



WELCOME TO ESL GRADUATE STUDIES

**NUMBER THE STARS
BOOK CLUB**

CHAPTER FOUR

11 & 12 JUNE 2025

LILY S. (WEDNESDAY)

45-SECOND SUMMARY

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

Suddenly on Jewish New Year's Day, Ellen's parents receive very sad news in the Synagogue, the rabbi told his congregation that the Nazis take the synagogue list of all the Jews, where they live, names are. Of course, the Rosens were on that list. Life for Ellen and her family changes overnight. Ellen goes from playing with Annemarie and Kirsti with paper dolls, remembering happy times at Tivoli Gardens, to terrified and sad, hiding from the German Army, which could come at any moment to arrest and take them away (relocation) for being Jewish.

After Ellen's mother receiving the news at the synagogue, Mrs. Rosen spoke for a long time in a hurried to Annemarie's mother and ask for help to hide Hellen in their house. Annemarie's parents are worried and have a magnificent idea: When the soldiers come to search for their apartment that night, they will say they have three daughters, not two, they will be sisters. It was the last night of September. Annemarie's father said: It will be a long night, and I am proud to have three daughters again.

MONICA (THURSDAY)

45-SECOND SUMMARY

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

Annemarie and her friend Ellen are playing paper dolls when Mrs Johansen and Kristi arrives. The little girl is complaining about her ugly green new shoes. To make her feel better Ellen offers to ask her father to paint the shoes with black ink, and Kirsti asks if she also could make them shine. Kristi joined her sister and her friend game as Bonnie. Since they were going to a ball Ellen suggested Tivoli would be a better option for a little girl instead. Tivoli Gardens was a park with fireworks at night. Kristi recalled seen them too on her birthday but the park was close and destroyed by the germans at that time. Annemarie knows that had been the night they had been all frightened for the bombs the Danes had used to destroy their own navy vessels to prevent the Germans from using them. Also, she remembered her parents reading the newspaper talking about it and concern about the king. Annemarie pictures on her mind a heartbroken king and she felt very sad putting her paper doll away.

Ellen went home to help cleaning the house since Jewish New Year will take place on Thursday. Annemarie and her family sometimes join the Rosens on that celebration. On Thursday morning, on their way to school Annemarie and Kristi saw the Rosens walking to the synagogue. By the afternoon, Mrs Rosen knock at the door talked for a while with Annemarie's mom and leave. Mrs. Johansen announced that Ellen parents have to go away and that Ellen will be staying somedays with them. The change of plans surprised the girls. After dinner Kristi went to bed with her mon while Ellen, Annemarie and her father talked. Anticipating the grieve the news will bring he told Annemarie the situation the Rosens were facing since the persecution of the jewish people started. Annemarie asked many questions but her father firmly explained the plan and the importance to be prepared. We will hide Ellen, if the soldiers come, you are sisters, and he promise Ellen that she will see her parents again soon. Peter will help Ellen parents to get to a safer place. He kissing both girls in the head and sent them to bed, he said don't be frightened once we have three daughters and now I am proud for having three daughters again.

MONICA (THURSDAY)

45-SECOND SUMMARY

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

Ellen went home to help cleaning the house since Jewish New Year will be celebrated on Thursday; that morning going to school Annemarie and Kristi saw the Rosens heading to the Synagogue. In the afternoon, Ellen's mom knock at the door, talked to Mrs Johansen who announced "Ellen will be spending some days with us". The girls were surprised about the change of plans. They have for dinner the chicken they suppose to have for New Year's celebration. Kristi went to bed with her mom and Ellen, Annemarie and her father who have news said, the rabbi told his congregation the nazis took the lists with names and addresses of all danish jews, they will come and look for them, to relocate them and we need to be prepare. Annemarie asked many questions but her father said we will hide Ellen, if the soldiers come you two are sisters, he said we will make her appear as the third daughter we once have, and Peter will help Ellen parents to get to a safer place. He promise Ellen who was sobbing that soon she will encounter her parents again. In the mid time he kissing both in the head and sent them to bed, he said don't be frightened once we have three daughters and now I am proud for having three daughters again.

ESMERALDA (WEDNESDAY)

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why doesn't Kirsti want her shoes?
2. Why did the Rosens leave their daughter Ellen with the Johanssons?
3. What is a Tivoli?

ERIKA (THURSDAY)

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What story did Mom tell Annemarie and Ellen?
2. What color were the shoes that Kirsti's mom bought for her?
3. Why did Ellen and her family celebrate New Year's and Kirsti and her family didn't?
4. On Jewish New Year's Eve, Ellen went to sleep at Kirsti's house. Why?

ARSENIA (WEDNESDAY)

VOCABULARY BUILDER

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

These words describe actions and expressions that show how the characters feel or react during tense and emotional moments in the story.

1. Sputtered – spoke in a confused or unclear way, often because of anger or surprise.
→ This word shows how someone might react when they're shocked or upset.
2. Giggled – gave a light, silly laugh.
→ It shows a moment of nervousness, embarrassment, or childlike behavior.
3. Bellowed – shouted in a loud and deep voice.
→ This action shows anger or authority, like a soldier or an adult yelling.
4. Sniffed – breathed in through the nose, often because of crying or trying not to cry.
→ A sign of sadness, coldness, or trying to hold back tears.
5. Wailed – cried out loudly in pain or sadness.
→ A strong expression of grief or fear.
6. Frowned – made a serious or unhappy expression by wrinkling the forehead.
→ A sign of worry, confusion, or disapproval.
7. Pondered – thought deeply about something.
→ Shows that a character is trying to make an important decision or understand a difficult situation.
8. Nodded – moved the head up and down to say yes or to show understanding.
→ A non-verbal way to communicate agreement, approval, or reassurance.

"I find it important to learn this vocabulary because, personally, it helps me gain a deeper understanding of the book's plot and emotional depth—such as Kirsti's young age, Ellen's fear, the family's grief over the loss of their older daughter, the war, and other significant elements."

--Arsenia Leon

AURICELIA (THURSDAY)

VOCABULARY BUILDER

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

sprawled

commanded

stomped / stumped

giggle

exasperated

disdainfully

frightened

sobbed

CRISTY (WEDNESDAY)

SOUND SPOTTER

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

glowering: “The door opened and Kirsti stomped in, her face tear-stained and **glowering**. Mama followed her with an exasperated look and set a package down on the table.”

questioningly: Annemarie giggled and looked **questioningly** at her mother. Mrs. Johansen sighed. “I bought Kirsti some new shoes,” she explained. “She’s outgrown her old ones.”

soothingly: “‘Kirsten,’ Mama said **soothingly**, ‘you know it wasn’t a fish store. And we were lucky to find shoes at all.’”

belligerently: “Kirsti drew herself up, her small shoulders stiff. “I did too,” she said **belligerently**. ‘It was my birthday. I woke up in the night and I could hear the booms. And there were lights in the sky. Mama said it was fireworks for my birthday!’”

STEFANIE (THURSDAY)

SOUND SPOTTER

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

Sprawled

Hesitated

Chattered

Stunned

LILY L. (WEDNESDAY)

CHARACTER TRACKER

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

Ellen was Annmarie's best friend. They spent so much time together that you might think they were sisters. However, they were different in appearance. Ellen was a stocky ten-year-old girl, in contrast to Annmarie's lanky figure. But as best friends, they understood each other perfectly. The girls enjoyed playing together, visiting each other and going to school.

So, Ellen, a pretty girl with dark hair and thick curls, braided as always, in pigtails. She was a talented performer and often played the leading roles in school drama productions. Ellen dreamed of going to acting school to become an actress.

IRA (THURSDAY)

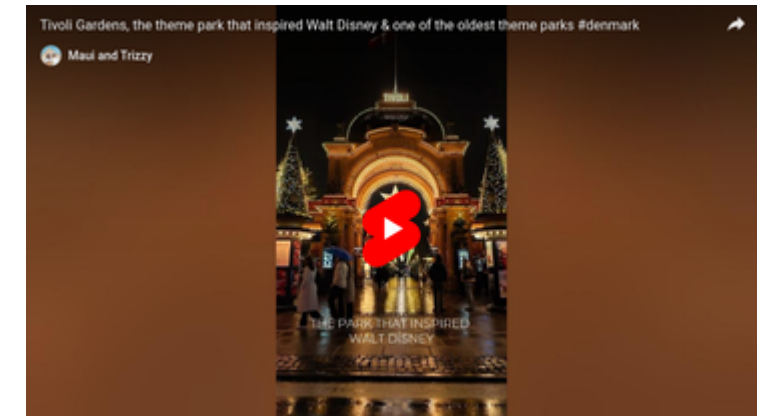
CHARACTER TRACKER

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

Ellen Rosen is Annemarie's best friend. She is a stocky ten-year-old girl with dark hair, thick curls, always braided, from a Jewish family. She is a level-headed child, but she happily supports her best friend's ideas, such as running down the street to practice Annemarie, although she would prefer to walk like "civilized people." Games of the imagination are always fun when Ellen plays, but she does not insist on being the main character and feels perfectly comfortable as "the main character's friend." A girl with a kind, sensitive heart, who comes up with a simple solution to save Kristi's peace of mind, for a new pair of fish skin shoes, by suggesting to make them black and shiny. A child who, faced with a frightening situation, left alone without parents, hiding from Nazi soldiers, force to mature beyond her years.

MARISELA (WEDNESDAY)

SCENE SETTER



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

Tivoli Gardens, description in the book (page 31):

“She remembered the music and the brightly colored lights, the carousel and ice cream and especially the magnificent fireworks in the evenings: the huge colored splashes and bursts of lights in the evening sky.”

In the heart of Copenhagen lies Tivoli Gardens, the second-oldest amusement park in the world. Since 1843, Tivoli has welcomed guests to a world of enchanting experiences. Tivoli is an important landmark in the history of architecture, and its monuments are among the most impressive to survive from antiquity.

What happened to Tivoli Gardens during WWII? Bombing in 1944 destroyed many park buildings, including the old concert hall; a new concert hall, seating 2,000, was opened in the Tivoli in 1956. It was extensively remodeled in 2005.

FLAVIA (THURSDAY)

SCENE SETTER

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

I chose the scene where the girls were playing “Gone with the Wind” with paper dolls. Kirsti’s doll was a little girl who couldn’t go to a ball, so they thought to go to Tivoli , a park in Copenhagen.

I can imagine this Tivoli park like: a place with a big green field where people can sit on the grass or bring their own chairs to enjoy the sunset , or have a picnic. The greenery of the park is beautiful. Gardens with a colorful flowers during spring season. Birds sing and fly around gracefully in the sky. Around this field people enjoy their evening by running, walking, and riding bikes with their family and friends. Many nights small concerts occur in a small area of this park. This park is loved by many kids. They enjoy the big playground where they have fun with each other. Their favorite part of the park is definitely the carousel . It has colorful colors and lighting that makes the children happy. During the day, there are many food trucks. Such as popcorn, ice cream, and cotton candy. In special days, you can see fireworks in the sky. Also there is a big lake that reflects the suns brightness during the summer and in the winter people join for ice skating.

INTERPRETIVE QUESTIONS

Interpretive questions are open-ended questions that ask someone to explain, analyze, or find meaning in something—such as a story, poem, image, or experience. These questions do not have one “right” answer. Instead, they invite thoughtful discussion and personal interpretation based on evidence or reasoning.

Characteristics of Interpretive Questions:

They have multiple answers, as long as those answers can be supported.
They ask “why,” “how,” or “what do you think...” instead of just “who,” “what,” “when,” or “where.”
They encourage deeper thinking about themes, character motivations, symbols, or messages.

Examples:

Comprehension question: What color was the dog?
→ (This has only one correct answer.)

Interpretive question: Why do you think the author chose to make the dog brown instead of another color?
→ (There could be many thoughtful answers depending on interpretation.)

From Number the Stars:

Why do you think Annemarie tells herself that real bravery only happens in fairy tales?
How does the theme of “ordinary people showing courage” appear in this chapter?

CAROLINA (WEDNESDAY)

CULTURE CONNECTOR

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

I think the time of the military dictatorship in Argentina is comparable to the story of Ellen and Annemarie in Number the Stars. Just like the Nazis persecuted the Jews, during the dictatorship the military hunted down revolutionaries, considering them a threat to the government. Many people disappeared, were tortured, and were persecuted because of their ideas. Many families helped by hiding people who were being hunted. Many children also suffered because they didn't know where their parents were.

KARINA (THURSDAY)

CULTURE CONNECTOR

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

Right now in this uncertain political time, the world is crossing for deep disconcert moments. Not only economical but emotional as well. We can see the fear in the faces of immigrant families living in USA now. It doesn't matter the country we have come from, Latin community is seen as bad people, blamed for all bad things happening around us. Been hunted like criminals. Deported sometimes to countries where they not longer belong.

As we can read in this chapter, the characters are experience the sadness and fear of being separated from their loved ones, that kind that our community is suffering today. It is like we did learn nothing from our past.

CULTURE CONNECTOR

Dear immigrant,

I honor and thank you for bearing the weight of pain far from your homeland. Thank you for enduring indifference, for not giving up despite the terror, loneliness, and uprooting. Thank you for speaking two languages with a broken heart, for holding in one hand the dreams you left behind, and in the other, those you are still building for your loved ones. I offer my apologies on behalf of those who, out of ignorance or privilege, have scorned your efforts; on behalf of those who have reduced your existence to a number or a formality. You are more than a number in a statistic, more than a footnote on the news. You are the true face of courage. Your struggle is not small: it is sacred. I apologize to those who only see your accent, but not your story; to those who demand that you adapt without offering you a modicum of dignity. Many see you as a burden, but casually forget that your work sustains entire economies, that your hands, silent and persistent, keep industries, families, and systems that will never recognize your name alive. Thank you for sending hugs in the form of remittances, for performing such prolonged physical labor under absolutely precarious conditions, for working shifts that ache but feed homes miles away. Thank you for not giving up, even though sometimes everything inside you tells you to. I know that most of you left what you loved behind, not because you wanted to, but because you had no choice. Your exile is not only geographical: it is also emotional, symbolic, and existential. You have had to rebuild your identity amidst uncertainty, defying everything. Migrating is not simply moving from one country to another: it is redefining your sense of belonging, living in a constant tension between what is lost and what is possible. And if you ever doubt your worth, remember this: Heaven itself looks down on you with honor, not for how much you've accomplished, but for all you've sustained.

Bless you, beloved immigrant.

#danielhabif

MARIA (WEDNESDAY)

EMOTIONS EXPLORER

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

When I read in this chapter about the girls playing with paper dolls, I felt happy because it reminded of when I was a little girl and played with a “real doll.”

I grew up with a big family but I was the little sister between 5 brothers. One day I made my own doll. My doll was a piece of wood, and I drew the eyes, nose, and mouth. The hair was corn silk. I covered my doll with a little bed sheet.

I played very happily with the doll.

ANA (THURSDAY)

EMOTIONS EXPLORER

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

The part that made me really sad and cry was when Ellen's mom asked Annemarie's mom if Ellen could stay with them, because the Nazis went to the synagogue during the Jewish New Year to get a list of the Jews.

Ellen didn't know if her parents would come back, and she was very sad and confused. Also, when Annemarie's father told them that from now on they would be sisters in case the soldiers came to ask questions. And when Annemarie asked her father what would happen if they needed to hide, because the apartment was so small and there was no place to hide Ellen, her father calmed her by saying not to worry, that there was space, and that they should enjoy their time together. But the whole city was already worried about what was happening.

This makes me feel sad because it seems completely unfair that people, out of pride, self-interest, or reasons I just don't understand, can hurt innocent people without any justification. It makes me feel frustrated.

MARIANA (WEDNESDAY)

PASSAGE PICKER

“Don’t be frightened,” he said to them softly. “Once I had three daughters. Tonight I am proud to have three daughters again.”

This part is very emotional and powerful. Mr. Johansen “Papa” speaks with love and calmness during a scary moment. He knows that the soldiers could take Ellen, but he is not afraid to protect her. He speaks kindly to help the girls feel safe. He calls Ellen his daughter, that shows deep love and courage. It also shows how brave the family is. Even in danger, they choose to do what is right. It makes me feel proud of them and reminds me that real family is about love, not just blood.

FATEMEH (THURSDAY)

PASSAGE PICKER

Not yet submitted.

LORI GRAMMAR CATCHER

FIND ONE INTERESTING GRAMMAR STRUCTURE OR PATTERN IN THE READING.

USING MODALS (“HELPING” VERBS) TO EXPRESS OBLIGATION, NECESSITY, POSSIBILITY & ADVICE

MODAL + BASE FORM OF VERB

OBLIGATION: “PETER STOOD. ‘I **MUST** GO,’ HE SAID.”

NECESSITY: “‘SOON WE WILL **HAVE TO** ADD ANOTHER BLANKET TO YOUR BED,’ MAMA SAID

POSSIBILITY: “THEY **MIGHT** COME TONIGHT.”

ADVICE: “YOU **SHOULD** STAY HIDDEN.”

PERSONAL CONNECTION

- HAVE YOU EVER FELT LIKE YOU HAD TO PROTECT A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER? WHAT HAPPENED?
- ELLEN FEELS BOTH SCARED AND BRAVE AT THE SAME TIME. CAN YOU THINK OF A SITUATION WHEN YOU FELT THAT WAY?
- THE JOHANSEN FAMILY HAS TO THINK QUICKLY TO KEEP ELLEN SAFE. HAVE YOU EVER HAD TO MAKE A QUICK DECISION UNDER PRESSURE?
- SOMETIMES PRETENDING TO BE CALM CAN HELP IN A DANGEROUS SITUATION. HAVE YOU EVER HAD TO HIDE YOUR FEELINGS TO PROTECT YOURSELF OR SOMEONE ELSE
- ELLEN'S SITUATION MAKES HER FEEL DIFFERENT FROM EVERYONE ELSE. HAVE YOU EVER FELT DIFFERENT FROM THOSE AROUND YOU? HOW DID YOU COPE?

SASHA (WEDNESDAY)

PREDICTION MAKER

MAKE A THOUGHTFUL PREDICTION ABOUT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN NEXT.

I think in chapter five, things probably start getting really intense. The Nazis are looking for Jewish families, and since Ellen is staying with Annemarie's family and pretending to be their daughter, it's super risky. Maybe the soldiers show up at their apartment, and everyone must act calm to convince them that Ellen isn't Jewish and that she really belongs there.

Annemarie might be freaking out inside but trying to act normal on the outside to protect her friend. She's probably starting to realize how serious everything is and how scary it is to live under Nazi rule.

BANU (THURSDAY)

PREDICTION MAKER

MAKE A THOUGHTFUL PREDICTION ABOUT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN NEXT.

At the end of Chapter 4, the Johansens decided that Ellen must pretend to be part of their family. I think something dangerous might happen next. Maybe the soldiers will come to their apartment, and they will ask questions. I think Annemarie will have to stay calm, and I also think the Johansens will feel nervous, but they will be brave, because they care about Ellen like she is their real daughter.

However soldiers already stopped the girls before, and this shows me there is more danger coming. The Johansens are getting ready for something serious. I think the family will do everything they can to help Ellen stay safe, even if it is very risky.

ESL Book Club Assignments (Chapters Five and Six)

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