

Study Guide Questions for Night by Elie Weisel (2006 Translation)

Section One (pages 3-22)

- 1. Describe Moishe the Beadle.
A religious advisor for Elie who instructs him in the Kabbalah; Moishe is very awkward and poor.*
- 2. Why did Eliezer pray? Why did he cry when he prayed?
He says that he does not know why he prays it is simply because he has always done it; he cries when he prays because something deep within him feels the need to cry.*
- 3. Upon his return, what story does Moishe tell?
He says the foreign Jews were gathered and put on a train, when the train stopped they were forced to dig trenches and then shot. Babies were used as target practice. Moishe is wounded in the leg and left for dead.*
- 4. Why didn't the people believe him (Moishe)?
They thought that he wanted attention or that he had gone mad.*
- 5. Cite examples of how the Jewish citizens of Sighet began to lose their rights.
Not allowed to travel, had to wear the yellow star, could not own valuables, had a curfew, could not leave the ghetto.*
- 6. What is a ghetto?
A ghetto was a section of the town that was sealed off and fenced in; the Jews were forced to live in this section of town. There were two in Sighet.*

7. *Why did the citizens resist the truth, even when it was right in front of them?*
They were in denial; they could not believe that this was actually happening.

8. *Describe the conditions on the train (at the end of the chapter).*
There were eighty people to a train, sealed up, unhygienic, hot, very little food or water.

Section 2 (pages 23 - 28)

1. *Explain the statement, "Our eyes were opened too late."
Where was the train at that point?*
They were leaving Hungary and the train was being taken over by the Gestapo. They did not realize how grave the situation was until this moment.

2. *What was foreshadowed by Mrs. Schacter's nightmare?*
The fires of the crematories were foreshadowed by her nightmare.

3. *What did some of the passengers do to quiet Mrs. Schacter?*
They beat her, gagged her, and tied her up.

4. *Where did the train finally stop?*
It first stopped briefly at Auschwitz, before continuing on to Birkenau, the reception center for Auschwitz.

Section 3 (pages 29 - 46)

1. When questioned by the S.S. officer, why did Elie lie about his age and occupation?
He was instructed to lie to the S.S. officer by a fellow prisoner. The prisoner told him to say that he was 18 instead of 15, and that his father was 40 instead of 50. He also says that he is a farmer instead of a student, to seem more useful.
2. What was the first horrifying sight that Elie at first disbelieved?
He saw trucks bringing children and babies to the crematory.
3. Explain what Elie meant when he said, "Never shall I forget these flames which consumed my faith forever."
In this face of such horrific sights he is beginning to lose his faith in god.
4. How had Elie changed in a short time.
He no longer defended his father when he was slapped by the gypsy as he would have ordinarily done.
5. What was Elie's first impression of Auschwitz after leaving Birkenau?
At first he thought that Auschwitz was better than Birkenau.
6. What was Bela Katz forced to do after he was chosen for his strength?
He was forced to throw his own father's body in the crematory fire.
7. What formalities did the prisoners have to go through at the entrance to the camps?

They are stripped, heads shaved, disinfected, and showered.

8. *What sort of identification was used on the prisoners?
Tattooed numbers; Elie's number is A-7713.*

9. *Why was the prisoner in charge of Elie's block removed from his position?
He was removed because he was believed to be too humane.*

10. *What were the prisoners' rations at each meal?
Black coffee, bread, sometimes margarine, soup.*

Section 4 (pages 47 - 65)

1. *What were the objectives of the medical examinations?
They were looking to see if the prisoners had any gold crowns.*

2. *Why were the Jewish musicians not allowed play music by Beethoven?
It was not believed that the Jewish musicians were fit to play music by a German composer.*

3. *Describe one of Idek's bouts of madness.
He beats Elie for getting in his way; Elie is hurt and cannot speak which Idek mistakes for defiance. He then beats Elie more extensively.*

He beats Elie's father with an iron bar for not moving quickly enough.

4. *How did Elie initially avoid losing his gold crown?
He lies and tells the dentist that he is sick and has a fever.*

5. *Whom did Elie meet years later on the Paris metro?
The French girl who helped him after Idek beat him; he found out that she was actually Jewish and passing for Aryan.*

6. *What happened when Elie refused to give his crown to Franek? What was the end result?
Franek beat Elie's father because he could not march in step.
Elie's crown is removed with a rusty spoon and he also loses food rations.*

7. *Describe the scene with the soup cauldrons.
There is a bombing and during the raid the prisoners are forced inside. There are two cauldrons of soup left outside unattended. One of the prisoners crawls out and tries to get to the soup; he is shot to death just as he gets a taste.*

8. *During one of the preliminary "ceremonies" for a hanging, what did Julieck whisper to Elie? What does this suggest?
Julieck asks Elie if he thinks it will take long because he is hungry.*

9. *During one hanging, Elie and the other prisoners cried. What made this hanging different from others?*

A child is hanged; he is too light to have his neck broken by the rope. He slowly suffocates for half an hour as the prisoners are forced to file by him and watch.

Section 5 (pages 66 - 84)

- 1. Why didn't Elie fast on Yom Kippur?
He promised his father he would not because it was too dangerous; he also is beginning to lose his faith in God.*
- 2. What advice was Elie given to pass the selection process?
He was advised to run quickly, avoid eye contact, and try to move around to get some color in his face before being seen.*
- 3. How did Elie's father respond when he learned his name had been written down?
He tries to be hopeful, but he gives Elie his spoon and knife (the only valuables he has left) as his inheritance.*
- 4. What did Akiba Drumer ask the others to do for him? Did they do it?
He asked them to say the Kaddish for him; they forget to do it because conditions begin to deteriorate even more.*
- 5. Why was Elie placed in the hospital?
He got an infection in his foot due to the extreme cold.*
- 6. Why was the camp to be evacuated? What did Elie learn of the fate of those who stayed behind?
The Russian army was advancing so the camp was evacuated. He decided to leave with his father; those who stayed behind in the infirmary were liberated two days after the evacuation.*

Section 6 (pages 85 -97)

1. What happened to anyone who could not keep up with the march?
They were shot and left for dead.
2. How did Zalman die?
Zalman gets severe stomach pains and has to stop. Elie does not see it, but he believes that Zalman is trampled by the others.
3. What horrible realization did Elie come to concerning Rabbi Eliahou and his son? How did Elie respond to this?
Elie realizes that the Rabbi's son knew that he was falling behind and purposely ran ahead to rid of the burden of his father.
4. What was Juliek's last act?
Juliek's last act was to play his violin.
5. How did Elie help his father when the selection was made?
He causes a distraction that enables his father to cross back over to the other side.

Section 7 (pages 98 - 103)

1. How did Elie again help his father when they were on the train?
He wakes his father as they are about to throw him from the train.
2. Describe the scene Elie witnessed between the father and son.
He sees a son kill his father over a piece of bread.

3. How many got out of the wagon? Where had they arrived?
Only twelve out a hundred get out alive; they have arrived at Buchenwald.

Section 8 (pages 104 - 112)

1. Explain how the father/son roles have been reversed in the case of Elie and his father.
Elie has begun to take care of his father, instead of his father taking care of him. He becomes increasingly responsible for his father's safety.

2. Why was Elie's father being beaten?
He is being beaten by the other inmates because he is no longer able to get up to relieve himself and has started to smell.

3. What did Elie think of the advice given to him by the head of the block?
The head of the block instructs him to stop giving his rations to his father. Elie secretly agrees but is afraid to admit it to himself.

Section 9 (pages 113-115)

1. What happened on April 5th?
The wheels of history turned; the end of the war was in sight.

2. *What was the resistance movement? What did they do?*
The resistance was an underground movement that attacked the S.S. at the end of the evacuations. The camp was liberated shortly thereafter.

3. *What did the prisoners do when they were freed?*
The first thing they did was eat; Elie says there was no immediate thought of revenge.