He was born in April 26, in 1914 in Brooklyn, and he died in March 18, in 1986 in Manhattan. He was an American novelist and short story writer.

Malamud’s parents were Russian Jews who had fled tsarist Russia. Malamud’s mother died when he was 15 years old, and he was unhappy when his father remarried. He early had to take responsibility for his brother.

Malamud was educated at the City College of New York (1936) and Columbia University (1942). He taught at high schools in [New York City](https://www.britannica.com/place/New-York-City) , at [Oregon State University](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Oregon-State-University), and at [Bennington College](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Bennington-College) in Vermont.

Malamud entered adolescence at the start of the [Great Depression](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Depression) (1930s).

During his youth, he saw many films and enjoyed relating their plots to his school friends, especially [Charlie Chaplin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charlie_Chaplin)'s comedies. Malamud worked as a teacher-in-training, before obtaining his master's degree from [Columbia University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Columbia_University), writing a thesis on [Thomas Hardy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Hardy). He was excused from military service in [World War II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II) because he was the sole support of his widower father.

In 1942, Malamud met Ann De Chiara, an Italian-American [Roman Catholic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic). They married on 1945, despite the opposition of their respective parents. She was fluent in Italian and French and she worked briefly at an advertising agency. Ann typed application letters for a college teaching job for her husband and reviewed his writing. Ann and Bernard had two children (Paul and [Janna](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Janna_Malamud_Smith)). Janna is the author of a memoir about her father, titled “My Father Is A Book”.

[Maxim Lieber](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maxim_Lieber) (Liiba) was his literary agent from 1942 to 1945. He was a prominent American [literary agent](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literary_agent) in [New York City](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_City) during the 1930s and 1940s, but a Soviet spy ([Whittaker Chambers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whittaker_Chambers)) named him as an accomplice.

[PEN/Malamud Award](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PEN/Malamud_Award): given annually since 1988 to honor Malamud's memory, the [PEN/Malamud Award](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PEN/Malamud_Award) recognizes excellence in the art of the short story. The award is funded in part by Malamud's $10,000.

The characters of Malamud’s stories are always embarking on a “**journey toward a new life**”, which is clearly making a reference to immigration, as this search for a new life starts with the physical movement from one place to another. Malamud’s parent had to leave from Russia and they have to start a new life, so is part of his own life.

Malamud’s characters deal with a lot of **suffering**, both mental and physical. Throughout Malamud’s novels, the characters are in constant suffering. When they find a little bit of hope, it does not last and then the suffering gets even worse.

However, their journeys are filled with mistakes and sufferings that make the characters end with a different view of **success** than they had originally.

Bernard Malamud completed his first novel, **The Light Sleeper**, in 1948, but later burned the manuscript.

His first [novel](https://www.britannica.com/art/novel), [**The Natural**](https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Natural-novel-by-Malamud)(1952), The story traces the life of an unknown middle-aged baseball player who achieves legendary status with his stellar talent. He achieves success through skill and through some sense of sacrifice, but he abandons those people he truly loves. There are some mythological elements like a magic bat.

[**The Assistant**](https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Assistant)(1957; film 1997). It is set in New York and drawing on Malamud's own childhood. The novel is about a Jewish immigrant who owns a grocery store in Brooklyn. Although he is struggling financially.

[**The Fixer**](https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Fixer-novel-by-Malamud)(1966), which takes place in tsarist Russia, is the story of a Jewish who was unjustly imprisoned for the murder of a Christian boy; it won Malamud a [Pulitzer Prize](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Pulitzer-Prize) for Fiction and [National Book Award](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Book_Award) for Fiction too.

[**The Magic Barre**l](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Magic_Barrel), his first published collection of short stories (1958) made him won the National Book Awards for Fiction.

The Magic Barrel:

Leo Finkle: rabbinical student

Pinye Salzman, jewish marriage matchmaker. He has an office in the air and a barrel of beautiful women pictures.

Leo's conception of love and spirituality (Lily). At first he just want to marry the perfect wife to become a perfect rabbi, then he feels alone and wants love. At first his ideas about being a rabbi are clear, then he even stops reading his books and he doesn’t know what to do anymmore.

Stella Salzman: for Salman she is dead because she is wild, with animal behaviours. A Rabi would never for in love with a girl like this.

[Malamud as Jewish Writer - Robert Alter, Commentary Magazine](https://www.commentary.org/articles/robert-alter-2/malamud-as-jewish-writer/)