

Dear Grandma

I know you did not want me to come here as the holocaust caused you so much pain. Ever since I was in Primary 7 and I asked you about your family and you told me they were killed in the holocaust I have been interested in every detail about the holocaust and believed I should visit a camp. The more you tell me about my family the stronger I feel my connection becomes with the holocaust.

This whole trip I have thought of you; every time I hear a story of people losing family and I get upset, I think of you. I cannot imagine how you feel. I have so much respect for you for the strength you have shown in bringing up an amazing family when most of yours was killed. How you must have felt when you were told you were not allowed to speak to your friends because you were Jewish. Everything you went through was so tough and I commend you for coming through it as such a great person.

You told me it was hard to remember about the holocaust and I guess you did not want to see so much, but to me it was very important coming here as a Jewish person, as a person who has lost a lot of family, and a person who has a wonderful Grandma who came through so strong.

Today I visited Auschwitz, it was one of the hardest things I have ever done. When I got to the gas chambers all I could think about was your family and how they must have felt if they went through this. Even worse that this was a pond which we were told that people's ashes had been dumped in. When I stood there I thought about how this is my family even if not in Auschwitz, at another camp this was them; nothing but ashes just because they were Jewish. When I threw a stone into the pond, I did it for you.

I love you loads and I hope you now understand my reasons for coming on this trip.

Jemma

Xxx

This letter was written by Jemma Grace (16) to her Grandma Erna Grace on Sunday 2nd November 2008 during a trip to Krakow, Poland