

**English** (All students)

Dear Eighth Graders,

This summer, in preparation for English 8, you'll be reading *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak, a moving, at times funny, and often thought-provoking story about a girl living in Germany during World War II. As you read, consider issues of **justice, friendship, sympathy, and power** that arise in the novel. It would be a good idea to annotate as you read. When you're done reading, think about the following questions. These are issues we'll discuss when school starts:

- **Who is the story's narrator and what impact does that have on the story?**
- **How does the relationship between Liesl and her adoptive parents develop over the course of the story?**
- **Liesl has very important friendships with three characters in the novel: Hans (her stepfather), Rudy, and Max. What draws her to each of these people? Which specific moments seem to solidify the bond she has with each of them? And why?**
- **How does the title relate to the story? Why do books take on such a significance in the story?**

You should be prepared to take a quiz on the novel in the second class in September. We will also write an essay on the novel together, as a class.

If you have any questions, please call (446-3049) or e-mail me ([pbentley@mphschool.org](mailto:pbentley@mphschool.org)). I am so looking forward to meeting you all and hearing what you have to say about the book. Enjoy your summer!

Sincerely,  
Ms. Bentley Hoke

p.s. If you read other books that you love this summer, let me know what you're reading either via email or when we return to school in September. I'm always excited to hear what my students like to read.