



Student Activity

Elie Wiesel Great Hearts of Courage

Vocabulary:

anti-Semitic, anti-Semitism, bigotry, Reichstag, martial law, Gestapo, Aryan blood, containment, Final Solution, deportation, crematoria, genocide, prolific writer, humanity

Pre-Viewing Discussion:

What was the Holocaust? When did it occur? Why did it occur? What term is used to describe the slaughter of an entire race of people?

Do any of you know people who survived the Holocaust? Perhaps you have read books about Holocaust survivors. What do they remember about their experiences? How many family members did they lose?

Can you imagine how you would feel if you were the sole survivor when most of your relatives suffered and ultimately died in a concentration camp? How would you gain the courage to go on with life?

Who is Elie Wiesel? Why is he so well known?

Post-Viewing Discussion:

Why were Hitler's views about Jews received so well in post-war Germany? Why was anti-Semitism so widespread at the time?

Were Jews the only people who were exterminated during World War II? What other "undesirables" suffered as a result of Hitler's political control? What was his theory about "Aryans"?

How do you know that writing about the Holocaust didn't come easy for Elie Wiesel? Why couldn't he begin writing at first? How did he find the right words to express the horrors of his experience? What attitude kept him writing?

What do you think has been Elie Wiesel's greatest accomplishment? Do you think he would see any one event or achievement as valuable in itself? What is his aim in life?

Further Activities:

Read at least one of Elie Wiesel's books.

Visit a Holocaust museum.

Interview a Holocaust survivor or read a personal account written by a Holocaust survivor.

Investigate youth peace initiatives that are taking place anywhere in the world.