

Name _____

Period _____

Socratic Seminar Questions

Night

Answer these questions on separate paper. Write multiple possible answers. Include specific textual support, including page numbers and quotations.

1. How is the meaning of “values” and “valuables” illustrated in *Night*? What is valued? What is truly valuable? What values are important? What values are in conflict with each other? What “things” of value are lost? Gained? Are there core values without which one ceases to be human (or humane) in some sense?
2. The memoir is filled with decisions made by Elie, his father, and others that represent crossroads, the painful outcomes of which can be known only in retrospect. Do you believe these “decision outcomes” are destiny or are they the reality of decision-making? Why? (In other words, did the large and small choices of Elie and his father lead them to some fated destination or were they purely the product of chance? Also, does the same “rule” apply to our own lives?)
3. What does Elie Wiesel seem to be saying in this book about the nature of the father and son relationship? What are the benefits as well as the costs of such a relationship? How does Elie’s relationship with his father change and what might be the reason for that transition?
4. Elie Wiesel paints a vivid but understated picture of his own identity as a teenager during the years 1941-1945. What evidence does he give us in his memoir about how his identity was shaped? What are the important components of Elie Wiesel’s character? How was his identity or his character changed over the course of this book? How do faith, courage, loss, and choices relate to his identity?
5. Early in *Night*, Moshe tells Elie, “Man asks and God replies. But we don’t understand His replies. We cannot understand them” (p. 4). In what ways might this statement apply to Elie’s ongoing crisis of faith and view of God throughout the book?
6. Why do you think that survivor testimonials like Elie Wiesel’s are important to prevent future holocausts?

