

9-12th Grade Student Guide

Instructions: What do you want to say and how do you want to say it? This Student Guide will help you decide. Read the background information and answer the “Finding Your Inspiration” questions to help decide what your message is and how you will use art or writing to communicate that message. Then use the “Creating Your Project” worksheet to make a plan for putting it all together.

Background Information:

Elie Wiesel was born in 1928 in Sighet, Romania. He was a young child when Hitler came to power in Germany, but would not directly encounter Nazi tyranny until the German army invaded his town in 1944. As a teenager, Elie was forced to live with roughly 11,000 other Jewish people in the Sighet Ghetto. From there, he and his family were deported to Auschwitz, where his mother and one of his sisters were immediately murdered. Elie and his father remained together for numerous harrowing experiences, including a death march, until his father’s death.

After Elie’s camp was liberated in 1945, he was sent to France, where he reunited with his two surviving sisters and went to university at the Sorbonne. He vowed not to speak about his experiences for ten years. Sure enough, nearly ten years later, in 1954 he wrote a memoir in Yiddish called *And the World Remained Silent*. By 1958, Elie had worked to translate a much shorter version of the work into French called *La Nuit*. In 1960, it was translated into English and called *Night*.

Eventually, Elie moved to the United States and became a professor. President Jimmy Carter appointed him Chairman of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council. The work of that council led to the creation of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

In addition, Elie was a human rights activist who spoke and wrote extensively to spread awareness of past and potential acts of genocide. He won numerous awards for his work, including the Nobel Peace Prize. Elie Wiesel passed away in 2016.

Reflection Questions:

- What do you know about Elie Wiesel?
- What more do you want to know?
- What do you know about the Holocaust?
- What more do you want to know?

The Power of Memory

In *Night*, Elie Wiesel describes his experience during the Holocaust. Having written this account nearly ten years after the war, it is impossible for Elie to describe the exact experiences as they occurred. What he shares with his readers is a recollection of the past, his memories. Millions of people have read his memories, which have become integral to our understanding of these experiences from Elie's perspective. They help us remember the Holocaust.

Finding your inspiration:

How have you been impacted by Elie's or another victim's memories of the Holocaust?

What did you find striking about their memories?

What is it about memories that make them important to share?

What can you learn from other people's memories?

Use the space below to jot or sketch your thoughts:

What does it mean to remember the Holocaust?

Over 75 years have passed since the Holocaust ended. Elie Wiesel, like many survivors, sought to rebuild his life after liberation. At the same time, they also struggled with profound losses—the loss of family members, the loss of youth, the loss of innocence. As we read memoirs and diaries, see artworks and artifacts, and watch recorded testimonies, we are presented with the opportunity to have compassion for the victims—both those who survived and those who died. However, it is not a foregone conclusion that we will develop compassion, let alone outwardly act on this feeling. First, we must choose to remember their memories of the Holocaust.

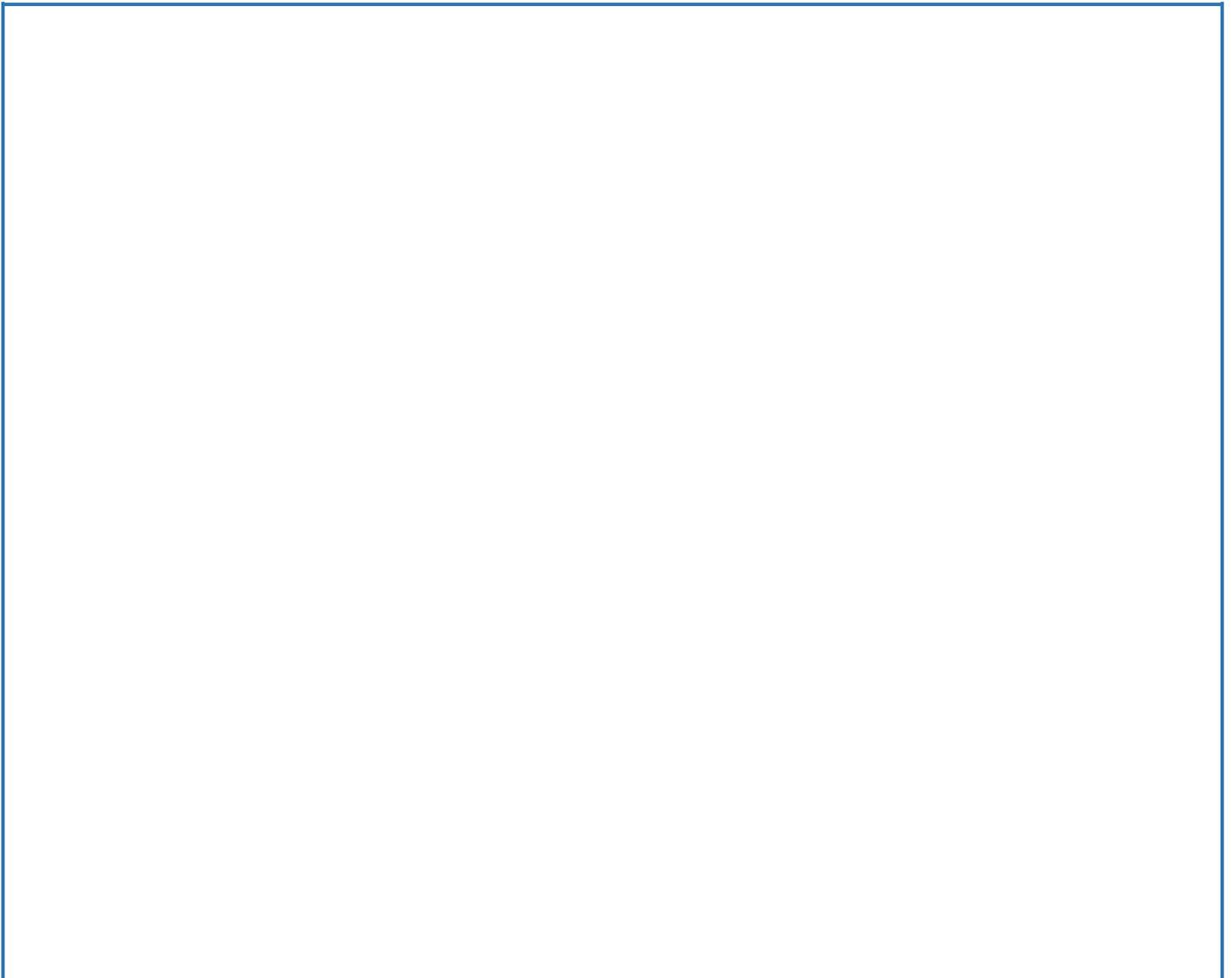
Finding your inspiration:

Why do you choose to remember the Holocaust?

Why do you find it important to honor those who survived, and listen to their stories?

Why do you find it important to remember and share the stories of those who died?

Use the space below to jot or sketch your thoughts:



How can we keep this memory alive?

Elie decided to write about his experiences in order to keep the memory of the Holocaust alive, so as to “fight those who would forget.” Today, we see instances of Holocaust remembrance throughout the world. The United Nations has declared January 27 as International Holocaust Remembrance Day to commemorate the tragedy of the Holocaust. Countless museums, organizations, and individuals have dedicated themselves to not only remembering the Holocaust, but to educate and inspire others.

Finding your inspiration:

What Holocaust remembrance efforts do you see in our world today?

What are their purposes?

How do they make you feel?

How can you keep these efforts alive in your community?

What are some challenges you might face?

What resources do you need to overcome these challenges?

Use the space below to jot or sketch your thoughts:

How does this memory impact our future actions?

Remembering the Holocaust is an internal action. It is a choice that we actively make. Without external actions, however, we keep these memories and lessons learned to ourselves. Without Elie Wiesel's *Night*, and the decisions of other Holocaust victims to share their memories, where would Holocaust remembrance be today?

Finding your inspiration:

What can you do with these memories and lessons learned?

How do they inspire you to act in your life?

How can your actions inspire others?

What do you hope that the outcome of these actions will be?

What do you think that a world would look like that chooses to remember the Holocaust?

Use the space below to jot or sketch your thoughts:

Art & Writing

Instructions: Now that you have used the “Finding Your Inspiration” questions to help decide what your message is and how you will use art or writing to communicate that message, use this worksheet to make a plan for putting it all together.

Step one: Reflect and Jot

Think about a piece of art or writing that you have seen or read, and write your thoughts about the following questions in the space provided below:

- What attracted you to it?
- What effect did it have on you?
- How did it make you feel?
- Did it impact your thoughts or actions?
- Why do you think the artist or writer created that piece?

Step two: Determine your message

Think about what you want people to know, think, feel, and do after seeing or reading your piece.

Complete this statement: The message that I would like to communicate to the viewers or readers of my piece is that...

Step three: Determine your audience

Who will see or read your piece of art or writing?

What do you know about this audience?

Step four: Design and Communication

What medium will you use?

- Poetry
- Prose
- Two-Dimensional Art
- Three-Dimensional Art

How can you use this medium to communicate your message? How will you make your point to the viewer or reader? What materials, symbols, words, or other elements will you use?

Step five: Draft your Statement of Purpose

Your entry must be accompanied by a Statement of Purpose in which you:

1. State your message
2. Explain the meaning of your piece
3. Explain its connection to the Theme, Inspiration, and Prompt

*The final version of your Statement of Purpose may not exceed 250 words
and must be written in complete sentences!*