Name: _____

Article of the Week #5

Instructions: COMPLETE ALL QUESTIONS AND MARGIN NOTES using the annotating strategies practiced in class.

Step 1: Number the paragraphs.

Step 2: Write the citation for the article: (_____)

Step 3: Read the article **carefully** and **make notes in the margin**.

Notes should include:

- Comments that show that you **understand** the article. (A summary or statement of the main idea of important sections may serve this purpose.)
- Questions you have that show what you are **wondering** about as you read.
- Notes that differentiate between **fact** and **opinion**.
- Observations about how the **writer's strategies** (organization, word choice, perspective, support) and choices affect the article.
- **Highlight** any words you do not know the meaning of and **define** them in the margin.

Your **margin notes** are part of your score for this assessment.

Elie Wiesel, Nobel Laureate and Memory Keeper of the Holocaust, Dies at 87

By Emily Langer, Washington Post on 07.05.16

Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel, the memory keeper for victims of Nazi persecution, and a Nobel laureate who used his moral authority to force attention on atrocities around the world, died July 2 at his home in New York. He was 87.

His death was confirmed in a statement from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Other details were not immediately available.

By the time of Wiesel's death, millions had read "Night," his account of the concentration camps where he watched his father die and where his mother and younger sister were gassed. Presidents summoned him to the White House to discuss human rights abuses in Bosnia, Iraq and elsewhere, and the chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee called him a "messenger to mankind."

But when he emerged, gaunt and near death, from Buchenwald concentration camp in 1945, there was little indication that he - or any survivor - would have such a presence in the world. Few survivors spoke openly about the war. Those who did often felt ignored.

Decades before a Holocaust museum stood in downtown Washington and moviegoers watched Steven Spielberg's "Schindler's List," Wiesel helped force the public to confront the Holocaust.

"The voice of the person who can speak in the first-person singular - 'This is my story; I was there' - it will be gone when the last survivor dies," Holocaust scholar Deborah Lipstadt said in an interview with The Washington Post. "But in Elie Wiesel, we had that voice with a megaphone that wasn't matched by anyone else."

"Elie Wiesel was one of the great moral voices of our time, and in many ways, the conscience of the world," President Obama said in a statement, describing Wiesel as "a dear friend."

"After we walked together among the barbed wire and guard towers of Buchenwald where he was held as a teenager and where his father perished," the president continued, "Elie spoke words I've never forgotten - 'Memory has become a sacred duty of all people of goodwill.'"

Wiesel was in his 20s when he wrote the first draft of "Night" after 10 years of silence about the war. Today, perhaps the only volume in Holocaust literature that eclipses the book in its popular reach is Anne Frank's "The Diary of a Young Girl."

Wiesel was less than nine months older than the aspiring writer who chronicled her existence in an Amsterdam hideaway, but "Night" is rarely characterized as the narrative of a young boy. While the diary ends days before Nazis arrest Anne and her family, "Night" puts readers in Auschwitz within the first 30 pages.

Short enough to be read in a single sitting, the volume captures all of the most salient images of the Holocaust: the teeming ghettos where many struggled to believe that the worst was yet to come, the cattle cars, the barracks, the smokestacks. The book also contains one of the most famous images in the vast theological debates surrounding the slaughter: the vision of God with a noose around his neck.

"'For God's sake, where is God?'" Wiesel hears a man ask as they watch a boy hanged at Auschwitz.

"And from within me, I heard a voice answer," he writes. "'This is where - hanging here from this gallows.'"

At the encouragement of the French writer François Mauriac, whom he interviewed as a journalist in the 1950s, Wiesel submitted the manuscript for publication in France. Publisher after publisher turned him away. Les Éditions de Minuit published the manuscript in 1958, but the book found little commercial success.

Initially, it fared no better in the United States. One rejection note, from Scribner's, called the work a "horrifying and extremely moving document" but cited "certain misgivings as to the size of the American market" for it, according to a New York Times account of the book's publication. Critics wrote admiring reviews when Hill & Wang published it in 1960, but few people in the general public knew that "Night" existed.

As time passed, more survivors began to open up about the war. Among the most prominent of them was Wiesel, who in the 1960s, by then living in the United States, began a celebrated lecture series at the 92nd Street Y in New York City.

Wiesel, whose speeches routinely drew sell-out crowds, would remain highly sought-after as a lecturer for the rest of his life. More than lecture, he told stories, one flowing into the next in a way that recalled a passage from Ecclesiastes, the one that inspired the titles of his two-volume memoir: "All Rivers Run to the Sea" and "And the Sea Is Never Full."

With those stories, he revived the old world of the shtetl and glorified the Hasidic masters he so loved. He was somber in the company of fellow survivors but hopeful, even funny, before students. At times, his style left the impression of a davening rabbi. In 1978, President Jimmy Carter appointed Wiesel chairman of the President's Commission on the Holocaust, which would call for the creation of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington. It was an important recognition of his role in the Holocaust community.

Another turning point came in 1985, when Wiesel publicly confronted President Ronald Reagan about a coming trip to West Germany, where the president planned to visit the Bitburg military cemetery. Wiesel and others opposed the trip after learning that the cemetery included the graves of several dozen members of the S.S., the elite Nazi force.

"That place, Mr. President, is not your place," Wiesel said during a White House ceremony in which Reagan awarded him the Congressional Gold Medal, Congress' highest civilian honor. "Your place is with the victims of the S.S."

Several weeks later, amid controversy, Reagan made the trip to Bitburg.

It was not the last time Wiesel took on a head of state. In 1986, just after Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish year, he learned he had been selected for the Nobel Peace Prize.

He said the honor did not make him a different person - "If the war did not change me, you think anything else will change me?" he commented upon winning the prize, the Times reported - but it did confer on him considerably greater authority.

Speaking at the dedication of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1993, Wiesel faced President Bill Clinton and said: "Mr. President, I must tell you something. I have been in the former Yugoslavia last fall. I cannot sleep since what I have seen. As a Jew I am saying that. We must do something to stop the bloodshed in that country."

Clinton later told reporters that he accepted Wiesel's challenge, The Washington Post reported. The president went on to lead NATO in two bombing campaigns in the Balkans, first in 1995 against Bosnian Serbs and four years later to stop ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. Later in Clinton's administration, Wiesel challenged him about the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

"Why are we ... so nobly involved in Kosovo and why were we not in Rwanda?" he asked the president at the White House in 1999. "I think we could have prevented that massacre. Why didn't we?"

Wiesel said in his Nobel acceptance speech that Jewish issues would always be of paramount interest to him. He belonged to a "traumatized generation," he said, and it would be "unnatural" for him to feel otherwise. But he said that other causes were as important to him.

Wiesel compared apartheid with anti-Semitism and backed the Solidarity movement in Poland. He spoke out on behalf of Soviet Jews, Cambodians and the Kurds, among other populations. He declared his support for the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, maintaining that the United States has an obligation to intercede when evil comes to power.

Critics accused Wiesel of having a blind spot where Israel was involved. When talk show host Oprah Winfrey asked him in an interview whether he had any regrets, he responded: "I wish I had done more for the Palestinian refugees. I regret that."

Speaking about the Holocaust, he often emphasized his conviction that it was an unparalleled event in history.

"I have learned that the Holocaust was a unique and uniquely Jewish event, albeit with universal implications," he said at the White House speech in which he prevailed on Reagan not to visit the Bitburg cemetery. "Not all victims were Jews, but all Jews were victims."

To forget the Holocaust, he always said, would be to kill the victims a second time.

Eliezer Wiesel was born Sept. 30, 1928, in Sighet, a town in modern-day Romania that he would later describe as a "Chagall-style Jewish city" in the Carpathian Mountains.

Wiesel grew up in a tight-knit, observantly Jewish family, the only son of a grocer, Shlomo, and his wife, Sarah. So great was the boy's religious fervor, instilled in him by his Hasidic grandfather, that he wept in prayer at the synagogue. He became a rapt student of the Jewish mystics, who taught that meaning could be deciphered from numbers.

Wiesel was 15 years old, a new arrival to Block 17 at Auschwitz after being swept up in the last transport from the Sighet ghetto, when the number A-7713 was tattooed on his left arm. He said that when he turned 18, he wasn't really 18, the camps having turned him prematurely into an old man.

After his liberation from Buchenwald, Wiesel found himself on a train of orphans that ended up in France. Unbeknownst to him, his two older sisters had survived. The siblings were reunited after one of the girls, also living in France, spotted her brother's face in a newspaper.

In his Nobel lecture, Wiesel recalled those early years after his liberation: "The time: After the war. The place: Paris. A young man struggles to readjust to life.... He is alone. On the verge of despair. And yet he does not give up. On the contrary, he strives to find a place among the living. He acquires a new language. He makes a few friends who, like himself, believe that the memory of evil will serve as a shield against evil; that the memory of death will serve as a shield against death. This he must believe in order to go on."

Wiesel's new language, and the one in which he would do much of his writing for the rest of his life, was French. He absorbed the existentialist works of Sartre and Camus and supported himself as a choir director while studying at the Sorbonne. Wiesel was later hired as a foreign correspondent for an Israeli newspaper; the job proved pivotal when it led him to Mauriac.

In 1956, he immigrated to the United States, becoming an American citizen and working for what was then called the Jewish Daily Forward. Journalism would remain his livelihood for years after the war, but he would ultimately pursue a life of teaching and writing books. He once wryly summed up the nature of reporting:

"I realized that I spent my entire life using maybe 400 or 500 words," he told Salon in 2000. "All I had to do was change the names. Sometimes this person said, sometimes another person said. But the word 'said' remained. And I said I don't want to live like that."

Wiesel taught for more than 30 years at Boston University, where his classes were blockbusters. At Yale University, where he was a visiting professor in 1982, 350 students signed up for 65 spots in his course on literature and memory.

To whittle the roster, Wiesel asked each student to write on an index card why he or she wanted to take the class. Their responses were so moving to him, the Times reported, that he did not drop a single student.

He wrote more than 40 works of literature, including novels, plays, memoirs and essays that were rooted in the Jewish thought he learned first from his grandfather and rabbis in Sighet.

In stark, minimalist language, he interrogates the meaning of life after Auschwitz. His novel "The Fifth Son" confronts the second generation's encounter with survivor parents. Another novel, "Day" (also titled "The Accident"), is about a survivor so filled with despair that he seems to allow a taxicab to hit him near Times Square.

Not long after he arrived in the United States, Wiesel, too, was struck by a taxicab in Times Square and hospitalized for months. In a preface to "Day," he wrote that he did not see the car coming. It was further proof of how little separated the living from the dead.

"Every moment is grace," he told the Times in 1983. "I could have died in '45. In a way I did."

And yet - Wiesel said that this was his favorite phrase - he maintained a sense of humor. In 1986, as a freshly named Nobel laureate, he was invited to throw the first pitch in one of the games of the World Series, which Wiesel only vaguely understood to be an important event.

"I had a feeling he was talking mysticism to me," Wiesel was said to have remarked, referring to the baseball commissioner.

Wiesel declined, telling the commissioner that the game took place on the Sabbath and that the next one fell on a holy day. The commissioner cleverly took the matter to some rabbis, who said that after sunset Wiesel would be permitted to participate. So Wiesel finally agreed, but only after consulting his then-teenage son, a baseball fan.

Wiesel often said that he found hope in the young, in both his students and his own child.

"When Marion, my wife, told me she was pregnant, my first feeling was fear," he told the Times. "The world is not worthy of children. I was frantic. But the next wave was joy. Will it be a boy or a girl? Whose name will it have - my mother's or my father's?"

His son Shlomo Elisha Wiesel survives him, as does his wife, the former Marion Erster Rose, a Holocaust survivor whom he married in 1969. A complete list of survivors was not immediately available.

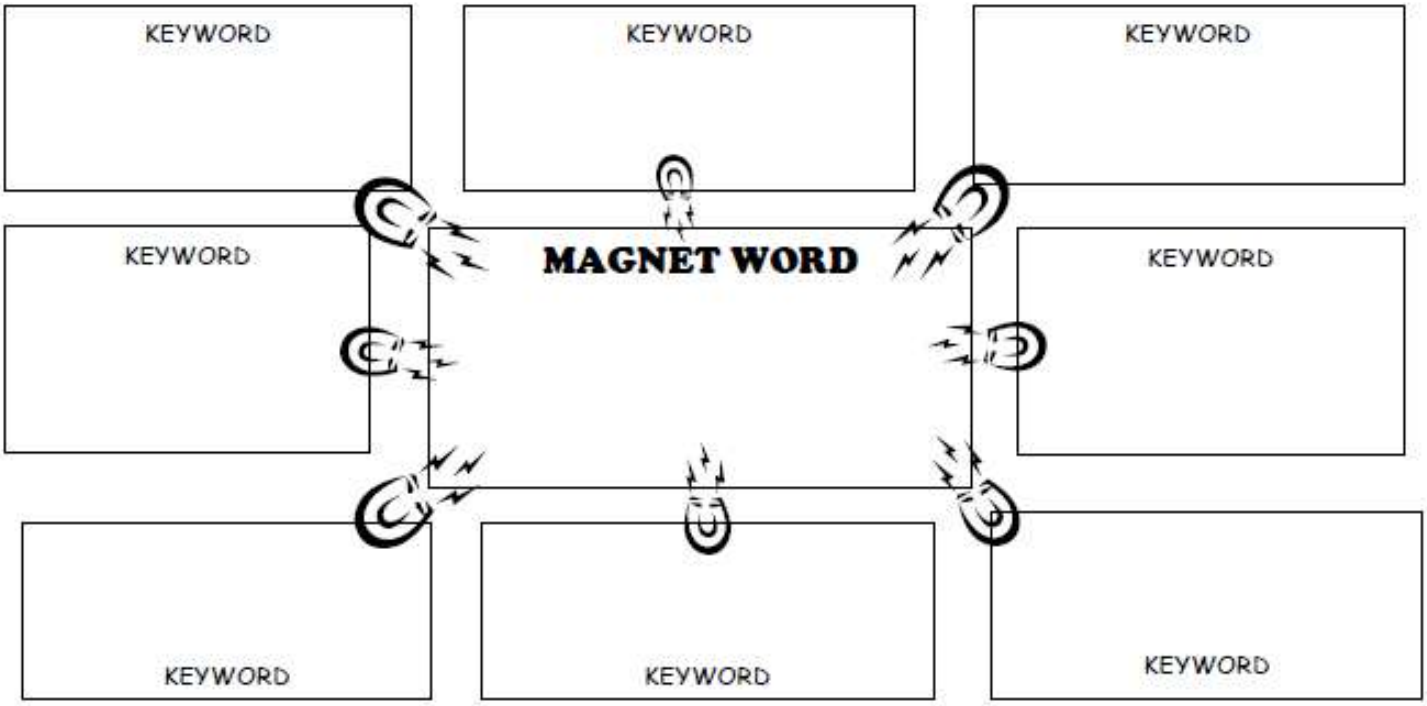
Toward the end of his life, Wiesel was among the victims of investor Bernard L. Madoff's Ponzi scheme and reportedly lost tens of millions of dollars from his personal assets and those of the Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity, which he and his wife founded after he won the Nobel Prize.

"I have seen in my lifetime the problem is when the imagination of the criminal precedes that of the innocent," Wiesel said in a public panel discussion. "Madoff had imagination.... We have no idea that a person is capable of that, but then I should have learned, of course, that a human being is capable of anything."

If the thoughtful face of Anne Frank, immutable on the cover of her best-selling diary, captured the youth and innocence extinguished in the Holocaust, then perhaps Wiesel, as he grew old, represented a different, impending loss.

In his lectures, he often looked small and fragile behind the heavy lectern. He commented that he hoped not to live long enough to be the last survivor because the burden would be too great.

"Wise men remember best," Wiesel said in his Nobel lecture. "And yet it is surely human to forget, even to want to forget.... Only God and God alone can and must remember everything."



SUMMARY:

1. _____ Which of the following statements accurately represents the relationship between the article's central ideas?
    a. Elie Wiesel survived the loss of his family members in the Holocaust; his experiences at Auschwitz were recorded in his famous book "Night" and include many of the most important images from the Holocaust.
    b. Elie Wiesel wrote one of the first books that shared a survivor's memories of the Holocaust; these memories include the death of his parents and sisters and his imprisonment at Buchenwald.
    c. Elie Wiesel was a Holocaust survivor who became a writer, lecturer, and Nobel laureate; this allowed him to share memories and thoughts that were influential to both students and politicians throughout his life.
    d. Elie Wiesel was a famous writer, lecturer, and Nobel laureate; this made him so popular that as many as 350 students signed up for one class and many different presidents listened to his ideas about world events.

2. _____ How does this quote from Wiesel's Nobel lecture develop a central idea of the article?
"The time: After the war. The place: Paris. A young man struggles to readjust to life.... He is alone. On the verge of despair. And yet he does not give up. On the contrary, he strives to find a place among the living. He acquires a new language. He makes a few friends who, like himself, believe that the memory of evil will serve as a shield against evil; that the memory of death will serve as a shield against death. This he must believe in order to go on."
    a. It describes his life, friends, and experiences in France after WWII.
    b. It describes his efforts to find a meaningful way to live with the memory of the Holocaust.
    c. It explains where he found the inspiration to write his famous novel "Night."
    d. It shows that he was widely respected for his talents and abilities.

3. _____ How does the article develop the idea that Wiesel was an outspoken advocate for persecuted people?
    a. by detailing his remarks to world leaders on their behalf
    b. by detailing the books he wrote about them
    c. by showing how he traveled to many countries
    d. by showing how he supported the Holocaust Museum

4. _____ Which of the following BEST represents Wiesel's approach to remembering the Holocaust?
    a. Wiesel was mostly focused on forgetting the family members he had lost during the Holocaust.
    b. Wiesel was mostly concerned with lecturing young people on the effects of the Holocaust.
    c. Wiesel was saddened and angered by the thought that no one was able to understand what he had been through.
    d. Wiesel was motivated and burdened by the belief that it was his duty to share his and other victims' stories.