

Individual Learning Packet

Teaching Unit

Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl

by Anne Frank

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Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl

Background Information

Anne Frank: The Dairy of a Young Girl is a diary written by an adolescent girl during the German occupation of Holland in World War II. For two years, Anne Frank lived with her family, the Van Daan family, and Mr. Dussel in the attic of a warehouse. It is over the course of those two years that Anne wrote this diary.

As a piece of nonfiction, a diary is different than an autobiography. If Anne had chosen to write an autobiography, the reader would have read about the entirety of Anne's life, as a child through her years as a teenager. Because this is a diary, readers are able to journey through the experiences Anne has on a daily basis. We have an inside look at Anne's feelings as she encounters conflict with other members of the "Secret Annexe" and the daily struggles of being confined in a small space. We are able to watch Anne develop as a teenager as she lives her life without the normal freedoms a young person would have. Readers are able to connect with the experiences that Anne has as she shares them through her diary.

World War II and the Holocaust have been commemorated in autobiographical and biographical accounts, as well as in history books for years. However, often in those accounts of the horrors of what happened, readers are given a sterile picture of its effects. In this diary, the reader comes face to face, not with facts and statistics about what happened during the German occupation, but with the daily struggles of maturing in a time when all freedoms have been stolen. Unlike many of the memoirs that have been written about people's experiences with the Holocaust, *The Diary of a Young Girl* is different in that while it was being written, Anne has hope that their hiding would only be temporary, hence the abrupt ending to the diary. She was not to know that, in writing, she was narrating the last years of her life. Because of that fact, the diary serves more to help adolescents understand that teenagers all over the world face the same concerns as they do. No matter the situation, young people have conflict with their parents, question their identities, feel insecure about their appearances, fall in love, and deal with loneliness and isolation.

Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl is largely a reflection on a young girl's struggle to become an adult in the midst of deprivation, inhumanity, and confinement. The diary offers readers an adolescent perspective on World War II, as well as the plight of a young girl forced to deal with issues in maturing into a young woman while living in isolation. This is a difficult book to read. The disrespect and hatred with which the Jewish people were treated is painful to confront. Readers should be aware that the diary deals frankly with those problems that come with being confined in a space with seven other people and also with the issues that a young girl confronts as she is maturing.

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Objectives

By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:

1. discuss the effect the point of view and the genre of a diary have on the story being told.
2. make connections to related information about World War II and the Holocaust.
3. summarize, make generalizations, and form conclusions about experiences and people based on the reading.
4. list examples of the anti-Jewish laws that were in effect in Holland.
5. describe the accommodations of the families in hiding.
6. provide support from the text that supports Anne's maturity from child to young adult.
7. compare and contrast Anne with the other people who were in hiding.
8. discuss and evaluate the risks that Elli, Miep, Mr. Koophius, and Mr. Kraler took in order to hide the families.
9. define and cite examples from the text of the following literary terms:
 - point of view
 - simile
 - foreshadowing
 - generalizations about life
10. discuss the important facts of the German occupation of Holland.
11. see how the idea of racial purity and ethnic genocide relates to World War II.
12. understand various aspects of the Holocaust.
13. appreciate the risks taken by ordinary citizens in Holland who helped the Jews survive.

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Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. *The Diary of a Young Girl* is written from Anne Frank's point of view. Explain the effect of learning about life in the attic through this person's eyes instead of another person who is living in hiding in the attic. Identify a scenario in the diary where the point of view influences the way the events are being told. How would the description of the event be different told from a different person, for instance, an observer in the attic or the other person(s) involved in the scenario?

2. In the dairy, Anne tells Kitty about her hobbies and dreams for life after hiding in the attic. She writes:

I must work, so as not to be a fool, to get on, to become a journalist, because that's what I want! I know that I can write, a couple of my stories are good, my descriptions of the "Secret Annexe" are humorous, there's a lot in my diary that speaks, but—whether I have real talent remains to be seen....I want to go on living even after my death! And therefore I am grateful to God for giving me this gift, this possibility of developing myself and of writing?, of expressing all that is in me....But, and that is the great question, will I ever be able to write anything great, will I ever become a journalist or a writer? I hope so, oh, I hope so very much, for I can recapture everything when I write, my thoughts, my ideals and my fantasies."

The reader knows when reading these statements that Anne and her writing is remembered. How are the statements that Anne makes ironic? Does Anne succeed in fulfilling her dream?

3. Describe the relationships between Anne and the other members of the Secret Annexe. For each, give an example from the diary to support your description.
4. Characterize each member of the Secret Annexe as Anne describes them to the reader.
5. Throughout Anne's years in hiding, she undergoes changes. Describe those changes that occur mentally. Does Anne recognize them in herself? Find an instance when she discusses the changes she is feeling. Are the changes she undergoes normal for a girl her age? Are they isolated to the circumstance in which she finds herself? Why or why not?
6. Describe Anne as a person, both physically and mentally. For each characteristic of Anne that deals with her personality, give an example from the diary that led you to that conclusion.
7. What would have happened to Anne and her family if Anne and her family had not gone into hiding when they did?
8. Explain the risks that Mr. Koophius, Mr. Kraler, Miep, and Elli took in order to hide the Franks, the Van Daans, and Mr. Dussel.

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Sunday, 14 June, 1942 – Sunday morning, 5 July, 1942

Vocabulary

ardent – intensely enthusiastic
blithely – showing a cheerful, carefree disposition
melancholy – a sadness, depression
pogroms – organized persecutions and massacres, often officially prompted, of a minority group
unbosomings – the revealing of one's feelings and secrets

1. With what event does the diary open?

2. Describe the members of Anne's family. How does she feel about the people around her?

3. What does Anne name her diary?

4. Why has Anne decided to keep a diary?

5. Give five examples of anti-Jewish laws that limit freedom for Anne and her family, as well as the rest of the Jewish people.

7. Who may join the war?

8. Describe how each member of the family is feeling after having been in the Secret Annexe for a significant amount of time.

9. On March 25, those living in the Secret Annexe have another scare. Describe what it is and how the families deal with the situation.

Friday, 18 February, 1944 – Thursday, 16 March, 1944

1. Describe the problems both Anne and Peter have with their mothers. How do they deal with them differently?

2. What new problems arise in the building? How is this time different from before?

3. How does Anne feel about falling in love?

4. Pay close attention to the entry on March 7. How does Anne describe her life in 1942 and now?

5. What is happening in the lives of the people who take care of those in the Secret Annexe? If any of those people were to be arrested or die, what problems would that create for those in the Secret Annexe?

6. How does Anne question her relationship with Peter? What type of questions does she ask of herself?
