

8 Honors Required Summer Reading

The Book Thief

Markus Zusak

SYNOPSIS:

Set during World War II in Germany, Markus Zusak's groundbreaking novel is the story of Liesel Meminger, a foster girl living outside of Munich. Liesel scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can't resist—books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement before he is marched to Dachau.

As you read this novel, think about:

- Narrator and point of view
- Courage and identity
- The title of the book and its significance
- Symbolism and allusions

ASSIGNMENT:

After reading The Book Thief, choose **one** of the following writing prompts in which to write an essay:

- **Option 1:**
Define hero in your own words. Examine who the “hero” is in the book and why. Provide evidence from The Book Thief to support your analysis.
- **Option 2:**
Adolf Hitler's book “Mein Kampf” is a very important prop in the plot of this novel. Explain the message Hitler was trying to send to the German people with his book. Then, provide evidence from The Book Thief in which the characters use “Mein Kampf” as a tool to aid in the fight against Hitler.
- **Option 3:**
Liesel's journey into adulthood can be traced through the books she reads. Choose at least three titles Liesel reads throughout the course of the novel and explain what Liesel learned from each of these texts. Then explain how the books Liesel reads guides her growth into adulthood using the three books you've selected as primary examples and evidence from The Book Thief to support your analysis.

ESSAY WRITING EXPECTATIONS:

This is an opportunity to show your next teacher how well you have read and can write. An informational/expository checklist reflecting the state writing rubric is provided to guide your writing. Be mindful of spelling, grammar, and punctuation. This assignment should be five paragraphs; the first paragraph being an introduction and the last being a conclusion. It should be typed, or NEATLY written, and approximately 1-2 pages.

Your essay should be typed and printed out:

- Use 12 point Times New Roman or Arial (regular, no bold)
- 1 inch margins
- Double line-spacing
- indent paragraphs with one tab; do not skip lines between paragraphs
- Full name and grade in the upper left corner
- Title centered

If you are unable to type your work, write in your very neatest handwriting, cursive or printing. Indent clearly; skip a line after the title.

REMEMBER:

- *Elyria Public Library will have multiple copies of this book to borrow if you cannot/choose not to purchase your own copy.
- *Read the book prior to the start of school.
- *Bring the writing assignment required on DAY ONE.

Enjoy your summer reading and writing!

