

WELCOME TO ESL GRADUATE STUDIES

**NUMBER THE STARS
BOOK CLUB**

CHAPTERS 8 & 9

2 & 3 JULY 2025

MARIA (WEDNESDAY)

45-SECOND SUMMARY

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

There has been a Death



Annemarie was confused because this night Great-aunt Birte will be resting in the living room in the casket before she is buried the next day.

Nobody brought food for the funeral.

Uncle Henrik kept an eye out in the distance and signal to Mrs. Johansen telling her is late (turn off the lights) so the stage of funeral to prevent them from looking suspicious, so Ellen can see her parents with out worries.

ANA (THURSDAY)

45-SECOND SUMMARY

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

The girls at breakfast eat butter that Uncle Henrick takes from the soldiers. Annemarie's mom cleans the house and complains to her brother that he needs a wife. They tell the girls that there is going to be a funeral.

Annemarie realizes that it is something unusual happening, and she also notices that her mom and Uncle Henrick are acting strangely. She is angry at Uncle Henrick. She questions why he and her mother are lying to her. Annemarie did not know about this aunt. This is a secret that she can't know now. Annemarie does not believe that Great-aunt Birte exists. At the end of chapter nine, Ellen is reunited with her parents.

MARIANA (WEDNESDAY)

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1-Why did Mama and Uncle Henrik lie to Annemarie?

2-What was the “funeral” for Great-aunt Birte really for?

3-How did Annemarie feel when the soldiers came?

4-What Mama said about the casket when the soldiers asked to open it?

5-What Annemarie learned about being brave?

SASHA (WEDNESDAY)

VOCABULARY BUILDER

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

C8

Tsking: refers to making the "tsk" sound, an interjection used to express disapproval, mild annoyance, or regret. "Inside the house, Mama scrubbed and dusted, tsk-tsking at Uncle Henrik's untidy housekeeping"

Grinning: to smile broadly, especially as an indication of pleasure, amusement, or the like. "Henrik was grinning at her, shaking his head in mock dismay"

Mock dismay: refers to a fake or insincere display of disappointment or distress, often expressed through exaggerated or theatrical gestures or words.

- **Mock:** To make fun of, imitate, or treat with contempt.
- **Dismay:** A feeling of consternation, shock, or disappointment.

SASHA (WEDNESDAY)

VOCABULARY BUILDER

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

C9 (hyphen “-” hyphenate compound adjectives)

Straw-covered: refers to something being coated or enveloped with straw.

“He was kneeling on the straw covered floor beside the cow, his shoulder pressed against her heavy side, his strong tanned hands rhythmically urging her milk into the spotless bucket.”

Frowned: form an expression of disapproval, displeasure, or concentration, typically by turning down the corners of the mouth.

“Annemarie frowned. She wasn't sure. What did bravery mean?”

gleaming : (of a smooth surface) reflecting light, typically because very clean or polished.

“The gleaming wooden casket rested on supports in the center of the living room and was surrounded by the fragile, papery flowers that Annemarie and Ellen had picked that afternoon.”

Flickering: (of a flame or light) burning or shining unsteadily; wavering. “Lighted candles stood in holders on the table and cast a soft, flickering light”

BANU (THURSDAY)

VOCABULARY BUILDER

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

Chase = to run after in an attempt to catch.

Startle = to surprise or frighten someone suddenly.

Dismay = a feeling of fear, sadness, or worry because something unexpected or bad happened.

Hearse = a special vehicle used to carry a coffin during a funeral.

Wryly - Wry = in a way that shows dry or sarcastic humor, often mixed with sadness or irony.

LILY S. (WEDNESDAY)

SOUND SPOTTER

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

- 1) Grinned: The word grinned is pronounced with a short "i" sound like in "grun" and a final "d" with a clear "n" sound in the middle.
- 2) Specter: The word specter is pronounced "Spekter". Spek, pronounced like speck and Ter, like the word ter in "center".
- 3) Deftly: The pronunciation is "deft-lee".
- 4) Frothy: The word frothy is pronounced with the two syllables: "Fraw-thee" or "Frah-thee"

MONICA (THURSDAY)

SOUND SPOTTER

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

startled- feeling or showing sudden shock or alarm

wryly-ironic, sarcastic. Express dry, mocking, humor or a sense of resignation in the face of something unpleasant.

trudge- walk slowly and with heavy steps because of exhaustion or harsh conditions.

gnarled- knobbly, rough and twisted specially with time.

dangling- hanging or swinging loosely.

CRISTY (WEDNESDAY)

CHARACTER TRACKER

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

AnneMarie is a small but very intelligent girl. Despite her age, she's very observant, but she also shows confidence when it comes to things her Uncle Henrick can discuss with her. Despite her age, she reassures her uncle that she's a brave girl. She also knows how to make her friend feel good and is her mother's support.

STEFANIE (THURSDAY)

CHARACTER TRACKER

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

Annemarie's Uncle Henrik is the brother of Annemarie's mom. He's described as a tall man with deep blue eyes. He is also a fisherman, doing his daily work like fishing or milking the cow. He owns a boat and lives by the sea close to Sweden in a country house. **DIRECT CHARACTERIZATION**

He is kind and patient. He is honest and humble. He knows Annemarie is young and may not understand everything, so he takes the time to explain the idea of bravery to her. He doesn't get angry when she questions him, and he admits that Mama and he have been lying to her about "Aunt Birte" and other things. **INDIRECT CHARACTERIZATION**

ESMERALDA (WEDNESDAY)

SCENE SETTER

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

The dusty barn gleamed in the pink light streaming through the window. Dust could be seen floating in the air, and the floor, full of hay from the straw piles near the back wall. A half full foaming milk bucket sat on a shelf covered by a cloth.

ERIKA (THURSDAY)

SCENE SETTER

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

The barn was about 20 pias (feet) from the house. It is surrounded by a wooden fence. It looks like a grid. It's large, with high ceilings, and cold. It's filled with straw. There are a few cows in it, and in the corner, buckets for collecting milk. It is a crowded, messy place with a lot of things. There are some chickens and chicken poop on the ground. There are tools (shovels) to move the straw for cleaning and taking care of the animals. The barn is dark, only a single spotlight in the middle of the roof provides very little light. Its walls are made of wood, with large windows and a gate that closes with a padlock. The floor is made entirely of dirt, which can't be seen because of the straw covering it. It has a very peculiar smell. [It smells like a delicious soup made of cow poop and straw.] There are many flies. It's a peaceful, quiet place, and the ideal way to escape from reality. Henrick treats his cow like **a person**. The cow is happy.

ARSENIA (WEDNESDAY)

CULTURE CONNECTOR

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

In *Number the Stars*, the Johansen family uses a fake funeral as a code to protect Jewish people. The closed coffin, candles, and warning not to open it for “health reasons” are part of a resistance strategy.

This reminds me of how, in my culture and in U.S. communities like Los Angeles, people use signals, whistles, or social media to warn about ICE. In both cases, coded language helps face danger.

The wake is a tradition that began in the Middle Ages and is still practiced in many cultures. These chapters show how rituals can become powerful tools for protection and resistance.

AURICELIA (THURSDAY)

CULTURE CONNECTOR

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

The connection between USA and Brazil, culturally is very different, Brazilian people is very warm, we will always try to find a solution for everything, even when we don't plan ahead. We are not a punctual people. We are really friendly people.

The American people are more competitive and work harder than people in Brazil.

My point of view the American people is very charitable, they do help a lot of another people when something happened, like natural disasters they always stand for help. In my neighborhood I do see when someone need help they always find away to do so. When one of my neighbors passed away we did Meal Train for her husband and son.

MARISELA (WEDNESDAY)

EMOTIONS EXPLORER

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

Chapter 8, Page 73

“She [Annemarie] had always been fascinated by her mother’s stories of her own childhood. She remembered the names of all the cousins, the great-aunts, and -uncles: who had been a tease, who had been a grouch, who had been such a scold that her husband finally moved away to a different house...”

This detailed description made me feel happy. Let me explain you why. For those mothers who are raising their kids far from their hometowns and family, it is common to talk to our kids about those family members that impacted our childhood in a positive way.

- So, this description made me feel happy because (even when it came to Annemarie’s mind trying to identify the dead woman the adults were talking about) it makes me feel identified with Mrs. Johansen when I talk to my kids about someone in my family and they identify him/her even when they haven’t interacted with him/her since they were toddlers, that’s fun. They basically can identify and describe people in my family’s tree who have never met before. At least, Mrs. Johansen and I can be sure that our kids listen and pay attention to us, although sometimes it seems that they are ignoring us hehehe

FLAVIA (THURSDAY)

EMOTIONS EXPLORER

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

When I saw the title of Chapter 8, I thought, "My Gosh ! Who died? Maybe Ellen's mom or dad?" I thought it will be hard to choose a moment that will make me feel happy and I don't want to talk about something that brings me a sad memory or painful moment. So, I kept reading, trying to find a part that I could write about. I finished Chapter 8 still not sure what to choose, so I went to Chapter 9.

It continued with the same theme.

I thought about writing something about life at Uncle Henrik's house and how it reminded me of my grandpa's farm. But my grandpa didn't have cows, he just had fruit trees and chickens.

Talking about death after losing my father is very difficult.

After this loss, I became more insecure and fearful person in certain situations in life.

Related to fear or maybe the opposite of it, one thing got my attention was when Uncle Henrik said: "It is much easier to be brave if you do not know everything" (page 76), then I chose it because I agree and I reflected.

Sometimes, not knowing the whole truth can be a kind of temporary protection. It helps us not to suffer too much. It avoids or delays suffering.

Here in Brazil, we say : "Sometimes ignorance is a blessing."

But ignorance can have two sides:

Good side : less fear, less anxiety, more peace of mind.

Bad side : you can miss good opportunities, make bad choices, vulnerability or become too passive.

The world is too crazy that sometimes it would be good don't have much information.

CAROLINA (WEDNESDAY)

PASSAGE PICKER

He tugged at the cow gently but firmly, pulling down the last of the milk. The bucket was half full, frothy on the top. Finally he set it aside and washed the cow's udder with a clean damp cloth. Then he lifted the bucket to a shelf and covered it. He rubbed the cow's neck affectionately. At last he turned to Annemarie as he wiped his own hands with the cloth.

KARINA (THURSDAY)

PASSAGE PICKER

“It is easier to be brave if you don’t know everything.”

“Ignorance is bliss” = feeling of complete calm and peace

blissful = adjective

bless = verb

blessed = adjective

blessing = noun A gift from God

LILY L. (WEDNESDAY)

PREDICTION MAKER

MAKE A THOUGHTFUL PREDICTION ABOUT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN NEXT.

Knowing that the Nazis are all over Norway, I think they will show up at Uncle Hendrik's house. Let's hope that everything will work out well for the heroes of this interesting, tense story. I think the German soldiers' attention will be drawn to the fact that there are suspiciously many people in the house at a late hour.

Still, the characters like Uncle Henrik, Annemarie, and Mama are brave and prepared, using clever cover stories and quick thinking to protect their friends.

IRA (THURSDAY)

PREDICTION MAKER

MAKE A THOUGHTFUL PREDICTION ABOUT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN NEXT.

Perhaps Chapter 10 will tell how the Rosen family, along with Henrik on his boat, because "the weather is good for fishing," will be like "a brown leaf that floated with movement of the water, which could have blown from a tree in Sweden and floated to Denmark" and in their turn, they will leave the dangerous coast of Denmark and reach the coast of a Nazi-free Sweden.

Perhaps the gleaming wooden casket, rested on supports in the center of the living room, contains weapons and explosives for the Resistance, for "friends of Great-aunt Birte" who now sit in the candlelit room.

ESL Book Club Assignments (Chapters Ten and Eleven)

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