

## WRITING SELECTION 2

Joaquim has written a character analysis for his English teacher's Night writing assignment. He would like you to read his paper before he turns it in. As you read it, look for revisions he should make. Then answer the questions that follow.

### Shattered Adolescence in Elie Wiesel's Night

(1) Choosing to live in another country is difficult enough, but imagine what it would feel like if one was forced to leave one's homeland. (2) Because the President of Serbia wanted to rid his country of all Muslims, my family left Albania; by the time I was twelve, we were living in Katy, Texas. (3) Although I had been a baby when the genocide began in my country, when I read Elie Wiesel's Night in my English language arts class, I could instantly identify with Elie's forced separation from his way of life simply because he was Jewish.

(4) When he is a teenager, Elie's world is suddenly interrupted when his family and he are sent to German concentration camps. (5) The effects of Elie's dislocation are shown both in his questioning of his faith as a result of what he observed in concentration camps and in his altered relationship with his father.

(6) Elie begins to have serious doubts about his faith after being deported to a German concentration camp. (7) Before the Nazis deported Elie's community, Elie was "thirteen and deeply observant." (8) He was so religious that he asked Moishe the Beadle to be his religious teacher of the Kabbalah, often remaining to discuss difficult religious topics with Moishe "long after the faithful had gone." (9) No one can be certain, but it seems reasonable that Elie's spiritual devotion reflected his genuine belief that people are essentially humane.

(10) After Elie and his family are deported, however, Elie's spiritual optimism turns into disbelief in a divine order. (11) "Never shall I forget those moments that murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to ashes." (12) Coming from

a teenager, such a startling statement indicates how much life in a concentration camp permanently shattered his view of the world as kind and decent.

(13) The reader can determine that before the war his father is not only the head of the family but also head of the community. (14) Another aspect of Elie's life that demonstrates the destructive consequences of a concentration camp on his adolescence is his relationship with his father. (15) "The Jewish community of Sighet held him in highest esteem; his advice on public and even private matters was frequently sought." (16) Describing his father as "unsentimental" and someone who "rarely displayed his feelings, not even with his family," Wiesel implies that his father and him never developed a personal relationship.

(17) Once Elie and his father find themselves in concentration camps however, their roles are reversed. (18) Because of his age and lack of physical strength, Elie's father begins to rely on his son to provide comfort and support. (19) As they march from one camp to another, Elie takes on the role of the father he constantly worries about the health and safety of his father the way a father would be protective of his own son. (20) Part of Elie feels relieved when his father finally dies because he will no longer have the responsibility of looking after a needy child.

(21) Although I am a teenager living in the United States; I can sympathize with Elie Wiesel's adolescence, especially after the stories my parents told me about the atrocities committed against Muslims in Albania. (22) The tragedy of Elie's life is that he never felt what it was like to be a normal teenager. (23) He never experienced the joys of growing up with his friends, making new discoveries about the world, or simply falling in love for the first time. (24) What I learned from Elie Wiesel's memoir is that one of the worse crimes of the Holocaust was that it destroyed a generation of adolescent innocence and hope for a brighter future.