
3. Most people have at least some familiarity with the Holocaust and what took place in the concentration camps. Did anything surprise you about Eddy's depiction of the camps while you were reading?
4. Eddy's journal begins and ends with him longing for Friedel. In what ways did his love for Friedel make Auschwitz more bearable and/or more difficult for him?
5. Eddy describes how the prisoners were divided into categories based on the SS's justification for their imprisonment. Discuss the effect this had on the prisoners. Would similar divisions have existed among them if they had not been visibly labeled?
6. The girl in No Pasaran asserts that she is staying alive so that she can "tell all of this, to tell everyone about it, to convince people that it was true" (182). Do you think this is why Eddy has written this account? Are there any other reasons that might have inspired him to write about his experiences in his initial weeks of freedom? Why do you think some survivors feel compelled to share what they went through, while others prefer not to talk about it?
7. Towards the end of the book, "Hans" asserts "The entire German nation is responsible. They're losing the war now and will renounce their leaders, but if they'd won the war, nobody would ever have asked the Fuhrer which means he had used or what had happened to all of the Communists and Jews" (179). Do you agree with this statement? Why, or why not?
8. In his essay "Confrontation with Death," Eddy reflects on the concentration camps and their lasting impact from a psychological and sociological perspective. What does it add to the book to include Eddy's writing from later in his life alongside his journals from within the camp? What are the different strengths and impact of these two reflections on concentration camps? Were there echoes of sentiments from his memoir that you recognized in Eddy's later writing?
9. The "Note on the Author and the Text" gives greater context and detail not included in Eddy's writings. Did any of this new information surprise you, or change how you see the narrative?