*Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry

Discussion Questions

Chapters 1-2:

1. Why were Anne-Marie, Ellen, and Kirsti stopped by the soldiers?
2. What advice did Mrs. Rosen give the girls about behaving outside?
3. Why isn’t Kirsti afraid of the soldiers?
4. Why do you think the “Free Danes” newspaper was important in Denmark during the war years?
5. How would you feel if you were stopped by the German soldiers?
6. What happened to Annemarie’s sister, Lise?
7. Why does Peter visit the Johansen’s?
8. How was King Christian different than other kings?
9. Why didn’t the Danish army fight the Germans when they invaded

Denmark?

Chapters 3-4:

1. What happened to Mrs. Hirsch?
2. Explain the following sentence from p. 25 of the novel: “All of Denmark must be bodyguards for the Jews….” Annemarie said.
3. Do you think the Jews were being treated fairly by the Germans? Why or why not?
4. How did the Germans find out the names of the Danish Jews?
5. Why was Kirsti upset when she and her mother returned from shopping? What was Ellen’s solution to the problem?
6. What were the “booms and lights in the sky” on Kirsti’s birthday? Why was the Tivoli Gardens important to the Danes of Copenhagen?
7. Why would Annemarie and Ellen need to pretend that they are sisters?
8. Do you think it was a good idea for the Johansen’s to let Ellen stay with them? Explain your answer.

Chapters 5-6:

1. What was Annemarie told about the death of her older sister Lise?
2. Why did the German soldiers come to the Johansen’s apartment looking for the Rosen’s?
3. How did Mr. Johansen convince the German soldiers that Ellen was not a Jewish girl hiding?
4. Why was it important that Ellen remove her Star of David necklace? What do you think would have happened to the Johansen’s if Ellen’s true identity had been discovered?
5. Why were the girls kept home from school after the visit by the German soldiers?
6. What made Annemarie realize that her father was speaking in code to her uncle? What was their conversation really about?
7. Where did Mrs. Johansen, Annemarie, Kirsti, and Ellen travel? Why didn’t Mr. Johansen go with them? Why did they go?
8. Why was Annemarie worried when the soldiers questioned them on the train?

Chapters 7-8:

1. What did Annemarie do with Ellen’s necklace?
2. Why did Mrs. Johansen ask the girls if they saw anyone while playing near the shore?
3. Why do you think there was no laughing between Mrs. Johansen and her brother as they sat down to talk?
4. Why was Annemarie surprised by Uncle Henrik’s announcement that there was to be a funeral?
5. What is the old custom when someone dies? What did the family have to do to prepare for the funeral?
6. Why is Annemarie so delighted to have oatmeal, milk, cream, and butter at breakfast?
7. What did Uncle Henrik mean when he said, “Tomorrow will be a good day for fishing”?
8. Why, when his sister and his nieces were visiting, would Uncle Henrik spend the whole night on his boat?

Chapters 9-11:

1. What does Annemarie learn about bravery in her talk with Uncle Henrik?
2. Why was Kirsti sent to bed before Aunt Birte’s funeral?
3. Who do you think the people arriving for the funeral really are?
4. Why did Mrs. Johansen and Uncle Henrik create the “death of an Aunt Birte”?
5. Why did the German soldiers come to Uncle Henrik’s house?
6. What was the first test of Annemarie’s bravery?
7. How did Mrs. Johansen stop the German soldiers from looking in the casket?
8. What do you think would have happened if the German soldiers discovered the truth about the funeral?
9. What was in the casket and why was it there?
10. Where were the Rosens and the other strangers going?
11. What did Peter give the baby and why?
12. What was the purpose of Aunt Birte’s funeral?
13. Why didn’t Mr. Rosen ask what was in the package that Peter gave him to take to Uncle Henrik?
14. What is in that package?

Chapters 12-13:

1. What promise did Ellen make to Annemarie?
2. What advice on walking the trail did Mrs. Johansen give the Rosens?
3. Explain the following thoughts of Annemarie, “It was harder for the ones who were waiting, Annemarie knew. Less dangerous, perhaps, but more fear.”
4. Do you think that Annemarie and Ellen will see each other again?
5. What happened to Mrs. Johansen on her way back from Uncle Henrik’s boat?
6. What had Mr. Rosen dropped at Uncle Henrik’s house?
7. Why did Mrs. Johansen tell Annemarie to act like a silly little girl if she were stopped?
8. What do you think Mrs. Johansen meant when she said that “it may all have been for nothing” when she spotted the parcel?
9. Why do you think Mrs. Johansen didn’t tell Annemarie what she was really carrying to Uncle Henrik on the boat?

Chapters 14-15:

1. What fairy tale did Annemarie remember on the trail to Uncle Henrik’s boat? Why did Annemarie choose this particular fairy tale?
2. Why did Annemarie have to be brave when she met the soldiers?
3. How would you have reacted to meeting the German soldiers?
4. What was in the basket that helped fool the Germans into thinking it was Uncle Henrik’s lunch?
5. Why did Annemarie behave like Kirsti when she was stopped by the German soldiers?
6. Why was it good that Annemarie did not know what was in the packet?
7. Why do you think the German soldiers stopped Annemarie?
8. Why do you think the contents of the packet were so important?

Chapters 16-17:

1. What did Annemarie learn about Peter from Uncle Henrik? What were the two clues that should have clued Annemarie in about Peter?
2. What was Uncle Henrik’s explanation for each of the following:
   1. Annemarie not seeing the Rosen’s in the boat
   2. The use of a drug on the baby
   3. The handkerchief
3. What would have happened if Annemarie had not gotten the handkerchief to Uncle Henrik?
4. What do you think life will be like in Sweden for the Rosen’s?
5. Why was everyone celebrating in Denmark?
6. What happened to Peter?
7. What did Annemarie learn about Lise?
8. What does Annemarie wearing Ellen’s necklace show?
9. What will the Rosen’s do now that the war is over?