



The Book Thief

Narrated by Death, the story follows Leisel, a young girl living with foster parents (Hans and Rosa) in Nazi Germany in WWII. Although she settles down into her new life, she is often exposed to the horrors of war. When the conflict increases, her foster parents conceal a Jewish man called Max. Hans teaches Leisel to read and she begins to steal books that the politicians are seeking to destroy. She also begins to write down her own story, and shares the power of language with Max.



Nazi Germany WWII

Nazi Germany was the German state between 1933-45 when Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party controlled the country and turned it into a dictatorship. Under Hitler's rule Germany became a totalitarian state where all aspects of life were controlled.



The Holocaust

The mass killing of European Jews during WWII. Between 1941-45 Nazi Germany and the collaborators systematically murdered 6 million Jews in extermination camps across Europe.

WWII – took place from 1939-45 and involved most of the world's great countries. It is believed to have started when Germany invaded Poland and ended with the liberation of German occupied territory.



Markus Zusak – Born in Sydney Australia in 1975. He is the author of six bestselling novels. His mother is German and his father is Austrian. The book was inspired by the stories his parents told him about wartime Munich and Vienna. It has since been made into a film which achieved huge success.

Characters	Overview
Death	He narrates the story of a young girl coming of age during the horrific times of Nazi Germany and the Second World War. To the reader, Death insists that it "most definitely <i>can</i> be cheerful", even pleasant, but also relates that it most certainly cannot be nice.
Leisel Meminger	An adopted girl on the verge of adolescence, with blonde hair. Her eyes, however, are brown. She is fostered after her biological father "abandons" their family due to being a Communist, her brother dies, and her mother is forced to send her to a foster home to avoid Nazi persecution. Liesel is the "book thief" because she is fascinated by the power of words.
Hans and Rosa Huberman	The adoptive parents of Leisel. Hans is the main source of support for Leisel. He was a former soldier in WW1 and protects Max because Max's father saved his life previously. Rosa is his sharp tongued wife, and despite her temper is a loving wife to Hans and mother to Leisel.
Rudy Steiner	Rudy is Leisel's neighbour and friend. One of six children, he is always hungry. Despite his blonde hair and blue eyes, he doesn't support the Nazis and this lack of support becomes problematic later in the story.
Max Vandenburg	A Jewish fist fighter who takes refuge in the Huberman's cellar. He forms a close bond with Leisel due to their shared love of words and writes his life story for her in the form of words and pictures.