ELIE WIESEL’S

NIGHT

A Balanced Approach to Academic Rigor and Cognitive Development
Elie Wiesel’s
Night
A Skills-Based Approach to Teaching the Novel
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Elie Wiesel’s Night: A Skills-Based Approach to Teaching the Novel
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Date

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Student Discussion Topics
Section 3 (pp. 47–65)

Vocabulary Words

altruistic (p. 48)  imprudent (p. 54)
pittance (p. 48)  untenable (p. 56)
cynical (p. 49)  muster (p. 59)
wizened (p. 51)  credible (p. 60)
reminiscing (p. 54)  manacled (p. 62)

Discussion Topics

1. Read the first paragraph on page 47. Discuss how the simile suggests what may have happened to the former occupants of the camp.

2. On page 48, discuss how Wiesel uses a physical description to characterize the German tent leader.

3. During the medical checkup, why was the dentist more conscientious than the other doctors?

4. On page 51, how does Wiesel’s description of Akiba Drumer’s “discovery” reflect his changed attitude toward the study of Kabbala?

5. On page 51, what is ironic about the description of the Czechoslovakian dentist who was removing the gold teeth from the inmates?

6. On page 52, read the paragraph that begins, “A few days after my visit…” Discuss how the synecdoche effectively describes Wiesel’s physical and emotional condition.

7. Read the paragraph on page 52 that begins, “A few days later after my visit, the dentist’s office was shut down.” What does this suggest about Wiesel’s attitude toward himself and others at this time? Use examples from the text to support your conclusions.

8. On pages 53–54, how does the use of anachrony help to characterize the French girl who gave Wiesel advice after Idek’s attack?
9. Read the paragraph on page 54 that begins, “I had watched it all happening without moving.” What does the rhetorical question reveal about Wiesel’s conflict?

10. Why did Franek change from being a “pleasant and intelligent young man” to someone who tormented Wiesel’s father “on a daily basis,” “thrash[ing] him savagely”?

11. What was ironic about Wiesel finally losing his gold crown?

12. On page 54, Idek beat Wiesel’s father. On page 58, Wiesel received his own beating from Idek, stating, “I was thinking of my father. He would be suffering more than I.” What does this statement suggest?

13. Read the paragraph on page 59 that begins, “In no time, the camp had the look of an abandoned ship.” Discuss how the figurative language and syntax is used to describe the supreme temptation that the two unguarded cauldrons of soup presented to the inmates.

14. On page 61, Wiesel states, “Every bomb that hit filled us with joy, gave us renewed confidence.” Why did the inmates feel this way? Use examples from the text to support your conclusion.

15. Read pages 61–62. What was the attitude of the boy who was executed?

16. Read the last paragraph on page 63. Which words from the paragraph help the reader to understand the meaning of the word sabotage?

17. On page 64, why are the three gallows called “three black ravens”?

18. In what ways was the execution of the little pipel different from the other executions?

19. What does the little pipel’s execution symbolize?

20. The text on pages 61–65 describes two hangings in detail. After describing the first, Wiesel states, “I remember that on that evening, the soup tasted better than ever…” (p. 63). After describing the second, Wiesel states, “That night, the soup tasted of corpses” (p. 65). Discuss the differences between the two executions and the specific reactions that the statements seems to suggest.
# Answer Key

## Discussion Topics

### Section 3 (pp. 47–65)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion Topics</th>
<th>Targeted Concepts, Processes, Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **1. Read the first paragraph on page 47. Discuss how the simile suggests what may have happened to the former occupants of the camp.**  
**Possible Response:**  
*The simile, “The camp looked as though it had been through an epidemic: empty and dead,” compares the actual appearance of the camp to what the appearance might have been if most of the former occupants had died of a deadly, contagious disease. After most epidemics, it is customary for the bodies of those who died to be cremated in order to prevent the spread of “the disease.” In this case, however, the reader may conclude that the “disease” was actually the institutionalized racial and cultural hatred that underpinned the “Final Solution,” the systematic extermination of the Jews and all others who did not epitomize the Aryan standard in every way. The Nazi government did not want the Jewish culture to “contaminate” Europe, so it systematically attempted to destroy it. It is reasonable to assume that the former inmate residents of this camp had been sent to the crematories.* |  
- Draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them from text  
- Identify and analyze the use of a simile  
- Identify and analyze the possible influences of the historical context on a literary work  
- Reference: p. 47 |
| **2. On page 48, discuss how Wiesel uses a physical description to characterize the German tent leader.**  
**Possible Response:**  
*Wiesel characterizes the tent leader as being a gluttonous predator. He had “an assassin’s face,” which suggests that for him, killing was commonplace, cold-blooded, and emotionless. Like an assassin, death was part of his job, and this man would shed no tears over the death of any inmates in his care. The man had hands “resembling a wolf’s paws.” This description alludes to an animal that is known to be a savage predator of other animals that are smaller or weaker. His gluttony becomes evident in his “fleshy lips” and the fact that “he could hardly move, he was so fat.” The comment about the camp’s food agreeing with him could be a suggestion that he was not particular about what he ate and that he had access to all the food he desired. Considering that food in the camps was scarce and many times used as a reward for cruelty toward the inmates, the tent leader must have exhibited many cruel acts in order to have been able to maintain excess weight when all those around him were emaciated from starvation.* |  
- Identify and analyze the use of diction and allusion  
- Analyze the characteristics and style of text  
- Reference: p. 48 |
| **3. During the medical checkup, why was the dentist more conscientious than the other doctors?**  
**Possible Response:**  
*The dentist was not searching for tooth decay but for dental work made of gold.* |  
- Summarize text by identifying main ideas and supporting details  
- Reference: pp. 48–49 |
Vocabulary Activities
Section 3 (pp. 47–65)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary Word</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Suggestions for Developing Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| altruistic      | • Meaning in context  
(In fact, this affection was not entirely altruistic…)  
(p. 48)         | • Ask the students to read the entire paragraph that contains this sentence. Discuss what the meaning of the word might be within the context of the paragraph. Point out the clues inside the text that would support such a meaning. |
|                 | • Denotation        | • Have the class look at the dictionary definition (denotation) of the word. |
|                 | • Predicate adjective | • Point out that this word is used as a predicate adjective because it modifies the noun “affection” and it follows the linking verb “was.” |
|                 | • Latin roots       | • Point out that the word altruistic has the Latin root alter, which means “other.” |
|                 | • Other forms of the word | • Other forms of the word include altruistically (adv.), altruism (n.), and altruist (n.). |
|                 | • Synonyms          | • Synonyms for the word altruistic as it is used in the sentence include unselfish, selfless, compassionate, kind, public-spirited, charitable, benevolent, beneficent, philanthropic, and humanitarian. Have students record the word and all of its forms and synonyms on note cards. |
|                 | • Diction / Tone    | • Discuss that the narrator is being sarcastic. The “affection” was twisted. |
Night

Short-Answer Quiz
Section 3 (pp. 47-65)

1. Read the paragraph on page 52 that begins, “A few days later after my visit, the dentist’s office was shut down.” What does this suggest about Wiesel’s attitude toward himself and others at this time? Use examples from the text to support your conclusions.

2. Read the paragraph on page 54 that begins, “I had watched it all happening without moving.” What does the rhetorical question reveal about Wiesel’s conflict? Use examples from the text to support your opinion.

3. On page 59, read the two paragraphs that begin with “Hundreds of eyes were watching...” and end with “In our minds, he was already dead.” What was the attitude of the watchers? Use examples from the text to support your opinions.
## Answer Key

**Multiple-Choice Quiz**

**Section 3 (pp. 47–65)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Targeted Concepts, Processes, Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. During the initial medical checkup, the dentist was more conscientious than the doctor because he— | • Summarizing text by identifying main ideas and supporting details  
• Reference: pp. 48–49 |
| A. cared about the inmates  
B. was looking for decay  
C. was looking for gold ✓  
D. was a German Jew | |
| 2. On page 51, Wiesel’s comment about Akiba Drumer’s discoveries suggests that he no longer— | • Identify and analyze tone  
• Reference: p. 51 |
| A. respects Akiba Drumer ✓  
B. likes Akiba Drumer  
C. believes in the Bible  
D. believes the prediction | |
| 3. Wiesel uses anachrony on pages 53–54 to explain why the French girl— | • Identify and analyze the use of anachrony  
• Reference: pp. 53–54 |
| A. was Jewish  
B. was Arayan  
C. spoke English  
D. spoke German ✓ | |
| 4. On pages 61–62, the description of the Polish youth’s behavior before he was executed suggests that he was— | • Identify and analyze tone  
• Reference: pp. 61–62 |
| A. frightened  
B. defiant ✓  
C. greedy  
D. obliging | |
| 5. On pages 64–65, the slow strangulation of the little pipel symbolizes the slow strangulation of Wiesel’s— | • Identify and analyze the use of symbolism  
• Reference: pp. 64–65 |
| A. defiance against the Germans  
B. quest for liberty  
C. faith in a just God ✓  
D. desire to live | |
Night

Multiple-Choice Test
Open Book

1. On page 4, which of the following sentences best suggests the idea that twelve-year-old Wiesel may not have felt emotionally close to his father at the beginning of the novel?
   A. My father was a cultured man, rather unsentimental.
   B. He rarely displayed his feelings, not even within his family, and was more involved with the welfare of others than with than of his own kin.
   C. The Jewish community of Sighet held him in highest esteem, his advice on public and even private matters was frequently sought.
   D. My parents ran a store.

2. Young Wiesel began studying with Moishe the Beadle because his father—
   A. refused to find his son a Kabbalist master
   B. believed there were no Kabbalists in Sighet
   C. disliked most Kabbalah masters
   D. wanted Wiesel to have a tutor

3. When the Germans first occupied Sighet on pages 9–10, the officers’ attitude toward the Jews was—
   A. discriminatory but reserved
   B. impossible but friendly
   C. demanding but fair
   D. distant but polite

4. The apostrophe on page 11 helps the reader to understand that Wiesel’s father—
   A. believed they were safe
   B. encouraged others
   C. would not survive
   D. was very afraid

5. On page 12, the statement, “The ghetto was ruled by neither German nor Jew; it was ruled by delusion,” suggests that the Jews who lived in the ghettos—
   A. disliked the present leaders
   B. ignored signs of impending danger
   C. realized that they actually were prisoners
   D. did not recognize governmental leadership
Directions: Choose one question and write a well-organized essay that responds to the question. Use specific examples from the text to support your position.

1. Read “The Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech Delivered by Elie Wiesel in Oslo on December 10, 1986,” pages 117–120. Discuss a main implication you feel Wiesel might want his readers to consider after reading *Night*. Use examples from both the speech and the novel to support your position.

Rubric:
Student responses should take a position and clearly identify and explain what they feel to be a main implication that Wiesel may have been making in the novel *Night*. Students should provide specific examples from both the speech and the novel that illustrate or support the identified implication.

**Superior papers (90–100)**
- Identify a clear implication
- Use specific, apt references that are used to prove a point, rather than for plot summary
- Provides specific support, using blended or embedded quotes effectively
- Contain specified, supported, insightful analysis
- Are focused, never wavering from the prompt
- Are well-argued
- Are organized
- Contain scholarly commentary
- Contain upper level, but effective vocabulary and sentence structure
- Are thorough
- Are perceptive, persuasive, and have voice
- Become the best papers when they have flair, depth of complexity, and apt, specific references from both the speech and the novel

**Good, solid papers (80–90)**
- Are well written, but with less maturity, less perception, and less specificity than the superior papers
- Contain analysis, but are less thorough than the superior papers
- Are stylistically less mature than superior papers
- Answer the question with adequate support, but contain fewer specific references and/or specific references that are not as effective as the references found in the superior papers
- Reveal a more limited understanding than the superior papers

**Superficial/ Base-line Papers (70–80)**
- Answer the prompt, but are formulaic, mechanical
- Contain some analysis
- Contain specific references from both the speech and the novel, but the references are not as numerous or effective as those contained in the good, solid papers
- Are simplistic
- Are characterized by an Immature style
- Are less organized
Appendix IV

Specialized Vocabulary

Section 1

- Hasidic (p. 3) – refers to the Hasidic or Chassidic Jews, who practice a form of Orthodox Judaism
- Shekhinah in Exile (p. 3) – refers to a Jewish term for the divine presence
- Kabbalah (p. 3) – refers to the study of Jewish mysticism
- synagoge – a central place for Jewish communal worship and study; a building where an ark containing the Torah scrolls faces the ancient site of the Temple in Jerusalem
- “destruction of the Temple” (p. 3) – refers to what traditional Judaism views as the only legitimate temple; built in Jerusalem by King Solomon circa 950 B.C.E., destroyed by Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar circa 587/6, rebuilt 70 years later, only to be destroyed by the Romans in 70 C.E.
- Maimonides (p. 4) – Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, who lived from 1135 to 1204 and was a major medieval rabbi, scientist, physician, philosopher, and author
- mysticism (p. 4) – a somewhat vague term that refers to ideas and behaviors that sometimes transcend what usually is considered reasonable while searching for a definitive religious experience
- Zohar (p. 5) – known as “Book of Splendor”; the main literary work of the Kabbalists
- Gestapo (p. 6) – (Geheime Staatspolizei) the Nazi Secret Police headed by Himmler that was formed in 1933, became a major force in Germany by 1936, and functioned mainly to persecute Jews and dissenting political parties
- Talmud (p. 8) – general term that refers to studies of the Jewish religion
- Rosh Hashanah (p. 8) – the Jewish New Year that occurs in the fall of the year, considered the holiest day on the Jewish calendar
- Rebbe (p. 8) – title given to the Hassidic spiritual leader
- Zionism (p. 8) – named for Mt. Zion, the ancient Hebrew term for Jerusalem, a cause that worked toward returning the Jewish people to Palestine
- Fascist party (p. 9) – a political party that believes the highest priority should be given to the state or nation, giving little importance to personal or individual freedoms
- Passover (p. 9) – occurring in the spring, a major Jewish holiday that commemorates the Exodus, the deliverance of the Hebrews from Egypt; part of an eight day festival during which Jews abstain from all foods that contain leavening; celebration includes preparing and consuming a special ritual meal called the Seder and reciting a traditional narrative called the Haggadah along with hymns and songs
- The Yellow Star (p. 11) – patterned after the Star of David; worn to by Jews to identify them as being Jewish
- ghettos (p. 10) – a section of a town or city where all Jews were forced to live, separated from the other citizens by walls and barbed wire
- Shavuot (Pentacost) (p. 12) – also known as the Festival of First Fruits, one of the oldest annual observances that appears on the Jewish Calendar