

### Book title

The book thief

### Author

Markus Zusak



### Bibliographic information

Publisher: Black Swan  
ISBN: 9780552779739

### Links (adaptations, reviews, full texts etc.)

- [https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/19063.The\\_Book\\_Thief](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/19063.The_Book_Thief)
- <https://www.amazon.com/Book-Thief-Markus-Zusak/dp/0375842209>

### Theme

A book about struggles of ordinary people during the World War II

### Short summary

During World War II Germany, young Liesel finds comfort in stealing books and sharing them with others. In the basement of her home, a Jewish refugee is being protected by her adoptive parents. When her stepfather finds out that she cannot read he decides to teach her, although he is not a good reader himself. Liesel is so eager to read books that she decides to save one from a bonfire made by German Nazi.

### Why is the story appropriate for the targeted groups of RSP readers?

1. It reflects readers' interests
2. The recommendation and the report emerged from the survey results
3. It reflects political/historical moment.
4. It's highly motivational
5. It promotes understanding of cultural diversities and heritage



### What are the distinguished readers interests reflected by this book/story?

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### Why is this story motivational for the pupils?

The story describes the power books can have, even in difficult life situations, it also depicts the hard life of people in the World War II and the importance of solidarity of people living in certain communities regardless of their nationality, social class or status.

### Is there a historical, political, multi/inter cultural, migrant or similar context recognized in this book/story?

Yes - Liesel's stepparents try to help a Jewish refugee. It describes the cruelty of the World War II.

### Is there a principle of inclusion reflected in this book/story and does it promotes understanding of cultural diversities and heritage?

Students can learn the importance of family, community and friendship.

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## METHODOLOGY

### Title of Activity

Book or film?

### Description of educational activity

**Duration:** 3 x 45 minutes

**Pupils' age:** 15-19

**Organization of the class of pupils:** group work

**The aim of the lesson:** The aim of this activity is to develop reading literacy of students, encourage their reading skills, use of their competences at the analysis and interpretation of the initial texts, to strengthen their language skills at verbalisation of their finding and to expand the vocabulary of students.

Working with the text in national and foreign (English) language. The aim of this activity is to give the students an idea about the chosen piece of work.

### Support materials:

A teacher chooses two chapters from a selected book in a national language (appendix 1) and two chapters in the English language (appendix 2). We chose THE OTHER SIDE OF SANDPAPER and THE MAYOR'S LIBRARY in the mother tongue and THE SNOWMAN and THIRTEEN PRESENTS in English language. He prepares the introductory presentation about the author of a book (appendix 3) and the presentation about the socio –historical events of the given period (appendix 4). Then he prepares two worksheets, one for the chapters in a national language (appendix 5) and one for



the chapters in the English language (appendix 6). During reading of the selected chapters silently, the teacher can make some tea for students and offer them some biscuits.

### **Activities:**

1. Students take their seats in a classroom and the teacher reads the introductory chapter of the book. He creates the atmosphere of the book, and introduces the main character. We chose DEATH AND CHOCOLATE in the mother tongue and ARRIVAL ON HIMMEL STREET in English language.
2. The teacher introduces the author using the presentation ( appendix 3)
3. Because the story is set in Germany between 1939 – 1942, the teacher clarifies socio-historical events of the period using a PowerPoint presentation. ( appendix 4)
4. The previous step is followed by reading in a national language. Each student is given the selected chapters ( appendix 1) and a worksheet for this part of the book ( appendix 5). During this activity, students work individually, read the chapters and work out the worksheet.
5. The discussion follows after reading. The worksheets are checked under the supervision of the teacher.
6. In the next step all the previous activities are repeated but in the English language. Students read the next two chapters in the English language (appendix 2) and work out the worksheet in the English language (appendix 6)
7. In the last part of the activity, students watch the parts of the book they read in the film version.
8. The previous step is followed by a discussion, the aim of which is to compare a book to its film version.

### **Evaluation and assessment method:**

Forms and methods:

- Individual silent reading;
- Reading out loud with active listening in the introductory part of the activity
- Analysis of the selected chapters;
- Interpretation of the texts which follows after reading of the selected chapters
- Discussion represents the significant part of the activity; students discuss and compare their opinions in groups/ class. During the discussion students broaden their horizons by the opinions and findings of other students
- Presentation/lecture of the teacher;
- Comparison of the book and its film version.

### **Connection to curriculum**

**Grade:** 2<sup>nd</sup> grade of bilingual studies

**Bilingual curriculum:** The study of literature is focused during the second year on reading comprehension of literary texts which are based on the interests of the students which involves serious literature, too. The aim of the curriculum is to teach students to



work with the text, to analyse the texts. Understanding texts, weighing their merits, and utilizing the information they offer are skills that teenagers draw on throughout the curriculum.

**Knowledge:**

- A student understands a text being read.
- A student finds the main character in the text.
- He differentiates supporting characters from the main character.
- He identifies the topic of the chapters.
- He selects the information.
- He understands the story in the context of socio-historical events.
- He can explain the motives of the characters
- He can characterise the characters.
- He identifies and names the narrator.
- He analyses the composition of the book.

**Skills:**

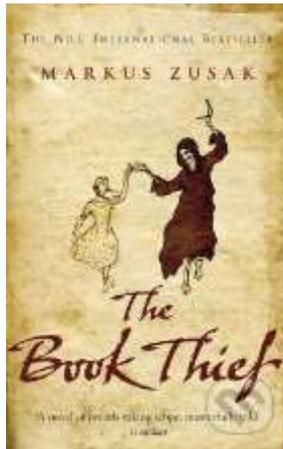
- A student analyses the text.
- He searches for and classifies information
- He can identify and interpret feelings if the characters correctly.
- He evaluates attitudes and actions of the characters.

**Competences:**

- A student is able to work individually
- He accepts others in a group.
- He can express his opinion.
- He can take a stand on the actions of the characters.

**Bibliographic reference to be used during the activity**

Markus Zusak  
Book thief  
Publisher: Doubleday  
ISBN: 9780552773898  
Page count: 560  
Year of issue: 2007



### Digital sources

The Book Thief is a 2013 American-German war drama film directed by Brian Percival and starring Geoffrey Rush, Emily Watson, and Sophie Nélisse. The film is based on the 2005 novel The Book Thief by Markus Zusak and adapted by Michael Petroni. Official trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=92EBSmxinus>

### Results

The expected outcomes of the lesson are:

- The students will be able to understand through comparison of movies and books, develop demonstrations.
- To connect ideas and themes across texts.
- To compare differences in the language used in two different languages.
- To offer observations, make connections, interpret, and raise questions in response to the excerpts.

### Recommendations

Both the teaching method and the text can help in increasing students' interest in reading. This text promotes a female character with whom girls can identify. But on the other hand it introduces as well male protagonists. Reading out loud can be motivational and inspirational for the students. They can understand the serious tone of the text. The teacher monitors the students so as to make sure they cooperate effectively. The volume of given fragments of books can be adapted to the potential of a group - fragments can be shorter - by cutting less important paragraphs, or be expanded to additional fragments of the same novel.