



Impact Statement

Eleanor Zhang, Grade 8

The Inside, 2026

Colored pencil, marker on paper, 17 x 14 inches

Yun Hua Fang Art Studio, Saratoga, California

Unsung Hero: Pavel Weiner

The person I chose as my unsung hero is Pavel Weiner, a Jewish boy and survivor of the Holocaust and his story is one of bravery and determination.

Pavel Weiner was only 10 when he was sent to a Nazi concentration camp. Inside, for two years, he kept a diary of his daily experiences, pains, and hopes, all of which were eventually published 66 years later. As a child in the middle of a horrific situation, he would have needed to learn how to deal and survive in something even most adults had trouble living in. He needed something to lean on, as well as something to do. And the answer to this was his diary, an object he could say (write) anything he wanted. Since they were inside the concentration camp, paper and ink were quite scarce but he, with help from parents was able to write two years of events down on paper.

He definitely had courage since his keeping of the records of life inside a camp was something that could have led to his death if it was discovered by the Nazis. What was truly inspirational about this was that he was still determined enough to write even with the looming danger, and his writings too were not only about the terrible events happening around, but also, and quite importantly, the dreams of a child who still had some hope in his heart left.

Pavel Weiner's writing provided insight and added to our knowledge of life inside a concentration camp from a different point of view. A child's experience from a camp in Czech. He eventually made it out of the camp and after many years was able to publish documentation of a few of his darkest years for the world to learn about.

During the process of drawing this piece, I wanted to capture events that he experienced and wrote about, especially the harsh ones. I wanted to create a piece he was writing in his world for us, the audience, to see. I added some blood to his hands since an important aspect of his time in the camp was how he dared to keep the diary despite the risk it came with.

Learning about his journey and his life during those few years was something that inspired me and brought me motivation. Weiner's story is one of determination and courage. He was able to survive through an incredibly horrific event and one, after learning about him, certainly feels inspired to hold fast onto hope, the way he also had done. This is something that I believe many people would be similarly motivated by and could benefit from as well. Looking through his life, we can broaden our view and learn how to improve our own life. Pavel Weiner, a living boy in a dying environment, brings

us the thought that even when life may seem hopeless at times, it is worth powering through and maybe, the future just might possibly be very bright.