

# Discussion Questions for "Girl in the Blue Coat"

Discussion questions for the 2018 All Iowa Reads selection, "Girl in the Blue Coat" by Monica Hesse.



- How was this book different from other books you've read about World War II? How was it similar? What did you learn that you didn't already know?
- What did you think about Hanneke's work moving foods and goods on the black market? What skills do you have that would make you good (or bad) at that kind of work?
- Who was your favorite character? Why?
- Who do you think made the best choices in this book? Why?
- Hanneke is mourning, in different ways, the death of her boyfriend Bas and the end of her friendship with Elsbeth. How do these losses affect the decisions she makes? Do you think she's right to blame herself for sending Bas to his death? (Is she right to blame Elsbeth for her marriage?)
- What do you think of Mirjam and Amalia's plan?
- This book won the Edgar Award for Best Young Adult Mystery. Do you think it was successful as a mystery? When did you figure out what had happened?

## Questions from *Disrupting Thinking - Why How we Read Matters*

*Disrupting Thinking - Why How we Read Matters* by Kyleene Beers and Robert Probst presents a vision of what reading and what education across all the grades could be. In brief, whether fiction or nonfiction, they are encouraging students to read beyond the page. The goal should not be to "teach" the book, but to have rich conversations; *Disrupting Thinking* highlights ideas on how to develop those discussions. [Listen to the authors in a short podcast.](#)

Reading should be disruptive - make us think. When you read, think about what is...

### In the book

- What's this about?
- Who's telling the story?
- What does the author want me to know?

### In your head

- What surprised me?
- What does the author think I already know?
- What changed, challenged or confirmed my thinking?
- What did I notice?

### In your heart

- What did I learn about me?
- How has this text changed my thinking about the world?

"We read to learn more about ourselves. We read to become more than we knew we wanted to be. (p. 71)

"Making sure readers read beyond the words of the page" (p. 70)