

Name: _____

Date: _____

Period: _____

Maus I Study Guide: Chapters 4-5

Mrs. Howard

Chapter 4: The Noose Tightens

1. What has happened to Jewish businesses during Vladek's absence?
2. Compare Vladek's response to the new economic situation of the Jews to his brother-in-law Wolfe's response.
3. Why does Vladek lie to his family about the amount of money he makes from his under-the-table deals?
4. How do the Germans who take the Zylberbergs' beds react when Mr. Zylberberg protests that he has not been paid for the furniture?
5. How does Spiegelman visually emphasize the fact that the streets have become unsafe for Jews?

6. Spiegelman portrays Vladek wearing a small star and standing in the middle of a giant one. What point do you think Spiegelman is trying to make with this image?
7. In this chapter, Spiegelman interrupts the sequence of images of the young Vladek in Poland with images of the elderly Vladek riding his exercycle as he tells his story. What is the effect of the interruptions?
8. How many of Vladek's family had to share a small apartment?
9. What does Spiegelman include in the background that tells us that the Germans gave Poles incentives to expose unregistered Jews?
10. Why were several of Vladek's acquaintances publicly hanged?
11. Describe the visual effects Spiegelman employs to illustrate the impact of the public hanging of his acquaintances on Vladek.
12. How does Vladek manage to survive when German soldiers catch him on the street, his arms full of more than ten kilos of "illegal" sugar?

13. Why does Vladek decide to work at a carpentry shop where he will not make nearly as much money as he does from his off-the-record dealings?

14. What forces Anja's grandparents into hiding?

15. Who were the Jewish police?

16. When did Vladek first hear about Auschwitz, and what was his reaction when he did?

17. Why is deciding whether or not to register at the stadium such a difficult choice for Vladek and his family?

18. Why is Vladek's sister Fela sent to the "bad" side during the selection at the stadium?

19. What sacrifice does Vladek's father make for Fela?

20. Describe the effect of the image of the elderly Vladek when he says, “Well...it’s enough for today. Yes, Artie?” What does the image tell us about *why* “it’s enough for today”?

Chapter 5: Mouse Holes

1. Why is Artie reluctant to use tools or fix things around the house?
2. Artie says to Francoise, “One reason I became an artist was that [Vladek] thought it was impractical – just a waste of time...it was an area where I wouldn’t have to compete with him.” What does this reveal about Artie’s feelings towards his father, and perhaps towards his father’s ordeal?
3. Briefly describe the artistic style of *Prisoner on the Hell Planet*, focusing on those areas in which it differs from the style of the rest of *Maus I*.
4. What literary term could apply to Artie’s comment, “You murdered me, Mommy, and you left me here to take the rap!!”
5. Why does Anja agree to let Persis take Richieu into hiding after so forcefully rejecting Ilzecki’s offer to do so before?

6. What happens to many of the young children taken by the Germans from Srodula while they are en route to Auschwitz? What literary term could be used to describe Vladek's comment about the children, "and they never anymore screamed"?
7. How is Richieu killed?
8. In describing his bunker in Srodula, Vladek says to Artie, "Show to me your pencil and I can *explain* you...such things it's good to know exactly how was it – just in case." How does this comment help us understand why Vladek may have insisted that Artie learn to use tools the same way Vladek does?
9. How are Vladek and his family twice betrayed by fellow Jews in this chapter?
10. Vladek, who has been portrayed as a pathetic soldier, and a compassionate man actually was ruthless at one point in chapter 5. What did he do to the man who he said, "*turned my family over to the Gestapo*"?
11. In chapter 5, we get to know about some of the Jews who actually tried to save themselves and their families by working for the Nazis. Haskel was one of these Jews who was portrayed as both a savior and a villain. Why? Explain using details from the chapter.

12. What is significant about Zylberberg having been a millionaire and still being unable to escape the camps?
13. How does Spiegelman represent the quavering in Vladek's voice when Vladek's heart begins to bother him?
14. What function do Vladek's stories of Pesach's "soap" cake and Pesach's plan to get rid of the guests he did not have desserts for serve in the narrative?
15. Why does Lolek decide not to hide in the bunker behind the "tunnel made from shoes"?
16. Avram and his girlfriend, who are sharing Vladek's bunker, offer to pay Vladek two watches and "some diamond rings" for his advice on what their next move should be. Vladek tells Artie, "I didn't want to take. They *needed* these to live. So I took only the small watch." What two things does Vladek's comment tell us about his character?
17. Comment on the way in which Spiegelman has drawn the crossroads Anja and Vladek come to. What does the image suggest?

18. Why do you think Spiegelman named this chapter, “Mouse Holes”? What are the literal “mouse holes” the title refers to?

19. Note the presence of dogs as the banker and the guard. What do they represent?