Art Spiegelman’s Maus I and II:  
Researching the Biographical and Historical Background

To gain a better understanding of Maus I and II, apply biographical and/or historical criticism. Below are questions that you generated in class. Your task is to find information about any three of the questions from sources other than Wikipedia or random, unreliable websites. Most efficient is to use a word processor to copy and paste information from the various source(s) under the appropriate question. As such, you also can highlight key quotes that you may end up integrating into your essay.

Due: Monday May 3rd (The three questions, the “answers,” and the source(s) listed according to MLA format)

HISTORICAL

- What does "Holocaust" mean, and where does the word come from?
- Why were the Jews persecuted?
- What were the conditions that led to the Holocaust?
- Who in addition to Adolf Hitler took part in persecuting the Jews?
- When did the Holocaust occur?
- Where were Jews limited to or taken to and how were they treated?
- How many Jews were killed, and how many survived?
- How did the Holocaust survivors “survive”? What strategies did they use?
- Why did some Jews accept their fates while others tried to escape?
- How different were the experiences of Jews in Poland versus Germany?
- How did people manage to escape to American or neutral territories?
- How were survivors affected?
- How does this issue affect Jews today?
- How can today's generation learn from the Holocaust?
- Should the German government be reprimanded for what happened during the Holocaust?
- What contemporary events are similar to the Holocaust?
- What should be done to prevent events such as the Holocaust from ever happening again?
- How has the Holocaust affected Germans today?
- How has the media shaped how we view the Holocaust?
- What evidence is there that the Holocaust even happened?
BIOGRAPHICAL (You’re likely to gain even more insight from the books themselves, but you may find information that enhance your understanding of the books.)

- What is the author hoping to achieve by writing about his father’s experiences?
- How did Artie’s father survive?
- Was life easier once they were able to emigrate to the US?
- What happened to Artie’s mother?
- How did the Holocaust affect Artie’s father? Did he experience post-traumatic stress?
- How did the Holocaust have an impact on Artie, even though he didn’t experience it?
- Was Artie’s childhood any different being raised by Holocaust survivors? How did his parents’ mental states affect Artie?
- What effect did the Holocaust have on father and son, and how do they differ?
- How does the author’s upbringing affect the relationship he has with his own wife and family?