

# Diagnostic book thief essay assignment

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



Assignment Sometimes in literature, a character's actions oppose the ideals, values, morals, etc. of his or her society. A character in *The Book Thief* who opposes his or her society is Rudy Steiner. Of course, there was a purpose for Zusak to make Rudy exactly the way he did. Rudy was a little boy when we first meet him, and we see him grow up in one of the most horrific eras of our world's history. At the end of the story, Rudy had deep anger towards Hitler, saying " the quote where he wants to kill him. (Zusak, pg) But he wasn't always like that. In the beginning, he didn't really care. At first, he didn't even fully understand what was going on. He was nothing but a little kid. This is what Zusak was trying to hit at. A lot of kids that went through the whole Nazi era didn't really understand what was going on, and therefore didn't really care. It doesn't mean they didn't care about the Jews; they were just too young to comprehend what was going around them. However, as the story progressed, Rudy changed his mind.

Again, Zusak was making him symbolize all those little kids back in those days. Rudy changed his mind because Hitler affected him directly. Hitler tried to take him to a school away from his family, and then ended up taking his father away. It wasn't until Rudy was directly and personally affected by Hitler's actions that he started to show remorse against him. It wasn't until then that Rudy started to realize what was going on around him. Another way that Rudy opposes the ideals and morals of his society, is the whole Jesse Owes incident.

Jesse Owens was a famous and respected gold medaled runner. However, he was African American. He wasn't what was expected; light skin, light hair, and colored eyes. The fact that Rudy covered himself head to toe in

charcoal, and was running as fast as he could, trying to impersonate Jesse Owens, would have been frowned upon. Yet, “ I just wish I was like Jesse Owens, Papa. ” (Zusak, 60) said, Rudy. Jesse Owens overall was not approved of. But Rudy didn't care. He had an idol, and he wanted to be like him, no matter what others said or thought.

And Rudy often did this. He believed what he wanted to believe, he did what he wanted to do, and listened to who he wanted to listen to, whether people approved or not. He was too young when the whole Jesse Owens incident occurred, and he didn't understand that if someone had seen him covered in coal they could've sent him to the camps. Luckily only his father had seen him. Zusak uses Rudy in the representation of kids, such as himself, who didn't understand that even the slightest action done out of the norm could have cost them their life.

Rudy helps Zusak show how the Nazi era affected even the kids, how it changed their point of view and their way of living. Overall, Rudy along with the other characters allow Zusak to write about the Nazi era in a new way. In a way that hits us like a bag of bricks and leaves us thinking about how we could have let someone hurt others so much and the endless points of view that were forever changed. Zusak reminds us that there are still thousands of people and perspectives that we haven't thought of or tried on for a change of shoes.