

Number the Stars Reading Guide

Summer, 2022

“Friends will take care of them. That’s what friends do.”

I Introduction and Pre-Reading

Welcome to your summer reading of Lois Lowry’s touching novel, *Number the Stars*.

In this book, you will be taken back to the time of World War II, which spanned the years of 1939-1945. Our story takes place in the European country of Denmark. Although this story takes place many years ago, the main characters are similar in age to yourself. In order to fully prepare yourself to understand and know Annemarie’s story, research and become familiar with these terms **BEFORE** you read:

The location of Denmark and Sweden – find both countries on the map and browse through pictures of the area

Research: The cause of World War II, Adolf Hitler, the Danish Resistance

Now, let’s get to know author Lois Lowry better through watching this video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSiAZMILsHw>

Based on what you just watched, write down three things you learned about her writing of this book that you believe will be important to reading and understanding it better:

1.

2.

3.

The Novel

Number the Stars is a work of historical fiction by the American author Lois Lowry about the escape of a family of Jews from Copenhagen, Denmark, during World War II. The story centers on 10-year-old Annemarie Johansen, who lives with her mother, father, and sister Kirsti in Copenhagen in 1945. The story is based on real events of a friend of the author named Annelise who lived in Denmark when the Nazis occupied her country and controlled its citizens’ lives.

The characters in *Number the Stars*

Annemarie

Annemarie is the protagonist of the story. She is 11 years old. She lives in Copenhagen, Denmark with her mother, father, and younger sister Kirsti. She is tall and unusually thoughtful for her age.

Ellen

Annemarie's schoolmate and best friend, she is Jewish. An only child, Ellen is very studious and more serious than her best friend.

II Thematic Topic: Bravery

Lois Lowry wrote about bravery in this novel –

- King Christian – riding on his horse each day greeting the Danish people.
- Peter – sneaking the resistance newspapers to the Danish residents
- Uncle Henrik – sneaking Jewish people into his boat and taking them to safety

Bravery is the same as having courage. Think about a time you showed bravery during the past year.

What was the difficult situation?

Your response:

What was difficult about it?

Your response:

How did you show courage?

Your response:

What does being brave reveal about what you value?

Your response:

Why is it important to have courage even during hardships (think COVID)?

Your response:

III Reflection Questions

Choose TWO of the three questions below and answer in complete sentences.

1. In your opinion, what was the toughest choice or bravest act a character in *Number the Stars* had to make? Explain your answer using evidence from the novel.

Answer:

2. What are some similarities (courage, responsibilities, sacrifices, etc.) shared by Annemarie's mother, Uncle Henrik and Ellen that allow them to persevere throughout their arduous challenges? Explain your answer using evidence from the novel.

Answer:

3. Explain how Annemarie has changed since the beginning of her journey.

Answer: