

BARBARA GRONEK

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Class 4

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My education during the occupation

The war in 1939 interrupted my education. I was still a child, but I was aware what was going to happen. I knew that all my plans and dreams would disappear, but I coped with it rather well. I met with hardships in all areas of my life. My parents had material issues; our farm was badly damaged during the war. Education was out of the question at the time. The German authorities made great efforts to stifle the national spirit of young Poles through education. I was very sad at the thought that Poland would never be free again, and that we poor Polish children would be forced to work hard for our occupier. But just as the calm comes after the storm, I too started to get used to the conditions. I realized that I had to study, no matter what. Education is an undervalued treasure, one acquired through hard work and dedication. Although it was prohibited to learn I still managed to do it in secret. At the beginning I studied at home; my brother taught me, because he had already finished middle school. It was difficult, because the enemy might appear at any moment and there would be very unpleasant consequences. But despite all that I studied eagerly and thanks to that I can now attend the fourth grade of middle school.