

Anne Frank

A Reading A-Z Level Z Leveled Book
Word Count: 1,553

Connections

Writing and Art

Research to learn more about the Anne Frank House. Make a brochure about it, explaining what visitors can experience there.

Social Studies

Read *The Diary of a Young Girl*, by Anne Frank. Identify the lessons from her story. Share your ideas with your class.

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Anne Frank

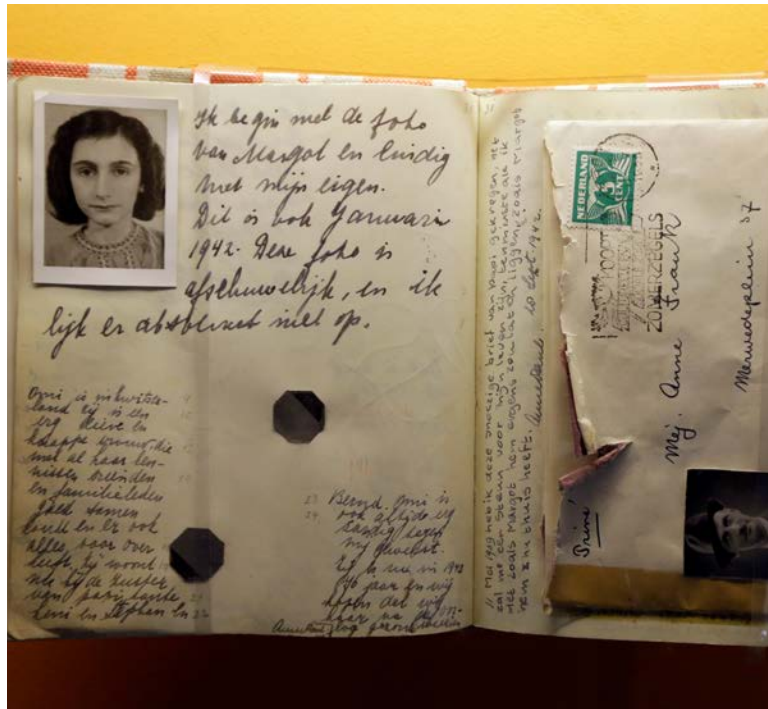


**Multi
level
Z•Z¹•Z²**

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Focus Question

Who was Anne Frank, and why is her diary significant?

Words to Know

Allies	Holocaust
annex	invasion
decrees	Jews
despair	Nazis
emigrated	occupiers
Great Depression	restrict

Page 3: Today, Prinsengracht 263 is a museum. The rooms of the Anne Frank House have been restored to look like they did while Anne and her family sheltered there. More than a million people visit the site each year.

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Correlation

LEVEL Z	
Fountas & Pinnell	U-V
Reading Recovery	N/A
DRA	50



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Into Hiding

The doorbell rang the afternoon of July 5, 1942. Anne Frank, thirteen years old, expected it to be a friend. Instead, it was the postman with a letter for her older sister, Margot, telling Margot to report for transport to a “work camp.” The news shook Anne and Margot’s mom, Edith Frank.

World War II had been going on for almost three years. Germany had overrun much of Europe. More and more, **Jews** like the Franks were being rounded up and sent to concentration camps.

Otto Frank arrived home and reassured his daughters that no one was going to break up their family. He and Edith had been making secret plans. He told Anne and Margot to pack their school bags. The first thing Anne put in hers was a red-and-green checkered diary. She had already begun filling the diary with her private thoughts.

The next morning, the Franks abandoned their home in a heavy rain. They went to a small warehouse at the company Otto had owned before the German **invasion** and disappeared into a secret apartment upstairs. There they would hide for more than two years. During that time, Anne poured out her thoughts and feelings on paper.



From top left, clockwise:
Edith Frank; baby Anne
and Edith; Otto Frank;
Margot Frank; Margot,
Otto, and Anne



Storm Clouds of Hate and War

During World War I (1914–1918), Otto Frank had been a German officer. After the war he settled in Frankfurt, Germany. By all accounts, he was a kind, smart, hardworking man. He married Edith in 1925, and they soon had two daughters. Margot was born in 1926; Annelies Marie Frank—Anne—followed on June 12, 1929.

Germany's defeat in World War I had brought great hardship. The country was left broke, and many Germans felt angry and desperate. Different political groups battled to control the government. Then in 1929, the **Great Depression** hit Germany especially hard.



Adolf Hitler (center) in 1933

A man named Adolf Hitler took advantage of people's desperation. Like Otto Frank, Hitler had served in World War I. However, he blamed Germany's defeat on the country's Jews. He hated them, for reasons that remain unclear.

Hitler led a group known as the **Nazis**. They gained power as more Germans turned to them to solve their problems. In 1933, Hitler and the Nazis took complete control of Germany's government.

Otto and Edith Frank immediately saw the danger Hitler represented. The Nazis passed more and more laws to take away the property and rights of Jewish citizens. The couple knew they had to get their young family out of Germany before the situation grew worse. They **emigrated** to the Netherlands in 1933–1934, along with thousands of other German Jews.



Anne was not yet five when her family moved to Amsterdam, the largest city in the Netherlands. The dark-eyed girl was full of spirit and mischief. She liked school, and her days were filled with friends, ping-pong parties, ice cream, and the love of her family.

On September 1, 1939, Nazi Germany attacked Poland, starting World War II. In May 1940, Germany invaded the Netherlands, and by the end of the year its powerful army and air force controlled most of Europe. The Franks and other Jewish families had escaped Nazi Germany, but now the Nazis controlled many of the countries they had escaped to.

Under Nazi Occupation

Otto Frank looked for ways to move the family to safety overseas, but every attempt was blocked or rejected. The German **occupiers** continued to **restrict** the freedom of Amsterdam's Jewish population with a series of anti-Jewish **decrees**.

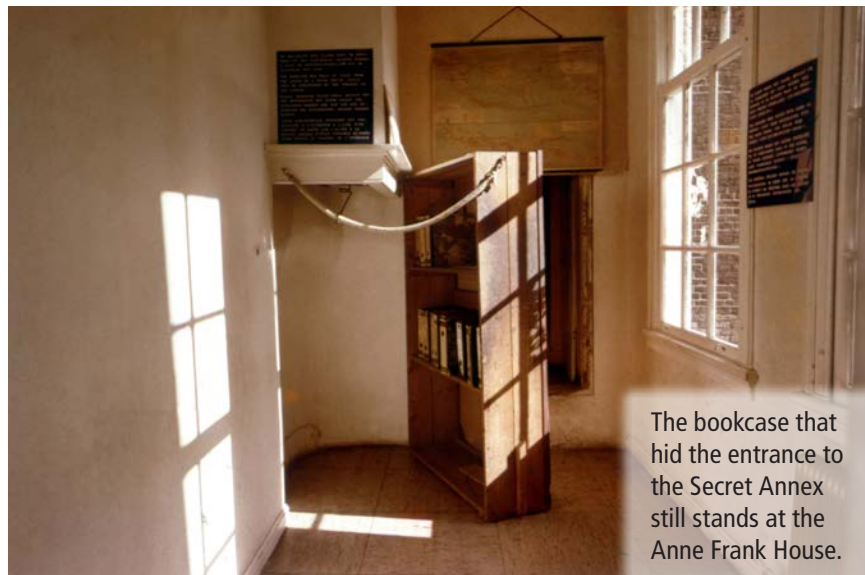
By 1939, Jews' radios were confiscated, and they had to obey a curfew. In 1940, their telephones were confiscated, too. In 1941, all Jews over the age of six were forced to wear a yellow Star of David with "Jew" written on it. They had to turn in their bicycles but were forbidden to use trams or ride in cars—even their own. They were forbidden to keep pets or leave the country. In 1942, all schools were closed to Jewish children.

Many Dutch people protested and took risks to protect their Jewish friends. However, they were often arrested and imprisoned for trying to help.

The situation grew worse until the four Franks went into hiding in July 1942. Hermann van Pels,



Otto Frank's business partner, soon joined the family, along with his wife, Auguste, and their sixteen-year-old son, Peter. That November, dentist Fritz Pfeffer became the eighth person living in their hideaway.



In her diary, Anne referred to their hiding place as the “Secret **Annex**.” The annex was fairly comfortable, though not roomy. It included a kitchen, bathroom, and cold running water. Each room doubled as a living area as well as a bedroom. There was a single entrance, hidden behind a bookcase. They covered all of the rooms’ windows to block any light from showing at night.

Those hiding were greatly aided by their “helpers.” This was Anne’s term for the non-Jewish friends who had promised to supply them with food and other things they needed. They included Miep Gies, her husband, Jan, and other friends and former employees of Otto Frank and Hermann van Pels. They risked imprisonment and execution for helping hide Jews.



Otto Frank (center) sits surrounded by his office workers in 1935 (clockwise left to right): Miep Gies, Johannes Kleiman, Victor Kugler, and Bep Voskuijl. A few years later, they worked to keep him and his family alive.

The helpers never complained, Anne wrote in her diary. Instead, they came upstairs each day with a smile, newspapers, and, maybe best of all, conversation.

Escaping into the Diary

During the week, employees worked a floor below the secret apartment. This forced Anne and everyone else to be perfectly silent. They had to move about on tiptoe and whisper. No one could run water or flush the toilet for fear someone would hear them. The Nazis were promising rewards to anyone who turned in Jews. If Anne and her family were caught, they would be instantly arrested.

During the hours of forced silence, Anne wrote in her diary. She told about her family and housemates, and glued in old family photos. She described her feelings about growing into a young woman under such grim circumstances. Many times she expressed **despair** and the great fear they would be caught. She quickly filled her first diary and moved on to notebooks and sheets of loose paper.

Writing became a way for Anne to cope with fear and boredom, to shake off all her cares and sorrows. She shared dreams of becoming a journalist or maybe an actress, and pasted pictures of movie stars on the wall in her little room.

When all the workers were gone, Anne and the others could wander downstairs but never outside. They often gathered around the radio to listen to broadcasts, and in June 1944 they heard welcome news. The **Allies** had landed a huge invasion force in France; in the east, the Soviet Union was forcing the Germans to retreat. Anne's father began keeping track of the war's progress on a wall map. Hope grew that the Nazis would soon be defeated, and the Franks and their friends could return to freedom.



German secret police, known as the Gestapo, march Jewish men away from Warsaw, Poland, in 1940.

Caught

On August 4, 1944, the secret police raided the hidden apartment. To this day, no one knows for sure how the hiding place was discovered. The Franks and the others could do nothing but raise their hands at gunpoint. The German officer was stunned to learn the group had been hiding there for more than two years.

The police searched every corner of the Secret Annex. They discovered a stash of papers and notebooks—Anne's diary—and scattered them on the floor. Miep Gies, one of the helpers, later gathered them up and put them in a desk drawer. She had every hope of returning them to Anne after the war.



Women prisoners are packed into barracks at Auschwitz.

In early September 1944, the Franks were shipped to Auschwitz, a concentration camp in Poland. There, the family was split up.

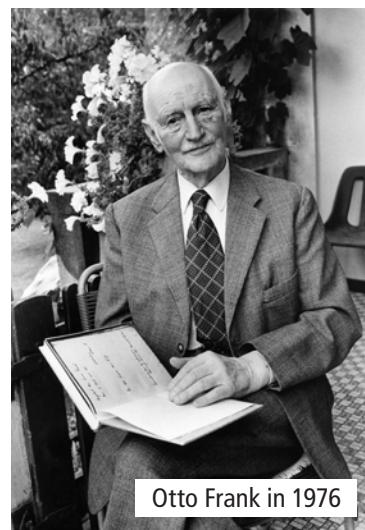
Otto was sent to the men's camp; Edith, Anne, and Margot were sent to the women's camp. The winter cold, tiny amounts of food, and backbreaking work took a terrible toll. Edith did her best to help Margot and Anne, even giving them all her food, but on November 1 the girls were separated from their mother. The Nazis sent Margot and Anne to a different concentration camp in Germany.

The Holocaust

Hitler and the Nazis wanted to rid Europe of people they said were inferior. This included Jewish, Romany, and homosexual people, as well as people with disabilities. At first, the Nazis tried to chase out Germany's Jewish citizens by making their lives so miserable they fled the country. By 1942, the plan had become mass murder. Jews were rounded up from all around Europe and sent to concentration camps, mostly in Poland and Germany. By the end of the war, the Nazis had murdered six million Jews. They had also killed five million people from other groups.

A Tragic End

Germany surrendered in May 1945, ending World War II in Europe. Soldiers who freed the concentration camps were horrified by what they found—stacks of bodies and survivors who looked like living skeletons. Trainloads of children, women, and men had been killed there.



Otto Frank in 1976

Otto Frank survived. He returned to Amsterdam, already knowing his wife had starved to death at Auschwitz. However, he held out hope that Margot and Anne still lived.

Soon, a friend who had seen the girls in the camps delivered the horrible news: both Anne and Margot had gotten sick and died in February 1945. Anne was just fifteen years old.

Miep Gies gave Otto Frank the five notebooks, along with more than two hundred loose sheets of his daughter's writings. He was immediately struck by Anne's talent. "I had no idea of the depth of her thoughts and feelings," he later said.

A Book That Still Lives

People have been reading Anne Frank's diary for seventy years. The text has been translated into more than sixty languages, and more than thirty million copies have been sold worldwide. Anne's work has also been adapted into an award-winning play, a film, and two TV miniseries. In the United States, the book has been read and taught in schools for decades. Anne's writing offers keen insights into the heart of a teen caught in a terrible time. Her story is a timeless warning against hatred and extremism.

Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl first appeared in print in the Netherlands two years after the war and eventually became a best seller around the world.

For many readers, Anne's story puts a personal face on the terrors of the **Holocaust**. She was a young, talented writer whose full life was stolen from her. The full extent of her talent and potential was also stolen from the world.



Anne at age 12

Glossary

Allies (<i>n.</i>)	the countries that aided each other in defeating Germany, Italy, and Japan in World War II (p. 11)
annex (<i>n.</i>)	a building that is added to a larger building (p. 9)
decrees (<i>n.</i>)	official orders or decisions (p. 7)
despair (<i>n.</i>)	a deep feeling of hopelessness (p. 11)
emigrated (<i>v.</i>)	left one country to settle in another (p. 6)
Great Depression (<i>n.</i>)	an international economic crisis from 1929 through the 1930s (p. 5)
Holocaust (<i>n.</i>)	the systematic killing of people, especially Jews, by the Nazis during World War II (p. 15)
invasion (<i>n.</i>)	the act of crossing a boundary to conquer, weaken, or injure (p. 4)
Jews (<i>n.</i>)	people whose ancestors are Hebrews or whose religion is Judaism (p. 4)
Nazis (<i>n.</i>)	members of the ruling political party in Germany from 1933 to 1945 (p. 6)
occupiers (<i>n.</i>)	members of an invading group that has taken control of a place by force (p. 7)
restrict (<i>v.</i>)	limit, control, confine (p. 7)