Summer Reading List and Assignments: 2015-2016

Honors English 9th Grade

Required Reading:

✓ The Book Thief by Markus Zusak (ISBN: 97803758442207)

The Book Thief: summary

Set during World War II in Germany, Markus Zusak’s groundbreaking new 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.

This is an unforgettable story about the ability of books to feed the soul.

Assignment #1: Register on www.turnitin.com for the summer reading assignment. Assignment #2 will be turned in to this website. Keep in mind that you must change your Pages documents to Word files before submitting. File—Export—Word will save it to your desktop in the correct format.

Class ID: 7930310

Password: Small (Be sure to capitalize the S)

Assignment #2: In well-written paragraphs, answer the following questions based on The Book Thief:

1. Explain the symbolism of Death as the omniscient narrator of the novel.
2. What are Death’s feelings for each victim?

3. Describe Death’s attempt to resist Liesel.

4. What is ugly and beautiful about Liesel, Rosa, and Hans Hubermann, Max Vandenburg, Rudy Steiner, and Mrs. Hermann?

5. Why is Death haunted by humans?

6. The *Grave Digger’s Handbook* is the first book Liesel steals. Why does she take the book?

7. What is significant about the titles of the books she steals?


9. Describe Hans Hubermann’s reaction when he discovers the book.

10. What does the act of book thievery teach Liesel about life and death?

11. Explain Rudy’s reaction when he discovers that Liesel is a book thief.

12. How does stealing books from the mayor’s house lead to a friendship with the mayor’s wife?
13. Explain how Liesel’s own attempt to write a book saves her life.

14. Liesel believes that Hans Hubermann’s eyes show kindness, and from the beginning she feels closer to him than to Rosa Hubermann. How does Hans gain Liesel’s love and trust?

15. Debate whether Liesel is a substitute for Hans’s children, who have strayed from the family.

16. Why is it so difficult for Rosa to demonstrate the same warmth toward Liesel?

17. Explain how Liesel’s relationship with Rosa changes by the end of the novel.

18. Compare and contrast the lives of Liesel and Max Vandenburg.

19. How does Max’s life give Liesel purpose?

20. At what point do Liesel and Max become friends?


What is the significance of this story?
22. Hans Junior, a Nazi soldier, calls his dad a coward because he doesn’t belong to the Nazi Party. He feels that one is either for Hitler or against him. How does it take courage to oppose Hitler?

23. Explain how courage is demonstrated throughout the novel.

24. Liesel Meminger lived to be an old woman. Death says that he would like to tell the book thief about beauty and brutality, but those are things that she had lived. Howe does her life represent beauty in the wake of brutality?

25. Explain how Zusak’s poetic writing style enhances the beauty of Liesel’s story.

Assignment #2:

In order to understand the setting of the novel, you will research a given topic relative to the novel’s time frame. The topic you are given will be based on the first initial of your last name.

You will create a 2 slide presentation (Keynote, Prezi, Powerpoint, etc.) on your topic. The presentation should include the following: a title slide, 2 informational slides, and a works cited slide. You will present your research to the class during the first few weeks of school.

Directions:
Please find the first initial of your last name. You will research the topic that
corresponds. Use the questions or statements below each topic to guide your research. Your research is not limited to those questions or statements; instead, use the questions and statements as guidance for important information you should include.

A-C
1. Siege of Leningrad:
   • Research why the siege had a devastating effect upon the German civilian population.

D-F
2. Economic and Social conditions of Germany during WWII:
   • What factors contributed to this situation?
   • How did Germany eventually manage to recover after the war?

G-I
3. Concentration Camps:
   • Research the purpose and organization of concentration camps in Germany and Eastern Europe.
   • How did this system fit in with Hitler's Final?

J-L
4. Indoctrination into Nazism:
   • What was the purpose of such organizations?
   • How did they fit into the psychology of fascism and militarism?

M-O
5. Bombing of the City of Cologne:
   • How much of the city was destroyed?
   • How many people were killed and wounded?

P-R
6. Ordinary Citizens:
• Research about ordinary citizens who risked their lives to hide Jews or help them escape Nazi Germany and the occupied countries.

S-U
7. World War II:
• Why did WWII start?

V-Z
8. Hitler and the Holocaust:
• Hitler's rise to Power
• What was the Holocaust?
• Who was affected?