

# Human Mind Through Film

## The Boy in the Striped Pajamas

This film presents a child's point of view of the Holocaust and serves as a valuable study of Germany's effort to exterminate the Jews of Europe. The relationship between the two boys demonstrates the absurdity of judgments based on blood line. The innocence of childhood is a concept which dominates the movie and supports a perspective on the Holocaust that is important for a full understanding of German atrocities during the Second World War.

1. In the opening scene of the film, boys are running happily through an upper class area of Berlin. They run past a group of Jews carrying their meager belongings being herded into a truck. What irony can be found in this scene?
2. When Bruno sees people in striped pajamas across a fence that he assumes marks the boundary of a farm, he questions his father and is told that they are inferior beings and not worth being considered as people. Later Bruno hears the sentiment echoed by his tutor. How is this concept important to any genocide and what causes Bruno to see things differently?
3. His tongue loosened by alcohol, Karl reveals information about his father's exodus from Germany. This information threatens Karl (the German soldier reporting to Bruno's father), despite his clear loyalty to the Nazi party and his role in the household as the brutal disciplinarian of the camp inmates who serve the household. What is revealed about Karl's cruelty in his brutal attack on Pavel, the servant who spills wine at the dinner table. Why does Karl beat Pavel so brutally? What is the irony in what happens to Karl in this story?
4. What is revealed in the characters of both Bruno and Shmuel in the episode in which Karl finds the two boys together in the family home and questions their actions? .
5. The film's final episode is filled with several stark ironies. List three of the ironies.

