

Approved for use in English IV

Summary of the Work:

It is 1941. Eliezer Wiesel is a 12-year-old- Hungarian Jew who lives in Sighet, Romania; he is deeply religious and yearns to become a mystic through studying the cabbala. Soon the Germans enter Sighet, and put all Jews in two ghettos, then they are deported via cattle cars to Auschwitz. It is here that Elie sees and smells crematories for the first time. Elie and his father Shlomo are sent to labor camps in Buna, where they manage to survive being surrounded by death daily. There are times when they almost do not pass selection, which would mean death. As the Allied fronts advance, the Germans and the prisoners flee deeper into Germany, forcing a 40+ mile death march in the snow, first to Glewitz, then to Buchenwald. The prisoners, aware that the American forces are near, revolt and scatter. The same day, April 11, 1949, the Americans arrive and liberate the entire camp. Elie survives, but a mirror reflects Elie as a corpse.

Rationale:

There have been many accounts of the Holocaust expressed through different mediums. Among them, Elie Wiesel's *Night* is one of the most effective, with language that is both simple and powerful. *Night* is relevant for young adults because of the great importance of knowing what happened in the past to ensure that history doesn't repeat itself. The brevity of *Night* will appeal to many students, but there is far more between the covers that one might expect--the strength of Wiesel's writing will mesmerize them, while the reality he describes, will challenge and disturb their perception of humanity. The raw emotions, justifiable anger, and confusion triggered by the book are vital to developing an understanding that such atrocities actually occurred, and continue to occur today.

Both the voices of those who suffered and the voices of those who were silenced must be given a forum to express their anger, fear, and sadness.

Through *Night*, students are exposed to Wiesel himself, a man who, being incomprehensibly dehumanized, spent his life fighting tirelessly for peace. In order to take action against apathy, students must realize that they themselves are capable of changing events. Elie Wiesel calls for awareness and knowledge, and he has declared that to remain silent and indifferent is the greatest sin of all.

Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:

- * Print resources are available from the library media center and libraries in the district. Contact any library media specialist to view the scholarly sources.
- * Scholarly reviews are also available online through Books in Print and Gale. Contact the library media specialist to obtain username and password information to access the subscription database of full-text reviews.

Noted Distinction:

- 1986 Nobel Peace Prize
- Nobel Literature Prize nominee
- Winner of the Medal of Freedom
- Founder of the Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C.

Readability:

- Lexile Score: 570
- Readability Level: 8.7

Learning Resources Guidelines:

- The novel meets the Learning Resources Guidelines.

Standard Alignment: [\(link\)](#)

Approval:

Submitted to Committee:

Approved for Adoption: 1994

Notes on the Text:

(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

Narrative: A first hand account of what happened during Adolf Hitler's "Final Solution" from Elie Wiesel's perspective.

Connection to the Curriculum:

As a Literary Memoir, *Night* is appropriate for the senior world literature curriculum, with its 20th Century presentation of Hebrew Literature.

Additional Connections:

(AP, Honors, Essential/Applied, Dramas, Films, etc.)