



HONORS ENGLISH II and extra credit for incoming sophomores 2018 Summer Reading

We hope you enjoy the novel that you will read over the summer. Please note that there is accompanying work. You will respond to a choice of various writing prompts for *The Book Thief*. Your work will need to be thorough and thoughtful and will be submitted on the first day of class next year.

Required Reading:

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

POST-READING QUESTIONS (READ INSTRUCTIONS THOROUGHLY!)

- Please choose from and answer the following questions thoughtfully. You will use these answers as preparation for the symposium to be held in class when school starts. You will also create TWO original questions (at the end), which you will also answer. DO NOT create additional closed-ended questions. The questions you create should require discussion.
- All questions and answers are to be typed, double-spaced, 12-pt. Times New Roman, heading in upper left corner of the first page and pages must be stapled together.
- Your answers must be a minimum of 4 sentences, but must not exceed 10 sentences.
- Make sure that your answers contain a mix of evidence (including direct quotes from the novel when possible) and analysis (explanation of how that evidence helps prove your claims).
- Your work must have a cover page with a photograph (Google Images, for example) under which you have used an important quote from the book that relates directly to the photograph you have chosen.

SECTION 1: World Connection Questions (Choose TWO prompts)

1. What causes genocide? Why do people allow genocide - even today? Do you believe that the Allied air bombings of German cities were ethical? Why or why not?
2. During the Holocaust, why did some people hide Jews despite the danger?
3. Is theft ever right? What would the world be like if we all justified stealing the way Liesel does?
4. Are there groups of people in contemporary society who are dehumanized as the Jews and other groups were during the Holocaust?
5. What other groups suffered at the hands of the Nazis? Why?

6. Is protecting a person ever not right?
7. How are the most recent wars in Iraq & Afghanistan similar to and different from the war with Germany?
8. Do you see any current societal trends that are dangerous? Is there a possibility of human rights violations in our own country? Are there such violations today?

SECTION 2: Open-Ended Responses from the First Half (Choose TWO prompts)

1. Why doesn't the mayor's wife report Liesel for stealing a book from the bonfire?
2. Why does she continue to allow Liesel to steal books?
3. Does the relationship between Liesel and Max ever progress into love?
4. Does the fact that Liesel grows up without her biological parents affect the way she perceives others?
5. Why does reading help Liesel cope with the difficulties of living in WWII Germany? How does it also help her neighbors? Do you see reading as a means of coping? Explain.
6. Is Hans right in the way he deals with the Jews, even if it endangers his family?

SECTION 3: Open-Ended Responses from the Second Half (Choose TWO prompts)

1. Discuss how Liesel matures over the course of the story.
2. Why does Rudy give the dying pilot a teddy bear?
3. How do words help the characters in the novel connect with each other?
4. How is beauty revealed in this story - in the midst of so much brutality?
5. Is Rosa a good mother? Which of the Hubermans is a better parent? Why?
6. Was Papa slapping Liesel out of character? Why or why not?
7. Do you think that Hans was "too good"? Was he a realistic character? Also choose a 2nd character and discuss whether or not you think/he is realistic. What makes them "real" - or not so real?
8. Discuss Max's stories for Liesel: The Word Shaker and The Standover Man. What were these stories about? Why did he write them—what was his message for her?
9. Is Liesel a substitute for Hans's own children who have left him? Explain.

SECTION 4: Universal Theme Questions (Choose ONE prompt from questions 1-5 and ONE prompt from questions 6-10)

1. How does literature - or WORDS -- affect the way people in a society think, feel, and act?

2. Do you think that literature can create racism? Can it combat racism?
3. Do you think words are as powerful today as they were in the past?
4. Is DEATH as evil as we tend to believe it to be? Why or why not? What makes us have a particular perspective? Has your perspective changed after reading this book?
5. How do words help us connect with each other?
6. People who survive often suffer from "survivor's guilt." Do you think such guilt is justified? Why or why not? What characters in the novel deal with this problem? Do you think Liesel experienced guilt? Why or why not?
7. How does one's attitude toward death affect the way one lives life?
8. Why does evil exist? Why do people choose to do evil?
9. Are people inherently good ... or bad?
10. In many ways this is a novel about pain and how one deals with pain. What sorts of pain are addressed in this novel? How are they addressed? How are these types of pain made real? Is it a painful novel to read?

SECTION 5: Literary Elements (Choose FIVE prompts.)

1. What is the **point of view** from which the story is told? How does this decision help the author convey his message?
2. Did you feel frustrated with the **foreshadowing** in the novel - about things being "given away" before they actually occur? Why do you think the writer does this? What effect (other than frustration) does it have on us as readers? Does it enhance or detract from the story?
3. Discuss the effect of having Death as a **narrator**. Does the fact that Death is telling the story affect the way we react as readers to his/her observations? (Is Death male or female?)
4. Why does Death make the final comment, "I am haunted by humans"? What does s/he mean? How is this **ironic**?
5. Provide examples of and comment on the use of **irony** in the book. How does it enhance the story? How does it create **mood**?
6. The story includes many **references** to color. Why is this so? What effect does it create? Does it enhance the story/**mood**? How so? Find and describe several examples and discuss their meaning— or what these colors might **symbolize**.
7. This story is FULL of **figurative language** and **imagery**. It is a LIVING story, though it is told by Death. (Isn't that **ironic**?) Please find and describe what you believe are the three most powerful and moving examples of **imagery**.
8. Describe 2-3 examples of setting in the story? Was the writer effective in his ability to delineate a sense of **setting**? Why or why not?

9. Comment on the way the **characters** are depicted. Are they likeable? Which ones - and why or why not? What is it about the way they are characterized that makes them appealing - or not? How does the writing make them "come to life"?
10. Why does Liesel NOT kiss Rudy until he is dead? What is the effect of this on the story? Which are more powerful - which have the greater effect on the characters: **internal or external conflicts**. Support your answer with examples from the book.
11. Why does Death bold certain items s/he includes in the **narrative**?
12. What are some of the other distinctive **stylistic elements** that you found noteworthy or provocative? What did you find interesting about them? How did they affect your reading and appreciation of the novel?