

Superb Student Samples - Journal Responses

The Book Thief

Sample 1	Feedback
<p>Zusak establishes the characters Hans and Rosa as parental figures to Leisel, to help her get over her abandonment issues. Hans and Rosa also have contrasting bonds with Leisel. Zusak characterizes Rosa as a demeaning figure to Leisel while he characterizes Hans as a more comforting figure. In a scene where Hans and Rosa give Leisel a doll, Hans apologizes for the appearance of the doll and Rosa responds with, "What are you talking about? She's lucky to have <i>that</i> much" (40). The emphasis on the word "that" creates a negative tone and shows how Rosa is talking down to Leisel, and it continues to develop her demeaning character. In a different scene where Leisel is shown having a nightmare, it explains how Hans is the one who comes to help her and comfort her through her traumatic experiences. Zusak says, "trust was accumulated quickly, due primarily to the brute strengths of the man's gentleness, his <i>thereness</i>" (36). The use of "gentleness" and the emphasis of "thereness" create a positive tone and shows how much Leisel already trusts him. Hans is replacing the father figure that was taken from her and he does it easily with the comfort Leisel receives from him.</p>	<p>The Good:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wonderfully focused topic sentence - Good contextualization of quotes - Good analysis of tone and word choice in the quotes - Ending sentence helps reinforce everything that is stated <p>Could Improve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The topic sentence is worth enough of an essay; focusing on 1 character deeply may be better - To add depth, consider the cause and effect relationship between each artistic choice
Sample 2	Feedback
<p>Zusak describes life on Himmel street as a place where mostly poor people lived in despite the growing economy in Germany. "The children rarely visited each other's homes, for they were small and there was usually very little in them" (47). The narrator connotes the words "little" and "small" to further show how underprivileged they were living at the time. Although Zusak uses negative words to describe Himmel street he also states, "Also, they conducted their favorite pastime, like professionals, on the street" (47). Furthermore, the narrator adds an activity that children love to play to emphasize that even though they lived poorly, they were still able to cherish the little things. Children including Liesel and Rudy don't oversimplify anybody or anything because they have only known what they've had which isn't much, so social classes don't matter to them and it plays out to be a huge influence to kids.</p>	<p>The Good:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I love how this responses focuses on how Zusak creates/establishes the setting, Himmel Street - Word choice -> what it means or connotes - Kids playing -> effect <p>Could Improve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Embed or introduce quotes better - Paragraph structure; much of the stuff after the quotes could fit before it as a way to introduce and prepare the reader for the meaning
Sample 3	Feedback
<p>Zusak establishes Rosa as an excellent aggravating woman who loves strangely and uses Rosa to help compliment her husband Hans who was made of kindness and soft silver eyes. "It involved bashing her with wooden spoon and words at various intervals" (35). The narrator applies the usage of the words "bashing" and "words at various intervals" to help build the type of woman Rosa resembles which is angry and strange. Zusak quickly writes "But she did love Liesel Meminger" (35). To give the readers a greater insight as to how the role play of Rosa as Liesel's foster mom will end up benefiting her in the long run. The application of two contrasting parents will help shape the woman Leisel will become because she will have known two different personalities and how to make them in affect within herself which will decide how she perceives it in the real world.</p>	<p>The Good:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'The narrator implies...;' - 'To give readers insight' - This responses focuses heavily on how the reader is supposed to interpret the info <p>Could Improve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Embed or introduce quotes better - Again, paragraph structure. More before the quote to prepare the reader for the interpretation

Sample 4	Feedback
<p>Zusak establishes Hans as a positive person by introducing him as liesel foster father, who comforts her and is kind to her.e. Zusak establishes a foil relationship with Rosa and Hans for comedy since Rosa is established as Liesel foster mother and is introduced as a grouchy and disrespectful mother by interpreting her actions. Both parents juxtaposed each other by the mother Rosa being aggressive and the father Hans being kind. “She possessed the unique ability to aggravate almost anyone she ever met”(35). “Hans came in every night and sat with her, a few nights after that he whispered I’m here, it’s all right”(36). This portrays both the parents emotions towards liesel and their character.</p>	<p>The Good:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The use of the word ‘foil’ correctly and explaining the effect/purpose - Use of word ‘juxtaposed’ - Excellent quotes <p>Could Improve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Never explained why Zusak would want comedy in this part of the book - Embed and introduce quotes - Add more to that last sentence: What is the author’s overall message/theme?