Symbols and Associations in *The Book Thief*

Post-Reading Assignment

**Objective**: Make original connections between specific characters, objects, places, events, etc. in *The Book Thief* and analyze the significance of each item to show what it reveals about the character(s) and about Nazi Germany in general.

**Lesson**:

1. Getting started:
   * Students will use crayons, colored pencils or markers to complete the assignment on a blank sheet of paper.
   * Review the definition of symbol.

*Symbol*: A person, place, thing, event or pattern in a literary work that designates itself and at the same time figuratively represents or “stands for” something else.

* + General instructions: Select one item from each category provided to represent in the form of a picture or a written word.

1. Symbols and Free-Association Categories:
   * Students select one character from the list provided: Liesel Meminger, Hans Hubermann, Rosa Hubermann, Rudy Steiner, Death [Narrator], The Fuhrer, etc.
   * Continue with additional categories, selecting one from each category.
   * Categories may include the following: characters, places, colors, objects, food, plants, time, books, nicknames, thematic topics
2. Written Analysis:
   * After students have filled up their page with various symbols and objects, they are to write about each item (2-3 sentences per item), explaining how how/why the item is significant and how it connects to the other items being discussed. Specifically, what does the item reveal about the character and what does it tell us about Nazi Germany?

Examples:

**Objects:**

Teddy Bear

Snowman

Toy Soldier

Dominoes

Dead soccer ball

Hairbrush

Accordion

Cigarettes

Word Puzzles

Newspaper

Toolbox

**Food:**

Carrot

Pea-soup

Potato

Bread

Stale bread

Fruit (apples)

Candy

Stale cookies

Champagne

Flour

Coffee

**Colors:**

Black

Red

Bleached bedsheet white

Dark, dark chocolate

Lemon Yellow

Safe Blue

Silver

Tooth-colored

Skull-colored

Gray

**Topics:**

Sacrifice

Loyalty

Obligation

Triumph

Fear

Innocence

Suffering

Hate

Love

Oppression

Luck