

Before You Read

NO NEWS FROM AUSCHWITZ

Make the Connection

Remembering History

In 1958, when A. M. Rosenthal was *The New York Times's* correspondent in Warsaw, Poland, he visited the concentration camp at Auschwitz. About fourteen years had passed since the camps had been liberated, and virtually no mention of them had appeared in American newspapers for several years. There was “no news” to report from those sites, and Americans seemed all too willing to put the ugly memories behind them. Rosenthal’s piece for *The Times* was a powerful reminder of the dangers that could befall people who forgot what had happened there.

Quickwrite

In a few sentences, write what you know about the Holocaust. (Perhaps you’ve read *The Diary of Anne Frank* or the speech from the Nuremberg trials on page 885. Save your notes.)



Reading Skills and Strategies



Dialogue with the Text

In your notebook, describe your feelings as you read this essay. Note the passages that you find most moving and your reactions to them.



A. M. Rosenthal saw these photos of concentration camp prisoners when he visited the museum at Auschwitz in 1958.

Elements of Literature

Objective and Subjective Writing

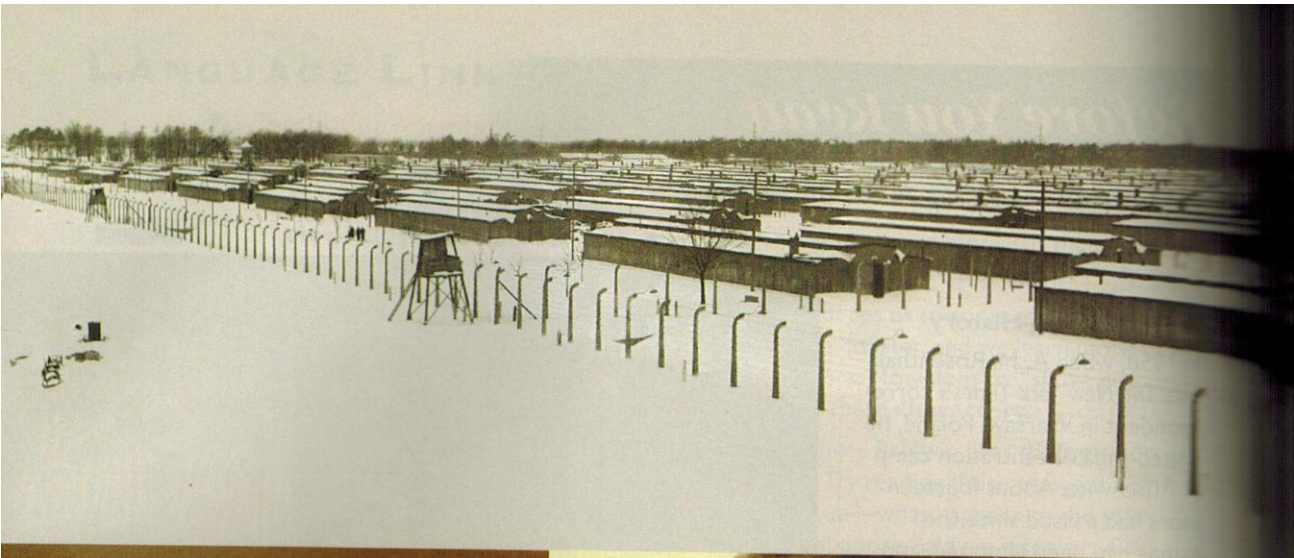
At the moment, you are reading this book. That’s a fact. You are somewhere. It is some hour of the day, some day of the week. All of these statements refer to **objective** facts, which means that they can be proved true.

You may also be interested or bored or worried about a test next period. These are **subjective**, or personal, feelings and judgments.

Two writers may start out with the same facts and yet report an event in vastly different ways. An encyclopedia article about the Holocaust, for

example, that contains only facts and gives no clue to the writer’s thoughts and feelings is **objective** writing. In revealing their own thoughts, judgments, feelings, and attitudes, writers are writing **subjectively**. As you read A. M. Rosenthal’s report from Auschwitz, consider which type of writing—objective or subjective—is more important in his essay.

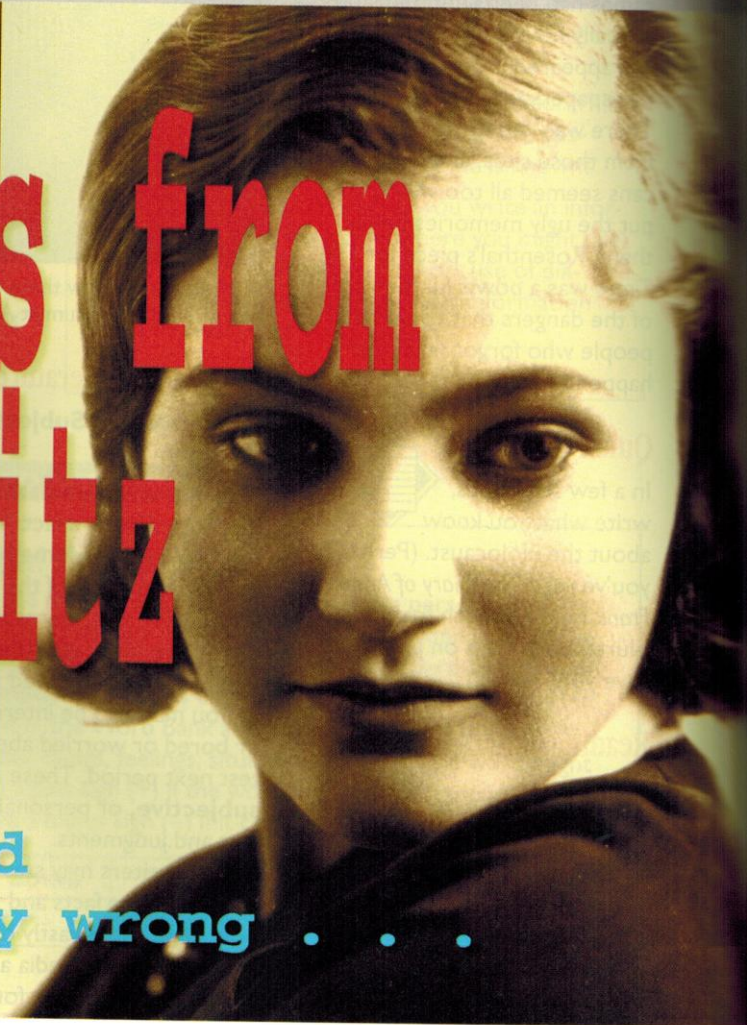
Objective writing reports only the facts; the writer is invisible. In **subjective** writing, the writer adds his or her opinions, judgments, or feelings.



No News from Auschwitz

A. M. Rosenthal

It all seemed
frighteningly wrong . . .





(Above) The abandoned Auschwitz II, or Birkenau, outside the town of Brzezinka, Poland, in February 1945. As the Soviet army advanced, Nazis moved prisoners to Dachau and other German concentration camps. (Left) Zdenka Gruenwald, age 15, who died in the Holocaust.

Brzezinka, Poland—The most terrible thing of all, somehow, was that at Brzezinka the sun was bright and warm, the rows of graceful poplars were lovely to look upon, and on the grass near the gates children played.

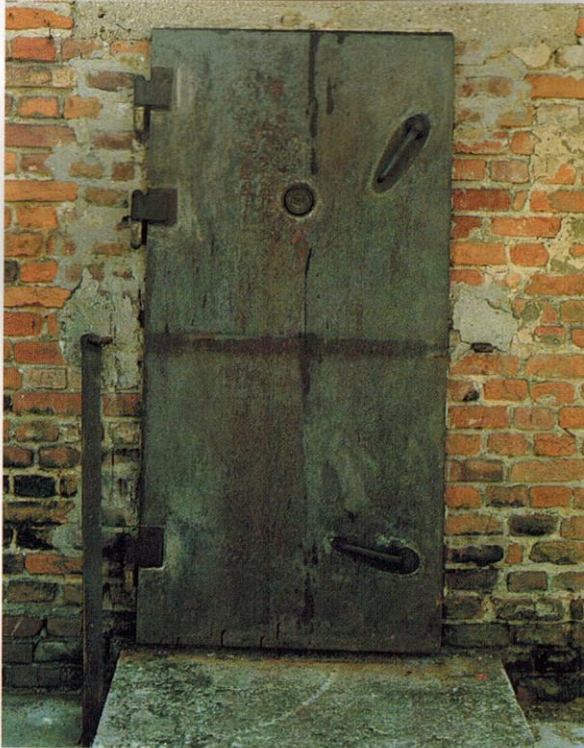
It all seemed frighteningly wrong, as in a nightmare, that at Brzezinka the sun should ever shine or that there should be light and greenness and the sound of young laughter. It would be fitting if at Brzezinka the sun never shone and the grass withered, because this is a place of unutterable terror.

And yet every day, from all over the world, people come to Brzezinka, quite possibly the most grisly tourist center on earth. They come for a variety of reasons—to see if it could really have been true, to remind themselves not to forget, to pay homage to the dead by the simple act of looking upon their place of suffering.

Brzezinka is a couple of miles from the better-known southern Polish town of Oświęcim.^o Oświęcim has about 12,000 inhabitants, is situated about 171 miles from Warsaw, and lies in a damp, marshy area at the eastern end of the pass called the Moravian Gate. Brzezinka and Oświęcim together formed part of that minutely organized factory of torture and death that the Nazis called Konzentrationslager Auschwitz.

By now, fourteen years after the last batch of prisoners was herded naked into the gas chambers by dogs and guards, the story of Auschwitz has been told a great many times. Some of the inmates have written of those memories of which sane men cannot conceive. Rudolf Franz Ferdinand Hoess, the superintendent of the camp, before he was executed wrote his detailed memoirs of mass exterminations and the experiments on living bodies. Four million people died here, the Poles say.

^oOświęcim (ôsh·vyan'tsim): Polish name for Auschwitz.



Entrance to one of the gas chambers at Auschwitz.

And so there is no news to report about Auschwitz. There is merely the compulsion to write something about it, a compulsion that grows out of a restless feeling that to have visited Auschwitz and then turned away without having said or written anything would somehow be a most grievous act of discourtesy to those who died here.

Brzezinka and Oświęcim are very quiet places now; the screams can no longer be heard. The tourist walks silently, quickly at first to get it over with and then, as his mind peoples

the barracks and the chambers and the dungeons and flogging posts, he walks draggingly. The guide does not say much either, because there is nothing much for him to say after he has pointed.

For every visitor there is one particular bit of horror that he knows he will never forget. For some it is seeing the rebuilt gas chamber at Oświęcim and being told that this is the “small one.”

For others it is the fact that at Brzezinka, in the ruins of the gas chambers and the crematoria the Germans blew up when they retreated, there are daisies growing.

There are visitors who gaze blankly at the gas chambers and the furnaces because their minds simply cannot encompass them, but stand shivering before the great mounds of human hair behind the plate-glass window or the piles of babies’ shoes or the brick cells where men sentenced to death by suffocation were walled up.

One visitor opened his mouth in a silent scream simply at the sight of boxes—great stretches of three-tiered wooden boxes in the women’s barracks. They were about six feet wide, about three feet high, and into them from five to ten prisoners were shoved for the night. The guide walks quickly through the barracks. Nothing more to see here.

A brick building where sterilization experiments were carried out on women prisoners. The guide tries the door—it’s locked. The visitor is grateful that he does not have to go in, and then flushes with shame.

A long corridor where rows of faces stare from the walls. Thousands of pictures, the photographs of prisoners. They are all dead now, the men and women who stood before the cameras, and they all knew they were to die.

They all stare blank-faced, but one picture, in the middle of a row, seizes the eye and wrenches the mind. A girl, twenty-two years old, plumply pretty, blond. She is smiling gently, as at a sweet, treasured thought. What was the thought that passed through her young mind and is now her memorial on the wall of the dead at Auschwitz?

MEET THE WRITER

Journalist of Distinction

Abraham Michael Rosenthal (1922–) was born in Ontario, Canada, but moved with his family to New York City when he was four. For many years he served as the executive editor of *The New York Times*. When he “retired,” he began to write a column for *The Times* called “On My Mind,” in which he often takes a moral and ethical stand on events in the news.

In November 1959, after Rosenthal had written “No News from Auschwitz,” the Polish government expelled him for his probing reporting. He won a Pulitzer Prize in May 1960 for the same reports. Rosenthal is also the author of *Thirty-Eight Witnesses* (1964), an account of a murder in a quiet New York City neighborhood. The title refers to the thirty-eight people who witnessed a young woman’s murder but did nothing to help the victim.

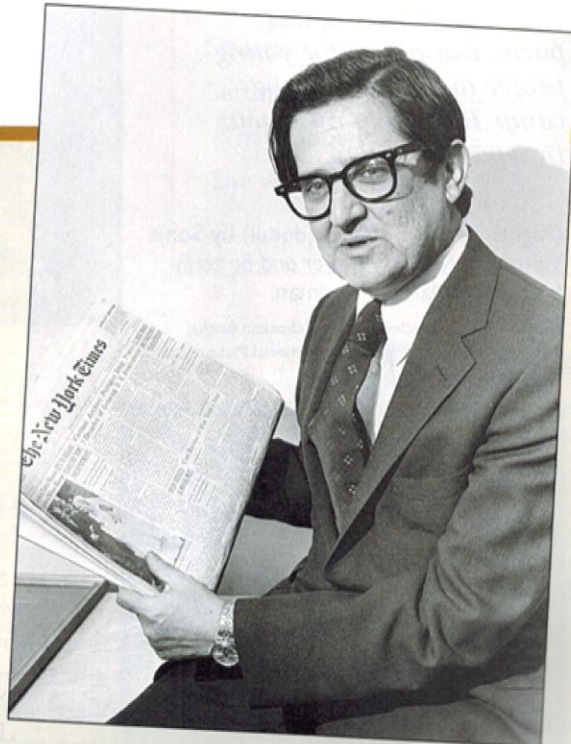
When asked if he thought that reporters’ opinions are slipping into news stories more often today than they did in the past, Rosenthal replied:

“ Yes, I do. But we don’t try for objectivity, because there is no such thing as pristine objectivity. There is an approach to doing a fair

Into the suffocation dungeons the visitor is taken for a moment and feels himself strangling. Another visitor goes in, stumbles out, and crosses herself. There is no place to pray in Auschwitz.

The visitors look pleadingly at each other and say to the guide, “Enough.”

There is nothing new to report about Auschwitz. It was a sunny day and the trees were green and at the gates the children played.



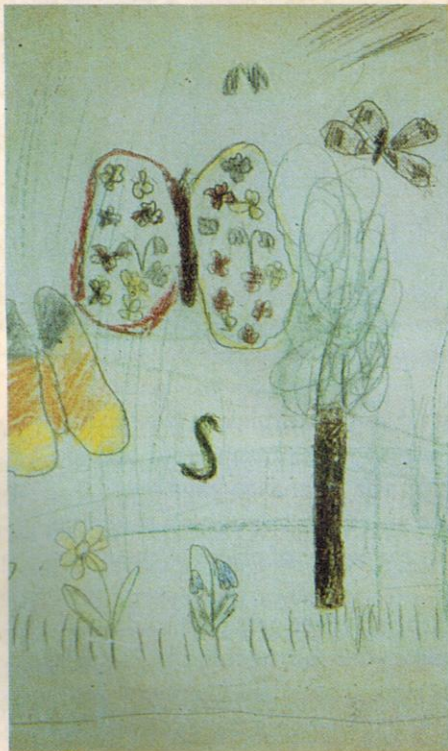
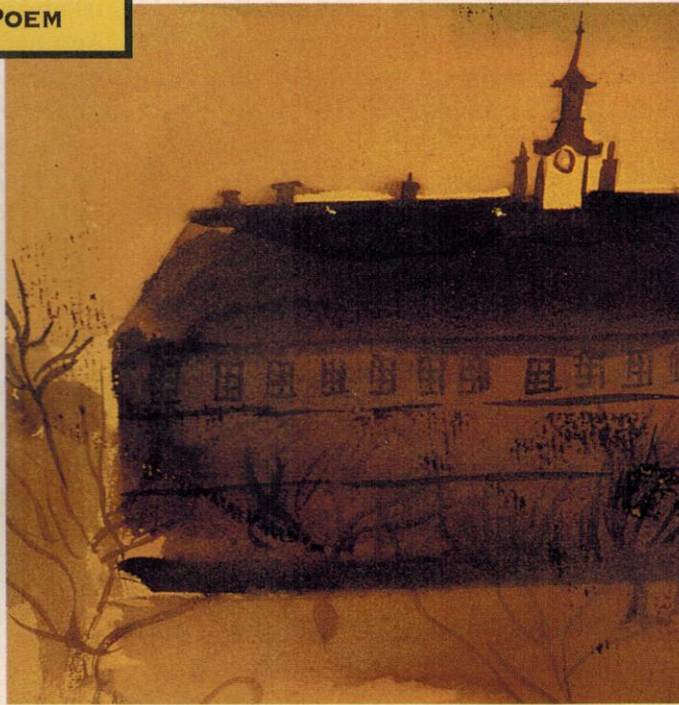
job, . . . but if you start thinking the most important thing to do is present your opinion, by stealth or not, to change your readers’ minds, then you can’t do your job the same way. There are plenty of places in the paper to do that. . . .

The editorial writer gets paid to do it; if you don’t like your job, become an editorial writer. Or stick around, be a reporter for thirty years, then become the executive editor, and then become a columnist. ”

The Nazis used the Czech town of Terezín as a concentration camp between 1941 and 1945. From 1942 to 1944, a total of 15,000 children passed through the camp. Only about 100 of them survived. Pavel Friedmann, the writer of this poem, was one of the young people imprisoned in the camp. He died in Auschwitz in September 1944.

(Right) Terezín Barracks (detail) by Sonja Valdstein. (Below) Flower and Butterfly (detail) by Marika Friedman.

From *I never saw another butterfly* (Schocken Books, 1993). Courtesy U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C.



The Butterfly

Pavel Friedmann

The last, the very last,
So richly, brightly, dazzlingly yellow.
Perhaps if the sun's tears would sing
against a white stone . . .

5 Such, such a yellow
Is carried lightly 'way up high.
It went away I'm sure because it wished to
kiss the world goodbye.

10 For seven weeks I've lived in here,
Penned up inside this ghetto
But I have found my people here.
The dandelions call to me
And the white chestnut candles in the court.
Only I never saw another butterfly.

15 That butterfly was the last one.
Butterflies don't live in here,
in the ghetto.

(6) The **future perfect tense** (formed with *will have* or *shall have* and the verb's past participle) is used to express an action or a state of being that will be completed in the future before some other future occurrence.

EXAMPLES

After tonight, I **will have seen** the film twice.
Next Tuesday, we **will have lived** here two years.

3f. Do not change needlessly from one tense to another.

INCONSISTENT	Her family packed up and moves.
CONSISTENT	Her family packed up and moved .
CONSISTENT	Her family packs up and moves .
INCONSISTENT	They marry and finally bought a house.
CONSISTENT	They married and finally bought a house.
CONSISTENT	They marry and finally buy a house.



Using Appropriate Verb Tenses

Using different verb tenses is often necessary to show the order of events that occur at different times.

NONSTANDARD

I wished that I wrote that poem.

STANDARD

I **wished** that I **had written** that poem. [Since the action of writing was completed before the action of wishing, the verb should be *had written*, not *wrote*.]

Try It Out

For each of the following sentences, correct the verb tenses to show the order of events.

1. After the clock had struck eight, Mr. Leonard Mead had gone for a walk.
2. For years, he had enjoyed the cool air and only occasionally has had trouble from roaming dogs.
3. Nothing had moved on the street for an hour, and now he has heard no sounds.
4. While he was walking, a police car has approached him.
5. A voice had told him to stop, and he does so.

ACTIVE AND PASSIVE VOICE

3g. A verb in the **active voice** expresses an action done by its subject. A verb in the **passive voice** expresses an action received by its subject.

ACTIVE VOICE Dick Fool Bull **told** his story.
PASSIVE VOICE The story **was told** by Dick Fool Bull.

ACTIVE VOICE The holy man **instructed** them.
PASSIVE VOICE They **were instructed** by the holy man.

3h. Use the passive voice sparingly.

The passive voice is not any less correct than the active voice, but it is less direct, less forceful, and less concise. As a result, a sentence in the passive voice can be wordy and sound awkward or weak.

AWKWARD PASSIVE Instructions were given to them by the holy man.
ACTIVE The holy man gave them instructions.

The passive voice is useful, however, in certain situations:

1. when you do not know the performer of the action

EXAMPLE

The First National Bank **was robbed** last night.

2. when you do not want to reveal the performer of the action

EXAMPLE

Police **were notified**.

3. when you want to emphasize the receiver of the action

EXAMPLE

Already, seven suspects **have been questioned**.



Some software programs can identify verbs in the passive voice. If you use such a program, keep in mind that it can't tell why you have used the passive voice. If you did so for a good reason, you may want to leave the verb in the passive voice.

Name: _____ Period: _____ - Date: _____

No News from Auschwitz
by A.M. Rosenthal (Literature Book page 410)

1) **Read “No News from Auschwitz”** by A.M. Rosenthal on page 410.

2) **Answer the “As You Read”** questions.

3) **Read page 414 “Connections, A Poem, ‘The Butterfly’ by P. Friedmann”** and complete the “**Poem Assignment**”

4) **Writing:**

- I. **Journal entry – minimum of 1 page:** What do you currently know about the Holocaust?

- II. **Journal entry – minimum of 1 full page (front and back):** If you had a chance to visit Auschwitz would you go? Why or why not?

- III. **Journal entry – minimum of 1 page:** List 3 things you learned about the Holocaust.

- IV. **Summary:** Read Pages 410 to 413 and Write an objective summary. Your response should summarize the key ideas and details without including extraneous information, include appropriate supporting details from the text, present a coherent, organized explanation, and conclude in a logical way that supports the explanation.

- V. **Open-ended question:** Remember to cite the text.

- What relationship do you see between Rosenthal’s essay and the poem “The butterfly?”

5) **Grammar:** Go to page 1028 in your literature book (green) read “Active and Passive Voice.” Create a sentence in the **active** and **passive** voice for each word below (you may also use a variation of the word). You should have 6 sentences in total.

- Spoke
- Gave
- Advise

Notes:

Objective writing, reports only the facts; the writer is invisible.

Subjective writing, the writer adds his or her opinions, judgments, or feelings.

Irony: A technique that involves surprising, interesting, or amusing contradictions or contrasts. A perception of inconsistency, sometimes humorous, in which the significance and understanding of a statement or event is changed by its context.

- **Dramatic Irony** - the audience or reader knows more about a character's situation than the character does and knows that the character's understanding is incorrect.

Example: In *Medea*, Creon asks, "What atrocities could she commit in one day?" The reader, however, knows *Medea* will destroy her family and Creon's by day's end.

- **Situational Irony** - When what actually happens is the opposite of what is expected.
- **Verbal Irony** - a discrepancy between what is said and what is really meant; sarcasm. *Example:* A large man whose nickname is "Tiny."

Repetition (rhetorical device): a word or phrase used two or more times in close proximity. Repetition allows an author to hammer home an idea, image, or relationship, to force the reader or listener to pay attention. Repetition is used to reinforce a theme, to create parallel structure, to highlight the author's attitude (tone), to provide a transition between paragraphs, to maintain an idea of persistence, or to focus the reader's attention on a particular person, place, thing, or idea.

- **Anaphora:** Commonly used rhetorical device. Repeating the words twice sets the pattern, and further repetitions emphasize the pattern and increase the rhetorical effect. The repetition of sounds makes the speech more catchy and memorable (e.g. "I have a dream" – M.L. King, Jr.).
- **Alliteration:** The commencement of two or more stressed syllables of a word group either with the same consonant sound or sound group (e.g. *from stem to stern*)
- **Assonance:** repetition of vowel sounds between different consonants (e.g. Early in the day, the *neighs* began to fade).

Imagery: Words or phrases that appeal to the reader's senses.

- **Auditory (sound) Imagery:** "...And a voice less loud, thro' its joys and fears, than the two hearts beating each to each."
- **Tactile (touch) Imagery:** "...the quick sharp scratch"
- **Olfactory (smell) Imagery:** "Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach..."
- **Gustatory (taste) Imagery:** "No food on earth, no wine, not even a woman's kiss is sweeter to me..."
- **Visual (sight) Imagery:** "...and the yellow half-moon large and low"
- **Kinesthetic (movement) Imagery.** The representation through language of an experience pertaining to the movement of the body's muscles, tendons, and joints. "They are like great runners: they know they are alone with the road surface, the cold, the wind, the fit of their shoes, their over-all cardio-/vascular health."

Sources: Intro. Video <http://natgeotv.com.au/videos/apocalypse-the-second-world-war/shock-the-holocaust-by-bullets-1C320332.aspx>, Fred visits Auch. <http://www.theholocaustexplained.org/our-stories/?sid=3>

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/video/Remembering-the-Horrors-of-Auschwitz.html>,

<http://www.history.com/topics/auschwitz>, Video: <http://www.history.com/topics/auschwitz/videos#arnold-ropeik-on-the-concentration-camps>, <http://www.history.com/topics/auschwitz/videos#concentration-camp-liberation>,

<http://www.history.com/photos/holocaust-concentration-camps/photo1#>, Holocaust Resource information:

http://archive.adl.org/education/edu_students_holocaust.asp The Holocaust explained video interviews:

<http://www.theholocaustexplained.org/our-stories/> Interviews: <http://www.tellingstories.org/holocaust/> | Summary:

Auschwitz, also known as Auschwitz-Birkenau, opened in 1940 and was the largest of the Nazi concentration and death camps. Located in southern Poland, Auschwitz initially served as a detention center for political prisoners. However, it evolved into a network of camps where Jewish people and other perceived enemies of the Nazi state were exterminated, often in gas chambers, or used as slave labor. Some prisoners were also subjected to barbaric medical experiments led by Josef Mengele (1911-79). During World War II (1939-45), more than 1 million people, by some accounts, lost their lives at Auschwitz. In January 1945, with the Soviet army approaching, Nazi officials ordered the camp abandoned and sent an estimated 60,000 prisoners on a forced march to other locations. When the Soviets entered Auschwitz, they found thousands of emaciated detainees and piles of corpses left behind. Full text book:

The Boy in the Striped Pajamas -

<http://www.anderson5.net/cms/lib02/SC01001931/Centricity/Domain/222/The%20Boy%20in%20the%20Striped%20Pajamas.pdf>

Name: _____ Period: _____ - Date: _____

“As You Read” - No News from Auschwitz
by A.M. Rosenthal (Literature Book page 410)

- 1) What is the purpose of this story? Inform, persuade, or entertain
- 2) What is ironic about the title of this story (“No News from Auschwitz”)? What “news” does Rosenthal want his readers to know?

- 3) Is the paragraph below objective or subjective? _____
- 4) Underline the textual evidence that supports your answer above.

“It all seemed frighteningly wrong, as in a nightmare, that at Brzezinka the sun should ever shine or that there should be light and greenness and the sound of young laughter. It would be fitting if a Brzezinka the sun never shone and the grass withered, because this is a place of unutterable terror.”

- 5) Use context clues to define the German term “Konzentrationslager.” What does this word mean?
- A. Concentration camp
 - B. Working factory
 - C. Cemetery

- 6) What objective historical facts do the last paragraph on page 411 (“By now...”) include?

7) What subjective details can be found in paragraph below? Underline each you find.

“One visitor opened his mouth in a silent scream simply at the sight of boxes great women’s barracks. They were about six feet wide, about three feet high, and into them from five to ten prisoners were shoved for the night. The guide walks quickly through the barracks. Nothing more to see here.”

8) What might the girl have been thinking about in the passage below?

“A girl, twenty-two years old. plump, pretty, blond. She is smiling gently, as at a sweet, treasured thought.”

9) What point of view is the story written in? First-person, second-person, third-person objective, third-person limited, or third-person omniscient.

10) **Grammar:** Go to page 1028 in your literature book (green) read “Active and Passive Voice.” Create a sentence in the **active** and **passive** voice for each word below (you may also use a variation of the word). You should have 6 sentences in total.

- Spoke,
- Gave
- Advise

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Name: _____ Period: _____ Date: _____

“The Butterfly” Poem (pg. 414)

1. Where is alliteration found in this poem? Write the textual evidence below.

- _____

2. Where is anaphora found in the poem? Write the textual evidence below.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

3. There several examples of personification in this poem. List the textual evidence below.

- _____
- _____

4. What form of imagery is used in this poem? Visual/auditory/tactile/etc.

Imagery used: _____

Textual evidence: _____

Imagery used: _____

Textual evidence: _____

5. Personal opinion: What do you like or dislike about this poem?

The Holocaust - http://archive.adl.org/children_holocaust/about_holocaust1.asp

1. The Holocaust was the systematic persecution and annihilation of more than 6 million Jews as a central act of state by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. Although millions of others, such as Romani, Sinti, homosexuals, the disabled and political opponents of the Nazi regime, were also victims of persecution and murder, only the Jews were singled out for total extermination.
2. Under the leadership of Adolf Hitler, this brutal campaign began with a deliberate series of progressively hostile acts of bigotry, repression, humiliation and discrimination. Authorized by the Nazis and their collaborators, such actions were based on the views that the German (or "Aryan") people were a superior "race," that all non-Germans were therefore inferior, and that Jews were race-prisoners. The intervals between each phase -- from antilocution (using hostile, bigoted language) to avoidance to discrimination to violence to genocide -- were frighteningly small.
3. Jewish victims of the Holocaust were rounded up from all parts of Nazi-occupied Europe and shipped to concentration camps where almost all were shot, hanged, subjected to hideous medical experiments, gassed or worked to death. Only a small percentage survived. It did not matter whether they were rich or poor, religious or secular, or decorated soldiers of the First World War. If they had even one Jewish grandparent (a provision of the Nuremberg Laws), they were marked for destruction.
4. Any act of resistance against this juggernaut demanded enormous courage. Those who helped or rescued Jews did so at great risk to their own lives and those of their families. While most people remained silent or excused their complicity on the grounds that they were only following orders, a few remarkable people, known today as the Righteous Among Nations, took the risks and hid or rescued Jews. Contrary to the bestiality of the Nazis and the indifference of most people in Germany and in the Nazi-occupied nations, these individuals represent the finest and noblest of the human spirit.
5. When the Nazi regime collapsed in 1945 under the onslaught of the Allied nations and the world learned the full extent to which the hatred of Jews had been carried, the few Jewish survivors faced living without homes, possessions, families and communities. Many left Europe -- the continent soaked with the blood of their fellow Jews -- and tried to rebuild their shattered lives in the United States, in Israel and elsewhere. The Nazi dream of a "master race" came to an end at the War Crimes Trials held at Nuremberg in 1945. The United States, England, France and the Soviet Union joined forces to stand in judgment of the Nazi crimes against humanity.

List the main idea in each paragraph:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Is this summary written objectively or subjectively? Explain your answer (give 3 examples/evidence).

Circle 2 words that are unfamiliar to you and define each below.

- 1 _____

- 2 _____

Shortly after Hitler's appointment as Reich Chancellor on January 30, 1933, the Reichstag (German parliament) began to institute a series of anti-Jewish decrees. Sections of these laws are quoted below:

April 7, 1933

Laws for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service

"Civil servants who are not of Aryan (non-Jewish) descent are to be retired."

April 7, 1933

Law Regarding Admission to the Bar

"Persons who, according to the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service of April 7, 1933, are of non-Aryan descent may be denied admission to the bar."

April 25, 1933

Law Against the Crowding of German Schools and Institutions of Higher Learning

"In new admissions, care is to be taken that the number of Reich Germans who, according to the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service of April 7, 1933, are of non-Aryan descent, out of the total attending each school and each faculty, does not exceed the proportion of non-Aryans within the Reich German population."

Nuremberg Laws

With the passage of the Nuremberg Laws by the Reichstag on September 15, 1935, the first direct attack on individual Jews was launched. These laws mark a sharp progression toward an irreversible anti-Semitic policy. In the future, no Jew would be able to escape intensified persecution.

September 15, 1935

Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor

"Marriages between Jews and subjects of German or kindred blood are forbidden...Extramarital intercourse forbidden between Jews and subjects of German or kindred blood...Jews are forbidden to fly the Reich and national flag and to display Reich colors...They are, on the other hand, allowed to display the Jewish colors...Whoever violates the prohibition...will be punished by penal servitude."

September 15, 1935

Reich Citizenship Law

"A Reich citizen is only that subject of German or kindred blood who proves by his conduct that he is willing and suited loyally to serve the German people and the Reich."

November 14, 1935

First Decree to the Reich Citizenship Law

"A Jew cannot be a Reich citizen. He is not entitled to the right to vote on political matters; he cannot hold public office...A Jew is anyone descended from at least three grandparents who are fully Jewish as regards race...Also deemed a Jew is a Jewish Mischlung subject who is descended from two fully Jewish grandparents and...who belonged to the Jewish religious community...who was married to a Jew...who is the offspring of a marriage concluded by a Jew...who is an offspring of extramarital intercourse with a Jew..."

August 17, 1938

Second Decree for the Implementation of the Law Regarding Changes of Family Names

"Jews may be given only such given names as are listed in the Guidelines on the Use of Given Names issued by the Reich Minister of the Interior... Insofar as Jews have other given names than those which may be given to Jews...they are obligated, beginning January 1, 1939, to assume an additional given name, namely the given name Israel in the case of males and the given name Sarah in the case of females."