

**Ann Shin
Imperial Middle School
8th Grade Language Arts
Mr. Robert Caplinger, Teacher
Mrs. Betty Bidwell, Principal**

First Place Middle School Essay

Because She Had Hope

Her only crime was being Jewish. She was escorted into a new world with a blindfold of hate covering her eyes and ropes of oppression binding her small hands. The young girl had nowhere to run except into the arms of death. Nazi soldiers in a line, with their guns pointed toward her, awaited the signal to fire.

This child knew nothing of the splendors and joys outside the microcosmic hell in which she was determined to survive. Her very innocence of being a youth had been stripped from her. Her memories of childhood lacked the carefree happiness of being young. She was blinded by the Nazi's act of cruel, inhuman torture. Everyday the innocent child wondered when it would be her own body next to the rotting carcasses of her comrades.

She had hope.

Through all the death and destruction of her people, she fought to remain a burning candle of optimism. This little girl refused to give into the idea that she was nothing more than a vehicle for manual labor. Her candle, her heart, had a force field of perseverance and pride. With each beat, her determination to survive strengthened. This child would show the world that her candle, her single flame, was all that was needed to give others warmth, grace, and a spark, to rekindle their own.

She had hope.

Being defeated was not an option. She would not die like the others. This little girl, a child of only six or seven, would like to tell this denial of human rights abroad.

She had hope.

In her quiet desperation to survive, this child touched the hearts of yesterday, today, and will inspire tomorrow. Her very essence of Holocaust survival is what humanity needs today, to live on for a better future. Without such hope, one's life is but a feeble candle in the wind, squelched by the slightest gust; a candle whose light will no longer be visible to those groping about in the darkness of life's storms.

Society must realize that to save itself from the dark realms of hatred and despair, it must be in accordance to this child, with a defense of determination and hope to preserve the very essence, the purpose of life, a significant blissful existence that is forever sought after.

Like her, earthly treasures mustn't be sought after to achieve this dream, the answer is solely within eh earth of mankind.

Because she had hope.