

Novel Study for Elementary & Middle Grade

# Number the Stars

Book By Lois Lowry | Novel Study by Maria von Hatten



Novel Study

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# How to Use This Novel Study

This novel study is divided into four sections or lesson. Each lesson cover four to five chapters in the book Each section includes:

- >> Chapter Summary
- >> Copywork/Dictation Passage
- >> Poetry memorization and recitation
- >> Vocabulary Words
- >> History/Geography
- >> Discussion Questions

The Chapter Summary, is to briefly remind the student or teacher of the events in the chapter they just read.

Copywork/Dictation Passages are a great way for the students to connect with the story. The copywork is really good for students as it improves memory, as well as penmanship. Beyond that it also familiarizes students with proper spelling and grammar skills. Included are some lovely passages for students to copy.

The poetry memorization and recitation is basically just what it sounds like. There is a poem that will be worked on memorizing and reciting throughout the course of the novel study.

The research projects are a great way for students to get deeper involved with the story. Research is a great skill to learn, and it is very useful throughout life. Included in the research sections are safe websites that can be used to complete the research projects. Discussion Questions: The discussion questions I included are open-ended questions.

You can find extra resources such as printable copywork pages, links to safe websites & videos, activity ideas and more on the extra resource page: <https://truehistoricalfriction.com/number-the-stars-novel-study-resources/>  
Use password: ANNEMARIE



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Chapters One Through Four



# Novel Study Chapter Overview

- >> Read short summary of Number the Stars Chapters 1-4
- >> Look at the definition of the words lanky, stocky, residential, resistance, familiar, solemn, trousseau, intricate, and torment.
- >> Choose one or more of four copywork/dictation passages.
- >> Read and memorize the first stanza of Be Strong! by Maltbie Davenport Babcock.
- >> Look for Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Germany, Holland (Netherlands), and Copenhagen in an atlas.
- >> Label Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Germany, Holland (Netherlands), and Copenhagen on a blank map.
- >> Learn about Denmark and read interesting facts about Denmark.
- >> Learn about King Christian X of Denmark.
- >> Learn about the Nazi Occupation of Denmark.
- >> Learn about the Holocaust.
- >> Learn about food and material shortages, & rationing during World War Two.
- >> Write an advertisement for Fish Leather Shoes as a writing project or alternatively, draw or design fish leather shoes.
- >> Read and answer the following discussion questions:  
How do you think Annemarie and Ellen felt about having Nazi soldiers posted all around Copenhagen? Do you think Kirsten felt the same way as the older girls?  
Why do you think pink frosted cupcakes are so important to Kirsten?  
Why do you think Kirsten was so upset about her new shoes?  
Would you wear fish leather shoes if you had to?  
How do you think Ellen felt when she had to stay with the Johansens? Do you think she felt more scared or excited?

# Number the Stars Chapters One Through Four Material

## Short Summary of the First Four Chapters

In the first chapter of the book, we are introduced to a ten-year-old girl named Annemarie, her little sister Kirsti, and her best friend, a Jewish girl named Ellen Rosen who all live in Nazi occupied Denmark.

Annemarie and Kirsti live with their parents in the same apartment building as Ellen and her family.

They are all very cautious around the Nazis who are posted about the area; outside of all the buildings, and at every street corner; always watching and listening.

Suddenly, one day when Annemarie and Ellen are out walking, they discover that one of the families they know, the Hirsches, have gone missing mysteriously. In light of this terrible news, Annemarie's parents suddenly decide to have Ellen stay with them for a few days.

## Interesting words & their definitions

- >> **lanky** a person who is thin and tall
- >> **stocky** a person who is thick and short
- >> **residential** an area where people live; a place filled with houses and buildings
- >> **resistance** not doing things that a certain person or people want you to do
- >> **familiar** something or someone that you know very well
- >> **solemn** serious; quiet; somewhat formal
- >> **trousseau** a collection of items kept by a woman who is going to be married
- >> **intricate** something that is very complicated and detailed
- >> **torment** hurting someone very badly

# Number the Stars Chapters One Through Four Material

## Copywork/Dictation Passages

You can choose any of the four passages below to give to your student(s). There is one for each of the first four chapters. Copywork pages for each of the passages below are available to download from the resource page.

### From Chapter 1 | Why Are You Running?

"And she knew what Resistance meant. Papa had explained, when she overheard the word and asked. The Resistance fighters were Danish people – no one knew who, because they were very secret – who were determined to bring harm to the Nazis however they could."

### From Chapter 2 | Who is the Man Who Rides Past?

"Mama had been crocheting that evening three years ago: the lacy edging of a pillowcase, part of Lise's trousseau. Her fingers moved rapidly, turning the thin white thread into an intricate narrow border. Lise was a grownup girl of eighteen, then, about to be married to Peter Neilsen."

### From Chapter 3 | Where is Mrs. Hirsch?

"For a moment she felt frightened. But she pulled the blanket up higher around her neck and relaxed. It was all imaginary, anyway – not real. It was only in the fairy tales that people were called upon to be brave, to die for one another. Not in real-life Denmark."

### From Chapter 4 | It Will Be a Long Night

"Mama made a lovely dinner large enough for second helpings all around, it was not an evening of laughter and talk. Ellen was silent at dinner. She looked frightened. Mama and Papa tried to speak of cheerful things, but it was clear that they were worried, and it made Annemarie worry too."

# Number the Stars Chapters One Through Four Material

## Poetry Selection

You can choose to either simply read the following poetry passage with your student(s) or you can download and print the printable poetry cards for this lesson which can be found on the resource page. It is suggested that you memorize the poem with your student(s). To make this easier, the poem will be broken one stanza to memorize per lesson.

The poem to memorize is **Be Strong!** by Maltbie Davenport Babcock. Below is the first stanza of the poem.

### Be Strong! by Maltbie Davenport Babcock (1858 - 1901)| The First Stanza

Be strong!

We are not here to play, to dream, to drift;  
We have hard work to do and loads to lift;  
Shun not the struggle - face it; 'tis God's gift.

## Geography

In the first four chapters of Number the Stars, many European countries are mentioned. Now would be a good time to take a look at those countries with your student(s). The following countries were mentioned in the book:

- >>Denmark
- >> Germany
- >> Norway
- >> Sweden
- >> Holland (Netherlands)

You print the blank map on the next page for your student(s) to color in and label Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland (Netherlands) and Germany. If they wish to color in and label the remaining countries on the map, they are welcome to do so. You can find an already labeled, but not colored in version of the map on the [extra resources page](#).

# Map of Scandinavia & Other European Countries

Color in and label the countries shown on the map below.



# Number the Stars Chapters One Through Four Material

## Geography Continued

Once your student(s) have colored in and labeled their map, get them to look at an atlas and find Copenhagen (COH-PUHN-HA-GEHN). Copenhagen is the capital city of Denmark. Get your student(s) to label Copenhagen on their map. They may have to write it beside Denmark and make an arrow pointing to where it is on the map. Annemarie and her family live in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Denmark is a fascinating little country that lies in western Europe. The official language of Denmark is Danish.

Denmark has a monarchy, which means they have a King or a Queen who rules the people. The current monarch of Denmark is Queen Margrethe II.

Here are five other interesting facts about Denmark:

1. Denmark shares its only land border with Germany.
2. Walt Disney got the inspiration for Disneyland when he visited Tivoli Gardens, an amusement park in Copenhagen, Denmark.
3. There is no direct translation for the word 'please' in Danish.
4. The Danish flag, Dannebrog, which was first acknowledged in 1219 is the oldest state flag in the world that is still used by an independent nation. It is 800 years old!
5. Danish is said to be one of the hardest languages to learn because of the complex pronunciations and silent letters. They also have three special letters that you won't come across in the English language. Those letters are: Æ, Ø, and Å.

If your student(s) are interested in learning more about Denmark, please visit the [extra resource page](#) for extra learning materials and links to safe websites.

# Number the Stars Chapters One Through Four Material

## History

There are a lot of historical topics that could be presented and discussed as part of this lesson. The main historical topics mentioned in the first four chapters of this book are King Christian X of Denmark, the Nazi occupation of Denmark, the terrible treatment of Jewish people during World War II, and the rationing of food and materials.

### King Christian X of Denmark

King Christian X of Denmark was born on September 26, 1870 near Copenhagen. He became King of Denmark and Iceland in 1912 and remained King of Denmark until his death in 1947. During the period of his reign as King, there were no less than two world wars!

During the Nazi occupation in the 1940's unlike the monarchs of Norway and the Netherlands who went into exile, King Christian remained in Denmark.

He didn't just stay in his palace hiding away either. In fact, he would ride his horse through the capital city everyday completely unaccompanied.

He did this to reassure his the people of Denmark that he had not given up being King even though the Nazis were taking over.

### The Nazi Occupation of Denmark

On the morning of April 9, 1940 Denmark was attacked by German soldiers. This was followed by sporadic bursts of fighting between the Danish and German armies.

Ultimately, however, the government in Copenhagen, Denmark decided that the German military was far more superior to their own and they feared that resistance would only result in many unnecessary deaths among the Danish people, and would end in German occupation anyway.

So after only a few hours resistance, Denmark surrendered. It then became an occupied country controlled by Nazi Germany.

This occupation continued until May 1945.

If your student(s) are interested in learning more about the Nazi Occupation of Denmark, please visit the [extra resource page](#) for extra learning materials and links to safe websites.

# Number the Stars Chapters One Through Four Material

## History Continued

### Being Jewish During World War II

The Holocaust can be a sensitive subject to discuss with young children. Learning about it is very important, though. Lois Lowry touches on the subject in a very gentle way in *Number the Stars*. She doesn't really give very much information about it, but throughout the book, children can get the general idea.

If you wish to further discuss the topic of the Holocaust with your student(s) you can visit the [extra resource page](#) for links to safe websites that contain information about the Holocaust that is written specifically for children.

### Food Rationing & Material Rationing

By the mid 1940's, World War Two had taken it's toll on food and material supply. This means that suddenly food and certain materials were running out quickly and it was hard to get more. Because of this, the Governments of many countries began rationing things, especially food.

This meant that each person was given a ration booklet or ration cards and they were only allowed to buy a certain amount of something. Normally, a person could buy as much of something as they could afford. If they had lots of money, they could buy lots of food. But with the rationing system, if you had lots of money you still could only buy a little bit of food.

Material also began running out. Like in *Number the Stars* when Kirsti gets a pair of new shoes made out of Fish leather. The regular leather had run out and they couldn't get anymore so they had to use what they had around, and because Denmark is surrounded by plenty of water, they had fish to make into leather.

\* Please take a moment to visit the [extra resources page](#) to take a virtual tour of Denmark, learn about the occupation of Denmark, the Danish Flag, the Holocaust, and life during WWII.

(The [extra resources page](#) is password protected. The password is ANNEMARIE.)

# Number the Stars Chapters One Through Four Material

## Writing Activity

"Mama opened the package and took out a pair of little girl's shoes. She hled them up, and Kirsti looked away in disgust.

"You know there's no leather anymore," Mama explained. "But they've found a way to make shoes out of fish skin."

As a fun writing project, have your student(s) write an advertisement for Fish Leather Shoes. For inspiration, you can show them some pictures of actual fish leather shoes, which you can find on the resource page.

Younger students may wish to simply draw or design a pair of Fish Leather Shoes.

## Discussion Questions for Chapters One through Four

1. How do you think Annemarie and Ellen felt about having Nazi soldiers posted all around Copenhagen? Do you think Kirsten felt the same way as the older girls?
2. Why do you think pink frosted cupcakes are so important to Kirsten?
3. Why do you think Kirsten was so upset about her new shoes?
4. Would you wear fish leather shoes if you had to?
5. How do you think Ellen felt when she had to stay with the Johansens? Do you think she felt more scared or excited?