

Sally Student

Mrs. Cotton

Composition and Literature

23 August 2019

Resisting Rotten Leadership

In 1943, German-occupied Amsterdam was a dangerous place to live. Monica Hesse outlines those perils in her recent novel, *Girl in the Blue Coat*. Much like the citizens of Amsterdam during World War II, Hesse's characters have three choices: collaborate, cooperate, or resist. A young girl named Mina chooses to resist in a powerful way, and doing so makes her one of the most admirable characters in the novel.

When readers are first introduced to Mina, she is presented as Judith's younger cousin and an active member of the resistance. Mina cares for children in Jewish families when they are separated from their parents and older siblings prior to transport. In addition to this role, Mina secretly captures evidence of the atrocities Nazis commit by hiding a camera in a baby bassinet. When Hanneke discovers this, Mina reluctantly explains: "I read about some photographers in an underground paper. They take pictures of the occupation. They document it, so when the war is over, the Germans can't lie about what they did here...Every time I take a baby for a walk, I can take secret photos. I have the whole war on my camera" (Hesse 124). These photographs could easily endanger the resistance group and cost Mina her life, but she believes in recording the wrongs she sees around her and chooses to take the risk anyway. This decision ultimately forces other members of the resistance to put their lives on the line to retrieve a hidden camera, but readers are still impressed with Mina for sticking by her beliefs.

Commented [MOU1]: MLA heading

Commented [MOU2]: Be sure to include an original title. Your title cannot be *Girl in the Blue Coat* or Summer Reading Essay.

Commented [MOU3]: I started with a hook to get my reader's attention. I used past tense here because I wrote about history, but the rest of my essay is in present tense because I'm writing about the novel.

Commented [MOU4]: The next sentence provides the context my reader needs: the title and author of the book I'm writing about. Remember to italicize the title of the book.

Commented [MOU5]: This sentence rephrases the prompt.

Commented [MOU6]: Here is my thesis. My reader now knows that I will argue that Mina chooses to resist the Nazis despite the danger.

Commented [MOU7]: This topic sentence lets readers know I am writing about Mina and her role in the novel.

Commented [MOU8]: Here I outline Mina's role in the novel and begin to highlight her brave resistance.

Commented [MOU9]: Here I include a quote from the novel as evidence/support.

Commented [MOU10]: After the quote, I explain how the quote supports my argument and wrap up my evidence.

Student 2

Most characters in *Girl in the Blue Coat* shy away from direct action against the Nazis, but there are a few who cannot sit idly by while their friends, neighbors, and even family members are stolen away. Mina is one such individual. Despite the risk, she chooses to take illegal photos, documenting the atrocities around her for future evidence. Readers can learn a lot about courage from Mina's character.

Commented [MOU11]: In my conclusion, I rephrase my thesis and summarize my main arguments.