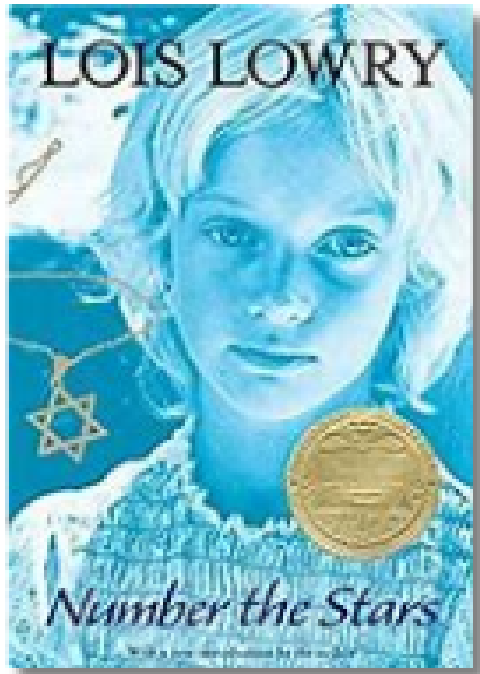


NUMBER THE STARS

Lois Lowry



RESOURCE GUIDE

Reading + Writing + Analysis

NO PREP

PRINT & GO

Upper Elementary

About the Text

Number the Stars is a historical fiction novel set during World War II in Nazi-occupied Denmark. The story follows ten-year-old Annemarie Johansen as she helps her Jewish friend Ellen Rosen escape danger. Through Annemarie's experiences, readers learn about courage, resistance, and the everyday heroism of ordinary people. The novel blends real historical events with fiction to help students understand the impact of war on families and communities.

About the Author

Lois Lowry is an award-winning American author known for writing powerful children's and young adult literature. She has written more than 40 books, including *The Giver* and *Number the Stars*. Lowry often explores themes such as memory, identity, morality, and human connection. She received the Newbery Medal twice for her contributions to literature.

Section Breakdown

1. Beginning of the Occupation (Chapter 1-3)
2. Annemarie and Ellen's Friendship (Chapter 4-6)
3. Danger in Copenhagen (Chapter 7-9)
4. The Escape Plan (Chapter 10-12)
5. The Journey to Freedom (Chapter 13-15)
6. After the War (Chapter 16-17)

Key Themes

Courage in the face of fear
Friendship and loyalty
Resistance against injustice
Family protection and sacrifice
Coming of age during war
Moral choices under pressure

Before You Read Questions

What does bravery look like in everyday life?
How would you protect a friend if they were in danger?
What do you already know about World War II?
Why do people resist unfair laws or rules?

Comprehension Questions:

SECTION 1

1. How are Annemarie and Ellen connected?

2. Who are the main characters introduced in these chapters?

3. What changes have started happening in Copenhagen because of the war?

4. Why do the soldiers stop people in the streets?

5. What role does Kirsti play in Annemarie's family?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

How would you feel if your everyday life suddenly changed because of soldiers and war in your town?

Comprehension Questions

SECTION 2

1. Why do Ellen and Annemarie pretend to be sisters?
2. How do the German soldiers behave when they come to the girls' apartment?
3. What does Annemarie notice about the soldiers' questioning?
4. Why is it dangerous for Ellen to stay in Copenhagen?
5. How does Annemarie's family try to protect Ellen?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

What would you risk to protect a close friend in danger?

Comprehension Questions

SECTION 3

1. Where does Annemarie's family go during this section?
2. Why is Uncle Henrik important to the plan?
3. What secret is Annemarie beginning to understand?
4. How does the family act differently when soldiers are nearby?
5. What does Annemarie learn about bravery from her parents?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

Why do you think adults sometimes keep important secrets from children during dangerous times?

Comprehension Questions

SECTION 4

1. What happens when the German soldiers come to Uncle Henrik's house?
2. Why is the coffin important to the escape plan?
3. How does Annemarie help during a dangerous moment?
4. What item does Annemarie carry that becomes very important?
5. How does Annemarie show courage in this section?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

Is courage more about being fearless or doing something even when you are afraid?

Comprehension Questions

SECTION 5

1. What happens when the German soldiers come to Uncle Henrik's house?
2. How is the Jewish group being helped escape?
3. What risk does Annemarie take on her own?
4. Why is the handkerchief so important?
5. How does Annemarie's understanding of bravery change?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

Why do people sometimes help others even when it puts them in danger?

Comprehension Questions

SECTION 6

1. What news does Annemarie learn at the end of the novel?
2. What happened to Ellen and her family?
3. How has Annemarie changed since the beginning of the story?
4. What does Uncle Henrik reveal about bravery and fear?
5. Why is the story of the handkerchief important to Annemarie?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

What is the most important lesson Annemarie learns about courage and friendship?

Understanding the Big Ideas

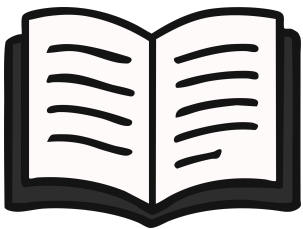
This story explores:

- **Ordinary people can show extraordinary courage**
- **Fear does not stop true friendship**
- **Small actions can have a big impact**
- **Doing what is right is not always easy**

Write a paragraph explaining how Annemarie demonstrates bravery throughout the novel. Use at least two specific examples from the text to support your answer.

Extension Activity

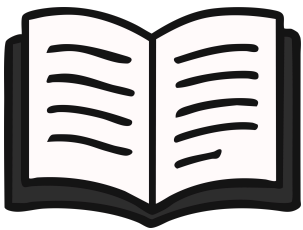
Choose one activity to complete.



- Create a timeline of key events in the novel and match them to real World War II events in Denmark.



- Design a character diary entry written from Ellen's or Annemarie's perspective.



- Create a symbolic artwork representing courage, freedom, or friendship in the novel.

Final Project

Choose One

- Historical Research Project: Research Denmark during World War II and create a presentation connecting real events to the novel.
- Hero Profile Project: Identify a real-life World War II hero and compare their actions to characters in the story.
- Creative Retelling Project: Rewrite a chapter from a different character's point of view.

Vocabulary

1. Occupation – When a country is controlled by a foreign military force.
2. Resistance – Actions taken to fight against control or unfair rule.
3. Curfew – A rule that says people must stay indoors at certain times.
4. Gestapo – The secret police in Nazi Germany who arrested and controlled people.
5. Rationing – Limiting the amount of food or supplies each person can have.
6. Persecution – Treating someone unfairly or cruelly, often because of their race or religion.
7. Courage – The ability to do something difficult or dangerous even when afraid.
8. Smuggle – To secretly move people or things in or out of a place illegally.
9. Defiance – Openly refusing to obey rules or authority.
10. Occupation Forces – Soldiers who take control of and occupy another country.

