

AROUND THE WORLD



ANIA'S ENERGY CRISIS



Prager University ("PragerU") is redefining how people think about media and education. Watched millions of times every day, PragerU is the world's leading educational nonprofit focused on changing minds through the creative use of digital media. From intellectual, fact-based 5-Minute Videos and powerful personal storytelling to educational animated shows made just for kids—PragerU helps people of all ages discover and keep pro-American values.

PragerU Kids offers edu-tainment (educational and entertaining content) across the K-12th grade spectrum. With kids shows, cartoons, and literature that teach history, life skills, and character building in an age-appropriate manner, PragerU Kids offers content that parents trust and children love. Watch for free and learn more at PragerUkids.com.

All text and illustrations Copyright © 2023 Prager University Foundation.

All rights reserved, including the right of reproduction in whole or in part in any form.

PragerU is a registered trademark of Prager University Foundation.

Published by PragerU

15021 Ventura Boulevard #552

Sherman Oaks, CA 91403



WELCOME TO POLAND

APTEKA

AKROPOLIS


RISTORANTE



Poland

Welcome to Poland, a country of 37 million people in Central Europe.

Shaped like an oval, Poland is a flat country filled with lakes, fields, and coal-producing mountains to the south. It sits on a central plain where people have lived for thousands of years, with ancient settlements that even predate the Roman Empire.



Because Poland borders Germany to the west, Slovakia and the Czech Republic to the south, Ukraine and Belarus to the east, and Lithuania and Russia to the north, its food and culture reflect many influences. Polish people are proud of their heritage – but living next to stronger countries has often meant trouble. Before World War II, Poland’s cities were a traditional home for many Slavic Jews, but now most of the population is Roman Catholic. Beneath this change lies a grievous crime – in World War II, Nazi Germany invaded Poland, occupied it, and murdered most of its three and a half million Jews in concentration camps. When the Russian army drove out the Nazis, they occupied Poland themselves, making it part of the Eastern Bloc. This meant the Polish people were forced to live under the harsh conditions of **communism** until 1989.

Communism

A political structure based on Karl Marx’s teachings. Communist governments oppose private property, travel, and freedom of speech.





Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Poland's growth, freedom, and resilience have raised its status in the international community. In 2004, Poland joined the **European Union**. Now, its strong economy is the sixth largest among member states. But like many growing countries, Poland struggles with high levels of smog pollution. To counter this problem, and to join the worldwide push for renewable energy, Poland's leaders recently pledged to cut nearly all coal production by 2049. While climate activists around the world celebrate this, many in Poland wonder how they will heat their homes in the freezing winter months without **fossil fuels**.

European Union

A group of European countries who use the same currency, let people travel freely over borders, and take the same approach to immigration, trade, and foreign policy.

Fossil Fuels

Underground energy from plants and animals that decomposed long ago. Coal, crude oil, and natural gas are all fossil fuels.



Meet Ania

This is Ania. She's fifteen and lives with her parents, Tymon and Klara, in the city of Krakow. They live in an old, skinny town house on a cobbled street, not far from the gorgeous buildings of Krakow's Old Town and Ania's international school. Every morning, Ania walks to school with her best friend Magda, who lives close by. In the afternoon, Ania and Magda work on homework and meet with their school's debate society before walking home together. Ania loves the sights and sounds of a busy, historic city that fills up with tourists every summer.

Since her classes are in English, Ania is **bilingual**. Like most of her friends, she speaks English at school but another language at home. Ania's parents speak a little English, but her older brother Michal, her Grandfather Jakub, and her Aunt Zofia all speak to her in Polish. Even though Ania loves talking with her family, she's always eager to practice English outside her home. After all, it's the international language, spoken by her friends, many Europeans, and business communities around the world.

Bilingual

Someone who speaks two languages.

Family Gatherings

Every Sunday, Ania and her parents go to Catholic mass in a tall, brick **cathedral**. In the evenings, when she's not writing on her blog or chatting online with friends, Ania goes with her family to visit Grandfather Jakub, who lives in an apartment right across the street. When they visit, Jakub greets everyone with a warm handshake and a witty comment. When Ania offers him her hand, he follows the old Polish custom of bowing his head and kissing it.

When Michal or Aunt Zofia join them, then it's really a party! Michal drives his own freight truck, making deliveries all over Poland and Germany. Aunt Zofia lives in Krakow, and she owns and manages a café in Old Town that's been in the family since World War II. The whole community, and even the tourists, love it. When the café fills with people in the hot, busy summer, Aunt Zofia sells ice cream, and Ania and Magda put on their staff aprons and help out.

Cathedral

A church containing the seat of a bishop, making it the central church of the area that he oversees.





Opportunities and Activism

Attending an international school and speaking English is giving Ania many opportunities. She loves meeting people from around the world and keeping in touch with them online. In English, or at home in Polish, she's always discussing topics from her school's debate society. Recently, Ania's teachers and her classmates from the United States, Germany, Sweden, and Italy have all been talking about **climate change**. Unfortunately, Poland's coal burning is a leading source of Europe's carbon emissions.

Ania's teacher says that if Poland's leaders don't act now by eliminating fossil fuels like oil, natural gas, and coal, the pollution will help raise Earth's average temperature and cause **ecosystems** all over the world to collapse.

Ania and her international classmates are busy getting the word out. With her teacher's direction, she's been writing about Poland's

pollution and the dangers of climate change on her blog.

Like her father, who teaches at one of Krakow's universities, Ania is a skilled writer. After she graduates, she plans to start a career in journalism. When her blog reached thousands of readers and was mentioned in a newspaper, she was even invited to give a speech (in English), at a student conference in Berlin! Ania was so nervous that she recited her speech word for word in front of the mirror for weeks. But when she finished it onstage, everyone in the auditorium stood and cheered.

Ania is very proud of her work, and the praise and recognition does make her feel good; but she still has a hard time sleeping at night and keeping her mind off of how scared she is that the world might be coming to an end soon.

Climate Change

An unproven and debated, but popular theory that the Earth's average temperature is slowly heating up due to human activity.

Ecosystem

A community of plants and animals that interact and rely on one another.



Poland's Pollution Problem

Poland has a large coal mining industry. Coal-powered plants provide nearly 70% of Poland's electricity, and around 37% of the population uses coal to heat their homes. This creates a problem. On the one hand, coal — especially lignite, or cheap "brown" coal — is plentiful and affordable. On the other hand, when millions of people burn coal for heat and electricity, pollutants like sulfur dioxide, carbon dioxide, particulates, and nitrous oxide gather in a heavy smog. Too much of these **emissions** makes the air dirty and unsafe. When people breathe in smog for long periods of time, it causes coughing, respiratory illness, and even lung cancer.

When she was younger, Ania remembers the smog reports that would come out in the news. When that happened, she and her family would stay inside or even drive out of smoggy Krakow to the country. A few years ago, and in an effort to make air in the Krakow region cleaner, Poland's government officials passed a law to stop people from using solid fuels like cheap brown coal to heat their homes. While Ania's family knows that coal pollution causes health problems, they also know that many poor people use cheap coal to stay warm in the winter. These people cannot afford to heat their homes with more expensive fuels like coal slurry, heating oil, or imported natural gas.

Emissions

Gasses or liquids released when someone burns an energy source.



Spreading the Word

Based on what she’s learning from her teachers and her international friends in her school’s “Climate Strike” club, Ania worries about coal pollution for another reason — rising temperatures all over the planet.

While her parents are very familiar with Poland’s pollution, Ania insists that the real problem is not just coal pollution but the resulting climate change. Tymon and Klara are always happy to discuss what Ania is learning... but when she tells them that fossil fuels and rising **carbon dioxide** levels will soon lead to heat waves, famine, and rapidly rising oceans, they don’t quite agree with her.

“How alarming,” Tymon says with a wink.

Through writing, speaking, and participating in climate strike protests, Ania shares the message that Poland needs to move away from all fossil fuels immediately. Like her friends and teachers, Ania thinks that Poland’s government needs to force its citizens to switch to **renewable** energy sources like wind and solar.

Carbon Dioxide

A gas released when people breathe or burn fuels like wood or coal. Carbon dioxide is an important, everyday gas, because trees and plants need it to survive. But too much of it in one place contributes to smog and pollution.

Renewable

An energy source that cannot be depleted and should be able to create continuous clean energy. Wind, solar, and hydroelectric energy are all considered renewable.

Celebrating the Past

On Christmas, Easter, and Polish Independence Day in November, Ania and her family gather together in Grandfather Jakub's small apartment. From afternoon to midnight or later, everyone shares stories, tells jokes, sings songs, and eats delicious, traditional Polish food! Ania's favorite is pierogi, a traditional meal of dumplings filled with things like cheese, potatoes, cabbage, mushrooms, or meat. She also looks forward to the sweet, jam-filled glazed donuts, called Pączki, that Michal brings over for **Fat Thursday**. Everyone eats at least one donut, to bring good luck for the rest of the year!

Whenever they gather, Ania asks her grandfather to tell stories from his dangerous childhood in Warsaw, Poland's capital, when the city was controlled by Nazi soldiers. She also listens when her parents talk about growing up under communism, when people who disagreed with the government had to gather in basements, or in places like Aunt Zofia's café to read, study, and talk about political freedom. Over the years, Ania learned about her family's incredible history of resistance — first against Nazi oppression, and then against communism.

Knowing relatives that died in World War II, and having suffered under communism, Grandfather Jakub, Aunt Zofia, and Ania's parents all celebrate their blessings.

"After all," Jakub likes to say, "our troubles aren't as bad as we think... in the past, it's been a lot worse!"

Fat Thursday

A Catholic tradition that begins the last days of celebration before Lent, when Christians around the world reflect on Christ's suffering.





An Energy Victory...

Recently, it looks like Poland's government agrees with Ania and her popular friends about climate change. With the entire European Union taking drastic steps to eliminate fossil fuels in the near future, Poland is following their lead. Even though solid coal is the country's cheapest and most effective energy source, Poland's leaders pledged to **phase out** coal usage by 2049. With cities like Krakow and Warsaw already limiting what kinds of coal people can use, the cost of heating homes and businesses is rising.

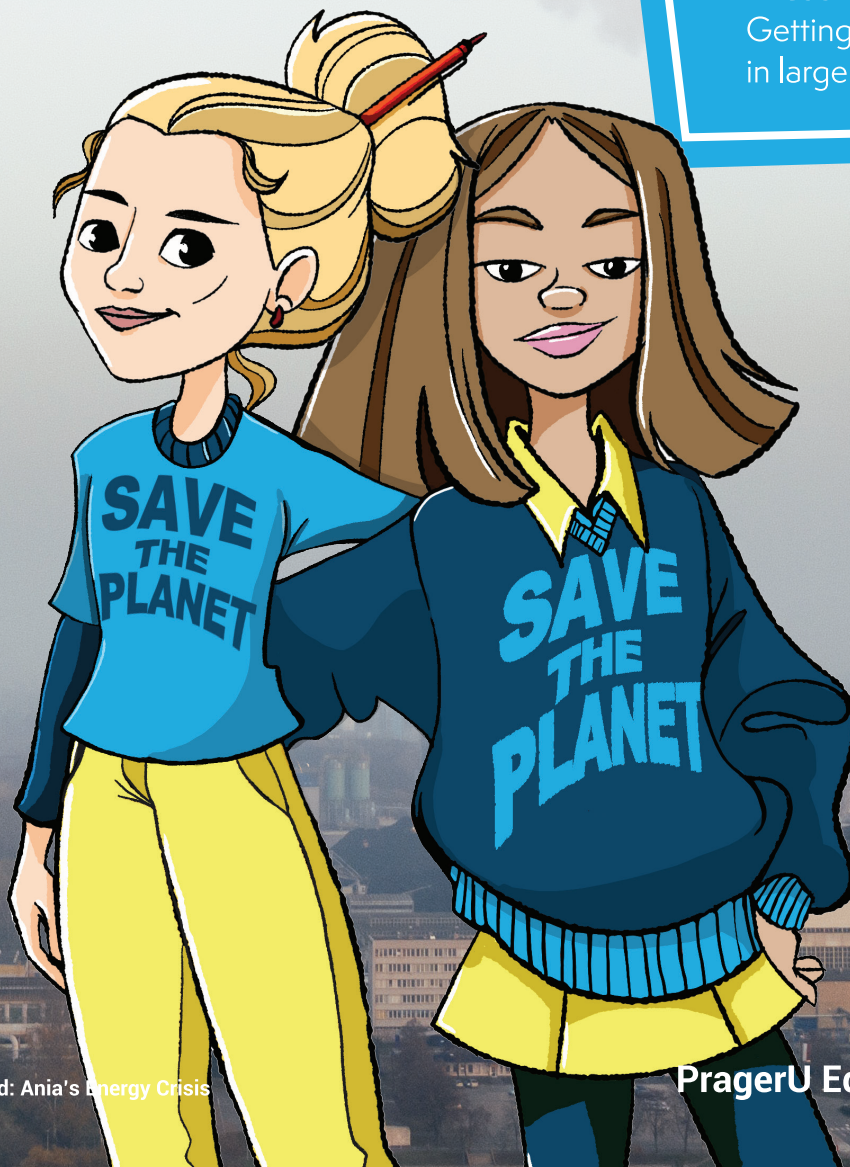
Of course, Ania, Magda, and their school friends see Poland's climate pledge as a big win! When Ania thinks about how her parents and

Grandfather Jakub struggled against threats to their life and freedom, she reminds herself that climate change caused by fossil fuels is her generation's struggle against oppression. After all, it is the popular consensus.

But Ania's parent's don't see it that way. When Ania brings up climate change or Poland's coal phase-out, they ask if she's ready to hear the other side — the one she's not getting from her teachers or her activist friends.

Phase Out

Getting rid of something over time, in larger and larger steps.





Russia Invades Ukraine

Poland and its people faced many wars throughout their long history, but the 2022 invasion of neighboring Ukraine caught everyone by surprise. Ania, her international friends, and even her parents were all shocked when Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered his armies to cross Ukraine's eastern border.

In the months after the invasion, Poland threw their support behind the Ukrainian people. In response to this, Russia stopped supplying Poland with natural gas. This is a huge challenge for the country. Before the Ukraine invasion, Poland, like the European Union, was **importing** around 45% of its natural gas from Russia. Because of the pressure to become more green, they relied on other countries for their energy supply. But now, trade with Russia is a problem. Ania wonders if her country had actually been helping Russia by buying from them. Without them, though, could Poland count on its own energy sources for all its needs?

With Poland's cities seeing a large arrival of Ukrainian refugees, Polish citizens are also stepping up and offering temporary shelter, food, and transportation. Ania and Magda are even volunteering at a temporary shelter for Ukrainian refugees in Krakow. Not that long ago, Poland itself was occupied by foreign invaders. People like Grandfather Jakub remember the destruction that came from that. He has always been a strong advocate for independence, including energy independence. He hated the idea of relying on Russia for natural gas and fuel.

Importing

Buying goods or products from another country.

Hearing the Other Side

Tymon, who reads scientific journals and talks with researchers at his university, has been giving his daughter some food for thought.

One evening, Ania joined him in the living room.

"You're right that the average temperature is rising," Tymon said, after taking a sip of coffee. "But our planet has been warming and cooling since prehistoric times... long before carbon emissions were a factor." He paused. "How do we explain that?"

"Hmm," Ania replied. "I'm not sure. The climate sounds complicated."

"It sure is," Klara added, bringing over a mug of black tea with honey — Ania's favorite. "I think carbon emissions are not the only factor. Earth is 70% water. Storms, evaporation, air pressure systems — the oceans interact with the atmosphere in many unpredictable ways. That might have more to do with warming or cooling than Poland's carbon dioxide emissions."

Ania drank her tea.

Oceans, she wondered. Did her Mom have a point?

"But here's what I wonder," her father said. "If everyone in Poland stops using coal, will that lower Earth's temperature all that much?"

"It would help," Ania said. "A third of our country uses coal every day to heat their homes. That's too much!"

"You're right," Tymon said. "That's why we



have pollution like China and India...but if we stopped using coal altogether, would that make a difference for the planet? Those countries burn many times the amount of coal we do, and they're not cutting back."

Seeing that Ania was deep in thought, Klara smiled. "I wonder what your debate society would think about all this."

"I see what you're getting at, Dad," Ania replied, "but we still have to do our part."

Tymon nodded.

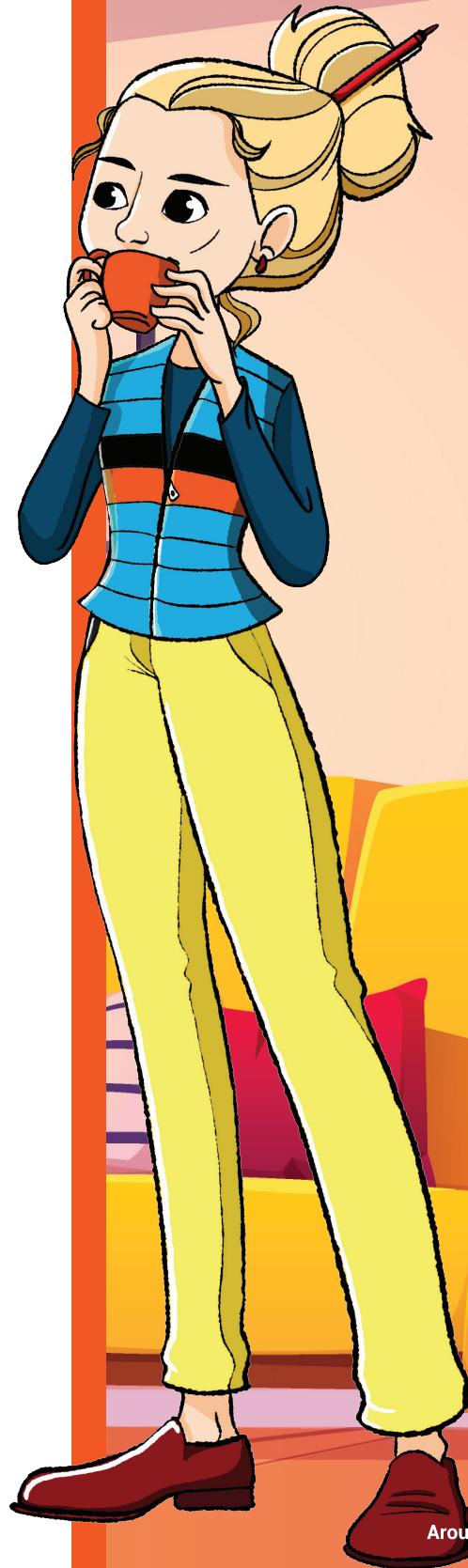
"That's fair," he said. "But did you know that in the two centuries mankind has been using fossil fuels, the Earth's temperature has only risen one degree celsius?"

Ania's eyes widened.

"I thought it was *much* higher than that," she admitted, thinking back to something she'd heard in class. Ania remembered her teacher insisting that without big changes in Poland's energy policy, Earth's temperature would rise by four degrees in the next 10 years.

Tymon and Klara listened while Ania talked about renewable energy. While they didn't agree with each other on everything, Ania and her parents listened patiently to each other. Later that evening, Ania sat at her computer and typed out an idea for her next blog article — *will banning fossil fuels really stop temperatures from rising?*

Was it possible that she had only been taught one side of the story? Should she have done more research before making big demands? She definitely had some work to do.





Another Coal Ban

As part of Poland's resistance against Russia, the country is enforcing a ban on Russian coal products. Ania's friends and even her teachers are excited about this, but Ania is not so sure. Over the years, Poland and Western Europe have relied more and more on Russian imports of coal and natural gas for energy. Now, climate activists think banning Russian coal is a great way to stop pollution, fight climate change, and punish an aggressive country for invading its neighbor at the same time.

Ania is worried, though. Do Poland's wind turbines and solar panels, or even those in nearby Europe, produce enough energy to replace coal and gas?

All over Poland, people use coal and natural gas to heat their homes... and winter is right around the corner. During her research, Ania noticed that almost 75% of the electricity Poland uses comes from burning coal. Will all that energy be easily replaced? From her careful reading and her conversations with experts, Ania is starting to think that phasing out fossil fuels while also banning coal and gas imports is a recipe for disaster.

Fossil Fuels versus Renewables

With everyone talking about Russian coal and natural gas, Ania's learning everything she can about fossil fuels. She's even met with a few of her dad's university colleagues to ask questions. So far, what they've told her about energy, the climate, and fossil fuels like coal and gas, is astonishing.

While it now makes sense, Ania never realized that fossil fuels are actually making Earth a more *habitable* place for humans. Of course, they cause pollution and even smog, but Ania had no idea that advanced countries use technology to limit most of the pollution. And thanks to fossil fuels, more people have access to technology and education, which leads to new innovations in the field of energy.

Instead of making life worse and bringing on disaster, it looks like fossil fuels have made life *better* for people throughout history. That is, they help people escape poverty and live longer, healthier, and more efficiently. Fossil fuels make it much easier to survive harsh weather like Poland's freezing winters, or natural disasters like hurricanes. By providing the heating, energy, and electricity that people

need in order to focus on other things, fossil fuels are even responsible for cleaner air, safer drinking water, medical technology, and education. Without them, the time and research needed to develop cleaner energy sources and make them cheap and plentiful in the future would not be possible.

Furthermore, she's learning how much energy renewable sources like wind turbines and solar panels *really* provide. It's a shockingly low amount. Because sunshine and wind are unreliable, difficult to store, and costly to convert to energy, only 10% of the world's energy came from wind and solar in 2021. Of course, renewable energy sources are popular, and countries like Poland are pushing for them to replace fossil fuels. Poland already has a number of wind farms and solar panels, but all those renewables didn't meet the goal of supplying just 15% of Poland's energy in 2020.

Ania wonders where Poland will get the energy it needs to be completely free from coal by 2049. If renewable energy doesn't work, then what's the plan?



A Different Narrative

Ania's activist friends talk constantly about rising temperatures. They all say that the only way to save the planet is for everyone to stop using fossil fuels immediately...but Ania thinks they've got it wrong. Lately, she's been reading fascinating articles by a Danish environmental science professor named Bjørn Lomborg. With a ton of research, he demonstrates that the best way to protect the world's environment is to invest in research and educate people. That means letting poor people in developing countries make their lives better with cheap, abundant fossil fuel energy.

Lomborg's arguments make sense. They also make Ania wonder why her friends from school think wind and solar can just replace fossil fuels without any problems. Don't they know that renewable energy sources are expensive, inconsistent, and barely able to provide 10% of the energy everyone needs to stay warm and keep the lights on? Do they know that stopping all fossil fuels would plunge people around the world into freezing weather, darkness, and even more pollution? Maybe they had only been hearing one side of the argument, just like her, before she started doing her research.

When Ania brought this up in class, all she got were a few mean stares. It was so quiet that she imagined hearing crickets. Ania's teacher didn't have a good response, and even Magda did not back her up. This gave Ania the uncomfortable feeling that her questions were not welcome. Suddenly she understood what her grandfather meant when he taught her that pursuing truth is a more important goal than being liked — a lesson he learned during World War II.

Energy Poverty

It's fall now, about eight months after Russia's invasion. All over Krakow, the gorgeous parks and stately trees are turning orange, yellow, and auburn red. But instead of strolling through Old Town and enjoying the crisp air and the fall colors, everyone seems rushed and worried.

Ania knows why.

Around the country, many are struggling with **energy poverty**. With cheap brown coal banned, and with coal and gas imports from Russia both long gone, people everywhere can't afford, or even find, fuel to heat their homes. Because it's so scarce and in high demand, the fuel people can buy is way too expensive. Heating and electricity bills are already much, much higher than they were just a few months ago, and Ania and her family are seeing things they never thought would happen.

As she walks around Krakow, Ania sees people storing wood, old furniture, and mounds of smelly trash in their yards — and even on her own cobbled street. Soon, the temperatures will drop to freezing, and people with no other option will burn all that wood and trash to stay warm. Ania knows that, unfortunately, burning wood and trash causes even *more* pollution than burning coal.

Energy Poverty

The lack of access to modern energy services.



Energy Hits Home

Poland's energy poverty means trouble for Ania's own family. Aunt Zofia worries about the cost of running her café. She once used natural gas imported from Russia to heat it every winter, when people come in by the dozens for delicious, steaming coffee. Now, her gas bill is ten times higher than it was a few months ago! Higher prices for food, fuel, and nearly everything means fewer customers are coming in to spend money. Will she be able to hold on to the café — an icon of Krakow that has been in the family through World War II and communism?

Fortunately, Tymon and Klara have a new, energy-efficient boiler to heat their home, and even a backup generator... but only a few people can afford those things. They're very concerned about Grandfather Jakub, who's in his eighties and lives on a small **pension**. He used to heat his apartment with affordable brown coal until the city of Krakow banned it. Now, the imported coal slurry he uses has become impossible to find. This worries the whole family. If he's not able to keep his apartment warm, his coughing and lung problems will get worse.



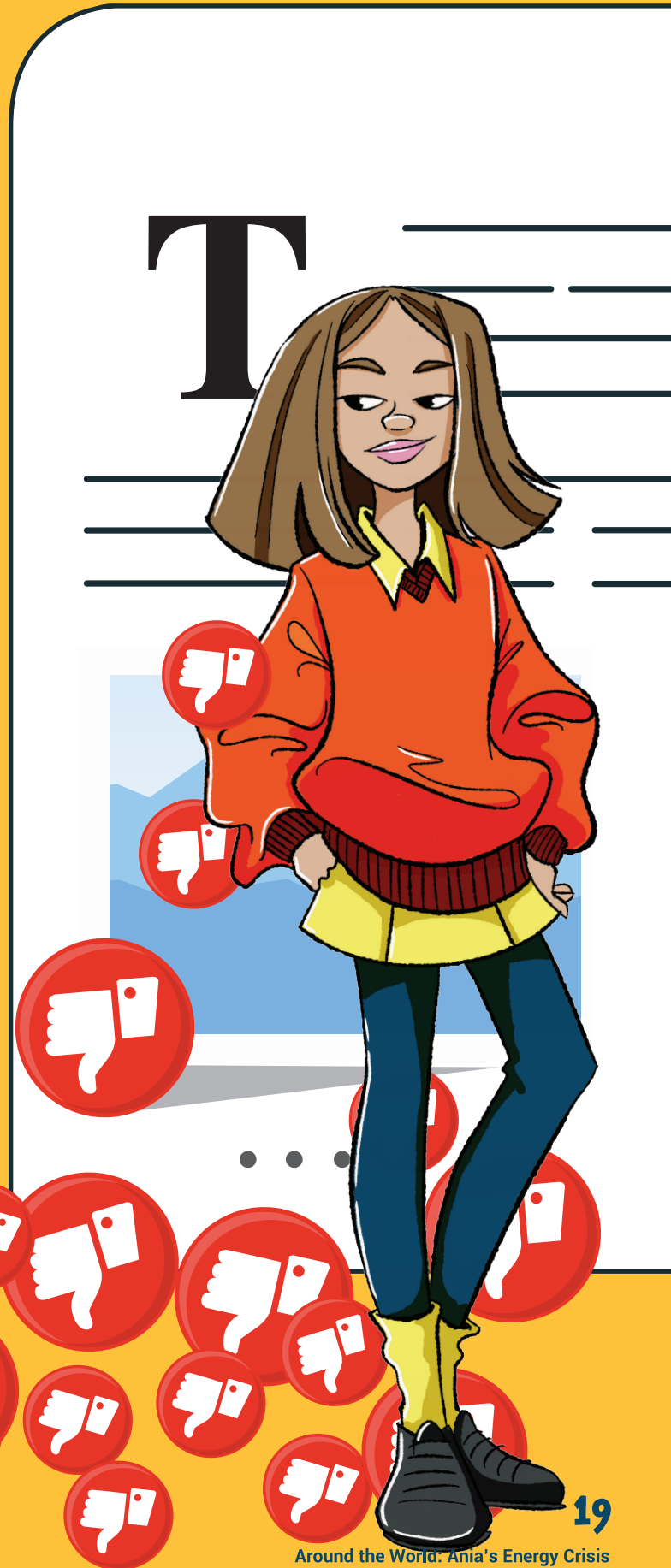
Pension

A monthly sum of money that a company, or the government, gives to a retired person.

Telling the Truth

Knowing that she has a duty to her readers, Ania is blogging all about energy, fossil fuels, and how energy poverty, *not* climate change, is the real threat to the Polish people. In both English and Polish, and with Tymon's helpful editing, her writing is getting stronger.

But the response is not what she expected. Many readers are posting mean comments or accusing Ania of not caring about people. *How is that possible?* Ania wonders. Have they read her arguments? *Of course* she cares! At school and online, many of her activist friends barely talk to her anymore. Even Magda, who can see the smoke and smell the fumes from the burning trash in their neighborhood, continues to believe that Poland's coal ban is saving the Earth and that Ania's new beliefs will destroy it. After so many arguments, they've stopped walking to school together. Losing friends has been hard for Ania. Even though being isolated for telling the truth sometimes makes her cry, Ania is determined to keep telling it. As hard as this is for Tymon, Klara, and even Grandfather Jakub to watch, they could not be prouder of their brave Ania.





Family to the Rescue

Over a delicious meal of hunter's stew (one of Ania's favorites), Tymon, Klara, and Grandfather Jakub are encouraging Ania by sharing their own struggles with oppression.

Tymon, an advocate for freedom, remembers meeting people late at night, in a freezing cellar, to avoid the communist authorities. One night, when he was walking home, corrupt policemen harassed him, stole his books, and beat him up... but that didn't stop him. He kept studying and meeting with friends. When Poland transitioned to a democracy in the 1990s, he kept on sharing his ideas — now he shares them as a university lecturer in political science.

Ania is astonished. She had no idea that the oppression under communism was that dangerous. She's also amazed at Grandfather Jakub's stories of the Warsaw Uprising, when the city's Jews fought back against the Nazis and took over the crumbling neighborhood they'd been herded into. Jakub remembers when he was twelve, and his family was part of a smuggling effort to help the Jewish resistance. At risk of being arrested, or worse, they carried crates of food, blankets, heating oil, and even ammunition into the Jewish ghetto through sewer tunnels.

"If they caught you, they would have killed you," Ania said.

"You don't say!" her grandfather replied. "But those brave Jews had nothing to fight with, so we were glad to do it...even though we couldn't *tell* anyone we were doing it."

For the first time, Ania is realizing that fighting oppression is always risky and comes with a cost. As Grandfather Jakub reminds her, oppression can start small, and it can appear where you least expect it.

"One of the first signs," he added, "is when all of a sudden, you're not allowed to talk about the truth."





Taking Action Together

It's winter in Krakow, and it's a new season for everyone in Ania's family. With her Dad's help and encouragement, Ania's blog is reaching many new readers. She's even written articles for an online magazine — in English, of course!

Unfortunately, her last blog post was a sad one. After sixty years of family ownership, Aunt Zofia had to close the café. Ania and her family can hardly believe that it happened. But with energy, food, and heating bills all climbing higher, and with fewer people visiting Old Town Krakow, Aunt Zofia finally had no choice. When Magda heard the sad news, she finally apologized to Ania for abandoning her over their recent disagreements. The two girls joined Ania's family for one last celebration at the café, a place where young journalists like her gathered over the years to sip coffee and share ideas openly.

After publishing her blog post, Ania's new readers surprised her. In dozens of emails, they thanked her for her writing and shared similar stories of soaring energy prices and seeing businesses close all over Europe. Ania had no idea that energy poverty from the push to end fossil fuels was impacting people in Germany, Austria, Hungary, and even England and Ireland. Recently, in her spare time, she's also been reading more about **nuclear energy** and how countries like France and Japan use it for electricity, with far less pollution.

Nuclear Energy

A form of electricity that comes from carefully controlled nuclear fission reactions.

In a big surprise to everyone, Poland's government removed the restrictions on brown coal, allowing people to once again use it to heat their homes. But too many people are still burning toxic trash to stay warm. With her parents and Michal's help, Ania is taking more action. She's been using her blog to fundraise money and purchase brown coal in bulk from Poland's neighbor, the Czech Republic. She's even gone with Michal in his truck to pick it up and then deliver it to people who need it all across the region.

Finally, things are happening in Ania's skinny, two-story house. Michal is spending more time at home to help coordinate the brown coal deliveries. Aunt Zofia often comes over for dinner and to visit with Grandfather Jakub — who moved into their spare bedroom last November! Now, Ania gets to hear his incredible stories every day, in exchange for helping him learn and practice some English phrases.

Grandfather Jakub is delighted to be living with the family once again.

"Whatever happens," he says, when everyone sits down for a meal, "we're better together. We always have been... after all, things could be a lot worse!"





Writing Activity

Is there an issue that you feel passionately about?

Just like Ania discovered, it is very important to learn about both sides of the topic. Either your argument will become stronger or you will find that some of your assumptions were wrong. Research your top issue and write down points and counterpoints from both sides below.

Fast Facts on Poland

Neighboring countries:

Germany, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, and part of Russia

Poland was a communist country until 1989, when the Polish people bravely elected the first non-communist government in Eastern Europe.

Size of population:

37 million people

Size of country:

120,733 square miles

Official language:

Polish

Poland comes from an old Slavic word, *Polaine*. It means 'people living in open fields.'

Name Days:

The Polish calendar lists multiple Polish names on each date, and people used to celebrate on the date with their name listed, just like a birthday!

After becoming known for its castles, art, and customs during the Renaissance, Poland was ruled by other countries for 123 years. During that time, you could not even find Poland on the map!

Occupation:

Because of its location between Germany and Russia, Poland was occupied by both countries during World War II.

Polish Cookies

You and your parents can bake your own sweet, crispy traditional Polish snack with this cookie recipe. In Poland and in Polish communities across the United States, **people call these twisty treats Chrusciki.**

Ingredients:

- * 4 cups, all-purpose flour
- * 1 teaspoon salt
- * 1 cup cold butter
- * 4 large egg yolks, room temperature
- * 1 cup evaporated milk
- * 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- * Vegetable or cooking oil
- * Confectioner's sugar

Prep Time: 45 minutes

Preparation:

- 1 Combine the flour, salt, and butter in a large bowl. Mix together until everything is coarse and crumbly.
- 2 In another bowl, beat the egg yolks until they're smooth and foamy. Then add the milk and vanilla.
- 3 Stir the egg yolks into the crumbly flour until the dough is stiff and ready to knead.
- 4 On sprinkled flour, knead the dough eight to ten times, and then cut into four pieces.
- 5 Roll each piece into a ¼ inch thick rectangle, then cut each rectangle into four narrow strips.
- 6 Cut a 2 inch slit down the middle of each strip and then pull one end through the slit like a bow.

Baking Instructions: (have your parents help you with this)

- 1 In a skillet or a deep fryer, heat cooking oil to 375°.
- 2 Fry a few dough strips at a time, until each strip is golden brown on both sides (this should take around five minutes).
- 3 Drain the strips on paper towels and sprinkle on confectioner's sugar.

Enjoy your twisty, tasty Chrusciki!



Sources

- Inwestycji i Handlu S.A., Polska Agencja. "Economic Stability and a Strong Economy." *Poland Investment and Trade Agency*, www.paih.gov.pl/Economic_stability_and_a_strong_economy.
- "21 Fun Facts About Poland!" *Blog Key to Poland*, keytopoland.com/post/21-fun-facts-about-poland.
- "Coal's Importance to the World." *Society for Mining, Metallurgy & Exploration*, www.smenet.org/What-We-Do/Technical-Briefings/Coal-s-Importance-in-the-US-and-Global-Energy-Supp.
- "Estimated Number of Jews Killed in the Final Solution." *Jewish Virtual Library*, www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/estimated-number-of-jews-killed-in-the-final-solution.
- Staff, Reuters. "Poland's Krakow Bans Coal Burning to Heat Homes." *Reuters*, 26 Nov. 2013, www.reuters.com/article/us-poland-environment-idUSBRE9AP0X120131126.
- "Coal and Conservatism: How Polish Activists Push for More Climate Action." *Clean Energy Wire*, 1 Sept. 2021, www.cleanenergywire.org/news/coal-and-conservatism-how-polish-activists-push-more-climate-action.
- "Air Quality Clampdown Could Leave Poor Poles Out in the Cold." *POLITICO*, 11 Oct. 2017, www.politico.eu/article/poland-air-quality-clampdown-could-leave-poor-poles-out-in-the-cold.
- Tilles, Daniel. "Polish City Tops Global Air Pollution Ranking as Winter Smog Sets In." *Notes From Poland*, 21 Nov. 2022, notesfrompoland.com/2022/11/21/polish-city-tops-global-air-pollution-ranking-as-winter-smog-sets-in.
- Dickinson, Peter. "Poland Is Leading Europe's Response to the Russian Invasion of Ukraine." *Atlantic Council*, 28 Jan. 2023, www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/poland-is-leading-europes-response-to-the-russian-invasion-of-ukraine.
- Powell, Jonathan. "Ban on Coal from Russia Has Poland Scrambling." *China Daily*, 8 Aug. 2022, www.global.china-daily.com.cn/a/202208/24/WS63057cafa310fd2b29e73ea1.html.
- Staff, Reuters. "Polish Cabinet Approves Law to Ban Russian Coal Imports." *Reuters*, 29 Mar. 2022, www.reuters.com/world/europe/polish-cabinet-approves-law-ban-russian-coal-imports-2022.
- "Poland to Phase Out Coal by 2049." *DW*, www.dw.com/en/polands-coal-phaseout-plans-fact-or-fiction/a-55102698.
- "The Green Turn of the Polish Energy Sector." *POLITICO*, 21 Nov. 2022, www.politico.eu/sponsored-content/the-green-turn-of-the-polish-energy-sector.
- Abnett, Kate, and Elizabeth Piper. "China, India, Other Big Coal Users Missing from COP26 Phase-out Deal." *Reuters*, 5 Nov. 2021, www.reuters.com/business/cop/cop26-coal-deals-take-aim-dirtiest-fossil-fuel-2021-11-03.
- Rapier, Robert. "Wind and Solar Provided a Record 10% of the World's Power Generation in 2021." *Forbes*, 4 July 2022, www.forbes.com/sites/rrapier/2022/07/04/wind-and-solar-provided-a-record-10-of-the-worlds-power-in-2021.
- "Renewables in the Polish Energy Mix. Still Not Enough to Meet the Targets." *Forum Energii*, 23 July 2020, forum-energii.eu/en/blog/oze-w-miksie.
- "Poland's Renewable Capacity Grows 9.4% to 6 GW in 2014." *Euractiv*, 3 Feb. 2015, www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/poland-s-renewable-capacity-grows-9-4-to-6-gw-in-2014.
- "Ice Cores and Climate Change." *British Antarctic Survey*, 30 June 2022, www.bas.ac.uk/data/our-data/publication/ice-cores-and-climate-change.
- "William Happer's Interview on Global Warming." *The Best Schools*, 12 Feb. 2016, thebestschools.org/magazine/william-happer-on-global-warming.
- "Climate Change Activists Are Focused on All the Wrong Solutions." *New York Post*, 12 Oct. 2019, nypost.com/2019/10/12/climate-change-activists-are-focused-on-all-the-wrong-solutions.
- Epstein, Alex. "How Fossil Fuels Cleaned up Our Environment." *Forbes*, 28 Jan. 2015, www.forbes.com/sites/alexepstein/2015/01/28/how-fossil-fuels-cleaned-up-our-environment.
- Epstein, Alex. "Moral Case for Fossil Fuels." *Moral Case for Fossil Fuels*, www.moralcaseforfossilfuels.com/main. Accessed 8 Mar. 2023.
- "Why Are Fossil Fuels So Hard to Quit?" *Brookings Institute*, 8 June 2020, www.brookings.edu/essay/why-are-fossil-fuels-so-hard-to-quit.
- Editors, History.com. "Warsaw Ghetto Uprising." *History*, 4 Sept. 2019, www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/warsaw-ghetto-uprising.
- Abnett, Kate. "Poland 'Looking Again' at Role of Gas in Green Energy Transition." *Reuters*, 17 Mar. 2022, www.reuters.com/business/sustainable-business/poland-looking-again-role-gas-green-energy-transition-2022-03-17.

PragerU KIDS



We're reaching America's youth with PragerU Kids!

With reliable and age-appropriate kids shows, books, and magazines that teach classic American values, PragerU Kids offers content that parents trust and children love. As a nonprofit, PragerU relies on the generosity of donors committed to helping us spread messages of liberty, economic freedom, and Judeo-Christian values to the next generation. PragerU Kids is the only network that makes educational, entertaining, pro-American content for kids. Watch for free and learn more at:

PragerUkids.com

An illustration of five diverse cartoon characters standing in front of a world map. From left to right: a man in a dark military uniform with a peaked cap, a boy in a blue and white soccer jersey with the number 30, a girl with long brown hair in a blue top and yellow skirt, a girl with dark skin in a yellow top and patterned skirt, and a boy in an orange t-shirt and dark shorts. The background is a blue world map with white outlines of continents.

AROUND THE WORLD

ANIMATED SERIES

**See the story come to life
with the Around the World
animated series.**

**Watch now at
PragerUkids.com**