

# Hugo cabret essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The fabulous setting in *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick is in a crowded train station in Paris, France. I know this is the setting because in the very beginning of the book, Selznick draws the Eiffel Tower at night, which is found in Paris. The time frame of this book is in the 1930s. I know this because Hugo Cabret makes references throughout the novel about events that happened in, say, 1929, which he finds as a recent event. Also, everyone at a theatre saw movies as “works of art” and in black and white, which had also been very common in the 1930s.

The mood in this book can be interpreted in many ways. Why? Because part of this novel is pictures, and “pictures are worth a thousand words” which, in turn, brings many different perceptions to the mood, or feeling, of the book. Some may say that the book is demeaning, unrealistic, and just plain boring. My discernment with the mood with the book, however, is mysterious, yet very simple in a sense as well. I believe this because (spoiler alert! ) when the old man from the toy booth takes his notebook, you really have no idea whether he will actually burn it or not.

As for the simple interpretation of the book, Hugo had had a normal life that focused on running the clocks, even if he had little mysterious things to worry about. As you have already guessed, Mr. Hugo Cabret is the main character in *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, hence the title of the book. Hugo is a white-skinned boy of 12 years of age with very dark brown hair. He only has a worn-out tweed coat and normal pants because he cannot afford new clothing. Hugo has always been an amazing clockmaker and mechanic (see pictures below), and could basically fix anything you threw at him since age six.

Hugo Cabret has an interesting life and personality, based on what past experiences have brought him. When Hugo was a small boy, his father, a horologist, had died in a fire at the museum he had worked for. After the terrible tragedy, his uncle took him under his (drunken) wing and made him his “ clock apprentice. ” Through the first few months, Hugo began to think his life was just getting back to normal... until his uncle didn’t show up for three days. Soon accepting the fact his uncle had died as well, Hugo became an even harder-working boy than he was before, and kept running the clocks just as he had been taught.

Hugo became starving, determined, fearful, and always-tired trying to keep the clocks running (for he was the only person left to run the clocks). Hugo, before his father died, was fascinated by an automaton his father had shown him one day at the museum. (Drawing showed at right. ) The machine could write (for it had a pen in hand) but was rusted so badly that Hugo and his father could not get it to do so. Hugo and his father tried day and night every day to get it to work, but the problem was, they just... couldn’t. When Hugo’s father died, Hugo had to continue his father’s work by himself and fix the automaton.

To fix the rusted, broken, disheveled machine, Hugo steals toy parts from an old toy booth in the train station. Although his method works for a very long period of time, the old man running the toy booth, Papa Georges, catches him stealing a blue mouse from his toy booth and takes his notebook with the automaton pictures in it. This detour sends Hugo into a screeching stop as to fixing the broken automaton. In order to get his notebook back, Hugo follows the old man home and gets help from the man’s god child, Isabelle.

Isabelle helps him retrieve his book and through the next couple of weeks, Hugo has successfully fixed the machine.

Finding pride in his work, he realizes only one thing is missing, a key to allow the machine to write. He sets off to find the key (in the shape of a heart) and realizes that none other than Isabelle, the girl who helped him, had the key strung along her neck. Hugo desperately asks for the key, and throughout much persuasion, he finally withholds the key to the machine. Hugo then goes home. This book has many small climaxes, his father dying, him finding the machine, getting caught by the old man, getting the key from Isabelle, but the one climax that really sets the story is when they find out what the automaton actually draws.

Hugo does have a solution to his problem he had been facing for quite some time. He did fix the automaton, and, not only that, discovered what it drew. The Invention of Hugo Cabret by Brian Selznick has a very cliché ending. The main moral of this story, or the theme, is that one must not stop trying to accomplish their goals, and never EVER stop believing in yourself and others.