Sample Kidblog book review of *Number the Stars*

In the middle of a war, is it possible for one child to help save another? In *Number the Stars,* by Lois Lowry, a ten-year-old girl named Annemarie tries to help her Jewish friend Ellen escape from the Nazis in Denmark. In this story, the author teaches us that everyday people, including 10-year-old girls, can be brave and help save the lives of others. Another message in the story is that friends look out for friends, even in dangerous times.

The story takes place in Denmark in 1943 during World War II. The German Nazis have invaded and taken over the country. In Copenhagen, where Annemarie Johansen and her family live, German soldiers patrol every street corner. Food is rationed, and Nazis are searching for Jews and shutting down their businesses. Annemarie lives with her parents and younger sister Kirsti. Although life is scary, Annemarie seems like a happy, carefree girl at the beginning of the story. She loves to run and play with her friend Ellen. But she also knows to be fearful of the Germans. She has learned how to adapt to the difficulties of the German occupation. She doesn’t complain about the shortages of food and electricity. Annemarie is also loyal to her friend Ellen as she tries throughout the book to help Ellen and her family.

The problem begins when the Nazis close Jewish-owned stores and schools. Annemarie learns that Ellen’s parents must go away and Annemarie’s family is asked to take care of Ellen for one night. During the night, German soldiers invade Annemarie’s home, demanding to know where the Rosens are hiding. Ellen pretends to be Annemarie’s sister so the soldiers won’t find out she is a Jew. To avoid further trouble, Annemarie, her mother, her sister, and Ellen travel by train to the northern part of Denmark where Uncle Henrik lives. Annemarie soon realizes that Uncle Henrik has a dangerous plan to save the Rosens. Will Annemarie be able to help save her friend Ellen, or will the Nazis capture the Rosen family?

I loved *Number the Stars*. I like to read about history and World War II, and this book gave a lot of information about life in Denmark under the Nazi occupation. I could imagine the Nazi soldiers with their dark black boots, guns, and German shepherd dogs trying to terrorize people. This was because the author wrote scenes very descriptively. I also liked the way the author skillfully created suspense when the Germans were almost finding the Rosens. Finally, I liked how the author used symbolism in the story. A Jewish Star of David necklace became a symbol of Annemarie’s friendship with Ellen. I recommend this book to students who want to read an uplifting story that takes place during a war.