In-Class Writing Outline

For your in-class writing on *Night* you will be writing about your interpretation (or lack thereof) of your motif.

The first step is writing a thesis statement. Thesis statements can almost be seen like a formula:

* In *Night*, Elie Wiesel uses **x (your motif)** to represent/show **y (what you think your motif means)**.

Seems easy enough, right? Well, then you actually have to figure out what your motif means.

* For example: In *Night*, Elie Wiesel uses **screaming** to represent **warnings.**

I would allow this to serve as a thesis, for the purpose of this in-class writing. If you want to do well, however, your thesis will also need to the ever present question—“So what?”

* For example: In *Night*, Elie Wiesel uses **screaming** to represent **warnings,** in order to show how **people choose to be deaf to crimes and injustice.**

You now have the core of your essay. A basic way to organize your essay is:

1. Introduction (very short, 2-4 sentences)
   1. Thesis (last sentence)
2. Example 1: Mrs. Schachter
   1. Give specific examples from the text

E.g. “We tried to reason with her, more to calm ourselves, to catch our breath, than to soothe her” (25). 🡨N.B. You **must** include the **page** **number**, and the period goes **after** the page number.

* 1. **ANALYZE** YOUR EXAMPLES.

E.g. Mrs. Schachter’s initial scream is “a piercing cry” which “broke the silence” (24). The “piercing” way in which her screams “broke” the silence demonstrates not only the sound of her cries, but also the forceful and aggressive way in which she popped the bubble of willful ignorance the Jews are living under. Her “cry” shows her desperation for them to wake up and see the reality around them, while its “piercing” nature acts like a siren alerting others to the danger.

1. Example 2: The soup man
   1. Give examples from the text. How does this example show that screaming represents warnings? How and what kind of injustice or crime does it point to, and how do people choose to ignore it?
2. Etc.
   1. You may include as many examples as you like, but depth is better than breathe, and I would much prefer to read fewer well thought out examples than a greater number of cursory (superficial and surface level) examples.
3. Conclusion
   1. “So what?”
      1. Your conclusion so remind me again why I should care that screams mean anything.
      2. For example: In his Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech, Wiesel says that “the world did know” about the Holocaust and “remained silent” (118). In way, the entire novel *Night* is a scream. A cry for us to open our ears and hear the cries of those suffering, those who we choose not to hear.

If you wanted to say that there is no one meaning of your motif, your thesis could look like this:

In *Night*, Elie Wiesel uses **screaming** to shows the **madness, chaos, and futility** and ultimate **meaninglessness in the world.**

**Note Bene:** If you choose this format, you must still tell me what it means (the “So what?” factor) that your motif is meaningless.

A basic way to organize your essay is:

1. Introduction (very short, 2-4 sentences)
   1. Thesis (last sentence)
2. Example 1: Mrs. Schachter
   1. Give specific examples from the text E.g. “We tried to reason with her, more to calm ourselves, to catch our breath, than to soothe her” (25). 🡨N.B. You **must** include the **page number**, and the period goes **after** the page number.
   2. **ANALYZE** YOUR EXAMPLES. E.g. When Mrs. Schachter begins screaming again, they rush to the window to look for first and “believer her, if only for an instant. But there was nothing outside but darkness” (27). Though you could try to blame the Jews for not “seeing,” this expectation is an unrealistic one, as they “believed” but there was nothing to see. When they returned to their places they felt “shame in [their] souls” (27),
3. Example 2: The soup man
   1. Give examples from the text. How does this example show that screaming represents something different? How does this example potentially disprove/disagree with the previous example? How does this example show meaninglessness?
4. Etc.
   1. You may include as many examples as you like, but depth is better than breathe, and I would much prefer to read fewer well thought out examples than a greater number of cursory (superficial and surface level) examples.
5. Conclusion
   1. “So what?”
      1. Your conclusion so remind me again why I should care that screams mean anything.
      2. For example: In his Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech, Wiesel says that “no one may speak for the dead, no one may interpret their mutilated dreams and visions” (118). He acknowledges that there is no way to know why the man thrust his head into soup, or if Mrs. Schachter was really a prophet. So when Wiesel says “And yet, I sense their presence” (118), he speaks to our desire to want to make meaning from their deaths. We want there to be meaning in life, but just because we want something doesn’t mean it’s true.

These are not the only possible essay formats, they are just examples. Feel free to deviate. You may bring an outline with your to class to use during your in-class writing, as well as your annotations/book.