

## Impact Statement

Seoeun (Zuleica) Cheon, Grade 8.

***Sheyann Webb, The Smallest Freedom Fighter, 2023.***

Mixed media on paper, 17 x 14 inches.

St Mildred's-Lightbourn School, Oakville, Ontario, Canada

Unsung Hero: Sheyann Webb

Put yourself in Sheyann's shoes and imagine being an 8 years-old girl, only in 3rd grade. Would you have ever thought of fighting for freedom, marching for hours after hours, and standing up for yourself and your community? Sheyann Webb was only 8 years-old when she did all that. Isn't that truly amazing? She was and still is a truly amazing and dazzling unsung hero, but today, I am writing this impact paper about my artwork and hero, because she is an inspiration. Let me tell you how everything started...

One day, I came across a girl named 'Sheyann Webb' on the Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Hero website (Link). As I was reading her story, I immediately became inspired by how she started finding her own paths of what she was interested in, at such a young age. It was remarkable how she helped lead a group of people along with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. This is why I think that she is an inspiration, because she made me think that no matter how old you are and how you look, you can always make a difference in the world.

As I mentioned, Sheyann Webb was just an ordinary, curious 8 years old girl that just happened to spot a group of black people entering a church. Out of wonder, she decided to follow them inside, even though it meant missing out on school. What made her so outstanding from the other grade 3s, was the fact that after hearing Dr. King's speech at the church, she became immensely determined to help find black people find their rights to vote and justice, but mainly freedom. That's how her journey began. Through my artwork, I wanted to express that she was only 8 years-old when she started participating in church meetings, (peaceful) protests, and more, and that she managed to do many brave things not just anybody can do.

My artwork signifies how Sheyann Webb was so earnest and serious about her goal of helping black people find their freedom. And so, I wanted to highlight some of her bold actions by putting a scale in the center of my artwork, behind a portrait of Sheyann. The scale exemplifies how black and white people should be treated equally. And as you may be able to see, I used the base of the scale to make it into a spotlight shining on her, with some warm-yellow lights. Behind Sheyann is the bridge that the civil rights activists, along with Sheyann, marched on, to protest. Then on the left-hand corner, we can find an opened chip-bag that has paper planes flying out of it and I wanted to symbolize freedom with the paper planes. Right underneath, there are many pieces of papers and one of them has 'Bloody Sunday' written on them, in red. 'Bloody Sunday' was when a dangerous fight broke out in the middle of a peaceful protest, and many people were injured or even died that day. I want this important history to not be forgotten, so I decided to mention it by writing 'Bloody Sunday' in bright red that could stand out in a pile of grey papers. Lastly, On the right, I did not draw many things in the area on purpose. We can see that the white paper is getting ripped by the musical notes, coming from an old music player. If you put the notes all together, it forms some lines from the song 'Ain't gonna let

nobody turn me around'. This song was sung by Sheyann and her community in the film 'Selma, Lord, Selma'. The white paper getting torn demonstrates how one united community can go through anything, because together, they are inexorable. Lastly, when planning and creating this artwork, my head was filled with how I should describe all of her incredibleness into just a piece of paper. I came across so many different ideas, each being different with their own uniqueness, but at last, I decided to choose this artwork idea, because I thought that it would be able to describe her and her story the best and that it could show the world of who Sheyann Webb was with the astonishing story of hers. I shared my artwork with my whole grade, by putting it on a slideshow, too.

As I was creating this art piece, I found out that my outlook on life has changed a bit. I realized how this took place awhile back but is still happening today. Yes, things have changed, but still not enough. Many more acts are going to take place if things don't start changing for good. There shouldn't be a line dividing people's race, and everybody should have their voices heard. Everybody should have freedom and equity. In conclusion, I would like to, once again, give the spotlight to the brave and unstoppable 8-year-old Sheyann Webb for making a difference, no matter her age and her skin colour.

Bold and inexorable, Sheyann Webb was truly the unsung hero.