The History Behind the Holocaust, Elie Wiesel, and Anne Frank
Night
By: Elie Wiesel

- The original title Elie Wiesel gave the novel was *And the World Has Remained Silent*.
- He wrote this book after 10 years of silence.
- Born in 1928 in the town of Sighet, now part of Romania.
- Deported to the German concentration and extermination camps, where his parents and little sister perished.
- Wiesel and his two older sisters survived.
- Liberated from Buchenwald in 1945 by advancing Allied troops, he was taken to Paris where he studied at the Sorbonne and worked as a journalist.
The Diary of Anne Frank

- Anneliesse Marie Frank was born on June 12, 1929, in Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany.
- The second daughter of Otto and Edith Frank.
- Anne and her older sister, Margot, were born in the post-World War 1 era. Along with their parents they were German citizens under the laws of the Weimar Republic (1918-33).
How the War Began

- In 1933, Hitler (head of the Nazi Party) was named Chancellor of Germany.
- Germany was in an economic pitfall after WWI.
- The Franks decided to move to Amsterdam in the Netherlands, which had been neutral during World War I.
- The Netherlands had the reputation of being a safe haven for religious minorities. Otto Frank left for Amsterdam first. He established a branch of his uncle's company called the "Opekta Works" which was a jam making company.

The Frank Family

- Otto
- Margot
- Anne
- Edith
"Margot and I started packing our most important belongings into a school bag. The first thing I stuck in was this diary...Preoccupied by the thought of going into hiding, I stuck the craziest things into the bag, but I'm not sorry. Memories mean more to me than dresses." –Anne Frank

People were told they were being “relocated” and that they could only bring one bag.
Hitler wanted to achieve an “Aryan Nation”

- An Aryan was supposed to be a person of pure Teutonic German background with distinct racial characteristics including fair skin.
- In Mein Kampf (My Struggle), Hitler wrote about the war between the Aryan and non-Aryan races. Hitler planned to kill all people he considered non-Aryan.
Mein Kampf (My Struggle)

- Adolf Hitler’s autobiography, written during his imprisonment in 1924. Mein Kampf details his plan to restore Germany to its former greatness and to make Europe judenrein.
Anti-Semitism

- Jews accounted for less than 1% of the German population when Hitler took over.
- During the Weimar Republic before Hitler took power, of the 230 cabinet positions in Berlin, only 7 were held by Jews.
- Yet Jews were thought to possess all the power and wealth in Germany after WWI.
A term you should know... Gestapo

The Secret Police of the Third Reich, which used terror and torture to eliminate political opposition in Germany. The Gestapo also orchestrated the arrest and deportation of Jews.
This is where propaganda comes into play…
School Changes
Hidden Children

- Jewish children were hidden from the Nazis during World War II. Anne Frank, a young girl who perished in the Holocaust went through many years of hiding with her family and friends. Her situation was unusual in that she was able to hide with her entire family and remain in one place for over two years. Most children were separated from family members and had to move frequently.
In Addition to the Jews, Who Were the Nazis’ Other Victims?

5 million others perished under Nazi persecution:
- Roma and Sinti (Gypsies)
- Jehovah’s Witnesses
- Homosexuals
- Poles, Slavs, and Serbs
- Political prisoners and political opponents
- Resistance fighters
- The physically and mentally handicapped/disabled
- People of non-white skin (EX: African Germans)
- Habitual criminals
How did the Nazis know who was Jewish?

- Census in 1933 had “race” as a category.
- Their clothes, habits, and practices made them look different.
- Synagogues and temples kept birth, marriage, and death records.
- Neighbors and friends turned on them after the Nazis took over, so they could claim rewards.
- I.D. cards labeled Jews with a “J” after the Nuremberg laws went into effect.
- Jews were later required to sew yellow Stars of David to all outer clothing, so they could be easily identified on sight.
Steps to this genocide:

Genocide is defined as “the deliberate and systematic destruction, in whole or in part, of an ethnic, racial, religious, or national group”.

• Prejudice is an attitude.
• Discrimination is an act.

- The Nazi government sponsored a boycott of Jewish businesses that lasted three days and brought international outrage which caused Hitler to end the boycott.
- He didn’t like negative attention from world governments.
Boycott of Jewish Business
Nazi Book Burnings

- The first of a series of book burnings aimed at erasing the literary and scientific contributions of intellectuals and Jews.
Kristallnacht (night of Broken Glass) Nov. 9-10, 1938

- Now that Jews have no rights because they are no longer citizens, the Nazis attempt to destroy all Jewish businesses and culture. On the night of Kristallnacht, Nazis burned Jewish homes, businesses, places of worship, and even destroyed special burial grounds.
Destruction of a Jewish Cemetery
Jewish people no longer lived among gentiles and were forced to live in ghettos.

The situation in the ghettos was brutal. In Warsaw Poland, 30 percent of the population was forced to live in 2.4 percent of the city's area, a density of 7.2 people per room.
Over 400 ghettos were created outside of Germany in Eastern Europe.)
Scenes from the Ghettos
Why Didn’t They Resist More?

- They did resist (Warsaw ghetto uprising)
- Deception by the Nazis (postcards sent home, flowers at the train depots, etc.)
- They didn’t know who the enemy was
- In denial because they’d experienced anti-Semitism as a people throughout history
- Collective responsibility
- Few weapons (Weimar laws prevented citizens from being armed due to losing WWI)
- Dehumanization
Removal to the Camps

- **Transit Camps** - Westerbork held the Franks and Drancy in Paris was an apartment building holding children.

- **Concentration Camps** - Dachau outside Munich, Germany was the first and held political prisoners and was opened March 22, 1933.

- **Labor Camps** - Worked for 3 months (Doctors calculated the number of calories they needed each day to stay alive).

- **Death Camps** - These were concentration camps with special apparatus designed for systematic murder. (All of these camps were outside of Germany in Poland.)
Jews Being Deported from the Warsaw Ghetto to the Death Camps
The Death Camps (All in Poland)

- Auschwitz-Birkenau
- Treblinka
- Sobibor
- Chelmno
- Belzec
- Majdanek
Elie Wiesel in Buchenwald, 1945

Wiesel is on the second row from the bottom, seventh from the left.
“Work Makes You Free”
Selection at Auschwitz
Liberation: 1944-1945
BRYKS Halina

GRUSSMAN Sinaida

[Other images of a hospital ward and a group of boys in sports uniforms can be seen here.]
Elie Wiesel leaving Buchenwald camp, April 27, 1945

He is the tall boy, the fourth from the front on the left side of the column of orphan boys.
Life Begins Again Elsewhere
American prosecutors picked the spiritual center of the Third Reich, Nuremberg, for the trials.

Trials were held at the Palace of Justice

It was an international tribunal to try war crimes. (U.S., France, Britain, and Russia)

This was unique because crimes committed during wartime had never been considered crimes before.

Simon Wiesenthal captured over 1,000 Nazis.

Goering, Streicher, Speer, Ribbentrop, and Hess were the major defendants.

Hitler, Himmler, and Goebbels committed suicide rather than face prosecution
Elie Wiesel, Holocaust survivor, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize said:

‘Ask any survivor and he will tell you, he who has not lived the event will never know it.

And he who went through it will not reveal it, not really, not entirely. Between his memory and his reflection there is a wall and it cannot be pierced.
only the survivor can bear witness,
transmit a spark of the flame,
tell a fragment of the tale,
a reflection of the truth.'
"...to remain silent and indifferent is the greatest sin of all..."

Elie Wiesel shown aged 15
“Despite everything, I believe that people are really good at heart.”- Anne Frank
If you would like to find out more information…

- [www.museumoftolerance.com](http://www.museumoftolerance.com)
- [www.annefrank.org](http://www.annefrank.org)