

# Compare and contrast elie weisel and anne frank essay sample



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The holocaust was one of the most horrific events of the 20th century, with over 6 million Jews, as well as millions of others, being slaughtered mindlessly no better than vermin. Within this tragedy of an event, there existed two Jewish individuals, and although one of them wasn't fortunate enough to survive the treachery, they have both contributed undeniably to the present day's understanding of the holocaust. Elie Weisel and Anne Frank's writings are both incredibly distinct, individual pieces, all the while sharing extremely prominent features. This so happens to be, as the two authors both have similarities and differences in writing style, as well as their own life experiences.

One of the most defining features of any writer or author is his or her writing style, and with Elie Weisel and Anne Frank the difference in style are key factors to what makes each piece so powerful and unique. Perhaps the most prominent difference in style is the mood attached to each author's works. In Weisel's book, *Night*, the mood portrayed is indisputably that of a depressing and gloomy one, as seen from the highly optimistic excerpt, "The stars were only sparks of the fire, which devoured us. Should that fire die out one day, there would be nothing left in the sky but dead stars, dead eyes." He cannot be blamed for stating this depressing thought, as within the story nearly all hope is lost, but it remains to be a key example in the depiction of Elie Weisel's dark mood.

In contrast, Anne Frank's pieces contain a hopeful, uplifting and ever-positive mood which can be seen from the excerpt, "Every day I feel...how beautiful nature is, how good the people are around me, how interesting this adventure is!" Despite her troubling times, Anne persists at seeing the

beauty in the world, and the goodness in all around her. This is what separates Anne not only from Weisel, but also from most other writers who wallow in their shallow pools of pessimism and self regret not once taking a step back to look around and truly see how lucky they are.

Another, more technical difference in the two writers' styles is their use of tense. With Anne Frank, her works are written in present tense, apart from her brief reflections of the events that took place that day. An example is, " Dussell is a very nice man, just as we all imagined." In contrast with Weisel, the difference is presented through means of Night's constant use of past tense. " The wheels began to ground. We were on our way." The reason for this difference is unmistakably due to the time in the authors' life whereupon it was decided to write about their lives. The tense has a large part to do with the readers intake of what is written, as past tense tends to give of the feeling of a solid story, one in which an ending is certain. With a narrated story, especially stories like Night in which the narrator is presented with life-threatening situations, to have it written in past tense gives the reader assurance that the narrator makes it through his struggles, as it is he who is telling the story. When dealing with present tense, the reader is always suspended within an opaque cloud of uncertainty regarding the fate of the narrator.

Thus can be seen a few differences in style between Elie Weisel's Night, and Anne Frank's diary entries.

As the two authors wrote their literature works under extremely different circumstances, Anne Frank's as simple diary entries and Elie Weisel's as a

prim and proper memoir, similarities in their writing style are extremely hard to come by. So it is not that big a surprise to have found but a single, extremely common similarity, the point of view. It is not surprising to find that both Anne Frank and Elie Weisel wrote their pieces in first person point of view as the subject of the writings was in fact the author him/herself. Yet one may doubt that the pieces would truly have the effect they do should, say, the pieces have been written in third person. The fact that they are both written this way immediately personalises the reader with the situations at hand, as well as directly feeds the reader all of the emotion and feelings of the character.

Especially when dealing with such a tragic event like the holocaust, a survivor may chose to write in third person so as not to fully face that which is in their past, but rather through the character they write about. Elie Weisel instead chose to confront his demons face to face and relive his troubling past through his own eyes, directly for the reader. Anne Frank on the other hand, not knowing her writing was to be read, simply followed suit with all diary-keeping young girls and worded it as if it were a simple conversation with her diary. Thus it can be seen that the two authors share no aspects of writing style, apart from their writing point of view.

The way the two authors portray their stories is fully dependant on their experiences in life, particularly the holocaust. Therefore as to whether or not their experiences are similar and/or different is truly of significance. Perhaps the most visible difference of their experiences, seen through their writings, is that while Anne Frank wrote her diary in hiding, before being sent to a concentration camp, Weisel wrote his book years after the war was over, <https://assignbuster.com/compare-and-contrast-elie-weisel-and-anne-frank-essay-sample/>

after surviving the horrors of the concentration camps. Important to note is that Anne Frank did not survive the concentration camps, and had absolutely no idea that her diary was to be found and publicised as it has. Weisel however, lives on knowing fully that millions of people have read his book and that his message has been received many times over. A further difference in their experiences is that during the holocaust, and upon their registration at the camps, they were obviously treated differently due to their differing genders. The fact that Weisel is male was probably a key factor of his survival in the camps, as females were considered by the Nazis to be generally feeble and useless, leading to their demise.

The difference between their emotional experiences, at the time of which their books respectively speak, can be seen vividly through the following quotation from *Night*, "The thousands who died daily at Auschwitz and at Birkenau in the crematory ovens no longer troubled me." When compared to the following quote from one of Anne Frank's diary entries, "...I shall not remain insignificant; I shall work in the world and for mankind!" It can be seen that from experiencing life within the concentration camps and being around constant death, Elie Weisel was emotionally dehumanised. Yet Anne on the other hand was evidently incredibly passionate about life, as well as all of mankind. So it can be seen that Elie Weisel's and Anne Frank's physical, as well as emotional experiences had quite a few differences.

There are also quite a few similarities between the experiences of Anne Frank and the experiences of Elie Weisel. First and foremost there is the unmistakable similarity that both of them were Jews present during the holocaust, meaning that both of them went through immense discrimination, <https://assignbuster.com/compare-and-contrast-elie-weisel-and-anne-frank-essay-sample/>

hardships and treachery. Yet the most striking similarity between the two author's experiences is how very religious they were. In *Night*, Weisel talks of his religious quest, "...I had spent so many years of my life in my search for God; in fasting in order to hasten the coming of the Messiah..." One can see that both authors were incredibly religious when compared to the following quote from Anne Frank's diary, "It is God that has made us as we are, but it will be God, too, who will raise us up again." Both Anne Frank and Elie Weisel were both on a search for God and anticipating their redemption. This shows us that they both believed that the evil of the Nazis would certainly eventually be destroyed by means of greater good, and that within the two individuals dwelled a constant of the strongest kind, hope.

Elie Weisel and Anne Frank's contribution to this earth will forever be remembered, as they left behind an essence of clarity amidst a sea of dense misunderstanding. The two authors indeed have similarities and differences in both writing style, as well as their individual experiences. After taking a step back and reflecting upon the entity that is our perception, both Anne Frank and Elie Weisel have gone their own separate way down a path leading past all else, and have managed to accomplish that which only a select few of the ages have ever accomplished - left an impression within our very souls.