

***The Book Thief*—Blog Assignments**

You are the Book Thief

Books have always been a valuable treasure, both personally and historically, to individuals, society, and education. We are often taught from a young age that books demand respect and care as they hold something quite dear—ideals that open people to completely different worlds. These books, however, represent much more than ideals and fantastic worlds; they represent the lives of the authors, the pain of the authors, the love of the authors.

Throughout history, unfortunately, people go to extraordinary lengths to purge the world of books they label to be unfit for society for whatever reason. The main goal is to limit the exposure of ideals, thereby allowing some leader to shape the minds of the people into whatever form deemed appropriate for the overall goal.

A very important motif runs the gambit of the novel, *The Book Thief*; it is, quite simply the lengths an individual would go in order to learn. Liesel engages in risk after risk in order to possess the books to feed her hunger for knowledge through her loving passion of books. There are several characters that are her co-conspirators, who share Liesel's devotion to reading but also a strong bond to the child herself.

Some people share this innate love of books with Liesel, while others simply see them as a means to an ends. However, we all have that one text that we love more than any other. Compose a paragraph for each question on your blog. Be sure to hyperlink the reader to the website for the book as well as tag the author, should it be appropriate.

- If you were the Book Thief, which book do you love enough to go to extraordinary lengths to secure for yourself and protect? Explain this choice in detail.
- What is it about this particular book that you hold dear? Explain these reasons in detail.
- Why should society want to protect the same book you have chosen? Explain in detail.

Thematic Argument

Choose one of the following themes and supporting quote. You may AGREE or DISAGREE with the quote. You must explain your position on the thematic statement in a well-developed paragraph that uses the quote as part of your textual evidence.

#1—Friendship runs deeper than simply having fun together.

“Now I think we are friends, this girl and me. On her birthday, it was she who gave a gift—to me. It make me understand that the best standover man I’ve ever known is no man at all...” (235).

#2—The words of one man can completely move a nation.

“She had seen her brother die with one eye open, on still in a dream. She had said goodbye to her mother and imagined her lonely wait for a train back home to oblivion. A woman of wire had laid herself down, her scream traveling across the street, till it fell sideways like a rolling coin starved of momentum. A young man was hung by a rope made of Stalingrad snow. She had watched a bomber pilot die in a metal case. She had seen a Jewish man show had twice given her the most beautiful pages of her life marched to a concentration camp. And at the center of all of it, she say the Fuher shouting her words and passing them around” (520-521)

#3—Words are powerful weapons; use them with care.

“I have hated the words and I have loved them. I hope I have made them right” (528).

#4—Death is ugly and frightening.

“Please trust me. I most definitely can be cheerful. I can be amiable. Agreeable. Affable. And that’s only the A’s...***Reaction to the Aforementioned***Does this worry you? I urge you—don’t be afraid. I’m nothing if not fair” (3).

#5—Guilt and our conscience can lead us to do things we would not otherwise do.

“Do you play the accordion, by chance?”

This time, Hans stopped, having the brush where it was. Again he nodded. The stranger rubbed his jaw, looked around him, and then spoke with great quietness, yet great clarity, ‘Are you a man who likes to keep a promise?’” (184).

#6—Those that truly love us would never abandon us.

“She saw it all so clearly. Her starving mother, her missing father. Kommunisten. Her dead brother” (111).

#7—Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words will never hurt me.

“A single word leveled against the girl. To their left, flames and burning books were cheered like heroes” (113).

Death’s Central Question

Throughout the novel, Death continually ponders the stories of humans as he shadows them across the ages of time. It is possible that Death is simply “haunted” by humans, but, perhaps, maybe there is more. The author, Markus Zusak, presents and analyzes the issue of how humans can do the most horrific and beautiful things during their lifetimes. He provides the reader with a unique perspective by examining this issue through Death’s eyes and contemplations. Through Death, the author’s predominant questions are these: What are humans capable of? And why do they do what they do?

Answer these questions as best you can from your personal experiences, history, and evidence from the novel.