

Survivors' way of coping with the horrible ordeals of holocaust in night, by elie...

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Night Analytical Paper

The troubling and eventful years of the 1940's were filled with many exciting and well documented highs and lows. From the approval of the Lend Lease Act in 1941 to the American victory in World War II in 1945. In between, the bombing of Pearl Harbor (1941), D-Day (1944), and the great tragedy of the Holocaust (1941- 1945) all took place. At the hands of the S. S soldiers in the concentration camps 11 million people were killed or died during these dark years. However, there were several million survivors of this horrendous ordeal. Many of the survivors went on to write memoirs and share their experiences, including Elie Weisel, who was only a teenager at the time, in his award winning book *Night*. The book *Night* tells the many experiences and struggles of Eliezer (Elie), his father, and all the people they encounter through the book. Elie Wiesel brings *Night* to life by implementing a strong array of metaphors, hyperboles, similes, personification, irony, and many others.

Vivid descriptions and personification are conveyed multiple times throughout *Night*. Over the course of the book 15 year old Elie is aged tremendously by everything he had to experience, starting with his being taken from his home and towards the unknown. " But it was all in vain. Our terror could no longer be contained. Our nerves reached a breaking point. Our very skin was aching. It was as though madness had infected us all." (E. Weisel & M. Weisel, 2006). The Jews from Eliezer's community are tightly packed into train cars in condition that they have never been exposed to. After days of optimistic thoughts and hope the people have started to

succumb to their fears of the future and their pain in the present. The personification shown connects the reader to the mental and physical pain that the people are in on the dark train.

The extensive applications of hyperboles assist in bringing the reader to merely understand how the characters are feeling. Another one of Eliezer's unimaginable ordeal takes place when the people are forced to march towards the fire pit during their first night in Birkenau. " My heart was about to burst. There. I was face-to-face with the Angel of Death..." (E. Weisel & M. Weisel, 2006). Eliezer and all the men in his group are terrified, as they have been informed that they are being led to their own fiery deaths. Some of the men are reciting the prayer of death, while other, like Eliezer, are mute with fear. The hyperbole of Eliezer's heart perfectly fits into his current state of mind. He believes that he is steps away from death and is instead contemplating a fast suicide; both thoughts have his heart pounding tremendously as if it is close to bursting, even though that is not possible. This was the first of many times Eliezer and his father had to look death in the face. In another instance a hyperbole is used to emphasize what Eliezer is feeling. " The race seemed endless; I felt as though I had been running for years." (E. Weisel & M. Weisel, 2006). In a moment Eliezer takes off sprinting away from Dr. Mengele. Although the distance he is running is not too long, in the moment it seems to him that the end is " years" or very far away.

Similes are displayed throughout the story to help bring familiarity to the situation at hand. While in the concentration camp's warehouse Eliezer is forced to work under the command of a temperamental guard named Idek,

who often resorts to violence. “ He threw himself on my like a wild beast, beating me in the chest, on the head, throwing me to the ground and picking me up again, crushing me with ever more violent blows, until I was covered in blood.” (E. Weisel & M. Weisel, 2006). One day, Idek blind with rage decides to take his anger out on Eliezer, like a wild beast. Wild beasts are known for their dangerous rage that cannot be contained or controlled by others, much like Idek’s. This experience helped teach Eliezer not to show his fear or pain, but to hide them with thoughts of a better tomorrow.

Irony is also shown in Night to place emphasis and importance on a sentence or situation. In the first few chapters when Eliezer’s community is first occupied, the people’s minds are full with optimism and doubt. “ We were to leave the train here. There was a labor camp on site. The conditions were good. Families would not be separated.” (E. Weisel & M. Weisel, 2006).

Before the news of the horrors of the concentration camps became wide spread news the people lived in complete oblivion. As history now tells, the innocent Jews were being led to a dirty, lonely, and horrendous future. In the following quote Eliezer is being given advice on what to do when he encounters the S. S doctors. “ Run as if you had the devil at your heels! And most important, don’t be afraid.” (E. Weisel & M. Weisel, 2006). This quote contains extreme irony and imagery. If one were really being chased by the “...devil at your heels!” it would be implied that they would be filled with terror. However, it is understood that he means run with a purpose, but do not be afraid, just run. From this Eliezer learns that in life he has to keep looking and moving forward without living in the past.

Literary devices such as metaphors, hyperboles, similes, personification, and irony are conveyed throughout the book *Night* by Elie Wiesel. Over the course of the book Eliezer matures tremendously in a one year period. He and his father go through so many terrible ordeals that most people could not even begin to imagine. However Elie Wiesel's display of various literary pulls the reader in and brings life to the words. The years of the 1900's were filled with many milestones, some tragedies and others victories, but none compared so the devastation felt around the world, the Holocaust.