

Maya Kaganskaya's School Record Book



This is my record book for the 5th grade issued to me, Maya Kaganskaya, by Kiev Jewish school #5 in 1937. My mother and I returned to Kiev in 1932 and she went to work at a Jewish school near our house in Podol. I was six years old, but I had finished four years at school already and could read and write in Ukrainian and Yiddish. It didn't make sense to send me to kindergarten and my mother obtained a special permission for me to go to the 1st grade since I was still under age to go to school. There were several categories of the first grade: 1st grade literate, 1st grade illiterate and 1st grade average. Pupils of the 1st literate had already finished a 'zero' class or came from kindergartens where they were taught the basics. 1st average was a mixture and 1st illiterate was a class for illiterate children. It goes without saying that I went to the 1st grade literate. My mother was a teacher in the 1st grade illiterate. I stayed in my class until I got bored. Then I asked my teacher permission to go out and went to my mother's class. I stayed there a little and then went back to my class. I was very successful at school and when I was out of class and our teacher asked a difficult question my classmates replied, 'When Musia -that's how they called me affectionately? comes back she will answer this'. I was an active pioneer and took part in many activities. I attended all kinds of clubs: choir, drama club and played checkers. I also studied to play the piano at a state music school. We studied music, literature and solfeggio at school. I can't say I was fond of studying music. I preferred taking part in various events at school: I recited poems, sang songs at school concerts and took part in parades and subbotniks. I wrote poems and attended a literature club with the Jewish newspaper 'Zai Grei' - 'Be ready!' [the motto of pioneers]. I wrote poems in Russian and Yiddish. In 1938 our school merged with Jewish school #17, and in 1939 it became a Russian school. The only change incorporated was switching to Russian as the language of teaching. In 1941 my classmates joined the Komsomol; I had to wait until I reached the age of 16. After I finished the 9th grade the war began.