

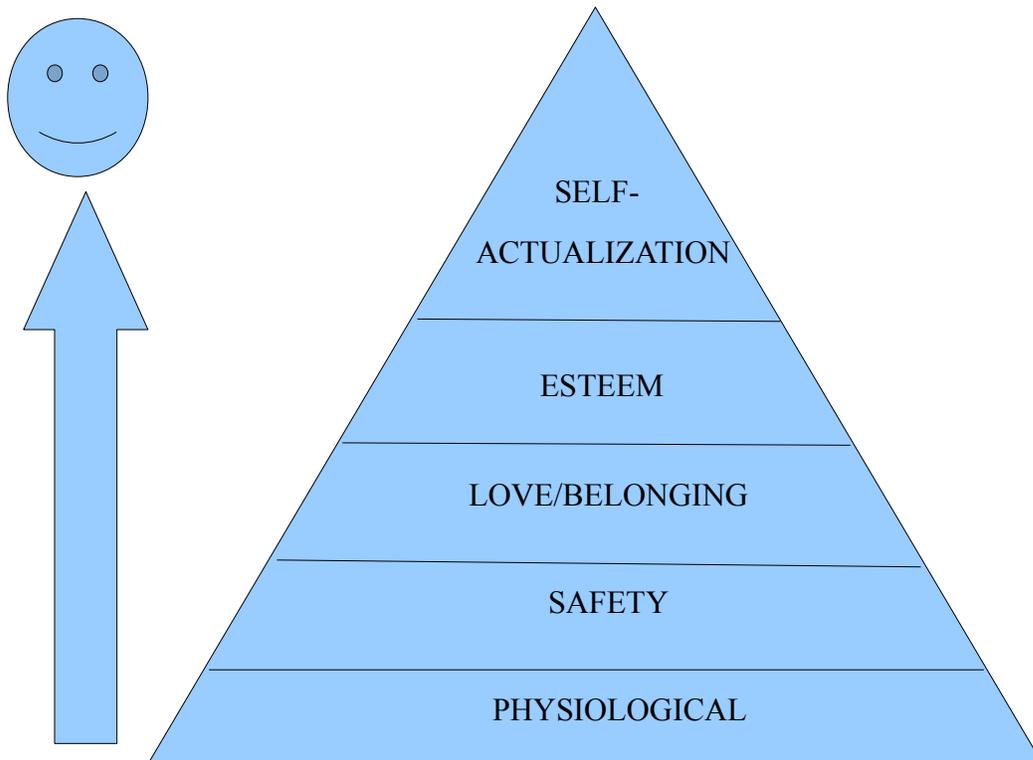
**Night by Elie Wiesel, trans. Marion Wiesel**  
**A Unit About Survival and the Human Spirit**

**Chapter 1 (p. 1)**

- Setting: Sighet, Transylvania (present day Romania) in 1941, narrator is 13
- Moshe the Beadle- befriends and mentors the young Elie
  - Beadle- a lay (non-clergy) member of a church or synagogue who performs various functions.
  - Synagogue- a Jewish place of worship.
  - Jews- an ethno-cultural and ethno-religious group tracing its lineage back to the historical Israelites. Jewish ethnicity, nationality, and religion (Judaism) are strongly interrelated. The modern state of Israel was established in 1948 (post-WWII).
  - Torah- The central concept of religious Judaism. It is the foundation for all Jewish religious study and for the Old Testament of the Christian Bible.
  - Talmud- A central text of Rabbinic Judaism.
  - Hasidic Judaism- a branch of Orthodox Judaism that promotes spirituality through the popularization and internalization of Jewish mysticism as the fundamental aspect of the faith.
  - Kabbalah (Jewish mysticism)- a set of esoteric (hidden, secret, arcane) teachings meant to explain the relationship between an unchanging, eternal, and mysterious force and his mortal, finite creation as expressed in the Jewish faith.
- Explain the attitudes of Elie's father, Elie, and Moshe toward the study of Kabbalah.
- Elie's family of 6
  - Father (Shlomo)- practical, well-respected in the Jewish community. Emotionally distant.
  - Mother (Sarah)- assisted Elie's father in running the family shop.
  - Hilda- eldest daughter.
  - Bea- second child.
  - Elie- third oldest child.
  - Tzipora- Elie's little sister.
- Elie is very spiritual and devoted to God- pay attention to the role of religious faith in the book and how the events of the Holocaust impact Elie's faith.
- Moshe is expelled from town with other foreign Jews, returns several months later and tells a horrifying story. Explain what this story is.
- None of the other Jews believe Moshe's story of the slaughter, and all refuse to leave.
- Fascists gain power, everyone still goes about their business. Soon German army cars appear in the streets.
- Arrest of Jewish leaders during Passover- "The race toward death had begun." (p. 10) This marks the beginning of the escalation of events which will eventually lead toward the concentration camps and death.
- Confiscation of valuable property, forced wearing of the Star of David.
- "The yellow star? So what? It's not lethal..." (p. 11) foreshadowing, irony
- Jews rounded up into ghettos. "The ghetto was ruled by neither German nor Jew; it was ruled by delusion." (p. 12) What does this quote mean to you?
- Father summoned to meeting of council- "The story he had interrupted would remain unfinished." (p. 12) Explain the significance of this statement.
- All Jews in the ghetto are deported.
- Why aren't the Jews of Sighet more visibly concerned about what is happening?
- Imagery: "Our backyard looked like a marketplace. Valuable objects, precious rugs, silver candlesticks, Bibles and other ritual objects were strewn over the dusty grounds- pitiful relics that seemed never to have had a home. All this under a magnificent blue sky." (p. 15) What do

the objects symbolize? What is the significance of the last sentence of the quote?

- “The Hungarian police used their rifle butts, their clubs to indiscriminately strike old men and women, children and cripples.” (p. 16) This is an example of the type of inhumane treatment which will only continue to get worse.
- The ghetto is turned into a ghost town and described as “dead”... personification.
- “Faster! Faster! Move, you lazy good-for-nothings!” (p. 19) In another translation: “Faster! Faster! Get on with you, lazy swine!” yelled the Hungarian police. (Stella Rodway's translation, p. 17)  
Dehumanization
- Elie's family moved to smaller ghetto: “The ghetto was not guarded. One could enter and leave as one pleased.” (p. 20) Multiple chances to flee.
- “There no longer was any distinction between rich and poor, notables and the others; we were all people condemned to the same fate- still unknown.” (p. 21) Think about Wiesel's conversation with Oprah in which he described the systematic removal of the elements of the Jews' identities.
- Forced to relieve themselves in the synagogue while waiting to be transported- degradation of culture.
- Loaded into cattle wagons, heading off to an unknown destination.
- The type of mistreatment and dehumanization which the Jews are subjected to throughout *Night* represents a systematic attempt to bring them down to “lower” levels of existence until eventually they are killed. **Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs** describes the factors which motivate people's actions. If Maslow's theory is correct, as people are reduced to more desperate and degraded states (lowered down the levels of the pyramid), they will be motivated by needs and desires which are more and more basic. As a result, they needs will motive them more than the higher needs. When people move “up” the pyramid, they desire higher meaning.



PHYSIOLOGICAL: the physical requirements for human survival

SAFETY: feelings of protection from harm

LOVE/BELONGING: the need for connection and acceptance

ESTEEM: the desire to be respected by the self and others

SELF-ACTUALIZATION: the realization of a person's full potential

-MASLOWS HIERARCHY AND *NIGHT*:

<https://prezi.com/xsxnslh57vw/maslows-hierarchy-of-needs-applied-to-night/>

-MASLOW'S HIERARCHY AND *UP*:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iucf76E-R2s>

-Story of the experience of being deported:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Xc66W2W1k4>

-Synagogue in Sighet:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1N5kkgFgV6Y>

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## Chapter 2 (p. 23)

Elie Wiesel speech:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=cgAZQXcGxVE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cgAZQXcGxVE)

-What does Madame Schachter think she can see? How might this serve as foreshadowing?

-Two “prophets” so far- Moshe and Madame Schachter

-What is the significance of this?: “She [Madame Schachter] received several blows to the head- blows that could have been lethal. Her son was clinging desperately to her, not uttering a word. He was no longer crying.” (p. 26)

-Arrival at the station- Auschwitz.

-“There was a labor camp on the site. The conditions were good. Families would not be separated. Only the young would work in the factories. The old and the sick would find work in the fields.” (p. 27) Lies to keep everyone calm and compliant, belief = naivety/denial?

-What do the passengers see and smell when they arrive at Birkenau? (Birkenau = reception center at Auschwitz Concentration Camp)

Auschwitz blueprint:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=XfFKaDGqxxY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XfFKaDGqxxY)

Yom Hashoah 2015:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=guvGPIxa0hI>

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## Chapter 3 (p. 29)

-“The beloved objects that we had carried with us from place to place were now left behind in the wagon and, with them, finally, our illusions.” (p. 29) What do the objects symbolize?

-Elie is forever separated from his mother and Tzipora.

“Eight words spoken quietly, indifferently, without emotion. Eight simple, short words. Yet that was the moment when I left my mother. There was no time to think, and I already felt my father's hand press against mine: we were alone. In a fraction of a second I could see my mother, my sisters, move to the right. Tzipora was holding Mother's hand. I saw them walking farther and farther away; Mother was stroking my sister's blond hair, as if to protect her. And I walked on with my father, with the men. I didn't know that this was the moment in time and the place where I was leaving my mother and Tzipora forever. I kept walking, my father holding my hand.” (p. 29)

-A fellow prisoner tells Elie and his father to lie about their ages. Why?

-Introduction of the notorious Dr. Mengele.

[www.mengele.dk](http://www.mengele.dk)

- “How was it possible that men, women, and children were being burned and that the world kept silent? No. All this could not be real. A nightmare perhaps...” (p. 32) How *could* this be possible? What would make people behave this way, and why didn't someone stop it all sooner?
- “For the first time, I felt anger rising within me. (In Rodway's translation: “For the first time, I felt revolt rise up in me.”) Why should I sanctify his name? The Almighty, the eternal and terrible Master of the Universe, chose to be silent. What was there to thank Him for?” (p. 33)
- Read the “Never shall I forget” passage (p. 34). Discuss the importance of remembering.
- Some of the prisoners who are appointed to guard the others are just as cruel as the SS men... why?
- All of the Jews' hair is shaved off- humiliation.
- Constant running- what is the purpose?
- Loss of all sense of time.
- Arbitrary rules- must stand up, etc.
- “Work or crematorium- the choice is yours.” (p. 39)
- Why does Elie not intervene when his father is being beaten? (p. 39) Has he quickly changed, or has he just discovered what he was always like?
- Sign at the entrance to the main Auschwitz camp: “Work makes you free.” What is the irony?
- “These were the showers, a compulsory routine. Going from one camp to the other, several times a day, we had, each time, to go through them.” (p. 41) Rodway: “These were the showers, a compulsory formality at the entrance to all these camps. Even if you were simply passing from one to the other several times a day, you still had to go through the baths every time.” (p. 38). Why?
- Tattoo- what is the significance?
- Was Elie right to lie to Stein by telling him that his family was fine?
- Transferred to Buna.

Stanley Milgram “Obedience”:

- Participants were paid to take part in what they were told was a study measuring the effects of punishment on memory. In reality, they were involved in a study meant to record their tendency to follow orders.
  - Participants were told they would be either the "teacher" or the "learner" in the experiment based on the luck of the draw. (Unknown to participants, it was rigged so they would always be the teacher. The "learner" was an actor working for the experimenter.)
  - The teacher would read word pairings and ask the learner to recall them. For every wrong answer, the teacher was to administer a shock to the learner. (The learner had been strapped to a machine in another room; this was witnessed by the teacher. Unbeknownst to the teacher, the learner was an actor who was not actually being shocked.)
  - The shock administered was to increase in intensity with each mistake (all the way up to a point labelled as being extremely dangerous). The "learner" complained of a heart condition in the presence of the participant before entering the laboratory. If the teacher hesitated to administer the shock, an "authority figure" (a man in a white coat) would order the teacher to continue and stress the importance of the experiment.) Most participants fully believed the learning experiment was real.
  - While 50% of the participants stopped obeying at some point, THE OTHER 50% were like this guy (Start at 20 min):  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=bY3SC2Rq\\_V8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bY3SC2Rq_V8)
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## Chapter 4 (p. 47)

Buna (largest Auschwitz sub-camp):

- All kinds of depravity thriving- why is the head of the tent so nice to the children?
- What happens with Elie's shoes?
- Why could the camp band not play Beethoven?
- Why does the dentist want to see Elie?
- “At that moment in time, all that mattered to me was my daily bowl of soup, my crust of stale bread. The bread, the soup – those were my entire life. I was nothing but a body. Perhaps even less: a famished stomach. The stomach alone was measuring time.” (p. 52) How does this connect to Maslow's Hierarchy?
- At what type of warehouse is Elie assigned to work?
- Describe Idek
- What is the story of Idek, Elie, and the French girl?
- How did Elie eventually lose his gold crown?
- Why is Elie whipped by Idek the Kapo?
- What happens during the bombing raid?
- First hanging: “The ceremony, will it be over soon? I'm hungry...” (p. 62)
- “Behind me, I heard the same man asking: 'For God's sake, where is God?' And from within me, I heard a voice answer: 'Where He is? This is where- hanging here from this gallows...’” (p. 65)
- [www.philosophy-index.com/nietzsche/god-is-dead/](http://www.philosophy-index.com/nietzsche/god-is-dead/)
  - In what sense does Elie say God is dead- the literal sense or in the sense of Nietzsche?
  - Do human atrocities indicate the absence or indifference of God?
  - If God is real, is human evil his fault or humanity's fault?
  - Is the existence and/or recognition of a higher power necessary for humans to be moral?
- <http://www.momentmag.com/heart-to-heart-with-elie-wiesel/>

## Chapter 5 (p. 66)

- Elie questions God- what is the difference between believing God is dead and believing He is alive but questioning His goodness?
- “But now [while the others are shouting out praises and pleads on Rosh Hashanah], I no longer pleaded for anything. I was no longer able to lament. On the contrary, I felt very strong. I was the accuser, God the accused. My eyes had opened and I was alone, terribly alone in a world without God, without man. Without love or mercy. I was nothing but ashes now, but I felt myself to be stronger than this Almighty to whom my life had been bound for so long. In the midst of these men assembled for prayer, I felt like an observer, a stranger.” (p. 68)
- Not fasting on Yom Kippur... “As I swallowed my ration of soup, I turned that act into a symbol of rebellion, of protest against Him. And I nibbled on my crust of bread. Deep inside me, I felt a great void opening.” (p. 69) Still yearning for God despite his rebellion, saddened by the dominance of his physiological needs.
- Selection time- first Elie thinks of himself, then he remembers to worry about his father.
- “At that moment, the others did not matter! They had not written me down.” (p. 72)
- Knife + spoon = inheritance
- What does Wiesel believe caused the death of Akiba Drumer?
- Forgot to say the Kaddish for Akiba Drumer
- What is winter like?
- What happened to Elie's foot?
- “I have more faith in Hitler than in anyone else. He alone has kept his promises, all his promises, to the Jewish people.” (p. 81) How do you interpret this quote?
- Why is the camp being evacuated?

-What is ironic about Elie and his father's decision to be evacuated rather than stay behind in the hospital?

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### **Chapter 6 (p. 85)**

The brutal run to evacuate the camp.

- “Though I tried to put it out of my mind, I couldn't help thinking that there were two of us: my body and I. And I hated that body.” (p. 85) What is the relationship between this statement and Maslow's Hierarchy?
  - Zalman collapses... “I don't believe that he was finished off by an SS, for nobody had noticed. He must have died, trampled under the feet of the thousands of men who followed us.” (p. 86)
  - “We were the masters of nature, the masters of the world. We had transcended everything- death, fatigue, our natural needs. We were stronger than cold and hunger, stronger than the guns and the desire to die, doomed and rootless, nothing but numbers, we were the only men on earth.” (p. 87) In what way is Wiesel measuring strength?
  - “Don't let yourself be overcome by sleep, Eliezer. It's dangerous to fall asleep in snow. One falls asleep forever. Come, my son, come... Get up.' Get up? How could I? How was I to leave this warm blanket? I was hearing my father's words, but their meaning escaped me, as if he had asked me to carry the entire shed on my arms... 'Come, my son, come...’” What enables Elie to get up and keep going?
  - “He [Elie's father] awoke with a start. He sat up, bewildered, stunned, like an orphan. He looked all around him, taking it all in as if he had suddenly decided to make an inventory of his universe, to determine where he was and how and why he was there. Then he smiled. I shall always remember that smile. What world did it come from?” (p. 90)
  - “Oh God, Master of the Universe, give me the strength never to do what Rabbi Eliahu's son has done.” (p.91) ... What did he do?
  - What does Juliek do before dying?
  - What nearly happens to Elie's father before the group leaves Gleiwitz?
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### **Chapter 7 (p. 98)**

- “Pressed tightly against one another, in an effort to resist the cold, our heads empty and heavy, our brains a whirlwind of decaying memories. Our minds numb with indifference. Here or elsewhere, what did it matter? Die today or tomorrow, or later? The night was growing longer, never-ending.” (p. 98) What can the concept of night best be said to symbolize throughout the book?
  - “Throw out all the dead! Outside, all the corpses!’ The living were glad. They would have more room.” (p. 99) “We were nothing but frozen bodies. Our eyes closed, we merely waited for the next stop, to unload our dead.” (p. 100)
  - What did German workers at one of the stops throw into the wagon? What happened as a result? How did this mirror a later life experience involving coins? What is the real motivation of the people throwing things?
  - What happens with the father, son, and piece of bread? Why does Wiesel make the seemingly random statement “I was sixteen” (p. 102) after his description of the incident?
  - Out of the hundred or more people originally in the wagon, how many are still alive when they are unloaded at Buchenwald?
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### **Chapter 8 (p. 104)**

- “Very close to us stood the tall chimney of the crematorium's furnace. It no longer impressed us. It barely drew our attention.” (p. 104) What does this show?
- “This discussion continued for some time. I knew that I was no longer arguing with him but with

Death itself, with Death that he had already chosen.” (p. 105) Explain the context and significance of this passage.

- “When I woke up, it was daylight. That is when I remembered that I had a father. During the alert, I had followed the mob, not taking care of him. I knew he was running out of strength, close to death, and yet I had abandoned him.” (p. 106) What character from earlier in the book does this sound like? What had Elie previously said in reference to this character?
- What thoughts provoke Elie to feel “ashamed of myself forever” (p. 106)?
- Maslow's Hierarchy: “With these few mouthfuls of hot water, I had probably given him more satisfaction than during my entire childhood.” (p. 107)
- What information does Elie's father painfully whisper to him?
- Why do the nearby prisoners beat Elie's father?
- What advice regarding his father and rations is Elie given? Is it logical? Is it ethical?
- Under what circumstances does Elie's father die?
- What is Elie's deepest emotional reaction to his father's death?

### **Chapter 9 (p. 113)**

- How does Elie feel about life after his father's death?
- What is his one desire during this time?
- What is the only thought of most of the prisoners after they are freed?
- “And even when we were no longer hungry, not one of us thought of revenge. The next day, a few of the young men ran into Weimar to bring back some potatoes and clothes- and to sleep with girls. But still no trace of revenge.” (p. 115) In the original manuscript, “sleep with girls” was expressed as an act of rape. What effect does this have?
- “One day when I was able to get up, I decided to look at myself in the mirror on the opposite wall. I had not seen myself since the ghetto. From the depths of the mirror, a corpse was contemplating me. The look in his eyes as he gazed at me has never left me.” (p. 115)

### **TEST BREAKDOWN:**

- 1-6. Essential terms- Match the term to the correct definition. Each term will be used only once.**
- 7-35. Background/Plot Recall- Choose the option which best answers the question.**
- 36-40. Cause and Effect- Match the cause with the corresponding effect. Two effects will not be used.**
- 41-47. Literary Devices- Choose the option which best answers the question.**
- 48-52. Motif- Match each character with a description (the descriptions will all relate to a particular motif).**
- 53-55. Symbolism- Choose the option which best answers the question.**
- 56-60. Maslow's Hierarchy- Match the plot occurrence to the appropriate level of the pyramid.**

### **ESSENTIAL TERMS:**

- 1. Anti-Semitism- ill-feelings or hatred toward Jews**
- 2. Fascism- a centralized government marked by stringent social and economic control, usually headed by a dictator**
- 3. Genocide- the systematic and planned extermination of an entire national, racial, political, or ethnic group**
- 4. Holocaust- “a sacrifice consumed by fire; a thorough destruction involving extensive loss of life”**
- 5. Prejudice- irrational hatred of a person, group, or race based upon preconceived opinion or judgment**
- 6. Totalitarianism- total control of a country by its government**

## **CHARACTERS- Who are they?**

**Eliezer**

**Shlomo**

**Akiba Drumer**

**Madame Schachter**

**Juliek**

**Tibi and Yosi**

**Dr. Josef Mengele**

**Idek**

**Franek**

**Rabbi Eliahu**

**Zalman**

**Meir Katz**

**Stein**

**Hilda and Bea**

**Tzipora**

## **ORDER OF BASIC PLOT HAPPENINGS**

- 1. Life in Sighet**
- 2. Transfer to ghettos**
- 3. Elie and family sent to Birkenau (Auschwitz)**
- 4. Family separated upon arrival, Elie meets Mengele**
- 5. Assigned numbers and a block**
- 6. Moved to Buna**
- 7. Meets Juliek, Yossi, and Tibi**
- 8. Dentist wants Elie's crown**
- 9. Idek beats Elie**
- 10. Franek forces Elie into giving up the crown**
- 11. Elie whipped for seeing Idek with a girl**
- 12. Hangings**
- 13. Elie and his father placed into different blocks**
- 14. Elie's father fails first selection, gives Elie knife and spoon, passes second selection**
- 15. Winter begins, foot operation**
- 16. Red Army advances, forces evacuation of Buna**
- 17. Death run, Rabbi Eliahu and son**
- 18. Arrival at Gleiwitz, Juliek and the violin**
- 19. Selection, father switches side in a commotion**
- 20. Train ride with corpses and bread**
- 21. Arrival at Buchenwald**
- 22. Elie's father stays outside til morning, Elie leaves him**
- 23. Elie's father becomes ill**
- 24. Elie's father dies, Elie transferred to the children's block**
- 25. American army liberates the camp**