

***Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*, by Anne Frank. Translated from the Dutch by B. M. Mooyart. New York: Doubleday, 1972.**

Story Summary: On her thirteenth birthday, June 12, 1942, Anne Frank received a diary as a gift. At that time, she and her family were living peacefully in Amsterdam, Holland after being forced to flee Hitler's anti-Jewish regime in Germany. One month after receiving her diary, Anne and her family must go into hiding in the "Secret Annex," a hidden portion of the building where Anne's father worked. The diary chronicles two years in hiding with Anne, her family and four other people. The Holocaust is only revealed by Anne's circumstances and her entries about radio broadcasts. The majority of the diary focuses on Anne's desires and fears for the future and the tension between the inhabitants, especially Anne's strained relationship with her mother. On August 4, 1944, the Gestapo raids the Secret Annex and all of its inhabitants are sent to concentration camps. Anne, along with her mother and sister, died in Bergen-Belsen, two months before the liberation of Holland. Anne's father was the only resident of the Secret Annex to survive the war.

Objectives: Students should be able to:

- explain how Hitler's rise to power slowly and systematically took away basic human rights from Jews;
- understand that Jews were productive members of German society before Hitler's rise to power;
- recognize the courage and determination of many non-Jews to help those persecuted by the Nazis;
- see the characters as human beings and adolescents with very similar concerns and hopes as his or her own; and
- empathize with the characters and understand how the Nazis shattered their lives.

Topics for Discussion:

- Describe the different birthdays Anne has shared in her diary. What were they like and how did they change over the course of time?
- Explain why you think Anne decided to name her diary. Does having a name at the beginning of Anne's entries help in the telling of her life? Explain.
- At the beginning of the diary Anne explains that paper is more patient than people. Explain what you think she meant by that statement and whether you agree or disagree with her.
- The Frank family had to gather together the belongings that they were taking with them into hiding. Imagine that your family had to flee. Tell what it would be like to select only a few of your belongings and leave, knowing that you would probably never return to your home, friends, and possessions? What would you choose to take with you and why?
- Explain what influence the setting has on the events in the story. How might the story have been different if the group was hidden in the country or in a smaller space?
- Explain why Anne's experience of hiding is different from most that were forced to hide during the Holocaust.
- What have you learned about the different ways people responded to the Nazis' treatment of the Jewish people and others during World War II?
- If someone asked you to describe each of the people in the annex, what words would you use to describe them? Explain the reason for your choices.
- Explain how Anne's entries changed from the start of her time in the annex to the end.
- If you had an opportunity to speak to Anne Frank after reading her diary, what would you want to say and why?

- Describe how this book is different from others you have read about the Holocaust.

Activity Ideas:

- Keep a diary throughout the unit. Name it as Anne did. Use it to express feelings about what you are reading and your reactions to Anne's entries.
- Compare and contrast Anne's diary with Zlata's diary. Then create a display representing your findings.
- Select a scene or event from the diary. Rewrite it in the form of a play and perform it for your classmates. To extend the learning experience, you should memorize lines, stage the movements, and set the stage using available furniture and props.
- Research the historical events which were described in the radio broadcasts and write a research paper on one of them.
- Watch the movie, "The Diary of a Young Girl," and compare it to the diary to determine its accuracy of content and events.
- Using what you know about Anne Frank write a paper in which you describe what might have become of Anne Frank had she lived. Consider what her career may have been, where she would live and what kind of family of her own she would have. Share them in class and compare the descriptions.

Related Resources:

- Adler, D. (1994). *Hilde and Eli*. New York: Holiday House.
- Adler, D. (1995). *Child of the Warsaw Ghetto*. New York: Holiday House.
- Friedman, I. (1982). *Escape or Die: True Stories of Young People Who Survived the Holocaust*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Gurko, M. (1988). *Theodore Herzl: The Road to Israel*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society.
- Oppenheim, S. (1992). *The Lily Cupboard*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Orgel, D. (1988). *The Devil in Vienna*. New York: Puffin.
- Petit, J. (1995). *A Time to Fight Back: True Stories of Children's Resistance During World War 2*. London: Macmillan.
- Ray, K. (1993). *To Cross a Line*. New York: Orchard Books.
- Richter, H. (1987). *I Was There*. New York: Penguin.
- Schloss, E. (1995). *Dear Anne Frank*. London: Penguin.
- Siegal, A. (1985). *Grace in the Wilderness: After the Liberation, 1945-1948*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux.
- Wilde, M. (1991). *Let the Celebration Begin*. New York: Orchard Books.
- Yolen, J. (1990). *The Devil's Arithmetic*. New York: Penguin.

