

Summer Reading for English Honors II
Night by Elie Wiesel

Dear English II Honors Students and Parents,

Welcome to English Honors II and what will hopefully be a fun and enjoyable year of literature and writing study. I am looking forward to the challenges and growth you will experience throughout this course and the fun we will have reading, writing, and discussing literature.

In an effort to better prepare you for this coming year and to increase your familiarity with renowned literary texts, you are expected to read the novel *Night* by Elie Wiesel before the start of next year. This novel is one Holocaust survivor's memoir of his struggles and experiences in the Nazi Concentration camps during World War II for which the author himself has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and the text itself has been widely received and translated in multiple languages across the world.

This text approaches many mature and difficult topics that would be expected in a novel about a Holocaust survivor such as death, loss, suffering, and abuse as well as some minor use of language; however, *Night's* literary value is found in its use of historical context, universal themes of remembrance, perseverance, faith, and family, and the narrative elements employed throughout the pages of this memoir. It is a tough read that should not be approached lightly, but an important one for all students planning to approach a collegiate-bound and advanced placement path to read and experience.

Your assignment is to obtain a copy of the novel and to complete the study guide provided. This is to help guide your reading and to focus your analysis on the key elements of the text. All students should be prepared for a test/essay on our first day of school. This novel is available in PDF online, the library, almost any bookstore, and Amazon.com. I also have copies available in my room that can be checked out and returned.

Although Sparknotes and Schmoop are great resources that can further your comprehension of this novel, you must not avoid reading the original text as this is part of the process of summer reading.

I look forward to working and learning with you next year. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Ms. Houck
gl_chouck@seovec.org

Assignment: Essay (test grade--due the first day of school)

Choose ONE of the below essay topics to write in response to *Night*. This should be a multi-paragraph essay and should have evidence and cited quotations woven throughout to defend your ideas and arguments about the chosen topic. Please note that plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form and will result in an immediate zero upon submission.

Topic 1: *Night* brings to light how cruelty can spawn more cruelty, creating monsters out of even the best people. Does Elie himself escape this fate, or does he, too, succumb to it?

Topic 2: Dehumanization, or the act of stripping a person of their humanity and belittling them to nothing more than an animal or an object, is shown vividly in the memoir *Night*. What effect does Dehumanization have on the Jewish prisoners in the text, and what advantage did it give to the Nazi guards?

Topic 3: Although a brutal depiction of the holocaust, *Night* also offers many moments of hope. Where are these moments in the text, and what greater purpose do they serve for the memoir as a whole?

Topic 5: Elie briefly discusses Rabbi Elaihu and his son during the death march. What was the purpose of including this moment in the text? Why do you feel this moment was so crucial for Elie?

Topic 6: Indifference is the act of doing nothing and feeling nothing when tragedy and pain occur. On a scale between getting upset and being happy, indifferent is just nothingness. Elie shows several moments of indifference throughout the memoir, and on more than one occasion criticizes the lack of action from the prisoners, the guards, and the bystanders who were aware of the atrocities happening during the holocaust. Why might indifference be viewed as worse than strong emotions such as anger or happiness?