

## WANDA PIETRUSZEWSKA

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Class 7

### My wartime experiences

When I was still young – I was only seven years old – the bloodthirsty Germans, our enemies, invaded our borders. Then, the whole of Poland was covered in a black veil of mourning. Although I was small and many years have passed, I remember perfectly well how horrified I was when I looked at the Germans, whom I saw for the first time. My innocent heart was pounding out of sheer fear. I knew well that [the Germans] came to carry on with the destruction of our country, as they did years ago, and to abuse the Polish populace. They took Polish youth to Germany, where they worked on farms. Out of those who stayed, many died at Majdanek, many a father lost his life and [many a child] became an orphan and had to live in poverty. Many tears were shed when innocent people died.

It was in September of 1939. That year I was supposed to start going to school, but as soon as the Germans came, they took our school buildings. We, poor children, had to study in private homes. That eternal enemy of ours took away our history, geography and Polish books, keeping the much needed knowledge from us.

On 22 June 1941 at 3.00 a.m., the noise and explosions of shells woke me up suddenly. I did not know what was going on, I kept trembling and my face was wet from tears. A moment later, I was in a trench. I could not hear anything but the thunder of the exploding shells. I cried for a long time and nobody could calm me down, because I thought I wouldn't come out of this alive, that this trench would be our family grave.

Today I am older and I am attending seventh grade. I remember it all as if it happened today. Sometimes I remember those war times. I remember praying to the Mother of God in hopes that we would win our beloved Homeland back, and with it the sweet freedom.