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Chapter 1 "They called him Moch the Beadle"Summary:Night opens with a brief description of a poor man named Moch the Beadle, who lives in the narrator's hometown of Sighet, Transylvania (modern-day Romania; at the time that the novel opens, the town is under Hungarian control). Moch is generally well liked, works in the Hasidic synagogue, and is a very pious and humble individual. In 1941, when he is twelve, the narrator, Eliezer Wiesel, wants to study the cabbala (a form of Jewish mysticism), but his father tells him that he is too young. In this passage we learn that Eliezer's father is highly regarded in the Jewish community and pays more attention to outside matters than to family ones; we also learn that Eliezer has two older sisters, Hilda and Ba, and a younger one, Tzipora. Despite his father's lack of support, Eliezer decides to study the cabbala anyway and chooses Moch as his teacher. Moch teaches him not to search for answers from God, but rather to try to ask the right questions. One day Moch and other non-Hungarian Jews are deported by Hungarian police, but the incident is forgotten by the other Jews and dismissed as a normal wartime practice. Several months later, Moch returns, having escaped from a concentration camp in Poland. He tries to warn the townspeople of the atrocities that he has seen, but no one believes him. Everyone thinks he is trying to win sympathy or has simply gone insane. He tells Eliezer that he miraculously survived the concentration camps in order to save the Jews in Sighet, but life continues on as normal during 1942 and 1943. Eliezer devotes himself to his religious studies, his father busies himself in the Jewish community, and his mother tries to find a husband for Hilda. In the spring of 1944, people believe that the Germans will soon be defeated by the Russians, and no one believes that the Nazis could want to exterminate an entire race of people. The Jews do not really consider that anything bad could happen to them, and even though Eliezer asks his father to emigrate to Palestine, his father does not want to start a new life elsewhere. Even after the townspeople hear that the Fascists have come into power in Hungary, no one really worries until the Germans actually invade Hungary and arrive at Sighet itself. Even then, the Germans seem nice and friendly, at least until Passover, when the persecution of the Jews begins in full force. Jews are not allowed to leave their homes, are forced to give up their valuables, and are required to wear the yellow star. Next, two ghettos are set up, and everyone is relocated. Once again, however, life returns to "normal," with the Jews setting up organizations and socializing happily. One day Eliezer's father is suddenly summoned to a meeting of the Jewish council. Family and neighbors wait up past midnight to hear whatever news Eliezer's father has to tell them. When he returns from the meeting, he tells them that all the Jews are to be deported to an unknown destination and that they will only be allowed one bag per person. Eliezer and the neighbors disperse to pack and wake everyone else up. Someone from outside the ghetto knocks on the door, but disappears before the door can be opened. Later, Eliezer discovers that it was a family friend in the Hungarian police trying to warn them to escape. Eliezer goes to wake up some of his father's friends, and then everyone cooks and packs in preparation to being deported. When the Hungarian police arrive early in the morning and begin forcing people outside into the streets, it is very hot and people are crying out for water. Eliezer and his sisters help the Jewish police to secretly bring water to thirsty children. When it is time for the people in the street to leave, there is joy because at this point people cannot imagine anything more horrible than sitting outside in the hot sun. Eliezer is scheduled to leave in the last transport, and he watches people in the first group march by. The next day, his family is moved from the large ghetto to the small one. Eliezer feels nothing as he looks at the house he grew up in, but his father begins to weep. At this point Eliezer begins to hate his oppressors, and he calls his hate the only thing that still connects him to them today. In the little ghetto, which is unguarded, people try to remain upbeat. Eliezer's family moves into the house formerly occupied by his uncle's family, and everything is in disarray, as if people were suddenly and unexpectedly driven out. An old, non-Jewish servant named Martha comes to visit and tries to get the family to escape and hide in her village. Eliezer's father refuses to go and tells Eliezer he can go if he wants to. Eliezer refuses to leave his family, and they all remain in the ghetto. It is night, and everyone goes to bed because there is nothing else to do but wait. When they wake at dawn, they are foolishly optimistic and compare the deportation to going on holiday. Eliezer says that the false optimism helped pass the time and notes that the uncertainty of everyone's future erased social distinctions between people. On Friday, the night before the scheduled deportation, the family eats dinner together for the last time. The next day, the Jews are ready to leave. They had agreed to organize their own deportation voluntarily, and they are all crowded into the synagogue for an entire day. No one can leave, and people are relieving themselves in corners. The following morning, everyone is herded into cattle wagons, which are sealed shut. The Gestapo puts one person in charge of each car and threatens to shoot him if anyone escapes. A whistle blows, and the train starts moving. Analysis:In this chapter we learn how important religion is to the young Eliezer. Though his father thinks that he is too young to immerse himself in religious mysticism, Eliezer is very devout and focuses all his energy on religious study. As a young boy, religion comes as naturally to Eliezer as living and breathing, and we should pay attention to how his attitude towards religion and God changes as Night progresses. In the first few pages of the chapter, Moch tells Eliezer that one must seek to ask God the right questions, not to find out the right answers. One simply cannot understand the answers that God gives: "You will find the true answers, Eliezer, only within yourself!" This advice proves to be one of the main themes of the book. While in concentration camps, Eliezer cannot understand why God is allowing so much death and destruction to take place around him. However, even though he is angry and questions God's actions, he never loses his faith. Though he doesn't come up with any answers, he continues to question God, and in doing so, his faith is actually strengthened. Eliezer's evolving relationship with God is a major source of character development in the novel. Another important theme in the novel concerns the inadvertent role that the Jews played in their own destruction. In the first section of the book, Eliezer is haunted by the complacency and foolish optimism of the Jews in Sighet. Despite Moch's warnings, news of the German invasion of Hungary, and even imminent deportation, the Jewish people refuse to believe that anything bad will happen to them. As long as possible, they try to maintain life as normal and even cast a positive light on their situation. For example, when the Jews are forced to move into ghettos, the townspeople act relieved that they no longer have to deal with overt prejudice: "We should no longer have before our eyes those hostile faces, those hate-laden stares. Our fear and anguish were at an end. We were living among Jews, among brothers." Of course, it is not an improvement for the Jews to be thus segregated, and such passages would be ironic, were they not so tragic. Eliezer reveals how nave and trusting the Jews were, and he is obviously haunted by how his own family could have easily escaped the horrors of the concentration camps simply by leaving town a little bit earlier. Though the innocence of the Jewish townspeople is painfully foolish in retrospect, Eliezer does not fault his family and neighbors for being so reluctant to leave Sighet. Although his narrative is filled with regret and a little guilt, he is careful to point out that the optimism of the Jewish townspeople is simply a survival strategy: "These optimistic speeches, which no one believed, helped to pass the time." The Jews must keep up hope if they want to survive; to give up in despair and to lose faith in God is to die. Eliezer will learn this lesson well as he gains time in concentration camps. While this first section of the novel focuses on how the Jews inadvertently participated in their own deportation to concentration camps, later sections will describe how they actively helped destroy each other while imprisoned by the Nazis. Forced under desperate conditions to try to survive, many of them will turn on each other with violence and cruelty. In addition, they will learn to bear things they had never imagined possible, such as the sight of their friends and family being beaten by those in authority. Throughout the novel Wiesel is exploring two variations on the same time: how people react in the face of terrible circumstances. Before deportation and in concentration camps, the Jews are put under extreme pressures and behave in ways that they generally wouldn't under normal circumstances. For this reason, the novel can be seen as a kind of psychological study in human behavior. However, Night is far from a coldly objective and distanced analysis of human psychology. Instead, it is a painful and intimate autobiography, and the two emotions that resonate most strongly within it are Eliezer's anger at the Nazis for violating his humanity and that of his people, and guilt that he was able to behave so inhumanely as a result. Night is a novel full of symbolism, and in this chapter Eliezer uses the word "night" repeatedly. Night is approaching, night has fallen, Eliezer and his family lie awake at night. Night functions as both a metaphor and a symbol. It is a metaphor for the Holocaust, which will submerge Eliezer's family and thousands of other Jewish families in the darkness and misery of concentration camps. Eliezer will be thrust into a world with no light and no hope, and everything around him will seem as black as night. For example, this passage comes right before Eliezer's family is deported: "Night. No one prayed, so that the night would pass quickly. 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." As it becomes closer and closer to the time that Eliezer's family is to be deported, night represents the increasing desperation and fear that he is experiencing. Night also symbolizes the evil and destructiveness of the Nazis. The world that Eliezer describes becomes darker and darker, with an increased emphasis on night instead of day. He recounts every single dusk, night, and dawn from the time that the Germans invade Sighet to the time that he is taken away by train. This focus on the sleep cycle emphasizes the hours the Jews spent waiting for their uncertain future, and it successfully recreates the feeling of days dragging on endlessly yet inexorably. Eliezer cannot stop time, and by marking it in intervals in his novel, he increases the sense of impending doom. And ironically, though the days seem drawn out and monotonous, everything happens in a very short time span and their lives change almost instantaneously. At the beginning ofNight,Eliezersfaith in God is complete. His faith is the result of his studies in Jewish mysticism, which teaches him that God is everywhere in the world, that nothing exists without Him, that He is omnipotent and benevolent. However, this belief sees a tectonic shift during his days in the concentration camp. The horrible environment of the camp, the deaths of Jews, the burning crematoria, the murder of children, the breakdown of familial relationships, all for no reason apart from the fact that they are Jews, shake his belief where at the end of it, God is dead, hanging from the gallows, like the child who was hanged by the Nazis. The fundamental struggle with faith is, if God is benevolent and omnipotent, how can such evil and depravity be permitted? If the Jews could have united and resisted the Nazis, Eliezer could have still believed that mankind is essentially good. But as his experience shows, not only the Nazis but even the inmates turn on each other selfishly. The death of God is an existential struggle which all the Jews are confronted with. However, even when Eliezer states that he has given up on God,Wieselsconstant use of religious metaphors undercuts what Eliezer says he believes. He refers to biblical passages when he denies his faith. He prays to God when he fears that he might abandon hisfather. Similarly, he regrets that there is no religious memorial for his father after his death. ThroughoutNight, Eliezer had questioned his faith and the existence of God. However, it is this questioning that underlines that he is still looking for answers within his faith, still trying to verify the existence of God. In other words, questioning is fundamental to finding God. When God doesnt intervene to stop the atrocities, He is silent. So is the world. So is America. Eliezer and the other prisoners pray to God for his help. But as Eliezer says, The Eternal was silent. What had I to thank Him for? While in the story of Isaac, God demanded sacrifice but ultimately intervened and saved Isaacs life, in the camp, there is no swooping in, no divine intervention, just an absolute silence where only the Jews cry and writhe in pain. Family is the singularly most important network of relationships in modern society. At the beginning ofNight, the reader is acquainted with the Wiesel familyparents, two daughters, and a son. This is an ideal family with a benevolent father. Disaster strikes with the Nazis approaching, and suddenly this idyll is under threat.Mrs WieselandTziporadisappear early on, and Eliezer now only has his father. Throughout the story, we see how they cling on to each other desperatelyfor support, for the zeal to live, to have one remaining family. Eliezer depends on his father, and it is his love for him that forces him to endure. As he says, My fathers presence was the only thing that stopped me [from allowing myself to die]. I had no right to let myself die. What would he do without me? I was his only support. This relationship demonstrates that Eliezers love and solidarity are stronger reasons for survival than his instinct for self-preservation. However, the Nazi brutality is so efficient that it systematically breaks down every single familial relationship, where a son even turns on his own father as in the instances ofRabbi Eliahousson and the nameless son who beats his father for a piece of bread. Even Eliezer often considers his father a burden, a feeling he is immediately ashamed of. In the world of the concentration camp, the inmates are not humans anymore; they are just beasts, without any individual personality or history, deprived of all their past and their affections. There is no family, no love, no hope in this cold, hostile environment, and as a beast, one can only look for food and think of oneself. Night Chapter 1(pp.321)Benchmarks:ELA.10.R.2.1:Analyze the impact of multiple text structures and the use of featuresin text(s).(Compare/contrast, descriptive, problem and solution, sequential, chronological, etc.)ELA.10.R.3.4: Analyze an authors use of rhetoricin a text. (Rhetorical appeals: logos, ethos, pathos)ELA.10.V.1.3: Apply knowledge of context clues, figurative language, word relationships, reference materials, and/or background knowledge to determine the connotative and denotative meaning of words and phrases, appropriate to grade level.R.2.1Text StructuresR.3.4RhetoricV.1.3Connotative/DenotativeMeaning123 Eliezer, the narrator, is a 12-year-old boy in 1941, living in the Transylvanian town of Sighet (then recently annexed to Hungary, now part of Romania). He is the only son in an Orthodox Jewish family that strictly adheres to Jewish customs and law. He has two elder sisters,HildaandBa, and a younger sister calledTzipora. His parents are grocers. Hisfatheris respected within his community at Sighet. Eliezer studies the Talmud and Jewish mystical texts of the Kabbalah, an unusual interest for a teenager. His father,Shlomo doesnt approve of this. Eliezer finds a sensitive and challenging teacher inMoishe the Beadle, a local pauper, who encourages the impressionable boy to perceive God through questions. A while later, the Hungarians expel all foreign Jews, including Moishe. Elie weeps for the loss of his tutor. The citizens of Sighet accept exile as a natural consequence of war and contend that the deportees are working in Galicia. Months later, Moishe returns to tell the village about the fate of the exiled. After they had arrived in Poland, they were taken to a forest where they were forced to dig their own graves and were systematically gunned to their death. Moishe was hit on the leg, and he had pretended to die, after which he escaped. He weeps as he recounts the horror, but the villagers consider he has lost his mind and do not take his words seriously. As 1942 and 1943 pass, the people in the village follow the war through London radio news. Elie pleads with his father to sell everything and shift to Palestine but Shlomo resists, saying that he is too old to start afresh. In the spring of 1944, the Hungarian government falls, and the Fascists take over. The next day, German armies occupy Hungary. The villagers presume that anti-Semitism would be restricted to the capital city of Budapest, but a few days later, German cars appear on Sighets streets. Initially, the Germans are polite and charming, but on the seventh day of Passover, the edicts begin and restrictions and oppressive measures are quickly imposed on the Jewsthey are prohibited from leaving their residences; they have to hand over their valuables to the Gestapo; they have to wear a yellow star for identification. Eventually, they are only allowed in certain geographic areas and are forced into living in ghettos. However, life returns to normal as the Jews set up councils and delude themselves as a means of survival. One day, Shlomo comes back with the news that the family will be deported and will be allowed only one bag per person. They start preparing. The next day, his family is moved from a large ghetto to a small one. Eliezer feels nothing as he leaves the house he grew up in, but his father begins to weep. At this point, Eliezer begins to hate the Nazis, and he calls his hate the only thing that still connects him to them today. Their gentle former servant Martha offers to hide the family in her village, an offer that the Wiesel family tragically declines. One the night before the deportation, the family eats their dinner together for the last time. When people wake up at dawn, they are foolishly optimistic, regarding the deportation as a sort of a holiday. The Nazis and their Hungarian counterparts herd everyone into cattle cars, which are sealed shut. The Gestapo puts one person in charge of each car and threatens to shoot him if anyone escapes. The last Jews in Sighet are now bound for Auschwitz. One of the most enduring questions that have haunted the Holocaust survivors is whether they could have escaped the Nazi torture if they would have heeded the warnings. A sense of doom afflicts every line in the first section ofNight, through whichWiesellaments the typical human propensity to delude themselves into optimism and not wake up to the facts of the disaster that awaits them. The Jews of Sighet are unwilling to believe what Hitler and his Nazis are capable of doing, despite being systematically robbed of their basic freedom and facilities. Eliezer begs his father to relocate to Palestine but at that moment the idea of relocation is a more exhaustive and disruptive option for his father, who is yet to comprehend that this perhaps could have saved their lives. Again, when the Jews are forced to move into ghettos, they appear to be relieved as they no longer have to deal with overt prejudices and can live in their own space uninhibitedly. These passages can be ironic if they wouldnt have been so tragic retrospectively. The family chooses not to take up Martha on her offer to escape, choosing rather to believe the authorities. The most poignant reminder of a warning being unheeded is when Moishe returns and recounts his horrific experience. He had come back to the town to alert the Jews of what horrors lay ahead but was dismissed as a madman. This also serves as a cautionary tale that a firsthand report should never be dismissed, thereby underlining Wiesels own intention in writing the bookthat his personal history too should not be discarded by the world and should serve as a testimony against the horrors of Nazism. If one objective of his recounting is to ensure that history doesnt repeat itself, another is to ensure the preservation of the memory of the victims. In this way, the first section also preserves the memory of the Jewish tradition through Wiesels father, who is a respected member of the community and whose good story remains unfinished when he is abruptly called away. This incomplete good story symbolizes the abrupt end to their peaceful life, the tremendous disruption to the Jewish community, and the subsequent loss of Jewish tradition. Although his narrative is filled with regret and a little guilt, Wiesel is aware of what prompts his optimismthis, after all, is a survival strategy. The longer humans wouldnt acknowledge the threat, the longer they can remain in bliss. While in this section the Jews inadvertently participate in their own destruction by remaining persistently passive, in the later chapters they will take on an active and aggressive role and turn on each other to survive. Hence,Night, apart from documenting the horrors of the Holocaust, also is a study into the human mind and what it is capable of when confronted with extreme realities. In this section, there is an almost obsessive quality to Wiesels description of night and day. He describes every single dusk, night, and dawn from the time the Germans invade Sighet to the time he boards the train. This detailed capturing of the days and nights emphasizes the hours the Jews spent waiting, trying to speculate their future. It also successfully portrays the feeling of every day being dragged out and the sense of doom that hangs in the air. The first section ofNightalso establishes the background of Eliezers faith withwhich he struggles later. In the beginning, he is a devout Jew who studies Jewish tradition faithfully and believes faithfully in God. As the Jews are deported, they continue to believe that God will save them from the Nazis. However, as the story progresses, the reader sees how the enormity of the torture compels the Jews to confront the question of whether God exists. The horrors of Nazi camps didnt just result in loss of lives but also the dissolution of mans faith in God, forever sentenced to live in a spiritual vacuum.Themes are overarching ideas and beliefs that the writers express in their texts, including poetry, fiction, and plays. Themes make the story appealing and persuasive and help readers to understand the hidden messages in a story or poem. Themes in Night, a masterpiece of Elie Wiesel, are diverse. They present question a mans faith, show the effects of cruelty and hatred, along with the dark sides of human nature. Some of the major themes in Night have been discussed below.Themes in NightTheme #1Cruelty in the HolocaustThe Night demonstrates terribly cruel acts by the Nazis against the Jews, also known as The Holocaust. Elies family is in Sighet. They are ordered to move in segregated places and are forced to board a train to Auschwitz. Cruelty can be assessed from the fact that various people have already foreseen their deaths. For example, Madam Schachterstarts screaming at the top of her voice and imagining that there is a fire. Moishe of Beadle also warns the people that they would be driven to their deaths, yet nobody believes him. Eliezer later remembers that people often took him as a lunatic. Elie, who is in his teens during these events, witnesses his familys death and the horrors of the concentration camps. Eliezer questions his faith when he sees a young boy hanging on the gallows.Theme #2HumanityHumanity is absent from the main storyline. However, it can be considered as an overarching theme. Most of the characters treat each other with prejudice and inhumanity. Amidst this chaos, however, readers will find a few exceptions. For example, a veteran prisoner advises Eliezer that he should forget his father, or else he would lose his own life. He says, You cannot think of others. Eliezer feels that he had lost his humanity. He understands the circumstances and doesnt condemn Rabbis son for leaving his father to die. Instead, he blames himself for his fathers death. Due to fear, Elie loses a sense of humanity and kindness when he does not give water to his father. He thinks by doing so, hell be killed by the Germans.Theme #3FaithFaith in God is another major theme of the novel. When Eliezer in Sighet, his primary concern is the study of his religion, Judaism, and the purpose of life on this earth. He used to take an interest in religion and religious studies. Once he enters the concentration camp, he begins to doubt the existence of God. He often thinks that if such a great power existed, God wouldnt allow such events, and also protect the chosen people. As the internal battle for the faith continues, he believes that man is stronger, greater than God. In fact, most inmates of the camp face the same dilemma about Gods existence.Theme #4FamilyFamilies were broken during the mayhem of transportation to the concentration camps to Auschwitz and other camps. Eliezer, for example, gets separated from his mother and sisters. During the camp, his relationship with his father turns cold. Because whenever Germans see such sympathies or efforts to support one another, they would kill them. Another such family relation is witnessed through the son of Rabi Eliahu, who gets separated from him. When he sees that he is unable to support his father, he leaves him and moves on. However, Eliezer prays to God that such a time should not come for him. However, Elies father dies, and Elie tries to suppress the loss.Theme #5SilenceSilence and suppression is another major theme of the novel. Eliezer observes that it is strange that despite warnings from Moishe the Beadle and Madam Sachachet, the Jews did not try to flee. There is a lack of voice even in Auschwitz and other camps. The most prominent silence is the silence of God. Though people cried out for Him, there was no answer. A prisoner asks it clearly Where is God? The play of Beethoven by Julek amid death is a reminder that the people are alive and that they can speak. The rest is all silence.Theme #6Faith in GodElie Wiesel had seen very religious people going to the death chambers with blank faces. He sees the Germans putting the little and innocent children to gas chambers or sending them to gallows. It is obvious that every person will question the very existence of God crying, Where is God? Elie becomes numb and loses faith in God as he thinks that he may never believe in God. Therefore, the theme of faith in God also goes with the other thematic ideas like faith.Theme #7LoyaltyThe theme of loyalty is closely tied to the theme of humanity. In fact, this loyalty sets human beings apart from other social creatures. Elie Wiesel proves his loyalty through his own relationships and the relationship of the son of the Rabbi. At first, he thinks that he is more loyal to his father and accompanies him on every stage of their lives. However, as he gives in to the fear of survival, he becomes numb and silent during the last stages of his fathers life. He doesnt give him because of the fear of death, either of his own or of his father. Secondly, when Rabbis son, helplessly watches his father be crushed during the march, he prays that he does not face the same situation.Theme #8Insight into Human NatureUnderstanding human nature, its unpredictability is another major theme of the novel. According to the author, human beings neither good nor bad. However, when they feel superior to their race and religion, they become cruel and kill people without any remorse. Even sometimes close and blood relatives ignore each other such as the son of Rabbi and Elie ignoring their fathers. Also, people stop believing in religion or the existence of God when they are desperate for safety.Theme #9DignityDignity or dignity of human life is another minor theme of the novel. However, the readers will only notice a loss of dignity such as Madam Schachterand Moise the Beadle. Under the Nazi regime, Jewish people were stripped of dignity and massacred in the most inhuman manner. The authors story of survival is one of the million examples of people who lost their dignity before losing their lives.Theme #10Freedom from OppressionFreedom from the oppression of the German occupation forces came after millions of Jews were slaughtered. During the marching or changing camps, Elie feels that his father has rather become a burden on him. Every prisoner wanted to be free from physical and mental torture in the concentration camps.

What are themes in night.