**Theme Chart**

**Directions: Complete the charts on the following pages. Find examples of each of the following thematic topics and explain what they show about that thematic topic.**

**Then, come back to this page, answer the questions about each thematic topic and develop each thematic topic into a full theme. Remember, a theme is general and universal. It is not about particular people in the book.**

**Denial**

* When do people maintain their optimism? Why do they maintain their optimism throughout the many circumstances they face?
* Do you think this optimism is seen as having a positive or negative effect?

**Theme:**

**Family Relationships (especially father-son):**

* Why are relationships among family members important during *Night*?
* How does the Holocaust affect family relationships?

**Theme:**

**Faith:**

* How does people’s faith help them during the Holocaust? Does it hurt them?
* How does Eli struggle with his faith? How and why does his faith change?

**Theme:**

**Dehumanization:**

* How and why are the Jewish prisoners stripped of their identities and their care for others?
* In what ways and for what reasons are people inhumane (cruel) to one another? (Consider the Nazis/SS, the Germans or non-Jews, and the Jewish prisoners themselves)

**Theme:**

**Silence:**

* How do people react to the Holocaust when it is getting started or while it is happening? (Think about the Nazis, the Germans, the Jews, their non-Jewish neighbors, God)

**Theme:**

**Denial**

* When do people maintain their optimism throughout?
* Why do they maintain their optimism throughout the many circumstances they face?
* Do you think this optimism is seen as having a positive or negative effect?

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| **Lines from the text** | **How do these lines show the theme of denial? After reading these lines, what does it seem that Eli Wiesel wants us to know or think about denial?** |
| **“A german officer lodged in the Kahn’s house across the street from us. We were told he was a charming man, calm, likable, and polite. Three days after he moved in, he brought Mrs. Kahn a box of chocolates. The optimists were jubilant: “Well? What did we tell you? You wouldn’t believe us. There they are, *your* Germans. What do you say now? Where is their famous cruelty?” pg. 10** |  |
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**Family Relationships (especially father-son):**

* Why are relationships among family members important during *Night*?
* How does the Holocaust affect family relationships?

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| **Lines from the text** | **How do these lines show the theme of relationship? After reading these lines, what does it seem that Eli Wiesel wants us to know or think about relationships?** |
| **“Those who were selected that day were incorporated into the Sonder-Kommando, the Kommando working in the crematoria. Bela Katz, the son of an important merchant of my town, had arrived in Birkenau with the first transport, one week ahead of us…He told us that having been chosen for his strength, he had been forced to place his own father’s body into the furnace.” Pg. 35** |  |
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**Faith:**

* How do people’s faith help them (or hurt them) during the Holocaust?
* How does Eli struggle with his faith? How and why does his faith change?

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| **Lines from the text** | **How do these lines show the theme of faith?**  **After reading these lines, what does it seem that Eli Wiesel wants us to know or think about faith?** |
| “Never shall I forget those flames that consumed my faith forever…Never shall I forget those moments that murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to ashes. Never shall I forget those things, even were I condemned to live as long as God Himself.” Pg 34 |  |
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**Dehumanization:**

* How and why are the Jewish prisoners stripped of their identities and their care for others?
* In what ways and for what reasons are people inhumane (cruel) to one another? (Consider the Nazis/SS, the Germans or non-Jews, and the Jewish prisoners themselves)
* How does cruelty lead to more cruelty?

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| **Lines from the text** | **How do these lines show the theme of dehumanization?**  **After reading these lines, what does it seem that Eli Wiesel wants us to know or think about dehumanization?** |
| **“Our clothes were to be thrown on the floor at the back of the barrack. There was a pile there already. New suits, old ones, torn overcoats, rags. For us it meant true equality: nakedness. We trembled in the cold.” Pg 35** |  |
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**Silence:**

* How do people react to the Holocaust when it is getting started or while it is happening?
* (Think about the Nazis, the Germans, the Jews, their non-Jewish neighbors, God)

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| **Lines from the text (with parenthetical citations)** | **How do these lines show the theme of silence?**  **After reading these lines, what does it seem that Eli Wiesel wants us to know or think about silence?** |
| I pinched my face. Was I still alive? Was I awake? I could not believe it. How could it be possible for them to burn people, children, and for the world to keep silent? No, none of this could be true. It was a nightmare… Soon I would wake up with a start, my heart pounding, and find that I was back in the room of my childhood, with my books…  Page 32 |  |
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