

## Schindler's List: Viewing Guide

**Name:**

**Period:**

*Introductory Note: Schindler's List is a film directed by Steven Spielberg that tells the story of Oskar Schindler, a Germany businessman, who felt that it was more important to show compassion to the Jews in need than to maintain his personal financial fortune. Helping him do this is a Jew named Itzhak Stern, an accountant, who becomes Oskar's partner in saving the Jews, as well as a personal friend.*

*Most of the movie was filmed in black and white. After all, the mood of the Holocaust isn't exactly one filled with color. However, there is a small portion that includes the color red. As we watch and you see the color, think about the possible reasons why Spielberg would have chosen to use it.*

*Schindler's List was chosen as the Best Picture of the Year in 1993, and remains one of the most praised films of our time.*

**As you watch, answer the following questions in complete sentences:**

1. In the first scenes in which Schindler appears, how are you SHOWN (not told) that he is a man who knows how to get what he wants?
2. Why does Schindler go to see Itzhak Stern, the Jewish accountant?
3. Why hire Jews instead of Poles? Who gets the salary earned by the Jewish workers? Why?
4. How does Stern rescue the university professor? What would have happened to him if he had not?
5. What does Schindler want the Jewish workers in his factory to make?
6. Schindler thinks he will be remembered, and indeed he is, but it is not for what he predicts. For what does he think at this point he will be remembered for?
7. What decision does Emilie make? What does this say about the relationship between husband and wife? What does it say about Oskar's character?
8. What happens to the one-armed man? Why?
9. When Schindler hears that Stern has been placed on a deportation train, he is very concerned. When he gets Stern off the train, we find out the nature of his concern. What was he concerned about, and how does it differ from what we assumed?

10. What happens to the belongings of the deported Jews?
11. A Jewish worker is shown evaluating gold watches, etc. in the warehouse. What disturbing item is dumped in front of him to evaluate? What is his reaction?
12. At the labor camp, what is Helen selected by the commandant to do? How does she feel about this?
13. Why does the commandant order the woman engineer to be shot?
14. Why according to the commandant of the labor camp (Amon Goeth) is "today history?"
15. During the liquidation of the ghetto, how does the family hide the jewelry?
16. What happens in the hospital ward?
17. Where does the little girl in the red coat find a place to hide?
18. What is Schindler's reaction as he watches the liquidation of the ghetto? Who is it that captures his attention during the liquidation?
19. When the commandant is unsatisfied with the number of hinges a worker has produced, what happens?
20. How is Schindler able to get certain Jews added to the list of workers in his factory?
21. How is Helen (Commandant Goeth's maid) treated by him?
22. Why does Schindler tell Helen that he's certain Goeth won't shoot her?
23. According to Schindler, one truly has power when he does what?

24. What ceremony is happening at night in the labor camp?
25. Why are they playing music for the children?
26. List three places the children hide.
27. Why is Schindler placed in jail?
28. Why does Schindler suggest they do for the people in the cattle cars?
29. What do the Jewish prisoners see falling from the sky?
30. What happens to the little girl in the red coat? What is Schindler's reaction?
31. What does Schindler do with the suitcases of money?
32. What is Stern typing? What is its significance?
33. Why can't Schindler add more names to the list?
34. What does Schindler do to get Helen on his list?
35. Name three things that happen to the women.
36. What excuse does Schindler give the officers to save the children's lives?
37. Who does Schindler see in church?

38. Why are the candles in color? Why do you think this is significant?

39. What is Schindler's present and what is inscribed on it?

40. What is Schindler's reaction to receiving this gift? What does this say about him as an individual?

### **Short Answer Questions**

**Answer the following questions in at least three complete sentences. You may use a separate sheet of paper if you do not have enough room:**

1. Schindler risked his life in order to save Jews. It was a time when terror reigned. The Jews had been dehumanized in non-Jewish eyes by Nazi propaganda and brutality. Tom Keneally, the author of the book *Schindler's List*, quotes Schindler as having said that "A life is not worth a pack of cigarettes." Yet Schindler risked his own life. Why do you think he did this based on what you saw in the film?

2. In making *Schindler's List*, Spielberg said he tried to be "more of a reporter than a passionate, involved filmmaker—because I wanted to *communicate* information more than I needed to proselytize and convert. The information is so compelling because it wasn't written by Hollywood authors. It comes out of the human experience...[but] out of history." That vision influenced many of his decisions as the film's director. **Identify and describe three scenes** that reflect Spielberg's desire to place the viewer "inside the experiences of Holocaust survivors and actual victims as close as a movie can." Describe the effect these scenes had on you as a viewer.

3. Schindler went from being an "antihero" to a hero. What specific events did he experience and realizations did he have to create this transformation?