

EXAMPLE SHORT PERSUASIVE THEME

Prompt: A hero can be defined as a person who has noble qualities and who engages in brave acts. Choose a character from one of the novels you have read this year, and write a Persuasive Theme showing that he or she is a hero according to this definition. Include at least four paragraphs.

TITLE OF PAPER: A Different Kind of Hero

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A Different Kind of Hero

The day that Liesel in *The Book Thief* is assigned to Hans Huberman as his foster child is a very lucky day; indeed, he can be considered the major hero in this story that takes place before and during World War II in Germany. A hero can be defined as a person who has noble qualities and engages in brave acts. At first, and on the surface, Hans does not appear to be a hero. He is an older man with grown children and a wife named Rosa. He paints peoples' houses in the daytime and plays the piano accordion in pubs around the town at night. Interestingly, though, when he meets Liesel for the first time, his gentle voice and patient manner win her over. They become friends, and he helps her in many ways, like a father should. As the novel unfolds, though, his ability to act according to his beliefs and his willingness to risk his life and welfare are the real factors that dictate his classification as a "hero."

With regard to his commitment to act according to his beliefs, Hans and Leisel are living in a time when Hitler is coming into power as a political leader and Hitler's beliefs are being adopted by everyone around them. Hitler believed that the German people should be special; he therefore wanted to rid the culture of all Jews and others who did not fit his idea of what the German people should be. In contrast, Hans does not agree with this belief. He believes that all types of people should live together in harmony. As a result, he acts according to his belief. He neglects to join the Nazi Party founded by Hitler, even

though he is threatened by Nazi Party members. Additionally, he does not participate in the burning of books by the Nazi Party. He allows Liesel to keep her precious books and even to keep a book that she steals from the burning pile of books. When his son, Hans Junior, calls him a coward for not joining the Nazi Party and walks out of his life, Hans still does not join the Nazi Party.

With regard to his willingness to risk his life and welfare, Hans steps forward several times when he might have been more protective. The first time he risks his life is when he is asked by a Jew named Max to shelter him in his home. Max lives in Hans and Rosa's basement for many months, and they share their meager food supplies with him. They even endure having their house searched by the Nazis when Max is hiding in the basement. This was at a time when the Nazis were sending Jews to concentration camps and killing them. If Hans had been discovered for sheltering a Jew, he probably would have been killed or sent to the war front. Another time Hans risks his welfare is when the Jews are being marched through their town on the way to a concentration camp. He sees that the Jews are starving and barely able to walk, so he tries to give some bread to one of the Jews. As a result, he is severely beaten and eventually sent off to the war.

In conclusion, Hans Huberman has many qualities of a hero. He shows noble qualities when he acts according to his beliefs even when he is pressured by others. He is willing to endure their wrath and even his son's rejection. He shows that he is willing to risk his life when he shelters Max in his home and offers bread to a starving man in plain sight of Nazi guards and the community. All in all, Hans Huberman is the very picture of a hero; he is an ordinary man who is willing to act in brave and extraordinary ways.

Works Cited

Zusak, Markus. *The Book Thief*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005.