



TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

Number the Stars

based on the book by

Lois Lowry

Written by

Janine H. Sherman

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A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lois Lowry

LOWRY, Lois (1937-). Lois Lowry is the author of over twenty juvenile novels, and has contributed stories, articles, and photographs to many leading periodicals. Her literary awards are numerous and extensive. She once said that she gauges her success as a writer by her ability to "help adolescents answer their own questions about life, identify and human relationships."

Lois Lowry was born in Honolulu, Hawaii. At the time of her birth, Lowry's father, a career army officer, was stationed near Pearl Harbor. The family separated with the onset of World War II, and Lowry spent the duration of the war with her mother's family in the Amish country of Pennsylvania. Much later, Lowry's wartime experience inspired her fourth novel, *Autumn Street*. As an author, she has often translated her life into fiction for the purpose of helping others who may have suffered under similar circumstances.

Memories of her childhood, as well as her experiences as a parent, have led Lowry to her most popular character: *Anatasia Krupnik*, the spunky, rebellious, and irreverent adolescent who stars in a series of books that began in 1979. The broad audience appeal of the first Anatasia book prompted Lowry to write another novel featuring her heroine. "I have the feeling she's going to go on forever-or until I get sick of her, which hasn't happened yet." Subsequent Anatasia titles number nine at the current time.

In 1990 Lowry received her highest honors. She was awarded the Newbery Medal, National Jewish Book Award, and Sidney Taylor, National Jewish Libraries, all for her World War II tale of Nazi-occupied Denmark, *Number the Stars*. In this novel she is able to create suspense and tension without wavering from the viewpoint of Annemarie, a child who shows the true meaning of courage. Based on a factual account, the inspiration for this novel came from the stories told to Lowry by a friend who was herself, a child in Copenhagen during the long years of the German occupation.

With so many accomplishments in the field of children's literature to her credit, Lowry reflects on her career in the following manner. "When I write, I draw a great deal from my own past. There is a satisfying sense of continuity, for me, in the realization that my own experiences, fictionalized, touch young readers in subtle and very personal ways." Ms. Lowry divides her time between Boston and New Hampshire.

INTRODUCTION

This unit has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, and language skills through exercises and activities related to *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry. It includes seventeen lessons, supported by extra resource materials.

The **introductory lesson** introduces students to background information about places, people, and events mentioned throughout this novel. It also doubles as the first writing assignment for the unit. Following the introductory activity, students are given an explanation of how the activity relates to the book they are about to read. Following the transition, students are given the materials they will be using during the unit.

The **reading assignments** are approximately twenty pages each; some are a little shorter while others are a little longer. Students have approximately 15 minutes of Pre-reading work to do prior to each reading assignment. This Pre-reading work involves reviewing the study questions for the assignment and doing some vocabulary work for 10 to 12 vocabulary words they will encounter in their reading.

The **study guide questions** are fact-based questions; students can find the answers to these questions right in the text. These questions come in two formats: short answer or multiple choice. The best use of these materials is probably to use the short answer version of the questions as study guides for students (since answers will be more complete), and to use the multiple choice version for occasional quizzes. It might be a good idea to make transparencies of your answer keys for the overhead projector.

The **vocabulary work** is intended to enrich students' vocabularies as well as to aid in the students' understanding of the book. Prior to each reading assignment, students will complete a two-part worksheet for approximately 10 to 12 vocabulary words in the upcoming reading assignment. Part I focuses on students' use of general knowledge and contextual clues by giving the sentence in which the word appears in the text. Students are then to write down what they think the words mean based on the words' usage. Part II nails down the definitions of the words by giving students dictionary definitions of the words and having students match the words to the correct definitions based on the words' contextual usage. Students should then have an understanding of the words when they meet them in the text.

After each reading assignment, students will go back and formulate answers for the study guide questions. Discussion of these questions serves as a **review** of the most important events and ideas presented in the reading assignments.

After students complete extra discussion questions, there is a **vocabulary review** lesson which pulls together all of the fragmented vocabulary lists for the reading assignments and gives students a review of all of the words they have studied.

Following the reading of the book, two lessons are devoted to the **extra discussion questions/writing assignments/activities**. These questions focus on interpretation, critical analysis and personal response, employing a variety of thinking skills and adding to the students' understanding of the novel. These questions are done as a **group activity**. Using the information they have acquired so far through individual work and class discussions, students get together to further examine the text and to brainstorm ideas relating to the themes of the novel.

The group activity is followed by a **reports and discussion/ activity** session in which the groups share their ideas about the book with the entire class; thus, the entire class gets exposed to many different ideas regarding the themes and events of the book.

There are three **writing assignments** in this unit, each with the purpose of informing, persuading, or having students express personal opinions. The first assignment is to inform: students write a composition about one of the background topics assigned in Lesson One. The second assignment is to give students the opportunity to express personal ideas: students will write an account of the first time they visited the sea (or some other impressive geographical site). The third assignment gives students the chance to persuade: students will pretend to be Annemarie Johansen when she was approached by the Nazi soldiers on her way to deliver an important package to her uncle. Their objective is to convince the soldiers to allow her go her merry way without drawing attention to the package.

The **nonfiction reading assignment** is tied in with Writing Assignment 1 and the introductory lesson. Students are required to read a piece of nonfiction related in some way to *Number the Stars*. In this case, the topics are assigned in Lesson One. After reading their nonfiction pieces, students will fill out a worksheet on which they answer questions regarding facts, interpretation, criticism, and personal opinions. During one class period, students make **oral presentations** about the nonfiction pieces they have read. This not only exposes all students to a wealth of information, it also gives students the opportunity to practice **public speaking**.

The **review lesson** pulls together all of the aspects of the unit. The teacher is given four or five choices of activities or games to use which all serve the same basic function of reviewing all of the information presented in the unit.

The **unit test** comes in two formats: all multiple choice-matching-true/false or with a mixture of matching, short answer, and composition. As a convenience, two different tests for each format have been included.

There are additional **support materials** included with this unit. The **extra activities section** includes suggestions for an in-class library, crossword and word search puzzles related to the novel, and extra vocabulary worksheets. There is a list of **bulletin board ideas** which gives the teacher suggestions for bulletin boards to go along with this unit. In addition, there is a list of **extra class activities** the teacher could choose from to enhance the unit or as a substitution for an exercise the teacher might feel is inappropriate for his/her class. **Answer keys** are located directly after the **reproducible student materials** throughout the unit. The student materials may be reproduced for use in the teacher's classroom without infringement of copyrights. No other portion of this unit may be reproduced without the written consent of Teacher's Pet Publications, Inc.

UNIT OBJECTIVES - *Number the Stars*

1. Through reading Lois Lowry's *Number the Stars*, students will gain understanding of the importance of loyalty and courage, despite existing adversity.
2. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text on four levels: factual, interpretive, critical and personal.
3. Students will do background research to become familiar with and gain meaning from life in Europe during World War II, focusing on the Jewish plight in Europe.
4. Students will define their own viewpoints on the aforementioned themes.
5. Students will gain appreciation for and demonstrate proficiency in identifying and using figurative language.
6. Students will be given the opportunity to practice reading aloud and silently to improve their skills in each area.
7. Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in *Number the Stars* as they relate to the author's theme development.
8. Students will enrich their vocabularies and improve their understanding of the novel through the vocabulary lessons prepared for use in conjunction with the novel.
9. The writing assignments in this unit are geared to several purposes:
 - a. To have students demonstrate their abilities to inform, to persuade, or to express their own personal ideas
Note: Students will demonstrate ability to write effectively to inform by developing and organizing facts to convey information. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to persuade by selecting and organizing relevant information, establishing an argumentative purpose, and by designing an appropriate strategy for an identified audience. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to express personal ideas by selecting a form and its appropriate elements.
 - b. To check the students' reading comprehension
 - c. To make students think about the ideas presented by the novel
 - d. To encourage logical thinking
 - e. To provide an opportunity to practice good grammar and improve students' use of the English language.

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET - *Number the Stars*

Date Assigned	Reading Assignment (Chapters)	Completion Date
	1, 2	
	3, 4	
	5, 6	
	7, 8	
	9, 10, 11	
	12, 13, 14, 15	
	16, 17, Afterword	

UNIT OUTLINE - *Number the Stars*

1	2	3	4	5
Library Writing Assignment #1	Introduction PVR Ch 1,2	Study? Ch. 1, 2 PVR Ch. 3,4	Study? Ch. 3, 4 PVR Ch. 5,6	Study ? Ch. 5,6 Writing Conference PVR Ch. 7, 8
6	7	8	9	10
Study ? Ch. 7, 8 Writing Assignment #2	PV Ch. 9,10,11 Read Ch. 9- 11	Group Activity Figurative Language	Study ? Ch. 9, 10,11 PVR Ch. 12-15	Study ? Ch. 12- 15 Writing Assignment #3
11	12	13	14	15
PVR Ch. 16,17 PV Afterword	Read Afterword Study ? Ch. 16, 17& Afterword	Extra Discussion Questions	Extra Discussion Questions	Vocabulary Review
16	17	18	19	20
Review	Test			

Key: P = Preview Study Questions V = Vocabulary Work R = Read

LESSON ONE

Objectives

1. To give students background information for *Number the Stars*
2. To give students the opportunity to fulfill their nonfiction reading assignment that goes along with this unit
3. To give students practice using library resources
4. To prepare students for the introductory activity in Lesson Two.
5. To give students the opportunity to write to inform by developing and organizing facts to convey information.

Activity

Assign one of each of the following topics to each of your students. Distribute Writing Assignment #1. Discuss the directions in detail. Take your students to the library so they may work on the assignment. Students should fill out a "Nonfiction Assignment Sheet" for at least one of the sources they used, and students should submit these sheets with their compositions.

Topics

1. List the basic beliefs of the Jewish religion.
2. Define anti-Semitism.
3. What was the Holocaust?
4. What is meant by Nazi occupation?
5. Write a short biography on King Christian X of Denmark.
6. Explain what the Danish Resistance was.
7. Write a short biography of Adolf Hitler.
8. Explain what a Nazi was.
9. Make a timeline of World War II.
10. Who were the Allies and name their leaders.
11. Name the Axis countries and their leaders.
12. What was a concentration camp?
13. Where were concentration camps located?
14. What was a Jewish ghetto?
15. When is the Jewish New Year? What does it signify?
16. What was rationing and why was it done? Identify items that were rationed.
17. Identify European countries' boundaries in 1943. Compare to present boundaries.
18. Discover what countries remained neutral during World War II and why.
19. Explain the significance of the Star of David symbol.
20. What is a synagogue and a rabbi?
21. What was Hitler's Final Solution?
22. Locate Denmark on a map and list its surrounding European neighbors and bodies of water.
23. What are blackout curtains and for what were they used?
24. Define sabotage and give examples of its use in World War II.
25. What is a swastika and what does it mean?

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 - *Number the Stars*

PROMPT

You are going to read about Annemarie Johansen and her Jewish friend, Ellen Rosen and their families. They live in Nazi-occupied Denmark during World War II. It is realistic or historical fiction (the events in the novel *could* have taken place, but the characters and events are *fictional*). Before you read it, however, you should have some background information about some of the things mentioned in the story.

You have been assigned one topic about which you must find information. You are to read as much as you can about that topic and write a composition in which you relate what you have learned from your reading. Note that this is a *composition*, not just a sentence or two.

PREWRITING

You will go to the library. When you get there, use the library's resources to find information about your topic. Look for books, encyclopedias, articles in magazines- anything that will give you the information you require. Take a few notes as you read to help you remember important dates, names, places, or other details that will be important in your composition.

After you have gathered information and become well-read on the subject of your report, make a little outline, putting your facts in order.

DRAFTING

You will need an introductory paragraph in which you introduce your topic.

In the body of your composition, put the "meat" of your research- the facts you found- in paragraph form. Each paragraph should have a topic sentence (a sentence letting the reader know what the paragraph will be about) followed by an explanation, examples or details.

Write a concluding paragraph in which you summarize the information you found and conclude your report.

PROMPT

After you have finished a rough draft of your paper, revise it yourself until you are happy with your work. Then, ask a student who sits near you to tell you what he/she likes best about your work, and what things he/she thinks can be improved. Take another look at your composition, keeping in mind your critic's suggestions, and make the revisions you feel are necessary.

PROOFREADING

Do a final proofreading of your paper double-checking your grammar, spelling, organization, and the clarity of your ideas.