

Anne Frank

Anne Frank was a teenager who wrote an extraordinary diary that tells the story of a group of Jewish people who went into hiding during World War II to escape persecution by the Nazis.

In those years, the Nazis made Jewish people their enemies, claiming that Jews were responsible for economic and social problems in Germany. Although Anne was born in Frankfurt, Germany, in 1929, her family fled to the city of Amsterdam in the Netherlands in 1933. In 1940, however, the Nazis invaded the Netherlands, beginning anti-Jewish measures there as well.

For her 13th birthday, Anne's parents gave her a small red-and-white plaid diary. Less than a month later, she brought the diary with her when she, her parents, and her older sister went into hiding. Along with four others, the Franks hid in the attic of the building that housed Mr. Frank's business.

During the hiding period, which lasted two years, Anne wrote in her diary, describing her daily life. She wrote about her family, her relationships with the other people in the attic, and her hopes and fears. As she wrote on April 5, 1944, "When I write, I can shake off all my cares."

The group was betrayed in August 1944. The Nazis broke into the attic, taking everyone to concentration camps. Mr. Frank was the only one among them who survived. Anne died in March of 1945 at Bergen-Belsen. She was 15 years old.

A family friend found Anne's diary after the raid on the attic, and he turned it over to her father. Impressed with what his daughter had written, Mr. Frank decided to publish her work so that others could learn more about the actions of the Nazis and the Holocaust.

Unit 2

The first Dutch edition of Anne's diary appeared in 1947. Once published, *The Diary of Anne Frank* became one of the most famous books ever written about war and the human spirit. Within five years, it had been published in German, French, and English. Since then, more than 24 million copies have been sold, written in more than 55 languages. The book was also turned into a stage play, and later, a movie.

Anne Frank was one of more than a million children under the age of 16 who died in the Holocaust.

- How indispensable do you think Anne's diary was to the quality of her life in the attic?

- Aside from writing in her diary, what else would Anne have done to help her endure her ordeal?

- Anne wrote in her diary: "The world will keep on turning without me, and I can't do anything to change events anyway." Why did publication of her diary make that statement ironic?