Number The Stars (Novel Study)
Created by Tash Umstead
Grade Levels 4-6

STANDARDS:
SS.5.HE.1.1 Define the Holocaust as the planned and systematic state-sponsored persecution and murder of European Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945.

LAFS.K12.R.3.7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

LAFS.K12.SL.1.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

TOTAL CLASS TIME: 50-60 minutes (per activity) This is a whole novel---it will take you time to plan your lessons and do the background information.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:
Would you ever be willing to risk YOUR life for another person?
Under what circumstances (conditions) might you take the risk?
LEARNING GOALS:

✶ Students will understand what the Holocaust was and when it took place.
✶ Students will understand how people were part of the resistance movement and how they helped those in need by risking their lives.
✶ Student will understand how being an upstander applies to their lives today.
✶ Students will understand how symbols represents ideas.
✶ Students will understand how important it is to learn from the past so that innocent lives lost will not be forgotten.
✶ Students will learn perspectives and point of views through a character’s lens.
✶ Students will learn how courage is something that you can do for a friend you care about.

RESOURCES/MATERIALS NEEDED:

✶ Number the Stars by Lois Lowry
✶ Comprehension Questions (included below)
✶ Vocabulary Questions (uploaded)
✶ Map Activity (included)
✶ Bravery Wheel (uploaded)
✶ Point of View Head Activity (uploaded)
✶ White Cardstock
✶ Brass brads
✶ Scissors
✶ Markers, crayons, colored pencils

BEFORE INSTRUCTION:

✶ As a class, discuss what the Holocaust was (**edit for grade level appropriateness***):
  o The Holocaust was the systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its allies and collaborators.
  o The Nazis came into power in Germany in January 1933.
  o Brainpop has a great video (appropriate for mature audiences)
    WWII—→ https://www.brainpop.com/socialstudies/ushistory/worldwarii/
    Holocaust—→ https://www.brainpop.com/search/?keyword=Holocaust
    (The Vocabulary page is great from BrainPop to go over terms before starting-builds their understanding).
  o They believed that the Germans belonged to a race that was “superior” to all others.
  o They claimed that the Jews (and others such as Gypsies as well as people who had physical or intellectual disabilities) did not meet the “superior race” criteria and were perceived to be a threat to the German community.
✶ Discuss that in order to exterminate the “inferior individuals”, especially the Jews, the Nazi’s, under Hitler’s leadership, created concentration camps, forced-labor camps and death camps.
✶ Discuss that Nazi rule would enforce rations, close businesses and Jews lost any feeling of safety in Denmark (and in many other countries in Europe).
Discuss concept of an upstander and people who were part of the resistance movement who helped save thousands of Jews by hiding them in their own homes, helping them find places to hide, and helping them escape to safety in countries outside of Europe.

Refer to the bottom portion where there are maps of Europe, then zooms in to Denmark, and finally Copenhagen. I print these for each student (2 maps per page) and they identify those locations with me.
**Number the Stars**

This KWL Chart can also be used before the students start the book. I love to do this with specific words, such as the Holocaust, Nazi, and Europe.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>K</strong></th>
<th><strong>W</strong></th>
<th><strong>L</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(What we Know)</td>
<td>(What we Want to Know)</td>
<td>(What I learned)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DIRECT INSTRUCTION:

✧ Read: Number the Stars, by Lois Lowry
✧ Throughout the read aloud, use the Before, During and After reading questions to create a meaningful discussion.
✧ Have the students think about the symbols in the story. Discuss how symbols are objects (living or nonliving), characters, figures, or colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts. The Star of David necklace – Ellen having to take it off as losing part of her identity.
✧ • Nazi soldiers as “fear”
✧ • Food – symbolizes feelings and connectedness, Nazis stealing food as “losing” friendships, family.
✧ • Seashells – symbolize life before war and vacations by the seashore
✧ • Great Aunt Bertie’s coffin – symbolizes deceit as necessary for survival, growing up

✧ Discuss the resistance movement and what people did to help others because it was right even though it meant risking their own lives.
✧ Tell students: Number the Stars is written by Lois Lowry. Though the book takes place in 1940s Denmark, where protagonist Annemarie helps the Danish Resistance hide and smuggle Danish Jews to safety in Sweden, it started in Bermuda. There, on a 1988 vacation, Lowry talked to her friend Annelise about her childhood experiences in wartime Denmark. Annelise spoke compellingly about her fear during air raids and frozen winters—and her terror of the Nazis who occupied her country and controlled its citizens’ lives. This inspired Lois to write this story about her friend.

COLLABORATIVE WORK:

✧ Have students turn and talk to a partner about how people helped others during the Holocaust (the invasion of the Nazi’s in Denmark) and how we can learn from that now. How do lives change through acts of kindness? (2 minutes)
✧ Afterwards, discuss as a class what the resistance movement was and how it helped so many. Guide students to understand how acts of kindness can spread.
✧ Ask students what THEME is occurring throughout this story? Do you see acts of courage? Do you see acts of bravery? What examples can you draw from the story?
✧ Have students brainstorm examples of acts of kindness, courage and bravery.
✧ Compare and contrast WWII in France (Europe) to now.
INDEPENDENT PRACTICE:

 Deserialize Have the students work on the “Think and Respond” questions to write a meaningful response paragraph.

Deserialize Then have students think about the THEMES that are in this story. Discuss COMMON THEMES in stories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>These books have characters who respect &amp; accept others’ differences and beliefs.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courage</td>
<td>These books have brave characters who have the strength to overcome a fear or accept a risk.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perseverance</td>
<td>These books have characters who never give up even when facing difficult times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>These books have characters who work together to solve a problem or achieve a goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassion</td>
<td>These books have characters who want to make those who are suffering feel better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>These books have characters who find that it is best to always tell the truth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kindness</td>
<td>These books have friendly characters who are generous and considerate of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>These books have characters who trust each other and never turn their backs on their friends.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Deserialize There are more than one. Talk about them. Lead students to the theme of BRAVERY. Have students refer to CHAPTER 9.

Deserialize Have students review the example of the project and their goal is to create a BRAVERY WHEEL that gives examples throughout the book of how the characters (especially Annemarie) show bravery throughout the story.
**Book Review**

**Number the Stars** by Lois Lowry

**Plot:**
How does the story start? What happens in the middle? How does it end?

*In the beginning...*

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**Characters:**
Who is in the story? Describe what they are like (personality and appearance). Did you like them?

Amma, a ten-year-old Danish girl, ...

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**Settings:**
Where is the story set? What words or phrases tell you about the location?

1943 in Copenhagen, Denmark. It is a country in Europe that is bordered by...

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**Your opinions:**
What was your favourite part and why? Did any parts make you laugh? Why?

My favorite part of the story was...

The moral/lesson of this story (the theme)...

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Give the story a rating out of 5: ★★★★★
Students also have a second activity where students will be able to talk about POINT OF VIEW from Annemarie. Have students refer to CHAPTER 4. Looking at specific adjectives, verbs and opinion clues...help to determine what Annemarie’s point of view is about the events that are going on in Chapter 4 “It will be a long night.”
Remember to look for those:
adjectives, verbs and opinion clues
( +, - )

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cocoon of her sister, Annemarie remembered how her father had said, three years before, that he would die to protect the king. That her mother would, too. And Annemarie, seven years old, had announced proudly that she also would.

Now she was ten, with long legs and no more silly dreams of pink-frosted cupcakes. And now she—and all the Danes—were to be bodyguard for Ellen, and Ellen’s parents, and all of Denmark’s Jews.

Would she die to protect them? Truly? Annemarie was honest enough to admit, there in the darkness, to herself, that she wasn’t sure.

For a moment she felt frightened. But she pulled the blanket up higher around her neck and relaxed. It was all imaginary, anyway—not real. It was only in the fairy tales that people were called upon to be so brave, to die for one another. Not in real-life Denmark. Oh, there were the soldiers; that was true. And the courageous Resistance leaders, who sometimes lost their lives; that was true, too.

But ordinary people like the Rosens and the Johansens? Annemarie admitted to herself, snuggling there in the quiet dark, that she was glad to be an ordinary person who would never be called upon for courage.
Name:

1. Read Chapter 4 (It Will Be a Long Night) with your reading partner—be on the look out for:
2. Any adjectives, verbs or opinion clues that help you to understand Annemarie's perspective and write them in her head.
3. What events are taking place that will help you understand her character? You are learning with her!

What adjectives or verbs is the author using to help display their emotions and feelings about the topic? Write them inside the brain because that is what the author is thinking.
Before Reading

🌟 Have you ever wondered what it would be like to live somewhere else?
🌟 Have you ever had to keep a secret? What did it feel like to keep a secret?
🌟 Have you ever been afraid? How did you react? How did you solve your problem?
🌟 Have you ever been called upon to be brave?

During Reading

1. Why were Annemarie, Ellen, and Kirsti stopped by the soldiers?
2. What advice did Mrs. Rosen give the girls about behaving outside?
3. How did Annemarie show her dislike of the German soldiers occupying her country?
4. What are some hardships faced by the Danish people because of the war?
5. What did Annemarie realize about her friend Ellen after Peter’s visit?
6. How did Annemarie know the Hirsch’s were not gone on a holiday?
7. What items were being rationed? Why?
8. How did the Germans find out the names of the Danish Jews?
9. Why was Kirsti upset when she and her mother returned from shopping? What was Ellen’s solution to the problem?
10. What were the “booms and lights in the sky” on Kirsti’s birthday?
11. What was Annemarie told about the death of her older sister Lise?
12. Why did the German soldiers come to the Johansen’s apartment looking for the Rosen’s?
13. How did Mr. Johansen convince the German soldiers that Ellen was not a Jewish girl hiding?
14. How did the German soldiers show a lack of respect for the Johansens?
15. Why were the girls kept home from school after the visit by the German soldiers?
16. What made Annemarie realize that her father was speaking in code to her uncle? What was their conversation about?

17. Where did Mrs. Johansen, Annemarie, Kirsti, and Ellen travel? Why didn’t Mr. Johansen go with them?

18. Compare the area around Uncle Henrik’s farm in Gillelege to the Johansen’s apartment in Copenhagen?

19. What was the name of Uncle Henrik’s boat and where did he get the name?

20. What did Annemarie do with Ellen’s necklace?

21. Why did Mrs. Johansen tease her brother Henrik?

22. How did the girls spend their full day at the farm?

23. How did Annemarie make fun of the German soldiers?

24. Why was Annemarie surprised by Uncle Henrik’s announcement that there was to be a funeral?

25. What is the old custom when someone dies? What did the family have to do to prepare for the funeral?

26. 1. What did Annemarie learn about Aunt Birte?

27. What does Annemarie learn about bravery in her talk with Uncle Henrik?

28. Why did the German soldiers come to Uncle Henrik’s house?

29. What was the first test of Annemarie’s bravery?

30. How did Mrs. Johansen stop the German soldiers from looking in the casket?

31. What was in the casket and why was it there?

32. Where were the Rosen’s and the other strangers going?

33. What promise did Ellen make to Annemarie?

34. What advice on walking the trail did Mrs. Johansen give the Rosen’s?

35. How did Annemarie pass the time while waiting for her mother?

36. What happened to Mrs. Johansen on her way back from Uncle Henrik’s boat?

37. What had Mr. Rosen dropped at Uncle Henrik’s house?
38. What fairy tale did Annemarie remember on the trail to Uncle Henrik’s boat?

39. Describe what happened to Annemarie on the way to the boat?

40. What was in the basket that helped fool the Germans into thinking it was Uncle Henrik’s lunch?

41. What did Annemarie learn about Peter from Uncle Henrik? What were the two clues that should have clued Annemarie in about Peter?

42. What was Uncle Henrik’s explanation for each of the following:
   a. Annemarie not seeing the Rosen’s in the boat
   b. The use of a drug on the baby
   c. The handkerchief

43. Why was everyone celebrating in Denmark?

44. What happened to Peter?

45. What did Annemarie learn about Lise?

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**After Reading**

🌟 Although Number the Stars is a fictional story, in what ways does the story reflect actual pieces of history?

🌟 Nazi soldiers resemble “fear.” If you approached a Nazi soldier on the street, what would your interaction be like?

🌟 Do you feel that Annemarie and Ellen are safe at the end of the story in Switzerland? Could anything else happen to them that is not revealed at the end of the story?
Vocabulary Check:

1. The delicious smell of the cake baking in the kitchen was ________________ me and making my mouth water.

2. During the thunder storm there was a ________________ of power and the lights blazed brightly before going out and leaving us in darkness.

3. The cows were ________________ along the path on their way in from the pasture.

4. I was filled with ________________ when I heard we could not go camping up north this weekend.

5. Her voice ________________ as she sang at the funeral.

6. He was ________________ about feeling too confident that the judges would like his performance, even though it was the best he had ever done.

7. I saw three people ________________ on the skating rink after falling during the free skating lessons.

8. The principal was ________________ because he was in a hurry. Usually he is a very friendly man.

9. The students ________________ the answers to the test questions.

10. We wanted to ________________ after the concert, hoping we might be able to meet the band.

11. The chick was ________________ by the shell before it pecked its way into the outside world.
Think and Respond:
Describe Ellen and AnneMarie’s friendship. How does friendship play a central role in this story? Do you have a friendship with a bond like these two girls?
Think and Respond:

There is a lot of talk about bravery throughout the story Number the Stars. In what ways do the characters show bravery? Cite examples from the story. Would you be willing to show as much courage?

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