

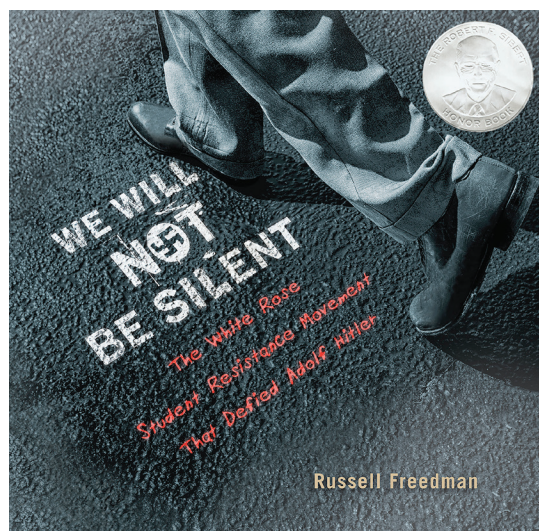
# White Rose by Kip Wilson

## We Will Not Be Silent by Russell Freedman

Both of these books tell the story of the White Rose movement, the student resistance movement that defied Adolf Hitler. *White Rose* is a fictional re-telling in verse from the perspective of Sophie, one of the leaders. *We Will Not Be Silent* is a purely nonfiction narrative. Together, they fully illuminate these brave students and all they fought for.



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### About the Book

Disillusioned by the propaganda of Nazi Germany, Sophie Scholl, her brother Hans, and his fellow soldiers, formed the White Rose, a group that wrote and distributed anonymous letters criticizing the Nazi regime and calling for action from their fellow German citizens. The following year, Sophie and her brother were arrested for treason and interrogated for information about their collaborators. This debut novel in verse recounts the lives of Sophie and her friends and highlights their brave stand against fascism in Nazi Germany.

### About the Author

Kip Wilson is the poetry editor of the Young Adult Review Network and has a PhD in German literature. In 2017, she won the PEN/New England Susan P. Bloom Discovery Award, and her work has appeared in several children's literary magazines.

kipwilsonwrites.com

Twitter: @kiperoo

Instagram: @kipwilsonwrites

### About the Book

In his signature eloquent prose, backed up by thorough research, Russell Freedman tells the story of Austrian-born Hans Scholl and his sister Sophie. As students, the Scholls and a few friends formed the White Rose, a campaign of active resistance to Hitler and the Nazis. Risking imprisonment and even execution, the White Rose members distributed leaflets urging Germans to defy the Nazi government. Their belief that freedom was worth dying for will inspire young readers to stand up for what they believe in.

### About the Author

Russell Freedman received the Newbery Medal for *Lincoln: A Photobiography*. He was also the recipient of three Newbery Honors, a National Humanities Medal, the Sibert Medal, a Sibert Honor for *We Will Not Be Silent*, the Orbis Pictus Award, and the Laura Ingalls Wilder Award, and was selected to give the 2006 May Hill Arbuthnot Honor Lecture.

# White Rose

by Kip Wilson



*White Rose* begins with a section entitled “The End.” Why might an author choose to begin this way? What impact does this have on you as the reader? Explain.

The sections of the novel alternate between “The End” and “Before.” Why do you think the author chose to tell the story

this way? As a reader, do you find this technique to be confusing or intriguing? Explain.

What do you learn about Sophie in the first poems?

The poem “Women’s Work” (79) represents a turning point for Sophie. What decision is she making? How do you know? Cite specific examples from the poem.

Sophie Scholl is the main narrator of the story. Occasionally, however, other voices are included:

Roland Freisler, judge

Else Gebel, prisoner

August Klein, defense attorney

Robert Mohr, Gestapo interrogator

Jakob Schmid, custodian

Ferdinand Seidl, defense attorney

What type of relationship did each of these people have with Sophie? Why do you think Wilson chose to give these characters their own poems in their own voices? What do you learn that you wouldn’t if you only experienced the story through Sophie’s eyes? Explain.

Letter writing plays an important part in the story. There are letters from Hans while he is away and letters that Sophie writes to Fritz. How do the letters help to advance the plot? What kinds of information do the letters provide? How do you think Wilson came up with the idea to include letters in the story? (Hint: Look at the list of primary sources in German on pages 355–356.)

The lines “*Boom-boom, boom-boom*” are repeated at various intervals in the novel. What do you think these sounds represent? Is it the same at every point in the story, or could it be different each time? Explain.

Because the novel does not progress chronologically, it may be difficult to follow Sophie’s growth as a character. Select five poems that best represent the changes in Sophie. Put them in chronological order and explain in your own words what makes Sophie a dynamic character.

*White Rose* is a fictionalized account (i.e., based on a true story) of Sophie’s life. Examine the Author’s Note and the Selected Sources in the back matter of the novel. What types of sources did Wilson utilize to help her frame the narrative? What is the difference between a primary and a secondary source?

Why do you think Wilson chose novel in verse as the format for her novel as opposed to prose? What are the benefits of writing in poetry for a story like this? Explain.

CCSS Alignment:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.1

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.3

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.4

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.5

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.6

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.1

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.3

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.4

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.6

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9–10.1

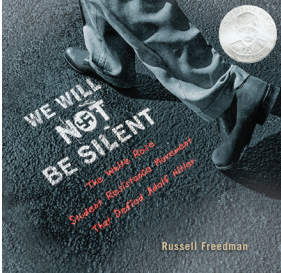
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9–10.3

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9–10.4

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9–10.5

# We Will Not Be Silent

## by Russell Freedman



### Chapter 1: Embraced by the Hitler Youth

- What do you think Robert Scholl meant when he said, “Don’t believe them. They are wolves and deceivers, and they are misusing the German people shamefully.” (1)?
- What do you think he knew/understood that his children didn’t?
- Why do you think kids were initially attracted to the Hitler Youth movement?
- Read the song on page 9. What do you think the children in the Hitler Youth understood those lyrics to mean?

### Chapter 2: Rumbblings of Doubt

- What events made Hans rethink his involvement in the Hitler Youth? Give specific examples.
- How did joining the *Deutsche Jungenschaft* change Hans? Contrast this group with his Hitler Youth experience.

### Chapter 3: Half Soldier, Half Student

- What was Werner’s first act of opposition (see page 26)? Since there is no photo included, draw what you think it might have looked like. What was the meaning behind this act?
- Why do you think some people shy away from action when faced with injustice while others choose to resist? Explain.

### Chapter 4: Leaflets of the White Rose

- How did reading and exposure to the arts influence Hans and Sophie? Who were some of the authors, philosophers, musicians, and artists they studied and/or enjoyed? How did they feel when they were told that works by these artists were no longer acceptable?
- According to Hans, “The name [White Rose] was chosen arbitrarily” (39). What do white roses

generally symbolize? Is it possible that Hans might have been aware of this symbolism when he came up with the name? Why or why not?

### Chapter 5: “We Are Your Bad Conscience”

- Read through Manfred Eickenmeyer’s account of what he witnessed with the *Einsatztruppen* in Poland (44). Write a response to this description. How does it make you feel? Why do you think that people who heard rumors about these mass killings had trouble believing them? How do you think hearing about the killings affected Hans and Alex?
- The third leaflet included the lines, “We will not be silent. We are your bad conscience. The White Rose will not leave you in peace!” (46). What does this mean? Explain it in your own words.

### Chapter 6: “Down With Hitler!”

- Read through the lyrics to the song “Thoughts Are Free” (54). Why do you think Sophie chose this particular song with which to serenade her father while he was in prison?
- Describe the steps the White Rose members had to take in order to safely create, mail, transport, and distribute their leaflets. What does that tell you about the danger surrounding their activities? Is their circle of members shrinking or expanding at this time? Do you think you’d be willing to put yourself at risk for a cause about which you feel strongly? Why or why not?

### Chapter 7: Arrested

- Read Paul Giesler’s comments at Munich University’s 470th anniversary (65). How do you think you would’ve responded if you had been in the audience for that speech? How did the students respond? What was the result of this protest?
- How did Hans and Sophie get caught? Describe it in your own words. Are you surprised by the events that led to their arrest? Why or why not?
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### Chapter 8: “Long Live Freedom!”

- To what lengths did Hans and Sophie go in order to protect their friends?
- Describe the “trial” that Hans and Sophie received. Were the proceedings fair and reasonable? Why or why not? Why do you think they were given a trial at all?
- How did the prison guards and prison chaplain seem to regard Hans, Sophie, and Christoph? What can you infer from their words and/or actions?

### Chapter 9: A Voice from Within

- What effect did the executions of Hans, Sophie, Christoph, and others seem to have on the White Rose Movement? Did their deaths suppress or amplify the movement? Give some examples from the text to support your answer.
- What are some of the ways in which the White Rose movement has been memorialized? Which do you think is the most impressive or impactful? Explain.
- Look at the quotes from Kurt Huber, Hans Scholl, and Sophie Scholl (85–87). Why do you think Freedman chose to conclude his book with these particular quotes? What do these words tell you about Kurt, Hans, and Sophie and their motivations for resistance? Explain.

### Consider the book as a whole.

- Once you have finished reading, make a list of each of the chapter titles. Explain the significance of each chapter title.
- Define primary source and secondary source. Is this book a primary or secondary source? How do you know? Give at least five examples of primary sources included in the book (provide page numbers).
- Make a list of the first six leaflets created. Who authored each leaflet? What was the focus of each? If given, tell how many copies of each leaflet were distributed.

- Below is a list of text features commonly found in nonfiction texts. How many of the following text features do you see? Add any additional features at the bottom of the list. Which text feature(s) did you find most helpful as you read the book? Explain.

Headings  
Table of Contents  
Glossary  
Index  
Bold/Color/Italicized Print  
Photographs  
Captions  
Map  
Diagram  
Timeline  
Sidebar  
Illustration  
Graph/Chart/Table  
Other

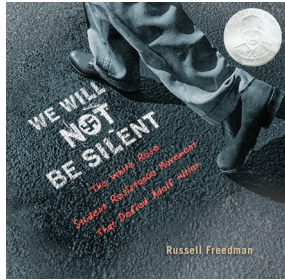
### CCSS Alignment:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.1  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.4  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.5  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.4  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9–10.1  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9–10.2  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9–10.4



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## We Will Not Be Silent by Russell Freedman



### Extension Activities for Students

Create a timeline highlighting and combining the main events from both books. Show how the events that occurred in Sophie's life fit into the larger world events taking place during the years 1935–1945.

Write a eulogy for Sophie Scholl.

Choose several important events that are depicted in both the novel and the nonfiction text. Compare and contrast how those events are represented in each book. How close is the fictionalized account to what is written in *We Will Not Be Silent*? Be sure to include page numbers. For example, consider the descriptions of Sophie's last meetings with her parents, Hans, and Christoph in *White Rose* (329–337) and in *We Will Not Be Silent* (75–77). Describe a text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connection for each of the texts.

Research other youth-led resistance movements and compare them to the White Rose movement. Some examples might include the Civil Rights Movement, Vietnam War protests, the Soweto Uprising, and Black Lives Matter. Consider the following articles:

Astor, Maggie. "7 Times in History When Students Turned to Activism." *New York Times*. 2018, [www.nytimes.com/2018/03/05/us/student-protest-movements.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/05/us/student-protest-movements.html).

Barrett, Dawson. "The History of Student Activism in the United State." *TeenVogue.com*, April 20, 2018. [www.teenvogue.com/story/the-history-of-student-activism-in-the-united-states](http://www.teenvogue.com/story/the-history-of-student-activism-in-the-united-states).

Bills, Kyla. "Tracing The History of Student Activism & Why It's So Important . . ." *Milk*, [www.milk.xyz/feature/why-student-activism-remains-important](http://www.milk.xyz/feature/why-student-activism-remains-important).

Consider the differences between reading *White Rose*, a fictionalized novel in verse, and reading *We Will Not Be Silent*, a nonfiction text. How does your reading experience change from book to book? Which book allowed you to empathize more? Which provided you with more details? Which deepened your understanding of the Scholl family and their sacrifices? Consider the purpose of each genre. Provide some examples from each text to explain your answers.

*White Rose* was written in a nonlinear fashion jumping between sections titled "Before" and "The End." *We Will Not Be Silent* was written chronologically. Why do you think each author chose to use the chronology that she/he did? How might a different timeline have changed your experience with each text? Explain.

*White Rose* was written primarily from Sophie's point of view. What did you learn from reading *We Will Not Be Silent* that you didn't learn from reading the novel? Provide several details from the text.

If you could only recommend one of these titles to someone wanting to learn more about the White Rose movement, which book would you suggest and why? What questions might you ask before making your recommendation?

Which format and genre did you prefer and why?

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Blakemore, Erin. "Youth in Revolt: Five Powerful Movements Fueled by Young Activists." National Geographic, [www.news.nationalgeographic.com/2018/03/youth-activism-young-protesters-historic-movements](http://www.news.nationalgeographic.com/2018/03/youth-activism-young-protesters-historic-movements).

Guide created by Daria Plumb.

Green, Matthew. "Too Young to Vote, Old Enough to Act: A Brief History of Major Youth-Led Movements." The Lowdown, KQED, 2018, [www.kqed.org/lowdown/30275/the-kids-are-all-right-a-timeline-of-youth-led-movements-that-changed-the-nation](http://www.kqed.org/lowdown/30275/the-kids-are-all-right-a-timeline-of-youth-led-movements-that-changed-the-nation).

CCSS:

CCSS. ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.9

CCSS. ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.9

CCSS. ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.5

CCSS. ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.9

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9–10.6

These texts can serve as either a valuable introductory and/or culminating activity in a unit on student activism. Consider teaming up a literature and social studies teachers to share the workload and planning. Below are some valuable, ready-to-use resources for teaching about activism.

Teaching Tolerance. "Defining Activism," [www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources/tolerance-lessons/defining-activism](http://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources/tolerance-lessons/defining-activism).

Pasquantonio, Victoria. "He Named Me Malala': Understanding Student Activism through Film—Lesson Plan." PBS, March 8, 2016, [www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/lessons-plans/he-named-me-malala-understanding-student-activism-through-film-lesson-plan](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/lessons-plans/he-named-me-malala-understanding-student-activism-through-film-lesson-plan).

Schulten, Katherine. "The Power to Change the World: A Teaching Unit on Student Activism in History and Today." *New York Times*, 2018, [www.nytimes.com/2018/03/07/learning/lesson-plans/the-power-to-change-the-world-a-teaching-unit-on-student-activism-in-history-and-today.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/07/learning/lesson-plans/the-power-to-change-the-world-a-teaching-unit-on-student-activism-in-history-and-today.html).