

WELCOME TO ESL GRADUATE STUDIES

**NUMBER THE STARS
BOOK CLUB**

CHAPTER FIVE & SIX

18 & 20 JUNE 2025

SASHA (WEDNESDAY)

45-SECOND SUMMARY

GIVE A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE ASSIGNED READING
IN 45 SECONDS OR LESS.

Who Is the Dark-Haired One?

In Chapter 5 the tension really rises. It's nighttime, and suddenly, Nazi soldiers come banging on the Johansens' door, looking for the Rosen family. Ellen, (who is Jewish), is secretly staying with Annemarie's family to hide from the Nazis. Everyone gets really nervous, but they try to stay calm. The soldiers come into the apartment and start asking questions. They notice that Ellen has dark hair, which doesn't match the rest of the Johansen family, who are blond. This makes them very suspicious.

One of the scariest moments is when they try to take Ellen's necklace away, which has the Star of David on it, that's a proof that she's Jewish. Thankfully, Papa stays calm and thinks quickly. He shows the soldiers an old photo of his late daughter, Lise, and says that Ellen looks just like her. The soldiers end up leaving, but the whole experience is terrifying for everyone. This chapter shows how serious and dangerous things are becoming, and how brave the Johansens are for protecting their friends.

SASHA (WEDNESDAY)

45-SECOND SUMMARY

**GIVE A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE ASSIGNED READING
IN 45 SECONDS OR LESS.**

Is the Weather Good for Fishing?

In this Chapter 6, the Johansens quickly realize that keeping Ellen safe in the city is too dangerous. So, Mama decides to take Annemarie, Kirsti, and Ellen to Uncle Henrik's house in the countryside, near the sea. The girls are told that they're just going to visit their uncle, and Kirsti, being little, is super excited because she thinks it's just a fun trip. On the train ride there, two German soldiers get on and question Mama about where they're going and why. It's a tense moment again, especially with Ellen being there, but Mama keeps her cool and calmly answers their questions. Eventually, they arrive safely at Uncle Henrik's house, which is quiet, peaceful, and very different from Copenhagen.

The chapter ends with the Uncle Henrik greeting them warmly, but it's clear that something serious is going on behind the scenes. There are hidden messages and code words being used, like the strange question Henrik asks Mama: "Is the weather good for fishing?" It's not really about fishing; it's a code that means something important is about to happen.

BANU (THURSDAY)

45-SECOND SUMMARY

**GIVE A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE ASSIGNED READING
IN 45 SECONDS OR LESS.**

Nazi soldiers come to the Johansens' home at night. They are looking for Rosens'. Annemarie is scared, but she stays quiet. The soldiers question Mama and Papa. Instantly Annemarie remembers and then pulls off Ellen's Star of David necklace just in time to protect her. Soldiers wake up the girls and questions Mama why one of daughter has dark hair. Then Papa shows the soldiers baby pictures of his daughters, so he convince them that Ellen is really part of their family.

Mama decides to take Annemarie, Kirsti, and Ellen to her fisherman brother Henrik's house to be safe. They travel by train, and Annemarie notices that the soldiers are everywhere, checking passengers. When they arrive at Uncle Henrik's peaceful home by the sea, Mother remembers the places where she spent her childhood and tells to the girls.

LILY S. (WEDNESDAY)

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. WHY DID ELLEN'S FATHER WANT HER TO BE A TEACHER WHEN SHE GROWS UP?
2. WHY DID ANNEMARIE TELL ELLEN TO TAKE HER NECKLACE OFF?
3. WHAT WAS ANNEMARIE'S MOTHER REQUEST TO THE GERMAN SOLDIERS?
4. WHERE MRS. JOHANSEN WAS THINKING OF TAKING THE GIRLS?
5. WHO IS HENRIK?
6. HOW WAS THE TRAIN RIDE NORTH ALONG THE DANISH COAST?

MONICA (THURSDAY)

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why did Annemarie's dad think they need a plan after the soldiers visit?
2. Why are they visiting her uncle Henrik?
3. Why is the conversation between her father and uncle Henrik awkward?
4. Why the Nazi soldiers ask on the train if they were visiting uncle's Henrik for New Years?
5. What time of the day is uncle Henrik going to fish?

MONICA (THURSDAY)

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why did Annemarie's dad think they need a plan after the soldiers visit? **Because he thought the Nazi soldiers would walk, and look around and leave but they didn't.**
2. Why are they visiting her uncle Henrik? **That is the only way to keep the safe.**
3. Why is the conversation between her father and uncle Henrik awkward? **Her father ask if the weather is good for fishing when the weather has never been relevant for uncle's Henrik job.**
4. Why the Nazi soldiers ask on the train if they were visiting uncle's Henrik for New Years? **Because they assumed they are jews.**
5. What time of the day is uncle Henrik going to fish? **At sunrise**

ESMERALDA (WEDNESDAY)

VOCABULARY BUILDER

CHOOSE 3–5 IMPORTANT OR INTERESTING WORDS FROM THE READING.

ERIKA (THURSDAY)

VOCABULARY BUILDER

CHOOSE 3–5 IMPORTANT OR INTERESTING WORDS FROM THE READING.

Hook

Clasp

Crumpled

Pegs

Wince

ARSENIA (WEDNESDAY)

SOUND SPOTTER

IDENTIFY 3–5 WORDS THAT ARE DIFFICULT TO PRONOUNCE OR THAT SOUND INTERESTING.

1. Threatening

 Spelling: T-H-R-E-A-T-E-N-I-N-G

 Pronunciation: ('THretniNG)

 Definition: Showing danger or harm; causing fear.

 In the book: The German soldiers have a threatening presence that makes Annemarie and her family feel unsafe.


 The threatening look of the soldiers made Annemarie nervous.

2. Tentatively

 Spelling: T-E-N-T-A-T-I-V-E-L-Y

 Pronunciation: TEN-tuh-tiv-lee (ten(t)adavlē)

 Definition: In a hesitant or unsure way; without confidence.

 In the book: Characters speak and act tentatively when they are afraid or unsure, like when Annemarie tries to understand what's really happening.

 She asked tentatively, afraid of what the answer might be.

ARSENIA (WEDNESDAY)

SOUND SPOTTER


IDENTIFY 3-5 WORDS THAT ARE DIFFICULT TO PRONOUNCE OR THAT SOUND INTERESTING.

3. Amazement

 Spelling: A-M-A-Z-E-M-E-N-T

 Pronunciation: (ə'māzmənt)

 Definition: A feeling of great surprise or wonder.

 In the book: Annemarie often reacts with amazement as she begins to understand the danger around her and the bravery of those she loves.

 Annemarie stared in amazement at how brave her mother was.

4. Shrugged

 Spelling: S-H-R-U-G-G-E-D

 Pronunciation: ('ʃrʌgd)

 Definition: Lifted the shoulders slightly to show uncertainty or indifference.

 In the book: Characters shrug when they don't know what to say or want to avoid saying something dangerous.

 She shrugged when asked if she understood the plan.

AURICELIA (THURSDAY)

SOUND SPOTTER

IDENTIFY 3-5 WORDS THAT ARE DIFFICULT TO PRONOUNCE OR THAT SOUND INTERESTING.

Tentatively

Rubbed

Reluctantly

Nodded

Suntanned

Chuckled

Chrysanthemum

CAROLINA (WEDNESDAY)

CHARACTER TRACKER

DESCRIBE ONE CHARACTER'S TRAITS OR ACTIONS IN THE READING.

Kirsti Johansen is a girl of about 5 years old, with a strong personality who never stays quiet. She always says what she thinks, no matter the situation. She is Annemarie's younger sister. She loves stories about princes and princesses and dreams of seeing castles. Her innocence makes her unconscious of the war happening around her.

KARINA (THURSDAY)

CHARACTER TRACKER

DESCRIBE ONE CHARACTER'S TRAITS OR ACTIONS IN THE READING.

Annemarie Johansen is young girl with a brave spirit.

Since the beginning of the story we can see she is very mature for her age and she has a talent for being alert to dangers. She has a very compassionate heart, and she is very loyal with her friend Ellen. She will protect her no matter what she has to do.

CRISTY (WEDNESDAY)

SCENE SETTER

PICK ONE PLACE FROM THE STORY AND USE CREATIVE, DESCRIPTIVE LANGUAGE TO DESCRIBE IT.

The place I chose is when they're on the train and have a view of the sea, and they were traveling with fear and hope of finding a few days of peace and quiet. But as soon as they arrived in Gilleleje, they were happy to see the sea. Their mother asked them "what do you smell? ", and for the girls it was the smell of fish and salt, and for her the smell was of good memories. And I imagine the Gilleleje train station with a view of the sea, old and with the smell of sea and fish, but I liked that those smell bring to their mother memories for of peace, happiness, joy.



STEFANIE (THURSDAY)

SCENE SETTER

PICK ONE PLACE FROM THE STORY AND USE CREATIVE, DESCRIPTIVE LANGUAGE TO DESCRIBE IT.

It was well before dawn, perhaps around 4:00 AM, when a sudden knocking shattered the silence of the Johansens' apartment. Most of the action of this scene unfolds in the living room, a space that I imagine plunged into near-total darkness, illuminated only by the soldiers' flashlights.

The living room, though usually a comforting space now feels uncomfortable. I can picture a warm but sturdy sofa and a couple of solid wooden armchairs, perhaps adorned with handcrafted throws for a touch of warmth. A small wooden table sits in the center, which might typically hold a simple oil lamp, as electricity would be carefully rationed during these times. In one corner, a modest wooden bookcase holds the Johansens' cherished family albums and a collection of well-worn books. The very air in the apartment feels cool, not from the temperature, but from the sudden invasion of the night and the chilling presence of the soldiers. This intrusion instantly brings with it a surge of raw apprehension and fear that grips the entire family.

INTERPRETIVE QUESTIONS

imprint of the star of david on annemarie's hand.
Deer hiding in the woods.

MARISELA (WEDNESDAY)

CULTURE CONNECTOR

**FIND ONE ELEMENT THAT CONNECTS TO YOUR HOME CULTURE
OR TO MODERN U.S. CULTURE.**

Chapter 5, page 43-45:

“It was hours later, but still dark, when she [Annemarie] was awakened abruptly by the pounding on the apartment door. [...] Papa opened the front door to the soldiers. [...] Terrified, both girls looked up at the three Nazi officers who entered the room.”

Chapter 6, pages 54-55:

“The door at the end of their car opened and two German soldiers appeared.

Annemarie tensed. Not here, on the train, too? They were everywhere. Together the soldiers strolled through the car, glancing at passengers, stopping here and there to ask a question.”

MARISELA (WEDNESDAY)

CULTURE CONNECTOR

**FIND ONE ELEMENT THAT CONNECTS TO YOUR HOME CULTURE
OR TO MODERN U.S. CULTURE.**

Could you perceive the fear of the characters in these scenes?

I could! And these scenes immediately made me remember a message I received two months ago, from an American friend of me. She texted me and some other friends to tell us his neighbor has told her the ICE agents were in his front door. The only question they asked him was "Do you know anyone around here who speaks Spanish?" He answered "No, Sir." And that was all. Apparently, one of the ways to detect illegal people is to identify them by their native language. This is crazy to me. Even if we are legal and good people who are trying to make this Country a better place, we are afraid to be in front of those agents.

First, they arrest you, and then there's a long and expensive legal process for your family to verify your legal immigration status and ensure that, if they don't release you, they'll at least send you back to your country and not to a prison in some other country where they'll never hear from you again.

This is more complex than what's portrayed on social media and in the news. These chapters made me think deeper about this issue, which I never thought I'd face after having lived freely as an international student in this country and having visited it many times as a tourist before deciding to come back and raise my kids here.

God bless us!

FLAVIA (THURSDAY)

CULTURE CONNECTOR

**FIND ONE ELEMENT THAT CONNECTS TO YOUR HOME CULTURE
OR TO MODERN U.S. CULTURE.**

I feel sad when I think about how people live under the hardships of authoritarian regimes, with the destruction of basic rights, such as freedom of expression. What saddens me even more is that, in the 21st century, Brazil, my own country, is rapidly moving in that direction, under the current government and with power increasingly concentrated in the hands of Supreme Court justices.

The desire to control social media through what is being called “internet regulation” may sound modern and justifiable. However, in practice, it carries the real risk of turning the State into an arbiter of truth, exactly what authoritarian regimes have done throughout history.

Today, we see journalists living in exile, citizens arrested for their opinions and posts, accounts being blocked without due legal process, and even cases of censorship. The temporary suspension of the social media platform X is a concerning example. All of this reveals the dangerous path Brazil is following toward a totalitarian regime, where criticizing the government could become a crime.

Especially in Chapter 5, it is possible to draw a parallel between the German soldiers who raided homes in search of evidence or hidden Jewish people, and the actions of the Federal Police in Brazil, who break into the homes of opposition politicians or citizens in the middle of the night, searching for anything that might incriminate them or others. (continued on next slide)

FLAVIA (THURSDAY)

CULTURE CONNECTOR

**FIND ONE ELEMENT THAT CONNECTS TO YOUR HOME CULTURE
OR TO MODERN U.S. CULTURE.**

Of course, we are not living under a regime comparable to Nazism, and it would be irresponsible to claim so. However, when freedom is under threat, when censorship exists, information is controlled, and political persecution is present, we can clearly see the early signs of authoritarianism slowly taking root. These actions are often accompanied by speeches that claim to protect the common good, ensure public safety, or fight “disinformation.”

Examples such as Cuba, Venezuela, China, and Russia show us how far this path can go, countries with which, unfortunately, Brazil has been strengthening ties.

LILY L. (WEDNESDAY)

EMOTIONS EXPLORER

CHOOSE A MOMENT THAT MADE YOU
FEEL SOMETHING (HAPPY, SAD, SURPRISED, ANGRY, ETC.).

Train ride to Uncle Henrik.

This moment made me feel different emotions from tension to relief and smile. I mean the train ride to uncle henrik.

The door of the car where Annemarie and Kirstie's mom and Ellen are riding opens and two German soldiers appear. Together the soldiers strolls through the car, glancing at passengers, stopping here and there to ask a question.

After Annemarie's mom explains, one of the soldiers suddenly asks: "Are you visiting your brother for the New Year?"

Mama stares at him with a puzzled look. "New Year?" she asks. "It is only October." But stubborn Kirsty intervenes in the conversation. "And guess what!" As usual, she doesn't listen to anyone and Annemarie thinks that Kirsti wants to say: This is our friend Ellen and it's her New Year! Annemarie's heart sinks . But everything ends well!) Instead, Kirsti points at her feet and says: "I'm going to visit my Uncle Henrik and I'm wearing my brand-new shiny black shoes!" The soldier chuckles and moves on. Happy end of the moment!

IRA (THURSDAY)

EMOTIONS EXPLORER

**CHOOSE A MOMENT THAT MADE YOU
FEEL SOMETHING (HAPPY, SAD, SURPRISED, ANGRY, ETC.).**

CHAPTER FIVE:

I felt relief after the heartbreaking episode of the cynical, disrespectful search of the Johansen family apartment, as did Annemarie when she unclenched fingers of her hand. But also the degree of inner stress Annemarie was under during this, as indicated by the imprint of the Star of David on her palm. *“Annemarie relaxed the clenched fingers of her right hand, which still clutched Ellen’s necklace. She looked down, and saw that she had imprinted the Star of David into her palm.”*

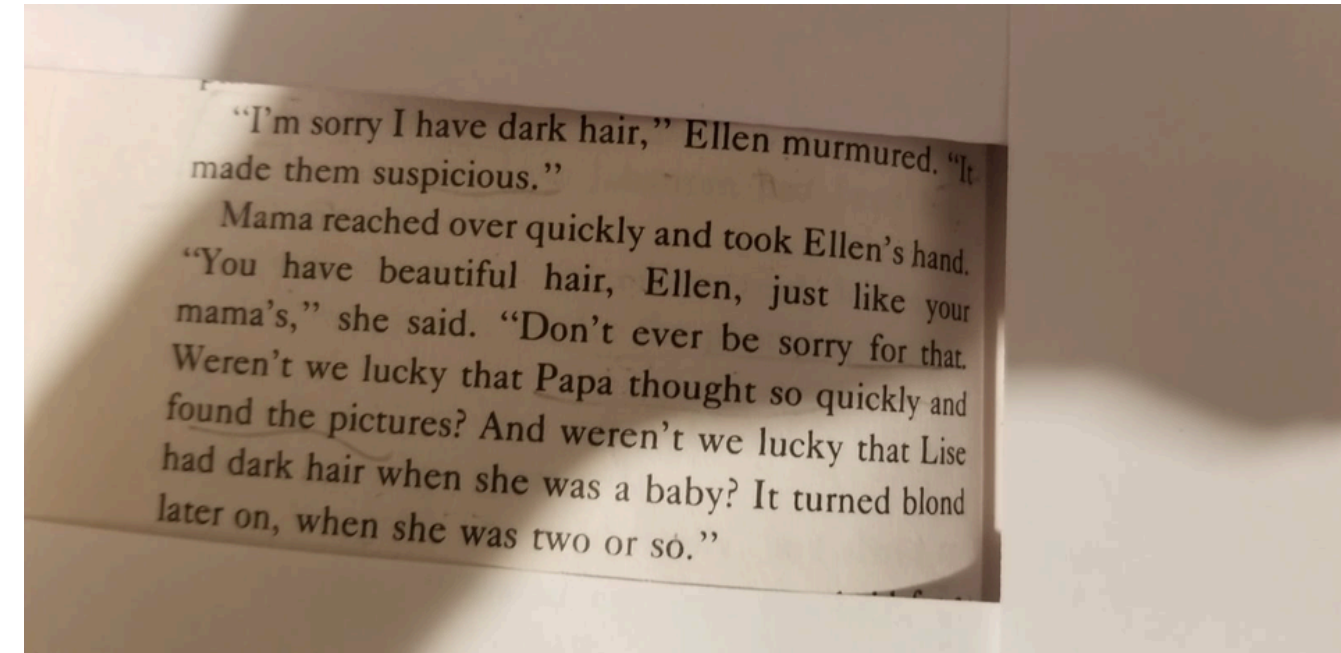
CHAPTER SIX:

“Smell the air,” Mama said when they stepped off the train and made their way to the narrow street. “Isn’t it lovely and fresh? It always brings back memories for me. . . . The air was breezy and cool, and carried the sharp, not unpleasant smell of salt and fish.”

After reading this passage, sentimental memories come to mind. Smells of childhood, often a little strange, but so pleasant and evocative (remindful), associated with times of carefree happiness, so bright and sudden, so alluring, because in childhood everything is easy and simple, even if it is not very easy and not very simple.

MARIA (WEDNESDAY)

PASSAGE PICKER



I think for one reason Lise had been born with black hair and later it turned blond, when she was two years old.
and they were lucky that papa thought so quickly and found the pictures and the soldiers believed what the papa said and Ellen was saved.

ANA (THURSDAY)

PASSAGE PICKER

“Don’t speak to my wife in such a way.” This is a powerful statement, because even though he was speaking to the soldiers who held the power at that moment, Annemarie’s father still stood his ground, because for him, it didn’t matter who you were, you couldn’t speak to a lady that way.

And another is, when Annemarie’s mom puts her arm around Ellen’s and says “that we’ve brought a friend” : that mean for me, both physically and verbally, “that you’re not alone”. From now on, we will protect you, and you can trust us.

MARIANA (WEDNESDAY)

PREDICTION MAKER

MAKE A THOUGHTFUL PREDICTION ABOUT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN NEXT.

I think the Johansen family will try to help Ellen's parents escape too. Maybe uncle Henrik be part of a secret group helping Jewish families escape, and he will help Ellen's family. The soldiers might come back, so they must be careful. It may get more dangerous, but they will do their best to protect Ellen and her family.

FATEMEH (THURSDAY)

PREDICTION MAKER

MAKE A THOUGHTFUL PREDICTION ABOUT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN NEXT.

Not yet submitted.

ESL Book Club Assignments (Chapter Seven)

Student:	Responsibility:	
Mariana / Fatemeh	45-Second Summarizer:	Give a brief overview of the assigned reading in 45 seconds or less.
	➤ Skills practiced: summarizing, sequencing, time awareness	
Sasha / Banu	Comprehension Quizzer:	Create a brief (3-5 question) quiz to test reading comprehension.
	➤ Skills practiced: reading for detail, forming questions	
Lily S. / Monica	Vocabulary Builder:	Choose 3–5 important or interesting words from the reading.
	➤ Skills practiced: vocabulary acquisition, context clues, paraphrasing	
Esmeralda / Erika	Sound Spotter:	Identify 3-5 words that are difficult to pronounce or that sound interesting.
	➤ Skills practiced: noticing pronunciation patterns, asking for help, listening	
Arsenia / Auricelia	Scene Setter:	Pick one place from the story and use creative, descriptive language to describe it.
	➤ Skills practiced: spacial thinking, descriptive language, making inferences	
Cristy / Stefanie	Culture Connector:	Find one element that connects to your home culture or to modern U.S. culture.
	➤ Skills practiced: making comparisons, speaking about culture, critical thinking	
Marisela / Flavia	Character Tracker:	Describe one character’s traits or actions in the reading.
	➤ Skills practiced: character analysis, using descriptive language	
Carolina / Karina	Emotions Explorer:	Choose a moment that made you feel something (happy, sad, surprised, angry).
	➤ Skills practiced: emotional vocabulary, personal connections, speaking fluency	
Lily L. / Ira	Passage Picker:	Choose one sentence or short passage that you found meaningful or powerful.
	➤ Skills practiced: reading aloud, text analysis, expression	
Lori / Lori	Grammar Catcher:	Find one interesting grammar structure or pattern in the reading.
	➤ Skills practiced: grammar awareness, noticing language in context	
Maria / Ana	Prediction Maker:	Make a thoughtful prediction about what might happen next.
	➤ Skills practiced: inferencing, using evidence from text	