



 Prestwick House

Activity Pack

NIGHT

BY ELIE WIESEL



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Item No. 200821

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading

Research Presentations and Posters

Objectives: Researching topics to provide a context for our reading of *Night*
Presenting research to the class

Activity

Night is an historical as well as autobiographical novel/memoir, and it will help if you learn a bit more about the events and people that shaped the Holocaust and World War II before you begin reading. To this end, your group will be assigned one of the following topics to research and will prepare a five-minute presentation to deliver in class on that topic. Your group must also prepare a poster to be used during the presentation and displayed in the classroom for the duration of the unit on *Night*. Posters should cover key points about your topic and may include photographs, illustrations, graphs, and whatever other visual aids you deem appropriate.

Topics for Research:

- Non-Jewish victims of the Holocaust
- Eugenics
- The Evian Conference
- Dr. Josef Mengele
- Kristallnacht (The Night of Broken Glass)
- Anti-Jewish Propaganda in Nazi Germany
- Babi Yar
- Warsaw Ghetto Uprising
- Kindertransport and Lebensborn
- German, Hungarian, and Polish citizens' knowledge of concentration camps
- Nazis' Successful Attempts to Disguise the True Purposes of Deportations, Shower Rooms, etc.
- Increasingly Harsh Laws Against Jews

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 1–9

Plot and Tone

Objectives: Identifying significant incidents in the plot
 Identifying tone

Activity

Author Elie Wiesel has chosen simply to separate the chapters of *Night* with white space rather than titling or numbering them. This gives you the opportunity to make up titles for the chapters as you read along.

Sometimes, chapter titles provide an overview of a chapter's content or point towards a significant incident or character in that chapter. Chapter 1 of *Night*, for example, might have been entitled “Moishe the Beadle” or “Expelled.”

On the other hand, a chapter might take its title from part of the dialogue or descriptive prose in the chapter—or even from a significant word that sums up the overall tone of the installment. In this scenario, Chapter 1 might be called “Night Falls” or “Jews, Listen to Me.”

As you read *Night*, take some time after each chapter to consider possible titles. Fill in the chart by writing one “plot-related” title and one prose or “tone-related” title per chapter.

Possible Chapter Titles

| Chapter | Plot-Related Title | Prose or Tone-Related Title |
|---------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |
| 5 | | |
| 6 | | |
| 7 | | |
| 8 | | |
| 9 | | |

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 2–8

Characterization

Objective: Keeping a character log on Eliezer's father

Activity

As *Night* progresses, we learn more and more about Shlomo Wiesel. We learn from Eliezer's observations, Shlomo's actions, and Shlomo's words. As you read, keep a "character log" on Eliezer's father. In the left column, note any significant or interesting actions or speeches of Eliezer's father, as well as any insightful observations Eliezer makes about him. In the right column, comment on what each entry in the left one tells you about Shlomo's character. If you quote directly from the book, remember to record page numbers along with the quotations.

Once you fill up the spaces allotted on this page, please use the back to continue your character log. **You should make a minimum of three log entries per chapter.** One sample log entry (from Chapter 1) is provided for you.

CHARACTER LOG FOR SHLOMO WIESEL

| ACTION, SPEECH, or OBSERVATION | WHAT IT SAYS ABOUT SHLOMO'S CHARACTER |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| "My father was crying. It was the first time I saw him cry. I had never thought it possible." | Up to this point, Shlomo has not shown his vulnerability or much sensitivity to his son. He has been a relatively distant father. |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Name: _____

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STYLE COMPARISON CHART

| Source of Selection | Diction: Simple or Elevated? Narrative or Dialogue? | Sentences: Long, Short, or Both? | Sentences: Simple, Compound, Complex, Compound-Complex? (Choose all that apply.) | Literary Devices Used |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass | | | | |
| Walden | | | | |
| Swann's Way | | | | |
| "Hills Like White Elephants" | | | | |
| Night | | | | |

Name: _____

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Chapters 3 and 4

Inference

Objective: Inferring information from the text

Activity

Occasionally, writers do not spell out the significance of an incident or piece of dialogue they include in their narratives; instead, readers are expected to *infer* meaning from the text. For example, in Chapter 1, after he describes Moishe the Beadle's return to Sighet, Wiesel writes, "My mother was beginning to think it was high time to find an appropriate match for Hilda." A person reading the memoir should realize that it is not Hilda's romantic prospects that are of interest. Rather, Wiesel includes this detail so that readers can infer that concern about what Moishe has told the Jews of Sighet is low: Eliezer's mother assumes that her daughter's future will be uninterrupted by the Nazis and that life will go on as normal.

To complete the following chart, fill in the second column with the fact or point that may be inferred from the passage or incident described in the first.

Inference Chart

| PASSAGE OR INCIDENT | WHAT MAY BE INFERRED FROM THE PASSAGE OR INCIDENT |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Eliezer is told to say that he is eighteen by a veteran prisoner. The prisoner also insists that Eliezer's father should claim to be forty. | |
| After seeing that Eliezer has already finished his own ration, Eliezer's father says, "Me, I'm not hungry." | |
| During a lengthy hanging, Juliek comments, "This ceremony, will it be over soon? I'm hungry...." | |
| Following the hanging, Wiesel mentions that "the soup tasted better than ever." | |

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 4

Found Poem

Objective: Composing a “found” poem

Activity

A “found” poem is a poem made up entirely of phrases, sentences, or quotations found in the text. Go back through Chapter 4 and make up a found poem of your own. The poem could tell the reader something about Wiesel’s emotional state, but this is not necessary; it may have direct relevance or be totally unrelated to the action of the story, which is one of the best parts of writing a found poem.

Your poem should be at least 10 lines long. The lines do not need to rhyme, but they certainly may. You can arrange the phrases in any way you like and change the punctuation, but do not deviate from Wiesel’s actual words. You may add *and*, *a*, *the*, or alter the tense of verbs, if necessary. Move adjectives and adverbs to create different images. Give the poem a title, which may or may not come from the book. Below is an example taken entirely from Chapter 3.

The spring sunshine
A beautiful April day
In the sky a few white clouds
In the morning, black coffee

Little gardens here and there
At noon, soup
Right out in the country
On the sunny road

A beautiful April day
The spring sunshine
My sister’s fair hair
Turned into ashes...

Name: _____

Date: _____

Sample Answer

Choice #1: conflicted

Reasons behind it: The camps cause Eliezer to doubt, then deny, and finally to abandon his faith in God.

Choice #2:

Reasons behind it:

Choice #3:

Reasons behind it:

Choice #4:

Reasons behind it:

Choice #5:

Reasons behind it:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 6

Dramatic Recitation

Objective: Reading and dramatically performing poetry written on the Holocaust

Activity

In addition to fiction and memoir, an amazing body of poetry has been written in response to the Holocaust. Reading and listening to some of it in class will enrich your study of *Night* and the individual's response to the Shoah.

Each group is responsible for finding—using the library or the Internet—a poem that deals with the Holocaust and for performing the poem for the rest of the class. What follows is a list of just a few of the many print sources for Holocaust poetry; using “Holocaust poetry” as a search term will also yield a wealth of possibilities.

You will need to make many choices concerning your group's performance of the poem. Will you read your poem in unison? In turns? Will one person read it alone while the others do something else (play a drum, hold a prop, hum a hymn)? Will you start out at full volume and end up in a whisper? Dim the lights in the classroom? These options and any others you might come up with are all up to your group. Just make sure to remember the reasons behind your choices. After your performance, your group must turn in a brief summary and explanation of your dramatic interpretation of the poem.

Partial List of Possible Sources for Holocaust-related Poetry

Against Forgetting: Twentieth-Century Poetry of Witness

ed. Carolyn Forché (W.W. Norton and Company: 1993)

Art from the Ashes: a Holocaust Anthology

ed. Lawrence L. Langer (Oxford Press: 1995)

Beyond Lament: Poets of the World Bearing Witness to the Holocaust

ed. Marguerite M. Striar (Northwestern University Press: 1998)

Holocaust Poetry

ed. Hilda Schiff (St. Martin's Press: 1995)

The Last Lullaby: Poetry from the Holocaust

ed. Aaron Kramer (Syracuse University Press: 1998)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 8

Plot

Objective: Arranging events in *Night* in order

Activity

While *Night* covers several months in Eliezer's life, Wiesel wrote it such that the events can feel like those of one long, surreal, seemingly endless night. He has said in interviews that he thinks of the Holocaust as an extended period of "night" in the 20th century.

Because of this, it can be difficult to keep track of the order of events in *Night*. The following is a lettered list of some of the book's major incidents. Arrange them in the proper order and record the progression at the bottom of the page. Your answer should take the form of a series of letters: If Event B is first, Event F is second, and Event C is third, your list should read "B, F, C," and so on.

- A. Eliezer's father becomes ill with dysentery.
- B. Eliezer sees a man shot for approaching a soup cauldron during an alert.
- C. Eliezer sees a boy kill his own father over a piece of bread.
- D. The Jews of Sighet learn that Mrs. Schächter's "vision" is real.
- E. Eliezer perceives his father as unsentimental and unaffectionate.
- F. Eliezer and his father decide not to observe Yom Kippur.
- G. Juliek plays Beethoven for his fellow prisoners.
- H. The Jews of Sighet are made to wear the yellow star.
- I. Eliezer has surgery on his foot.
- J. A pipel is hung at Buna.
- K. The Jews of Sighet are forced to live in a ghetto.
- L. The prisoners at Buna are forced into a long march in the snow.
- M. Eliezer sees live children thrown into a fire.
- N. Eliezer realizes that Rabbi Eliahou has been abandoned by his son.