

## Eighth Grade Summer Reading Assignment

Dear Incoming Eighth Grade Student,

Welcome back to Language Arts! We are looking forward to having each of you in class next year. Even though summer vacation means it is time to relax, We'd love to hear that you continued to read every day. Read a novel, magazine, interesting news topics, short stories, non-fiction or poetry! Reading helps you become the best writer you can be.

This summer, we are assigning all incoming 8<sup>th</sup> graders to read one book: ***The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak.**

**Please complete the following assignment:**

As you read, you may find it helpful to write **short** summaries after each chapter. This will help you clarify each character's involvement in the novel's plot development. This will also help you with the essay that is due once you've finished the novel.

**AFTER** you have finished the novel, please complete a **two-page typed essay** responding to the following prompt:

**"Discuss the symbolism (practice of representing things by symbols) of Death as the omniscient (all-seeing, all-knowing) narrator of the novel. What are Death's feelings for each victim? Death states, *"I'm always finding humans at their best and worst. I see their ugly and their beauty, and I wonder how the same thing can be both."* (p. 491) What is ugly and beautiful about Liesel, Rosa, Hans Hubermann, Max Vandenburg, Rudy Steiner, and Mrs. Hermann? Why is Death haunted by humans?**

Before you begin writing your essay, put together an outline to help with organization. Remember to open your paper with a "hook," and somewhere in the opening paragraph, include a thesis statement (what your paper is about). Trying to write this essay without taking this advice will probably leave you feeling overwhelmed. We also suggest you begin reading the novel **sooner** rather than later, so you are not rushed when writing your essay.

**The assignment will be collected on the first day of school and will be included in first quarter grades.**

Have a fantastic summer and get ready for an amazing eighth grade year!

Middle School Team