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In Class 8

**Rhetorical Situation Analysis Prompts, Eli Wiesel’s   
“The Perils of Indifference”**

*For each bullet* (•) *copy and paste evidence or compose reasoning; hit <enter> after each to add on as many additional bullets as needed.*

Compose a thesis sentence in which the focused topic is Ellie Wiesel’s speech, and your claim uses the term **“rhetorical situation.”**

**Thesis:** In Wiesel’s “The Perils of Indifference”, he effectively used text, rhetorical situation, audience, purpose, and Kairos to argue that the world must stop being indifferent in the next century.

1. *Claim:* compose a topic sentence that claims Wiesel’s **“text”** affects his rhetorical situation (using the terminology in red):

* Wiesel affectively used text to argue the dangers of indifference

1. *Reasoning:* Wiesel’s rhetorical ***genre*** choice is persuasive logic (*evidence*)—why was this a good choice for this audience and this situation?

* Using evidence to show the dangers of indifference gives his speech more credibility and relatability
* Wiesel’s goal was to persuade his audience and using persuasive logic makes the audience more persuaded
* Using evidence for indifference is great because throughout the 20th century indifference has caused wars, assassinations, etc.

1. *Reasoning:* there are two ***mediums*** here: oral presentation (*evidence*—his original speech) before an audience broadcasted on television; and printed text *(evidence*—the essay form we are studying). Compare and contrast the advantages of each.

* The advantage of oral is we get to see Wiesel a victim of indifference in person/ on screen and talk about how indifference affected his life and how he is trying to limit indifference in the world to help kids like him
* The advantage of printed text is that it is easier to read and understand because you can read at your own pace.
* Another advantage of printed text is that it’s easier to analyze and write about because you can take points at the beginning to the end and re-read sections to fully understand it

1. *Claim:* compose a topic sentence that claims Wiesel’s background as **“rhetor”** (work that term into the sentence) affects his rhetorical situation:
   * Wiesel used rhetor to successfully argue the effects of indifference
     1. *Evidence:* compile facts from sources outside of the text on Wiesel’s background (Google public domain information; no need for quoting or citing):
   * Born in 1928 in Sighet

* Deported in World War Two with his family to concentration camps
* His parents and siters died, him and his two sisters survived
* Liberated in 1945 by Allied troops
* Became a journalist and human rights activist
  + 1. *Evidence:* what facts can you quote from within the text that show who the author is?
* “Fifty-four years ago to the day, a young Jewish boy from a small town in the Carpathian Mountains woke up, not far from Goethe's beloved Weimar, in a place of eternal infamy called Buchenwald. He was finally free, but there was no joy in his heart. He thought there never would be again.”
  + - Wiesel was saved from the Nazi’s
    - Could not find joy, even after being freed
* “Liberated a day earlier by American soldiers, he remembers their rage at what they saw. And even if he lives to be a very old man, he will always be grateful to them for that rage, and also for their compassion. Though he did not understand their language, their eyes told him what he needed to know -- that they, too, would remember, and bear witness.”
  + - Saved by American soldiers
    - Grateful for rage
* “And now, I stand before you, Mr. President”
  + - This Jewish boy was himself, Wiesel
    1. *Reasoning:* how does this background information affect the situation of his rhetoric (consider his generation/age, his ethnic and cultural background, his religion, his education, and his politics).
* First it gives him more credibility to argue about indifference because he lived through the effects of indifference
  + - Was separated and lost his parents and sister because of indifference
* Wiesel strives for human rights all across the world and indifference needs to be removed from society if he wishes to succeed in his goal this speech gives him the greatest opportunity to stop indifference.

1. *Claim:* compose a topic sentence that claims Wiesel’s **“audience”** (use the term) affects his rhetorical situation:

* Wiesel hoped having a worldwide audience would bring countries to stop being indifferent and combine forces towards injustice.
  + 1. *Evidence:* who was the center-of-target audience: who were the people in the audience for the occasion?
* The main audience was the people who heard the speech in person and people who watch it on tv
  + - Worldwide Audience
* Wiesel was invited to talk on the Millenium Lecture Series that the Clinton’s hosted
  + 1. *Reasoning:* how might that audience determine Wiesel’s subject matter and how he would communicate it?
* Weisel was presenting to a group of powerful people in person and to an entire nation. He changed elements such as discussing the us involvement in the holocaust, if he was in a different country or not preaching to world leaders, he may have taken a different approach to express his point.
* Depending on the country, like Germany now has to look back on the tragedies their grandparents/parents and from his speech can see how it effect a Jew’s life and could bring a the county to strive for a better future
* Other countries who did not get involved can see how they effect the war like America did because they allowed the war to continue and if the world took effect right away Hitler’s reign would have ended way sooner
  + 1. *Evidence and reasoning:* who is his broader audience (keep in mind the two mediums—his speech and the transcript/essay).
* The broader audience is the people who will read and watch it after the speech was given, a perk of giving the speech at the white house is the fact that it will be kept and accessible to anyone who wants to read it for a long time.
* Worldwide audience allows everyone to hear the effects of indifference everyone country had towards the Jews/Victim’s of World War Two and can bring together countries to remove indifferences that are created between them.
* Creating a physical copy of his speech allowed people who do not know English to read what he said in their language and can allow his message to spread further if there wasn’t one.

1. *Claim:* compose a topic sentence that claims Wiesel’s **“purpose”** (use the term) affects his rhetorical situation.

* Wiesel’s purpose is to limit indifference and bring humans rights to all
  + 1. *Evidence:* quote evidence that suggest to you what it is that Wiesel wants to change in his audiences.
* “But this time, the world is not silent. This time, we do respond. This time, we intervene
  + 1. *Reasoning:* based upon the evidence, what is Wiesel’s “**rhetorical exigence”**(use the term)in this speech; i.e., what does he hope his rhetoric will change?
* Weisel’s motivation and Exigence is the holocaust and prevention of the holocaust, as well as preventing and stopping hate/indifference in our world.

1. *Claim:* compose a topic sentence that claims Wiesel’s use of **“kairos”** (use the term) affects his rhetorical situation:

* Wiesel’s used Kairos to bring his lecture more attention and credibility.
  + 1. *Evidence:* describe the “**occasion”** (use the term)for the rhetoric (Google the *Seventh White House Millennium Evening*).
* The occasion is the Millennium Evening hosted at the White House and Nobel prize winner Elie Wiesel was the events speaker
  + - Wiesel uses his teachings and lectures to argue for human rights and world peace
    1. *Evidence and reasoning:* quote evidence from the text where Wiesel shows “**appropriate decorum”** (use the term). ***For each quote, explain*** (in few words) how he captures in socially appropriate words what will be respectful and engaging to his audience.
* ““He was finally free, but there was no joy in his heart. He thought there never would be again.”
  + - This quote shows how devastating the concentration camps were that even freedom doesn’t bring joy into their lives
* “Though he did not understand their language, their eyes told him what he needed to know—that they, too, would remember, and bear witness.
  + - This quote shows that even though there are a different country they would see him as a human being and stop his suffering from the Nazi’s, not being indifferent
* “‘Gratitude’ is a word that I cherish. Gratitude is what defines the humanity of the human being.”
  + - This quote shows what Wiesel values the most in life and Gratitude being the word shows he has never forgotten his feeling at seeing the American soldiers saving him
* “Indifference is not a beginning, it is an end. And, therefore, indifference is always the friend of the enemy, for it benefits the aggressor -- never his victim, whose pain is magnified when he or she feels forgotten.”
  + - This quote shows how bad indifference is and what happens when a country has indifference. Wiesel gives examples of America’s indifference and their consequences towards the Jew’s

1. *Evidence and reasoning:* quote evidence of Wiesel using examples or illustrations that relevantly show “**appropriate pertinence”** (use the term). ***For each quote, explain*** (in short phrases) why it is so pertinent (include paragraphs 19, 22, 23, and 24, among others—Google background on the specific examples).

* “The depressing tale of the St. Louis is a case in point. Sixty years ago, its human cargo -- maybe 1,000 Jews -- was turned back to Nazi Germany. And that happened after the Kristallnacht, after the first state sponsored pogrom, with hundreds of Jewish shops destroyed, synagogues burned, thousands of people put in concentration camps. And that ship, which was already on the shores of the United States, was sent back.”
* “Why did some of America's largest corporations continue to do business with Hitler's Germany until 1942? It has been suggested, and it was documented, that the Wehrmacht could not have conducted its invasion of France without oil obtained from American sources. How is one to explain their indifference?”
  + - Wiesel added these events because it accurately shows the effects of indifference and why humanity should never be indifferent toward others
* “And yet, my friends, good things have also happened in this traumatic century: the defeat of Nazism, the collapse of communism, the rebirth of Israel on its ancestral soil, the demise of apartheid, Israel's peace treaty with Egypt, the peace accord in Ireland. And let us remember the meeting, filled with drama and emotion, between Rabin and Arafat that you, Mr. President, convened in this very place. I was here and I will never forget it.”
* “And then, of course, the joint decision of the United States and NATO to intervene in Kosovo and save those victims, those refugees, those who were uprooted by a man whom I believe that because of his crimes, should be charged with crimes against humanity. But this time, the world was not silent. This time, we do respond. This time, we intervene.”
  + - Instead of relying on everything bad that each country this century did, Wiesel also shared the good countries can do in the war because he wishes to show what the world can be like if the world would stop being indifferent

1. *Evidence:* what is the kairotic “**exigency”** (the urgent situation that his speech cannot change, but which is the reason Wiesel was invited to speak on this occasion).

* He was invited because the event was marking the end of the 20th century, and it was important to acknowledge one of the bigger events of the century which was World War 2 and the holocaust. It made sense to touch on the tragedy this century saw, not only positives.

1. *Reasoning:* why might Wiesel be best suited to address this exigency?

* Because his background had firsthand experience with discrimination and indifference, and his voice carries more weight and power than just a normal activist.