

Violence

- Which kind of violence is more traumatic to Eliezer, impassioned violence or cold, dispassionate violence? Or is there no difference?
- In what ways does the language in the memoir help portray the content? What writing techniques does Wiesel use?
- The prisoners are violent towards each other. Is this different from the violence they suffer from their oppressors? Explain.
- Who is more cruel, man or God - according to Wiesel? Why?
- It took being face to face with extreme violence and cruelty for individuals in the book to believe it was happening. Why?

Identity and Faith

- In the final sentence of *Night*, it is Elie who looks into the mirror and does not recognize who is looking back. Why do think identity is such an issue for Wiesel? In considering your response, try to connect the issue to your own life: How do you define your own sense of identity? What parts of social life are key to your sense of identity? (e.g., Religious beliefs? Political beliefs? Groups with which you affiliate? Family values that you hold? And so on.)
- When *Night* begins, Eliezer is so moved by faith that he weeps when he prays—but he is only 12 years old. How does Eliezer's relationship with his faith and with God change as the book progresses? When the book ends, he is 16 years old. How would you describe him?
- What literal and symbolic meanings does "night" have in the book?

Family

- How does family change for Elie through *Night*? How do his feelings for his father evolve through their experiences in Auschwitz?
- Discuss the other father/son relationships we encounter in *Night* and how they impact Elie.
- Are Elie's feelings about his father (at the end of the book) normal? Do they make him a bad person? Should he feel guilty or not?

Race and Prejudice

- Why were the Jewish people persecuted? Why were Weisel and his family taken to Auschwitz?
- What are some ways that the prisoners try to keep their Jewish religious and cultural traditions alive? Did they continue? Why or why not?
- "I looked at my little sister, Tzipora, her blond hair neatly combed, her red coat over her arm: a little girl of seven." What does this quote tell us about the racial ideals of the time?
- How does prejudice lead to violence? Does racism exist in our society today? Explain.

Lies and Deceit

- Eliezer lies to his cousin Stein about Stein's family, giving him false hope. Was this an act of mercy or an act of cruelty?
- Why do the Jews of Sighet continue to talk themselves out of facing the dangerous reality of their situation, even when they are confronted with facts from people like Moishe the Beadle?
- Does self-deception preserve life or endanger life? Is self-deception more dangerous to the Jews or beneficial in the long run? Explain and provide textual support.

“In retrospect I must confess that I do not know, or no longer know, what I wanted to achieve with my words. I only know that without this testimony, my life as a writer—or my life, period—would not have become what it is: that of a witness who believes he has a moral obligation to try to prevent the enemy from enjoying one last victory by allowing his crimes to be erased from human memory.” - Elie Wiesel-

“Any fool can make history, but it takes a genius to writ it.” -Oscar Wilde-