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**Close Reading: *Night***

Close reading means paying especially close attention to what is printed on the page. It means not only reading and understanding the meanings of the individual printed words; it also involves making yourself sensitive to all the nuances and connotations of language as it is used by skilled writers. In essence, close reading means not only understanding *what* is written, but *how* it is written, and *how* the writer’s stylistic techniques contribute to the meaning and purpose of the work as a whole.

**Directions:** Perform a close reading analysis for each of the following passages. Use the chart provided to guide you in analyzing all of the passage’s important elements.

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| **Passage #1 (pg. 10):**  THE EIGHT DAYS of Passover.  The weather was sublime. My mother was busy in the kitchen. The synagogues were no longer open. People gathered in private homes: no need to provoke the Germans.  Almost every rabbi's home became a house of prayer.  We drank, we ate, we sang. The Bible commands us to rejoice during the eight days of celebration, but our hearts were not in it. We wished the holiday would end so as not to have to pretend.  On the seventh day of Passover, the curtain finally rose: the Germans arrested the leaders of the Jewish community.  From that moment on, everything happened very quickly. The race toward death had begun. |

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| **Elements of Style:** | **Identification and Analysis:** |
| **Diction**  Carefully examine the language of the passage. Pay attention to the author’s diction (word choice), including vocabulary and words with strong or weak connotative meanings (feelings associated with the words). | **● Ex:** Wiesel uses the forceful word “commands” in place of a milder word such as “asks” or “requests.” It points to the power of the Bible for the Jews and suggests that, at this point, they were continuing their traditions more out of obligation than out of desire. |
| **Figurative Language**  Identify key examples, such as simile, metaphor, personification, symbol, symbolism, and imagery. Comment on their effect on the passage as a whole. |  |
| **Tone**  What is the speaker’s attitude in the passage? What aspect(s) of the text suggest this? |  |

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| **Passage #2 (pg. 19):**  We were ready. I went out first. I did not want to look at my parents' faces. I did not want to break into tears. We remained sitting in the middle of the street, like the others two days earlier. The same hellish sun. The same thirst. Only there was no one  left to bring us water.  I looked at my house in which I had spent years seeking my God, fasting to hasten the coming of the Messiah, imagining what my life would be like later. Yet I felt little sadness. My mind was empty.  "Get up! Roll call!"  We stood. We were counted. We sat down. We got up again. Over and over. We waited impatiently to be taken away. What  were they waiting for? |

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| **Elements of Style:** | **Identification and Analysis:** |
| **Diction**  Carefully examine the language of the passage. Pay attention to the author’s diction (word choice), including vocabulary and words with strong or weak connotative meanings (feelings associated with the words). |  |
| **Figurative Language**  Identify key examples, such as simile, metaphor, personification, symbol, symbolism, and imagery. Comment on their effect on the passage as a whole. |  |
| **Tone**  What is the speaker’s attitude in the passage? What aspect(s) of the text suggest this? |  |