Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Class \_\_\_\_#\_\_\_\_

**The Pianist – the Search for Meaning**

During his more than two years in hiding, Szpilman passes the days waiting for one of his protectors to bring him food, careful not to make any noise that would betray his presence. When a protector is late in coming, he starves rather than risk going out into the street.

What did Szpilman think about over those long months of isolation? **What gave purpose to his existence and sustained his will to survive?**

To explore these questions, imagine that Szpilman kept a diary during his life in hiding. Choose one of the episodes described below, then write a diary entry that reflects what you think Szpilman felt at the time and what meaning the episode may have held in his life.

300+ words. If you are having trouble meeting the word requirement, write two diary entries about two different events. For full credit, you need to explore the questions posed above. For reference, the text on this page is about 350 words total. You may type your response as long as you can print and bring a hard copy.

1. Forced to flee his first hiding place, Szpilman goes to the emergency address he was given and finds Dorota, the non-Jewish woman with whom he once hoped to develop a relationship, now married to a member of the anti-Nazi underground. She and her husband agree to find him a new hiding place.
2. Drawn to the piano in his new hiding place, Szpilman sits and moves his fingers above the keyboard so as not to make a sound.
3. Placed in the care of an irresponsible protector, Szpilman almost starves to death, but he is rescued when Dorota and her husband come to say good-bye on their way to a safe haven in the country.
4. From his window, Szpilman watches as Polish resistance fighters launch their attack against the Nazis, forcing them to retreat, then sees the Nazis regroup and retake the neighborhood, gunning down the resistance fighters and leaving their bodies in the street.
5. When the Nazis shell his hiding place, Szpilman barely escapes to a nearby abandoned hospital by hiding among the dead bodies still strewn on the street.

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