

Anne Frank – information from www.annefrank.org

Anne had already started to write a diary before she went into hiding. When the Dutch Education Minister asked for all war records to be kept, Anne re-wrote her diary entries into one running story.

TASK –

Year 5 children to begin keeping a diary, during this period of isolation, to be used when they begin the topic in Y6.

On 1 September 1939, when Anne was 10 years old, Nazi Germany invaded Poland, and so the Second World War began. Not long after, on 10 May 1940, the Nazis also invaded the Netherlands. Five days later, the Dutch army surrendered. Slowly but surely, the Nazis introduced more and more laws and regulations that made the lives of Jews more difficult. For instance, Jews could no longer visit parks, cinemas, or non-Jewish shops. The rules meant that more and more places became off-limits to Anne. Her father lost his company, since Jews were no longer allowed to run their own businesses. All Jewish children, including Anne, had to go to separate Jewish schools.

TASK –

**How did our isolation, due to Covid-19, begin?
Did these rules apply to everyone?**



Anne in her final year of primary school, 1940.

Photo collection: Anne Frank Stichting, Amsterdam/ photographer unknown

Anne has to go into hiding in the Secret Annex

The Nazis took things further, one step at a time. Jews had to start wearing a Star of David on their clothes and there were rumours that all Jews would have to leave the Netherlands. When Margot received a call-up to report for a so-called 'labour camp' in Nazi Germany on 5 July 1942, her parents were suspicious. They did not believe the call-up was about work and decided to go into hiding the next day in order to escape persecution.

In the spring of 1942, Anne's father had started furnishing a hiding place in the annex of his business premises at Prinsengracht 263. He received help from his former colleagues. Before long, they were joined by four more people. The hiding place was cramped. Anne had to keep very quiet and was often afraid.

TASK –

How did our isolation work?

How was it different to Annes?

Anne keeps a diary

On her thirteenth birthday, just before they went into hiding, Anne was presented with a diary. During the two years in hiding, Anne wrote about events in the Secret Annex, but also about her feelings and thoughts. In addition, she wrote short stories, started on a novel and copied passages from the books she read in her *Book of Beautiful Sentences*. Writing helped her pass the time.

When the Minister of Education of the Dutch government in England made an appeal on Radio Orange to hold on to war diaries and documents, Anne was inspired to rewrite her individual diaries into one running story, titled *Het Achterhuis* (*The Secret Annex*).



The diary Anne receives for her 13th birthday. Photo collection: Anne Frank Stichting, Amsterdam

TASK –

How did the UK and other nations record what was happening, during Covid-19?

Why couldn't Anne and her fellow Jews follow what was happening in the news?

How is it different for us?

The hiding place is discovered

Anne started rewriting her diary, but before she was done, she and the other people in hiding were discovered and arrested by police officers on 4 August 1944. The police also arrested two of the helpers. To this day, we do not know the reason for the police raid. Despite the raid, part of Anne's writing was preserved: two other helpers took the documents before the Secret Annex was emptied by order of the Nazis.

Anne is deported to Auschwitz

Via the offices of the *Sicherheitsdienst* (the German security police), a prison in Amsterdam, and the Westerbork transit camp, the people from the Secret Annex were put on transport to the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration and extermination camp. The train journey took three days, during which Anne and over a thousand others were packed closely together in cattle wagons. There was little food and water and only a barrel for a toilet. Upon arrival at Auschwitz, Nazi doctors checked to see who would and who would not be able to do heavy forced labour. Around 350 people from Anne's transport were immediately taken to the gas chambers and murdered. Anne, Margot and their mother were sent to the labour camp for women. Otto ended up in a camp for men.

Anne dies from exhaustion in Bergen-Belsen

In early November 1944, Anne was put on transport again. She was deported to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp with Margot. Their parents stayed behind in Auschwitz. The conditions in Bergen-Belsen were horrible too. There was a lack of food, it was cold, wet and there were contagious diseases. Anne and Margot contracted typhus. In February 1945 they both died owing to its effects, Margot first, Anne shortly afterwards. Anne's father Otto was the only one of the people from the Secret Annex to survive the war. He was liberated from Auschwitz by the Russians and during his long journey back to the Netherlands he learned that his wife Edith had died. Once in the Netherlands, he heard that Anne and Margot were no longer alive either.

The people living in the Secret Annex

From 1942 to 1944, these eight people all lived in the Secret Annex. They were completely dependent on six helpers; employees and friends of Anne's father. The helpers provided food and clothing, as well as books, magazines and newspapers.

TASK –

How did your family get everything you needed during the isolation?

People in hiding

Edith Frank, Margot Frank, Otto Frank, Anne Frank, Peter van Pels, Hermann van Pels, Auguste van Pels and Fritz Pfeffer

The helpers

Victor Kugler, Johannes Kleiman, Miep Gies, Jan Gies, Johan Voskuijl and Bep Voskuijl

A typical day in the Secret Anne

Anne Frank spent 761 days in the Secret Annex. Although each day was different from the last, there was a certain rhythm to life in the Secret Annex. Based on Anne's diary and a few of her short stories, we can reconstruct what typical weekdays and Sundays in the Secret Annex would have been like.

TASK –

What was a typical day like in your house, during the isolation?

What did you miss?

What do you think Anne missed?

In the morning

At 6:45 am, the alarm of Mr and Mrs Van Pels went off. Hermann van Pels got up, put the kettle on, and went to the bathroom. After fifteen minutes, the bathroom was free again and it was Fritz Pfeffer's turn. Anne got up and removed the blackout screens from the windows. The people in hiding took turns using the bathroom.



Reconstruction of the bathroom in the secret annexe, 1999 Photo collection: Anne Frank Stichting, Amsterdam/ photographer: Allard Bovenberg

At 8:30 am, a risky half hour started. The men in the warehouse started their working day, while the office helpers had not yet arrived. Any noise from the people in hiding was dangerous, as the warehouse was located below the hiding place and the warehouse staff were unaware of the people in hiding.

At 9:00 am, the helpers started working in the office above the warehouse. The people in hiding walked around in socks and still had to be quiet, but sounds from above now caused less suspicion. The rest of the morning was devoted to reading, studying, and preparing for their lunch break.



Reconstruction of the front storeroom, 1999.

Photo collection: Anne Frank Stichting, Amsterdam/ photographer: Allard Bovenberg

The lunchbreak

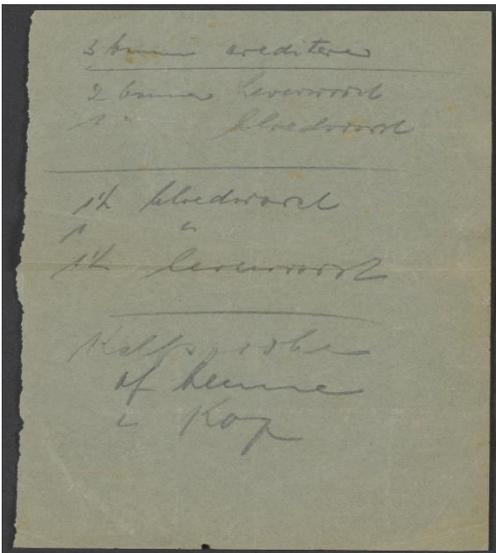
At 12:30 pm, the warehouse workers went home for lunch, and the helpers and people in hiding had the place to themselves for a while. At 12:45 pm, a few of the helpers, usually Johannes Kleiman, Victor Kugler and Bep Voskuijl, came up to the Secret Annex to have lunch. In the beginning, Johan Voskuijl (Bep's father) often came up, too. Jan Gies (Miep's husband) frequently joined them as well, although he worked elsewhere.

Miep Gies usually stayed in the office to keep an eye on things. For the people in hiding, it was nice to see other people and to hear the latest news from the city. At 1 pm, the radio was switched on for the BBC news. At 1:15 pm, they had lunch and at 1:45 pm, the helpers went back to work.

In the afternoon

After the people in hiding had cleared everything away, most of them took an afternoon nap. Anne used that time for studying or writing. Around four o'clock, they had coffee and then started on the preparations for dinner.

At 5:30 pm, the warehouse workers went home. Helper Bep Voskuijl usually came by to see if the people in hiding needed anything. After she had gone home at a quarter to six, the people in hiding were no longer restricted to the Secret Annex and they spread out through the building.



Shopping list for the butcher, written by Hermann van Pels. Miep Gies found it in her coat pocket after the war.

Collection: Anne Frank Stichting, Amsterdam

In the evening

Hermann van Pels looked at the day's post, Peter van Pels fetched the bread that had been left for them in the office, Otto Frank wrote business letters on the typewriter, Margot and Anne did administrative chores and Auguste van Pels and Edith Frank cooked dinner. After dinner, they read, talked, or listened to the radio. Around 9 pm, they started preparing for the night. Pieces of furniture had to be moved, for instance in the room of Hermann and Auguste van Pels. Just like in the morning, they took turns using the bathroom.

Every day when the sun went down, the windows had to be blacked out. After that, the Secret Annex went quiet. The next morning, the alarm went off at 6:45 am again, except on Sundays.

A Sunday in the Secret Annex

A Sunday in the Secret Annex had a completely different rhythm to it and was characterised by 'scrubbing, sweeping and washing', as Anne wrote in her story 'Sunday'. The people in hiding were slow to get going. The first one to get up was Fritz Pfeffer; at 8:00 am he was the first to go to the bathroom. The Van Pels family were next. One of Anne's 'ordeals' was watching Fritz Pfeffer pray for fifteen minutes. '....' From 10:15 am onwards, it was the Frank family's turn.

Breakfast did not start until 11:30 am on Sundays. After three quarters of an hour, everyone went to work: scrubbing the carpets, doing the laundry, making the beds.

TASK –

Were any of your days different, during the week?

An extended siesta

After a short break, during which they listened to the news, the cleaning and tidying up continued until about two o'clock. After another round of radio news, a music program and coffee, it was time for an extended siesta. At 2 pm, they would go back to bed for a few hours. Anne did not understand 'why the adults around here always need to sleep?'



The desk in the room of Anne Frank and Fritz Pfeffer in the Secret Annex. Reconstruction, 1999.

Photocollection: Anne Frank Stichting, Amsterdam / photo: Allard Bovenberg

A voice in Anne Frank screams on Sunday, the most miserable day of her week.

The most miserable day of the week

Anne considered Sunday the most miserable day of the week. 'I wander from one room to the next, down the stairs and back up again and feel like a songbird that has had its wings torn off and flies against the bars of its cage in total darkness. "Outside, fresh air and

laughter," a voice inside me screams; I don't even try to answer anymore, I lie down on a divan and sleep in order to shorten the time, the silence, the terrible fear too, because there is no question of killing them.'

Before dinner, they listened to a concert on the radio. After dinner and the dishes, Anne was 'overjoyed', because another incredibly boring Sunday in the Secret Annex was over.

TASK –

Write a diary entry about life during the isolation in the UK.

Write a diary entry about life in the annexe for Anne.

Produce a timeline of the events leading up to the isolation in the UK.

Produce a timeline of the events leading up to Anne's hiding.

Produce a newspaper report of the events leading up to Anne - and other persecuted people - going into hiding, and eventually onto concentration camps.