

Pre-AP English 9  
*Night & The Boys Who Challenged Hitler*  
Synthesis Essay

**Directions**

The following prompt is based on the accompanying four sources and *Night*. This question requires you to synthesize a variety of sources into a coherent, well-written essay. *Refer to the sources to support your position; avoid mere paraphrase or summary. Your argument should be central; the sources should be used to support this argument.*

**Introduction**

One of the central issues surrounding the Holocaust, and World War II in general, is the indifference shown by many people toward the events that were occurring around them. Does evil occur when good men choose to do nothing? Is it better to get involved in a dangerous situation and risk one’s own personal well-being than to stay neutral and risk the persecution of others and “onlooker” guilt?

**Assignment**

Read the following sources (including any introductory information) carefully. Then, in an essay that synthesizes at least three of the sources<sup>1</sup> for support, take a position that defends or challenges the claim that individuals have an obligation to help themselves and others.

Please refer to the sources by their titles and cite their authors when quoting or paraphrasing.

- Source A: “Outside a Small Circle of Friends” (Ochs)
- Source B: “37 Who Saw Murder Didn’t call the Police” (Gansberg)
- Source C: “Can the Law Make Us Be Decent” (Silver)
- Source D: “Hangman” (Ogden)
- Source E: *Night* (Wiesel)
- Source F: *The Boys Who Challenged Hitler* (Hoose)
- Source G: from *An Ordinary Man* (Rusesabagina)

- Source H: q & a on justice (Google dictionary)
- Source I: “Our mission is to report these horrors...” (Colvin)
- Source J: from *Schindler’s Ark* (Keneally)
- Source K: “Nuremberg Trials” (*History*)
- Source L: “Andartiko: the Greek Resistance” (Ray)
- Source M: “Paul Rusesabagina, No ‘Ordinary Man’” (Banks)
- Source N: “Cattle Car Complex” (Rosenbaum)

**Thesis Statement:**

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\*Please format your final essay properly in MLA format. Visit the OWL at Purdue University (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>) for assistance.

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<sup>1</sup> You must use either *The Boys Who Challenged Hitler* or *Night* as one of your three sources.

## Grading Rubric for *Night* or *The Boys Who challenged Hitler* Synthesis Essay

9 - 8 papers demonstrate →

- Originality and imagination
- They are clearly focused discussions composed of coherent arguments of exceptional clarity.
- These papers leave the reader convinced of the soundness of the discussion, impressed with the quality of the writing style, and stimulated by the intelligence and insight of the writer.
- These essays are unified with specific and accurate references or examples. They possess a thoughtful and articulate thesis. They possess a mature command of language, vocabulary, and sentence structure.

9 = 99%

8 = 96%

7 - 6 papers demonstrate →

- Solid, logical, and persuasive discussion, but they lack the originality and maturity of the "9" papers.
- Furthermore, the development of the essay lacks the grace and style of the "9" papers and may seem a bit predictable and plodding.
- These essays possess an articulate thesis and sufficient details to support the thesis.
- The command of language, vocabulary, and sentence structure is adequate.
- Ideas are clearly presented and some sentence variety exists.

7 = 93%

6 = 90%

5 papers demonstrate →

- A thorough but not totally convincing discussion of the topic, marked by the sense that the writer has not completely thought out the issue
- In addition, there are some writing errors that may distract the reader from the writer's argument.
- The writing is simplistic; the ideas, superficial and hastily constructed.
- The introduction and the conclusion are empty or repetitive.

5 = 85%

4 - 3 papers demonstrate →

- That an attempt has been made to organize the essay but the structure is flawed and the supporting detail is weak
- Sentence patterns are simplistic and vocabulary is immature.
- Serious problems with the mechanics of standard written English may exist.

4 = 80%

3 = 78%

2 - 1 papers demonstrate →

- A lack of understanding of the task or the process of writing
- These essays do not have a thesis and do not address the topic or question.
- They draw obscure or irrelevant conclusions and are seriously deficient in the conventions of standard written English.
- Vocabulary and sentence structure are simplistic.

2 = 68%

1 = 64%

Elements to consider:

1. clear argument for what obligation individuals have to help themselves and others
2. clear, complex thesis assertion
3. sophisticated sentence structure
4. strong rhetoric used to persuade
5. strong verbs
6. depth and thoroughness of argument
7. use of three sources to validate argument, including *Night*
8. fluid incorporation of sources