

**Papillion La Vista South High School**

**English Department**

**Summer Reading Program**

Purposes of Summer Reading

Reading effectively is a core skill needed by students no matter what their life plans include. Because of this truth, the English Department has developed the Summer Reading Program with these goals in mind:

* to rekindle the pleasure of reading at a more leisurely pace than is possible during the more hectic school year
* to give students a jump start on their regular curriculum
* to give students the opportunity to practice and develop valuable reading and note-taking skills

Focused Reading Guide

Course: Honors World Literature (12)

Teacher/s: Ms. Alee Cotton

Title/s: *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak

The above title may be checked out from the school library. Students may choose to purchase the text if they prefer to write in their own texts.

As you read, look for the following ideas, concepts, characters, etc.

When you come across lines that strike you as significant,jot them down for later discussion. These notes do not have to be in any format, but because of the nature of the book, you will need to keep track of various elements of the story. The notes should not retell the plot, but should suggest ideas that you feel are important, observations you have made, themes that you want to discuss, or questions that you have. I will collect notes on the first day of school. We will also have a brief quiz over the novel. After discussion, we will have a summative writing-on-demand assessment based on what we have learned (See below.) IF YOU HAVE READ THE NOVEL, YOU WILL DO WELL ON THESE ACTIVITIES!

Formative assessment/s: (designed to be a quick, check-for-understanding)

* A simple, multiple-choice, plot-based quiz
* Reading notes to be collected on the first day of school

Summative assessment: (After instruction, discussion, etc.)

* A writing-based, essay performance

Additional instructions, materials, hand-outs, etc.

Hints for reading:

1) DO NOT BE INTIMIDATED BY THE BOOK’S LENGTH. It reads very quickly. This book is amazing. I found it after several students recommended it highly. They were right.

2) DO NOT BE INTIMIDATED BY GERMAN WORDS AND PHRASES. Most are defined in the context of the lines they appear in; if you really get stuck, you can Google them.

3) As you read, think about the narrator: Who is telling the story? How does this narrative viewpoint affect the narrative structure? How does the narrative structure work? Is the narrator reliable? How does the narrator surprise us as readers? Characterize the narrator.

4) Set in the years leading up to World War II, the novel takes place in Germany. How does the setting affect the reader’s perception of events?

It might be helpful to understand the following: Google them. Why is each important to the novel?

* Kristallnacht
* The Nuremburg Laws
* Jesse Owens

5) Who is the protagonist? How would you characterize her?

Other important characters are Rudy Steiner, Max Vandenberg, Hans and Rosa Huberman, Tommy Mueller, Ilsa Hermann, Frau Holzapfel and her sons Michael and Robert.

6) Think about the use of the following: (Find examples as you read.)

* Irony
* Foreshadowing
* Creative diction
* Non-chronological structure

7) As you read, think about (and be ready to discuss) the following:

* The value of books and reading (Notice how each part of the novel is the title of a book the book thief acquires.)
* The use of words and propaganda
* Theft (of various kinds)
* The nature of courage/cowardice
* Abandonment and the guilt of those who survive
* The use of colors
* The difference between death and Death
* The ability of humans to retain their humanity when everything around them tries to strip it from them

8) If you have read *Fahrenheit* 451, think about how these two books are connected.

Happy reading! I hope you love this book as much as I did! See you in August.

Ms. Cotton