

Instructional Overview

Book Club

Number the Stars
By: Lois Lowry
Grade Level: 5 / Guided Reading Level: U

Instructional Focus:
Determining Theme

Background:
Theme is the central, underlying, and controlling idea or insight of a work of literature. It is the idea the writer wishes to convey about the subject—often representing the writer's view of the world or a revelation about human nature. Theme is determined by evaluating how characters change and the focus of the plot.

Theme is NOT:

- expressed in a single word
- the purpose of a work
- the moral
- the conflict

The way the person tells the story is influenced by their role in the story. A character's point of view may change based on how that character faces and reacts to trouble.

Instructional Overview:

Meeting #1
Introduce Theme

Meeting #2 (Chapters 2 – 4)
Identify the Big Ideas

Meeting #3 (Chapters 5 – 9)
Characters Respond to Challenges in Different Ways

Meeting #4 (Chapters 10 – 13)
Summarize the Plot of the Story

Meeting #5 (Chapters 14 – 17)
Identify Theme and Supporting Details

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Instructional Focus

Description of the Instructional Focus

List of Book Club Meetings and the Instructional Focus for Each Meeting

List of Materials and Preparation

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Materials and Preparation:

- Determine which students will participate in the *Number the Stars* Book Club (4-6 students)
- Gather copies of *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry (1 per student)
- Prepare copies of the Book Club Calendar (1 per student)
- Prepare copies of the Expectations for Book Club (1 per student)
- Prepare copies of the Book Club Reading Response Board (1 per student)
- Prepare Reader's Notebooks (1 per student)
 - These may be spiral notebooks or several sheets of lined paper stapled together, or bound in a folder.
- Prepare "Two Column Notes" Chart Paper
- Prepare Plot Line Chart Paper
- Definition and Examples of Theme on Chart Paper or iPad
- Optional: Prepare Vocabulary Resources (1 set per student)
- Optional: Prepare Student Self-Evaluation Forms (1 per student per meeting)
- Optional: Prepare Assessment Resources (1 set per student)
- Examine resources on the Resistance and the Holocaust in preparation for answering student questions about Judaism and Nazi Germany.

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