

Study Guide for The Devil's Arithmetic, by Jane Yolen

**A. Character List:**

Identify each character below (To identify means to tell things about the character that will keep him or her from being confused with anyone else in the story. This can be physical description or something he/she does. Avoid general terms like "caring" or "good.")

1. Hannah Stern \_\_\_\_\_
2. Grandpa Will \_\_\_\_\_
3. Grandma Belle \_\_\_\_\_
4. Aunt Rose \_\_\_\_\_
5. Aunt Eva \_\_\_\_\_
6. Aaron \_\_\_\_\_
7. Gitl Abramowicz \_\_\_\_\_
8. Shmuel Abramowicz \_\_\_\_\_
9. Yitzchak \_\_\_\_\_
10. Shifre \_\_\_\_\_
11. Rachel \_\_\_\_\_
12. the Badchan \_\_\_\_\_
13. Fayge \_\_\_\_\_
14. Rabbi \_\_\_\_\_
15. Rivka \_\_\_\_\_
16. Wolfe \_\_\_\_\_
17. Reuven \_\_\_\_\_
18. the blokova \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Setting:**

PLACE:

1. Where is Hannah's home town? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Where is Grandpa Will and Grandma Belle's apartment? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Where do Gitl and Shmuel live? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Where is the wedding to take place? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Where is the concentration camp? \_\_\_\_\_

**TIME:**

1. For Chaya, what is the season? \_\_\_\_\_
2. For Chaya, what is the year? \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Plot:**

1. List 4 events that take place before the fantasy part begins. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. List 10 events that take place after the fantasy part begins \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. In 2 or 3 sentences, explain what Hannah figures out at the end about her family. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**D. Religious terms and other terms:** explain each term below.

1. Passover \_\_\_\_\_
2. yarmulke \_\_\_\_\_
3. afikoman \_\_\_\_\_
4. *malach ha-mavis* \_\_\_\_\_
5. "organize" \_\_\_\_\_
6. Kaddish \_\_\_\_\_
7. midden \_\_\_\_\_

8. Lilith's cave \_\_\_\_\_

**D. Quotations:**

**Who said each of these wise sayings (character name or narrator)?**

**What is going on when it is said, and what is the significance?**

1. "A sacrifice unasked is so much greater." p. 19 \_\_\_\_\_

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2. "Being married does not bother me. But getting married – that frightens me!" p. 33 \_\_\_\_\_

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3. "Pray, for we are all in God's hands." p. 78 \_\_\_\_\_

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4. "Work Makes You Free." p. 87 \_\_\_\_\_

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5. "But promise me you will cry no more before these monsters." p. 95 \_\_\_\_\_

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6. "In this place she would not think. Only do." p. 96 \_\_\_\_\_

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7. "As long as we can remember, all those gone before are alive inside us." p. 113 \_\_\_\_\_

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8. "We count our luck with a different measure here in the camp." p. 119 \_\_\_\_\_

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9. "I will organize some water." p. 123 \_\_\_\_\_

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10. "This is not a place for a fool where there are idiots in charge." p. 133 \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Questions:**

1. A. Who lights the holiday candles at Grandpa Will's? B. Why is this odd? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What are three things that are different about Hannah herself once she is in the fantasy place? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. What are three basic rules for survival in the camp? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What is the Nazis' story about why the Jews have to go with them? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. Why won't the other Jews believe Hannah when she tries to tell them what is going to happen? (2 reasons)

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6. What is their first definite clue that the Nazis have been lying? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. List six (6) jobs that Jews did in this camp. \_\_\_\_\_

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8. What are two ways that the term "the devil's arithmetic" is used in the book? \_\_\_\_\_

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9. For what did the blokova lose her third finger? \_\_\_\_\_

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10. What is Hannah's final act of courage and unselfishness? \_\_\_\_\_

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11. List the 5 survivors of this camp that Hannah knew. \_\_\_\_\_

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12. Beside the names of two of these, tell their American names. \_\_\_\_\_

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