

11.3.1 Lesson 3

Introduction

In this lesson, students read and analyze paragraphs 8-11 of “Hope, Despair and Memory” from “Stripped of possessions, all human ties severed, the prisoners” to “For us, forgetting was never an option.” In this portion of the lecture Wiesel expresses incredulity regarding the behaviors of those who participated in the Holocaust as well as those who passively stood by. Wiesel disavows the option of forgetting even in the face of despair. Students continue to analyze Wiesel’s use of language and rhetoric while focusing on how he continues to develop the idea of memory in paragraphs 8-11. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How does Wiesel further develop the idea of memory in paragraphs 8-11?

Additionally, students continue to identify potential research topics and record them on the Surfacing Issues Tool. For homework, students preview paragraphs 12-17 of “Hope, Despair and Memory” (from “Remembering is a noble and necessary act” to “then let it be inhabited by their deaths”), and annotate for the development of central ideas.

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Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
RI.11-12.2	Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
Addressed Standard(s)	
W. 11-12.9.b	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. b. Apply <i>grades 11-12 Reading standards</i> to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy [e.g., <i>The Federalist</i> , presidential addresses]”).
L.11-12.3	Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

Assessment

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Assessment(s)

Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students answer the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.

- How does Wiesel further develop the idea of memory in paragraphs 8-11?

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Explain how Wiesel develops the idea of memory in paragraphs 8-11 (e.g., In this section, Wiesel contradicts his earlier idea of memory as a shield (par. 5). In this section, memory elicits “real despair” after the war when the prisoners were released and as they began to “search for meaning” (par. 8). For the survivors memory became impossible to escape: “for the first time in history, we could not bury our dead” (par. 10). Although relief should have followed the suffering, it did not, and that is what caused the “real despair” (par. 8). However, at the very end of this section, Wiesel reiterates his faith in “memory that will save humanity” (par. 3), when he states, “forgetting was never an option” (par. 11).).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- theology (n.) - the study of religious faith, practice, and experience
- passivity (n.) - the state or condition of not participating readily or being inactive
- aberration (n.) - the act of deviating from the ordinary, usual, or normal type
- contention (n.) - a struggling together in opposition; strife
- xenophobia (n.) - an unreasonable fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers or that which is foreign or strange
- fanaticism (n.) - outlook or behavior marked by excessive enthusiasm and often intense uncritical devotion

Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)

- Allies (n.) - the 26 countries, including the United States, who fought against Nazi Germany, Italy, and Japan in World War II
- repress (v.) - to not allow yourself to remember (something, such as an unpleasant event)

Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)

- conceive (v.) - to form a notion or idea of; imagine
- reassessed (v.) - assessed (something) again; re-evaluated
- called into question - caused someone or something to be evaluated; examined or reexamine the qualifications or value of someone or something
- betrayed (v.) - broke (a promise) or was disloyal to (a person's trust)
- withdraw (v.) - to go or move back, away, or aside; retire; retreat

Lesson Agenda/Overview

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Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards: RI.11-12.2, W.11-12.9.b, L.11-12.3 Text: “Hope, Despair and Memory” by Elie Wiesel, paragraphs 8-11 	
Learning Sequence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of Lesson Agenda Homework Accountability Reading and Discussion Quick Write Closing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5% 20% 45% 25% 5%

Materials

- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 11.3.1 Lesson 1)
- Student copies of the Surfacing Issues Tool (refer to 11.3.1 Lesson 2)
- Student copies of the Rhetorical Impact Tracking Tool (refer to 11.3.1 Lesson 2)
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Student copies of the Central Ideas Tracking Tool (refer to 11.3.1 Lesson 1)

Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence	
Symbol	Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol
10%	Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.
no symbol	Plain text indicates teacher action.
	Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.
	<i>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</i>
►	Indicates student action(s).
☞	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.
❗	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

5%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standard for this lesson: RI.11-12.2. In this lesson, students continue to read “Hope, Despair and Memory” from “Stripped of possessions, all human ties severed, the prisoners” to “For us, forgetting was never an option” (par. 8-11), focusing on how Wiesel continues to develop the idea of memory in these paragraphs. Additionally, students continue to surface issues from the text. Students engage in evidence-based discussion and complete a Quick Write about the development of the central idea of memory in this portion of text.

- Students look at the agenda.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

20%

Instruct students to talk in pairs about the homework from the previous lesson. (Use the Internet or other print and electronic resources to identify a brief definition or explanation for each of the following terms or ideas: “Auschwitz,” “Concentration Camps,” and “Holocaust.” Come to class prepared to discuss how these explanations inform your understanding of the young man (par. 5) and the “universe” (par. 6 and 7).).

- Students discuss their homework in pairs.

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- Student responses should include:
 - Auschwitz: Auschwitz or Auschwitz-Birkenau was a concentration and death camp in Silesia, Poland. “Established in 1940 originally as a concentration camp, it became an extermination camp in early 1942. Later, it consisted of three sections: Auschwitz I, the main camp; Auschwitz II (Birkenau), an extermination camp; Auschwitz III (Monowitz), the I.G. Farben labor camp, also known as Buna. In addition, Auschwitz had numerous sub-camps.” (<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/>)
 - “Holocaust” derives from Greek words meaning “whole” and “burned,” and is also called the “Shoah,” which means “catastrophe” or “calamity” in Hebrew. It refers to the “systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder” of millions of European Jewish people during the years of 1933 to 1945 (www.ushmm.org). At first, the term only referred to burnings in general, but later it became common to describe all the persecution targeted at Jews during World War II as part of the Holocaust. (“History And Meaning Of The Word ‘Holocaust’: Are We Still Comfortable With This Term?”; <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/>)
 - Concentration camps were places where ethnic or cultural groups and political prisoners (in this case, Jewish people, among others) were imprisoned without trial in inadequate facilities and with inadequate provisions. Some were forced-labor camps, in which the prisoners had to work all day for no pay. Punishment at the camps was extreme and often resulted in death. Some, like Birkenau, were death camps, where people were routinely killed. Auschwitz was one of the most infamous concentration camps in World War II. (<http://www.yadvashem.org/>)
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider asking students to work in pairs or small groups to summarize the results of their searches into one line or less. Place three pieces of chart paper up around the room, each labeled with one term, and invite partners or small groups to write their succinct explanations on the paper. Allow students to refer to and clarify the definitions of these words as they emerge in the reading.

Instruct student pairs to briefly discuss the following question before sharing out with the class:

How does the information you found for homework inform your understanding of the young man (par. 5) and the “universe” (par. 6 and 7)?

- Student responses may include:
 - The young man was probably in World War II. The text says that it is “After the war” (par. 5) and that he is in Paris. He “struggles to readjust to life,” so he must

have been in the war, either as a soldier or a survivor. He has lost his “mother, his father, his small sister” (par. 5).

- The young man was probably in a concentration camp, probably one of the “Men ... from every corner of Europe” who were suddenly reduced to “nameless and faceless creatures” (par. 7).
- In paragraph 5, the young man is described as “On the verge of despair” and that he “strives to find a place among the living.” This connects to the last line of paragraph 7, which states, “Waking among the dead, one wondered if one was still alive,” suggesting that the young man was one of the people who had been displaced into a “social and cultural void.”
- The concentration camps were terrible places where people were burned, tortured, and killed. The “Tower of Babel” (par. 6) was supposed to stretch to heaven, but instead was stretching toward an “anti-heaven” (par. 6) or hell, an accurate description of what was happening at the camps.
- The Holocaust was a systematic persecution and murder of many people. The idea of “a parallel society, a new “creation” with its own princes and gods, laws and principles, jailers and prisoners” (par. 6) describes the Holocaust very well because it does not seem that civilized people would be able to commit such acts as in the Holocaust.
- Paragraph 6 states that “God, betrayed by His creatures, covered His face in order not to see.” A just and merciful God would not want to see torture and persecution of his people, the construction and use of death camps, and the extermination of millions. In order for these atrocities to have happened, Wiesel reasons, God must have chosen to look away.
- The prisoners at Auschwitz arrived with few personal “possessions” (par. 7) because they had been forced to leave them behind when they were moved from ghetto to camp. When they arrived, they were “stripped” (par. 7) of their remaining possessions.
- Families and friends were separated into different camps and “all human ties severed” (par. 7). They had to sleep with strangers in their bunks and do forced labor.
- All the people were starved, even the children, so they began to “look like old men” (par. 7). They were given the same “ration of bread or soup,” no matter what they needed to live.

- The text states that “Men and women from every corner of Europe” (par. 7) were in the prison, and it was mostly European Jews who were imprisoned in concentration camps.
- Students may further connect this textual evidence to what they learned about concentration camps or Auschwitz.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 3: Reading and Discussion

45%

Instruct students to read paragraphs 8-11 of “Hope, Despair and Memory” from “Stripped of possessions, all human ties severed, the prisoners” to “For us, forgetting was never an option” and annotate for central ideas using the annotation code CI.

- If necessary to support comprehension and fluency, consider using a masterful reading of the focus excerpt for the lesson.
 - Students read paragraphs 8-11 and annotate for central ideas.
- This focused annotation supports students’ engagement with W.11-12.9.b, which addresses the use of textual evidence in writing.

Instruct students to form pairs and take out their Surfacing Issues Tools. Post or project each set of questions below for students to discuss. Instruct students to continue to annotate throughout the reading and discussion.

- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider having students track central ideas in paragraphs 8-11 using the Central Ideas Tracking Tool.

Instruct student pairs to reread paragraph 8, from “And yet real despair only seized us later” to “All found their ultimate expression in Auschwitz,” and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class. Remind students to annotate the text and record topics/issues for research on their Surfacing Issues Tools.

- For potential student issues surfaced in this reading see the Model Surfacing Issues Tool at the end of this lesson.

Provide students with the following definitions: *theology* means “the study of religious faith, practice, and experience,” *passivity* means “the state or condition of not participating readily or being inactive,” and *aberration* means “the act of deviating from the ordinary, usual, or normal type.”

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- Students write the definitions of *theology*, *passivity*, and *aberration* on their copy of the text or in a vocabulary journal.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definitions: *conceive* means “to form a notion or idea of; imagine,” *reassessed* means “assessed (something) again; re-evaluated,” and *called into question* means “caused someone or something to be evaluated; to examined or reexamined the qualifications or value of someone or something.”
 - Students write the definitions of *conceive*, *reassessed*, and *called into question* on their copy of the text or in a vocabulary journal.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Provide the following question to guide students’ reading:

Why were the survivors in more despair after the war ended?

When did “real despair” begin?

- Real despair began “later. Afterwards” (par. 8). Real despair began after the “nightmare” (par. 8) of the Holocaust had ended.

How does Wiesel’s explanation of when “real despair” began connect to the last sentence of paragraph 7?

- In the last sentence of paragraph 7, the people Wiesel talks about seem numb from seeing so much death and wonder whether they are “still alive.” People started to feel again when they started to “search for meaning.”

Who “coldly, deliberately ordered the massacres and participated in them” (par. 8)?

- The “doctors of law or medicine or theology” and “lovers of art and poetry, of Bach and Goethe” (par. 8).
- Explain to students that Bach was a famous German music composer and Goethe was a famous German writer.

What is the effect of Wiesel’s juxtaposition of these descriptions?

- Wiesel describes the same people in two different ways. He calls them “lovers of art and poetry,” (par. 8) which suggests that they were romantic and refined. Wiesel also describes them as murderers or coconspirators in “massacres” (par. 8), indicating that they were heartless. Wiesel creates a sense that the people who committed and planned the murders were not always “cold[]” (par. 8), but became that way.

- Students should be familiar with *juxtaposition* as a rhetorical device from their work in Module 11.2. If necessary, provide the following definition: *juxtaposition* means “an act or instance of placing close together or side by side, especially for comparison or contrast.”

Instruct students to add this example to their Rhetorical Impact Tracking Tools.

How does Wiesel describe the “metamorphosis” (par. 8) of those who ordered and participated in the massacres?

- Those who killed and conspired to kill others during the Holocaust forgot ethical principles and their cultural and religious beliefs. Their metamorphosis was a “loss of ethical, cultural, and religious memory” (par. 8).

How does the question “How could we ever understand the passivity of the onlookers” help you to make meaning of “the silence of the Allies” (par. 8)? What might “Allies” mean in this context?

- Student responses may include:
 - Wiesel seeks to understand why the “onlookers” did not try to stop the torture of the prisoners. In this way, *passivity* is similar to silence.
 - The Allies must be like onlookers because the passivity is similar to the silence. Wiesel says, “and—yes—the silence of the Allies?” (par. 8). This phrasing suggests that some people may disagree with whether the Allies were actually silent. The Allies may have been trying to help the Jews, but Wiesel is suggesting they did not do enough.
- Consider providing students with the following definition: in this context, *Allies* means “the 26 countries, including the United States, who fought against Nazi Germany, Italy, and Japan in World War II.”

How does Wiesel explain the place of God in Auschwitz?

- Wiesel asks where God was in Auschwitz and states that it “seemed...impossible” (par. 8) to consider.

What is the effect of putting “civilization” in quotation marks in Wiesel’s question at the end of paragraph 8: “Was Auschwitz a consequence or an aberration of ‘civilization’?”

- Wiesel suggests that “civilization” may not mean what he thought it meant before the war and his experiences in Auschwitz. Wiesel states, “everything had changed” and “Auschwitz called that civilization into question.”

Provide students with the following definitions: *contention* means “a struggling together in opposition; strife,” *xenophobia* means “an unreasonable fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers or that which is foreign or strange,” and *fanaticism* means “outlook or behavior marked by excessive enthusiasm and often intense uncritical devotion.”

- Students write the definitions of *contention*, *xenophobia* and *fanaticism* on their copy of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

What is the impact of the list of ideas that “found their ultimate expression in Auschwitz” (par. 8)?

- These things are bad for society and may lead to war. “Nationalism” keeps countries from collaborating toward a shared goal, and “social and economic contention,” “xenophobia,” “religious fanaticism,” and “racism” are about excluding others or dividing society.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** The terms Wiesel uses at the bottom of this paragraph may be new to some students. Consider facilitating a brief whole-class discussion around how each of these terms relates to Auschwitz in Wiesel’s lecture.
- The list of social ills can provide a strong springboard for surfacing issues. Consider drawing students’ attention to this paragraph and encourage them to track possible research topics/issues on their Surfacing Issues Tools.

About whom is Wiesel speaking in paragraphs 5-8?

- Student responses may include:
 - Wiesel is speaking about people who experienced the Holocaust, including the “young man” (par. 5), the “prisoners” (par. 6-7), and people who “deliberately ordered the massacres and participated in them.”
 - Wiesel is speaking about himself. He is the “young man” in paragraph 5 and one of the “prisoners” in paragraphs 7 and 8. In paragraph 8, Wiesel uses the pronouns “us” and “we,” which show that he is remembering and describing his own experiences as part of a group of people who experienced the Holocaust.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student pairs to read paragraph 9 (from “The next question had to be, why go on?” to “God and man betrayed their trust in one another?”), and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definition: *betrayed* means “broke (a promise) or was disloyal to (a person's trust).”
- Students write the definitions of *betrayed* on their copy of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

Post or project the following questions for students to answer in pairs.

- Student pairs reread, discuss, annotate, and record their answers to the following questions.

What is the relationship between memory and despair in paragraph 9?

- Wiesel shows their hopelessness by offering examples of questions survivors may have asked themselves in despair: “Why build a home?” and “Why bring children into a world in which God and man betrayed their trust in one another?”

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

- Students discuss their responses.

Instruct student pairs to read paragraphs 10 and 11 (from “Of course we could try to forget the past” to “For us, forgetting was never an option”), and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

- If students struggle to determine word meanings from context, provide the following definition: *repress* means “to not allow yourself to remember (something, such as an unpleasant event).”
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definition: *withdraw* means “to go or move back, away, or aside; retire; retreat.”
- Students write the definition of *withdraw* on their copy of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

What is “natural” for a human being to do with “what causes him pain, what causes him shame” (par. 10)?

- It is natural to forget.

What is the purpose of Wiesel’s reference to the “ghosts” and the “dead” (par. 10)?

- The ghosts and the dead refer to bad dreams or nightmares that vanish in the daylight. Wiesel uses the reference to the ghosts and the dead to show how “memory protects

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its wounds” (par. 10) by sometimes allowing people to forget what scares or haunts them.

- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider telling students that this is an example of an *allegory*, a type of figurative language. Offer students the following definition: *allegory* means “figurative treatment of one subject under the guise of another.”

How does the claim “forgetting was never an option” (par. 11) inform your understanding of Wiesel’s statement that “We bear their graves within ourselves” (par. 10)?

- Student responses may include:
 - Wiesel suggests that survivors carry the memory of those who died.
 - Wiesel says that “we could not bury our dead” (par. 10) so there is no place to escape the memories. The “ghosts” (par. 10) are ever-present.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle with the idea that the survivors “could not bury [their] dead,” remind students about the information they researched for homework, and have them connect the mass graves to this line.

What is the cumulative effect of Wiesel’s use of questions in paragraphs 8-10?

- Student responses may include:
 - The questions emphasize Wiesel’s and other survivors’ “search for meaning” (par. 8).
 - The questions show the “real despair” (par. 8) of those who survived the Holocaust.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 4: Quick Write

25%

Instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

How does Wiesel further develop the idea of memory in paragraphs 8-11?

Instruct students to look at their annotations to find evidence. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

- Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.
- Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

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Transition to the independent Quick Write.

- Students independently answer the prompt, using evidence from the text.
- See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Instruct students to refer to their Central Ideas Tracking Tools for evidence.

Activity 5: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to preview paragraphs 12-17 in the text (from “Remembering is a noble and necessary act” to “then let it be inhabited by their deaths”), and annotate for central ideas.

- Students follow along.
- This focused annotation supports students’ engagement with W.11-12.9.b, which addresses the use of textual evidence in writing.

Homework

Preview “Hope, Despair and Memory,” paragraphs 12-17 (from “Remembering is a noble and necessary act” to “then let it be inhabited by their deaths”) and annotate for central ideas.

Model Surfacing Issues Tool

Name :		Class :		Date :	
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Directions: As you read, look for issues that are suggested in the text. Remember that an issue is an important aspect of human society for which there are many different opinions about what to think or do. Many issues can be framed as a problem-based question. Summarize the issue succinctly, and note the paragraph number and what the text says about the issue in the correct columns.

Issue	Paragraph(s)	Key Information about the Issue from the Text
Passivity in wartime	8	Some nations stayed out of World War II for a long time, including some nations that eventually joined the Allies, but Wiesel states that he does not “understand the passivity of the onlookers.”
Scientific abstraction without regard for human, social, or environmental impact	8	“Scientific abstraction” had its “ultimate expression in Auschwitz” where prisoners were experimented on.
Nationalism	8	Wiesel mentions that nationalism had its “ultimate expression in Auschwitz.”
Xenophobia	8	Wiesel mentions that xenophobia had its “ultimate expression in Auschwitz.”
Religious fanaticism	8	Wiesel mentions that religious fanaticism had its “ultimate expression in Auschwitz.”
Anti-Semitism	8	Wiesel mentions that racism and religious fanaticism had their “ultimate expression in Auschwitz.”

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Repressing memories	10	The text mentions that people repress painful or shameful memories.
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Model Central Ideas Tracking Tool

Name :		Class :		Date :	
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Directions: Identify the central ideas that you encounter throughout the text. Trace the development of those ideas by noting how the author introduces, develops, or refines these ideas in the texts. Cite textual evidence to support your work.

Text: “Hope, Despair and Memory” by Elie Wiesel

Paragraph #	Central Ideas	Notes and Connections
8	Memory	Memory elicits “real despair” after the war when the prisoners were released and as they began to “search for meaning” (par. 8). “With one stroke, mankind’s achievements seem to have been erased.” (par. 8)
9	Memory	At that point, memory, instead of being a salve, became impossible to escape: “why go on? If memory continually brought us back to this, why build a home?” (par. 9).
10	Memory	“For the first time in history, we could not bury our dead” (par. 10). This shows that memory can act like a scab: “memory protects its wounds,” but when it cannot “withdraw,” it causes great suffering.
11	Memory	However, at the very end, Wiesel reiterates his faith in “memory that will save humanity” (par. 3), when he states, “forgetting was never an option” (par. 11).

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