**Wings of Imagination**

During the Holocaust many Jews lived in ghettos, under harsh conditions of hunger, crowding, and disease. But even so, children in the ghetto continued to write poetry, draw pictures, and dream about better days.

**Opening photo**

**The Butterfly**, Eva (Hava) Lubova, Theresienstadt Ghetto, Czechoslovakia

From: *There Are No Butterflies Here* (Moreshet and Sifriyat HaPoalim Publishers, first edition, 1966; third edition, 1996) [Hebrew].

**Written testimony section**

Like a Caged Bird / Anonymous girl, Lodz Ghetto

**March 7, 1942**

**“…Today is a nice day. Things feel lighter when the sun is shining. You miss the other life. When you see a fence separating us from the rest of the world your soul yearns for freedom like a caged bird. Your eyes fill with tears. How I envy the birds. My heart is bursting with longing. I remember past years. Will I live to see better days? Who knows? Will I be with my parents and friends? Who knows? Will I eat enough bread and wheat to feel full? Right now the hunger is terrible. There is nothing left to cook.”**

From “Walls All Around Us: A Lesson Plan on Ghettos,” Workbook 2 – Isolation and Alienation, written and edited by Naama Galil and Hadas Steuer (Jerusalem: International School for Holocaust Studies, no date), diary of an anonymous girl in the Lodz Ghetto, Yad Vashem Archive [Hebrew].

Here is a passage from a diary by an anonymous girl in the Lodz Ghetto.

What does she miss?

Draw a line between the things she misses and the lines in her diary that describe them.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Lines in her diary** | **What does the girl miss?** |
| “I remember past years.” | Her previous life |
| “Your soul yearns for freedom… How I envy the birds.” | Freedom |
| “Will I be with my parents and friends?” | Family and friends |
| “Will I eat enough bread and wheat to feel full? Right now the hunger is terrible. There is nothing left to cook.” | Enough food |

<Glossary>

Anonymous – someone whose name is not known

Yearns – wants very much

**Picture section**

**[1]**

**<Title> A Stamp in Honor of Petr Ginz**

In 2005, 60 years after the war ended, the Czech Republic issued a stamp in honor of Petr Ginz. The stamp shows one of his paintings, titled “Moon Landscape.”

Who was Petr Ginz?

**Picture – Petr Ginz**

Photo of Petr Ginz from the Yad Vashem Photo Archive: 6352/1 YAD, taken in Prague, Czechoslovakia, 1939

Petr Ginz was a Jewish boy from Czechoslovakia. He was born in 1928. A very talented boy, Petr dreamt of traveling across the oceans and in outer space. When he was 13 years old, he and his family were sent to the Theresienstadt Ghetto. In the ghetto he continued to draw, kept a diary, and even edited a children’s newspaper called *Vedem*. Petr did not survive the Holocaust.

Have a look at this picture. Petr drew it when he was confined to the Theresienstadt Ghetto. The drawing shows the Earth as seen from the moon. The moon’s landscape as shown in Petr’s drawing also reflects his ambition of reaching such a place, his dream of being a researcher or scientist. In 2003 the Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon and his fellow crew members on the state shuttle Columbia lost their lives. Among Ramon’s possessions was a copy of Petr’s drawing “Moon Landscape,” which he brought along for his journey in outer space.

<Glossary>

- confined – trapped, unable to leave

- ambition - something a person hopes to be or do in the future

**Moon Landscape / Petr Ginz**

**Poem section**

Avraham Koplowicz was born in Lodz, Poland, in 1930. During the war, at age 12, he lived in the Lodz Ghetto. Avraham left behind a notebook of poems and drawings. He wrote this poem under the harsh living conditions of the ghetto – hunger, crowding, and cold. But even so, the poem describes a completely different reality. The poem uses several verbs that express Avraham’s strong desire to leave the ghetto and move freely around the world. Highlight these verbs.

“When I grow up and reach the age of twenty,

I’ll set out to see our charming world.

I’ll sit inside a bird with a motor

I’ll lift off and fly high into space.

“I’ll fly, I’ll sail, and I’ll soar over the beautiful faraway world.

I’ll pass over rivers and seas,

To the sky, I’ll rise up and blossom

A cloud my sister, the wind my brother.”

From: Avraham (Avrahmek) Koplowicz, *Of Myself – Poems of a Lodz Ghetto Boy* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1995), pp. 45-46 [Hebrew].

Click on the verbs.

After reading the poem answer the following questions:

- Why did Avraham want to soar over the world in an airplane, rather than, for example, take a walk or ride in a car?

- What role do you think imagination played in survival in the ghetto?

Listen to the song: <https://youtu.be/HAPMOOUuLw0>