

**The Big Idea:**  
Hope and Courage in  
the Face of Atrocity

# The Diary of Anne Frank

Written by Frances Goodrich and  
Albert Hackett

Adapted by Wendy Kesselman

Directed by Jodie Weiss

“The Diary of Anne Frank (Adaptation by Wendy Kesselman)” is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.

**CHILDSPRAY**  
RESOURCES

# Meet the Team

## Cast

Anne Frank.....	Ariella Centeno
Otto Frank.....	Tony Blosser
Edith Frank.....	Bonnie Romney
Margot Frank.....	Spencer Wareing
Miep Gies.....	Amie Bjorklund
Peter Van Daan.....	Isaac Greenland
Mr. Kraler.....	Beau Heckman
Mrs. Van Daan.....	Debra K. Stevens
Mr. Van Daan.....	Louis Farber
Dussel.....	Jeff Deglow
Nazi Officer.....	Drew Leatham

## Creative Team

Director.....	Jodie Weiss
Stage Manager.....	
Costume Coordinator.....	Moira Caswell
Sound Designer .....	Chris Neumeyer
Prop Designer.....	Natalie Ward
Lighting Designer.....	Tim Monson
Projection Designer.....	Ricky Araiza
Fight Choreographer .....	Rachelle Dart

## Sponsors



Field trip discounted ticket prices are underwritten by Susan Goldsmith.



# What the Play is About

In Amsterdam on July 6, 1942. Thirteen-year-old Anne Frank, her sister Margot, and her parents, Otto and Edith Frank, arrive in the Secret Annex, a hidden space in Mr. Frank's business. They are Jewish, Amsterdam is under Nazi occupation, and they plan to hide in the Annex until the war ends. They share the space with Mr. and Mrs. van Daan, their 16-year-old son Peter, and Peter's cat Mousche. Anne starts a diary and initially sees the hiding as an adventure. Her diary quickly becomes her comfort and escape while living in the annex.

As the months pass, routines settle, and tensions rise over food and space. Sudden noises, like sirens, send everyone into a panic. Their helpers, Miep and Mr. Kraler, introduce Mr. Dussel, a dentist. He joins them and shares grim news about the fate of Jews outside.

Food is increasingly scarce, and they're eating rotten potatoes. Anne suffers from nightmares. Mr. Kraler warns them that an employee indicated that he may suspect their presence and asked for either a raise or a bribe.

The celebration of Hanukkah provides some moments of connection and levity for the group as Anne has made gifts for everyone in the Annex.

Anne describes her developing feelings for Peter in her diary and their friendship deepens, leading to their first kiss.

Tensions peak when Mr. van Daan is caught stealing bread. Miep interrupts with the exciting news that the Allies have finally started invading. Days later, a Nazi officer bursts in. The bustle of their capture is full of terror, and Anne must leave her diary behind.

The play ends with Anne's father, Mr. Frank, the only survivor, sharing the heartbreaking fate of each person in the secret annex. He receives Anne's diary, which becomes her legacy. This play, adapted by Wendy Kesselman, shows us Anne as a bright, hopeful girl who wants to "go on living even after [her] death."





# Talk About It!

## Start a conversation before the show:

- ★ Anne's diary was first published in 1947. Why do you think people still read it?
- ★ The word "holocaust" literally means absolute destruction, primarily through fire, as in a nuclear holocaust. Why do you think Holocaust is the word used to describe the genocide of World War II?
- ★ While the Covid lockdown pales in comparison to the circumstances under which Anne lived, we briefly experienced a time during which we had to live our lives at home. What was the first thing you remember wanting to do after the lockdown ended? What were some of your feelings and thoughts during that time?

## Start a conversation after the show:

- ★ Miep and Mr. Kraler risk their lives to help Anne and the others. What do you think motivated them to take such risks?
- ★ Miep doesn't consider herself a hero, although her support of the families in the annex was heroic. What does it mean to be a hero? Who do you consider to be a hero?
- ★ What moments stood out to you? Were they moments of tension? Moments of hope?
- ★ How did the acting and technical elements (sound, lights, etc.) help support the mood of the show during key scenes? How did it make you feel?
- ★ The characters in the play had to make difficult decisions. Did someone make a choice that surprised you? Did your perspective of that character change during the play?
- ★ What did you learn from the play that you didn't know before (either about Anne or the Holocaust or WWII)? Why is retelling Anne's story and other stories from the Holocaust so important?





# Discover It!

## Vocabulary

- **GENOCIDE:** the planned and organized killing of a group of people. Victims of genocide are killed because of their race, religion, ethnicity culture, or nationality.
- **NAZI:** the shortened title of the National Socialist German Workers' Party (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei in German). The Nazi party was a fascist political party.
- **FASCISM:** the political viewpoint that one's nation and race are superior to all others and the government controls everything; people aren't allowed to make many of their own choices.
- **HOLOCAUST:** a thorough destruction involving extensive loss of life, especially through fire.
- **ANTI-SEMITISM:** hostility toward or discrimination against Jews as a religious, ethnic, or racial group.

## What is Genocide?

The word "genocide" did not exist until 1944. It was coined by Ralph Lemkin, a Polish Jewish lawyer, in an effort to describe the atrocities that occurred during World War II. On December 9, 1948, the United Nations approved the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and established genocide as an international crime and the job of nations to "undertake to prevent and punish." While the word "genocide" didn't exist until 1944, there are several examples of genocide prior to the Holocaust. Sadly, genocide has also occurred since the Holocaust, such as:

1975-1979 The Killing Fields: The Cambodian Genocide  
1992-1995: Bosnia and Herzegovina  
1994: Rwandan Genocide  
2003-2005: Darfur

## Want to learn more?

<https://genocideeducation.org/resources/modern-era-genocides/>

<https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/genocide.shtml>

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/what-is-genocide>



# Discover It!

## Did You Know?

Anne used pseudonyms (fake names) for many of the people she spoke about in her diary. She didn't use pseudonyms for everyone, especially some of her helpers like Miep.



PSEUDONYM:  
Henk

ACTUAL NAME:  
Miep and Jan Gies



The Frank Family: Otto, Anne, Edith, and Margot  
Attending Miep's wedding July 16, 1941.



PSEUDONYM:  
Mr. Kraler

ACTUAL NAME:  
Victor Kugler



PSEUDONYM:  
Petronella Van Daan

ACTUAL NAME:  
Auguste Van Pels



PSEUDONYM:  
Peter Van Daan

ACTUAL NAME:  
Peter Van Pels



PSEUDONYM:  
Hans Van Daan

ACTUAL NAME:  
Hermann Van Pels



PSEUDONYM:  
Albert Dussel

ACTUAL NAME:  
Fritz Pfeffer



# The Timeline

1

15 moments that impacted the life and legacy of Anne Frank

**June 12, 1929**

Anneliese Marie Frank is born in Frankfurt

**January 30, 1933**

Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany.

**April 1933**

The Nazis declare a boycott of Jewish businesses and medical and legal practices and laws are passed causing the removal of Jewish people from government and teaching positions.



**May 3, 1942**

The "Yellow Badge" is introduced in the Netherlands

**June 12, 1942**

Anne receives a diary for her 13th birthday

**July 5, 1942**

Margot is "called up" for deportation to a labor camp.

**July 6, 1942**

The Frank family moves into the "Secret Annexe," 10 days earlier than planned.



Source: [annefrank.org](http://annefrank.org)



**February 16, 1934**

Anne, Margot, and Edith emigrate to Amsterdam and reunite with Otto who emigrated there the summer of 1933

**September 1, 1939**

Germany invades Poland. World War 2 begins.

**February 22-23, 1941**

Deportation of Dutch Jews begins



Photo: Neil Tuller

# The Timeline 2

15 moments that impacted the life and legacy of Anne Frank

**August 4, 1944**

The inhabitants of the "Secret Annexe" are discovered, arrested, and taken to Westerbork to await transport to Auschwitz

**October 1944**

Margot and Anne are moved from Auschwitz to Bergen-Belsen



\*They awaited transport in barrack 67



**February/March 1945**

Anne and Margot contract typhus and die within days of each other.



**May 7, 1945**

Germany declares "unconditional surrender," ending the war in Europe

**June 25, 1947**

Anne's diary is published for the first time with the title "Het Achterhuis" ('The Secret Annexe')



**Want to learn more?**

Scan the QR code to access a timeline with even more facts about the inhabitants of the Annex and events of World War II





# Create It!

## ERASURE POETRY

Erasure poetry is a creative way to make a poem from an existing text. You pick out words or phrases from the text that you like and erase the rest, creating your own unique work of art and poetry.

### Materials Needed

- Excerpts from Anne Frank's diary
- Black markers or pens
- White paper
- Colored pencils or markers
- Scissors and glue

Scan the QR code to access excerpts from Anne's diary



1

**Choose a Text:** Select an excerpt from Anne's diary that you find interesting.

2

**Highlight Meaning:** Use a colored marker or pen to highlight words or phrases that stand out to you, words that have a special meaning or feeling.

3

**Black Out the Rest:** With your black marker, cover or "erase" all the words you didn't highlight, leaving only your chosen words behind.

4

**Craft Your Poem:** Rearrange the selected words to create a poem.

**Experiment with different orders and layouts to express yourself and make new meaning with the highlighted words:**

- Rewrite highlighted words on a new sheet
- Decorate the black and white space around highlighted words
- Cut them out and glue them onto a new sheet.

5

**Share and Explain:** If you'd like, share your erasure poem with others and explain why you chose those particular words. It's a chance to show your creative process.



# Imagine It!

# GROUP SCULPTING

1

Gather students in a circle. Choose a small group (4 to 5 students) to step into the circle and be the sculpture; the students on the perimeter will be the sculptors.

2

Provide a prompt for your piece of art. This can be something concrete, like “preparing dinner,” or a more abstract concept or emotion connected to the theme you are exploring.

## Examples of abstract concepts include:

Safety

Fear

Discovery

Silence

3

The students in the circle should stand in a neutral position. One at a time, the sculptors will step into the circle and make one adjustment to the sculpture, i.e. adjust an arm position or turn one person to face another. The sculptor should demonstrate the position or facial expression they’d like to see, and the sculpture will mirror it with their body.

Sculptors must make respectful and safe choices with their classmates’ bodies.

Sculptures must hold each new position until they are adjusted again. If necessary, they can shake out their body and relax for a moment before returning to position.

4

If you have a large group, give each sculptor one turn to fine tune the sculpture. For smaller groups, you might keep adjusting until the group feels like their piece is finished.

5

Invite one or more students to tell the “story” of the piece of art, with the understanding that there isn’t a right or wrong interpretation of what the group has created.

**If time allows,  
choose new  
students to step  
into the circle and  
do it again!**



The attic window in the annex offered a quiet space for Anne to be alone and reflect. She could daydream about the future, ponder her feelings, and connect with nature. Connect with the nature around you with this sensory-focused activity.

**1**

Go outside if possible or, if it's not, open a window to the outdoors.

**2**

As you let the sights, smells, and sounds of nature wash over you, fill out the template on the next page.

**3**

Share your observations and compare the items that different people noticed. Which things were common observations? Which were unique?

**4**

Choose one item from your list to elaborate on. Write a few sentences including lots of vivid descriptors and reflecting on how observing that thing made you feel. For example, if you saw clouds, you could write something like: "I saw the white, fluffy cumulous clouds floating through the bright blue sky. I felt light, like I could float away too."

### **Expand It!**

Take your piece of writing and create a piece of art around it. Use paint, crayons, real items from nature...whatever inspires you. Use the text as a caption to your artwork or incorporate the words into the art itself!



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Diary of Anne Frank: THE WORLD OUTSIDE

Be still, take a deep breath, and notice the world outside! Fill in the blanks next to each prompt with a few words describing what you notice using that sense.

5 things you can see:

---

---

---

---

---

4 things you can feel:

---

---

---

---

3 things you can hear:

---

---

---

2 things you can smell:

---

---

1 thing you are grateful for:

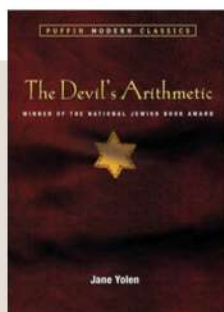
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# Read About It!

Keep the conversation going; check out this list of books connected to the themes in 'The Diary of Anne Frank.'



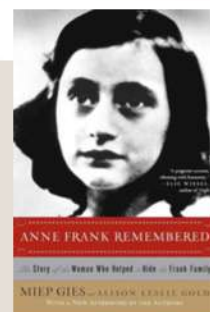
**Anne Frank Beyond the Diary**  
By Ruud van der Rol & Rian Verhoeven  
Ages 10-12



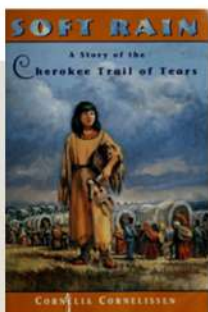
**The Devil's Arithmetic**  
By Jane Yolen  
Ages 11-13



**My Friend Anne**  
By Hannah Pick-Goslar & Dina Kraft  
Ages 14-18



**Anne Frank Remembered**  
By Miep Gies  
Ages 14-18



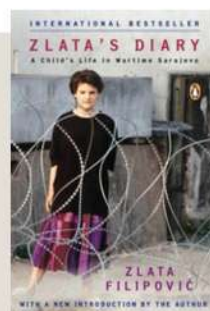
**Soft Rain**  
By Cornelia Cornelissen  
Ages 9-11



**Broken Memories**  
By Elizabeth Combres  
Ages 12-15



**The Red Pencil**  
By Andrea Davis Pinkney & Shane W. Evans  
Ages 9-12



**Zlata's Diary**  
By Zlata Filipovic  
Ages 12-15



**When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit**  
By Judith Kerr  
Ages 9-10



**White Bird: A Wonder Story**  
By R.J. Palacio  
Ages 12-14



# Extend It!

The play is just the beginning - there's always more to learn. Scan the QR code or [click here](#) to dig deeper into what interests you!

- ★ Visit the Anne Frank House website
- ★ Access the full timeline of events surrounding the story
- ★ Learn more about the history of genocide



## Extend the Experience!

Bring a professional Teaching Artist to your classroom to lead an arts-based, standards-driven lesson connected to the play.

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For more information:

[childsplayaz.org](http://childsplayaz.org)



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# The Complete Timeline 1

Follow the lives of all of the inhabitants of the Secret Annexe and the major events leading up to, during, and after World War 2.

## June 28, 1919

Treaty of Versailles signed:  
Article 231 is known as the "War Guilt Clause". This clause forced Germany to accept full responsibility for World War 1 and to pay reparations to the Allied nations for their losses during the war. Protests against the Treaty begin in Germany.

## July 29, 1921

Hitler voted official leader of the Nazi Party

## May 12, 1925

Otto Frank and Edith Hollander marry

## December 25, 1925

Hermann van Pels and  
Auguste Rottgen marry

## June 12, 1929

Anneliese Marie Frank is born in  
Frankfurt, Germany

## November 11, 1918

Armistice signed,  
effectively ending World War 1

\*Armistice: a truce to end  
a war for a period of time

## 1919

Hitler joins the German Workers' Party  
(DAP)

## February 1920

The DAP becomes the  
National Socialist German Workers' Party,  
or the Nazi Party

## 1925

While in prison, Hitler publishes  
Mein Kampf. Among other things, this  
book contains Hitler's plan to transform  
Germany into a race based society.

## February 16, 1926

Margot Frank is born in Frankfurt, Germany

## November 8, 1926

Peter van Pels is born in Osnabrück, Germany

## October 24, 1929

U.S. Stock Market crashes causing  
Germany a compounded financial crisis  
alongside the Versailles reparations. The  
Nazi Party uses the opportunity to gain  
support by offering financial stability  
through job production and strengthening  
the economy



# The Complete Timeline 2

## **January 30, 1933**

Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany.  
Mein Kampf sells 1 million copies this year.

## **July 4, 1933**

Otto Frank emigrates to the Netherlands,  
opens a business in Amsterdam

## **February 16, 1934**

Anne, Margot, and Edith emigrate  
to Amsterdam

## **March 7, 1936**

Hitler sends troops to occupy the  
Rhineland, a part of Germany bordering  
France stated as an area in which Germany  
may not station troops in the Treaty. Hitler  
receives no repercussions for this act.

## **December 1938**

Fritz Pfeffer (Mr. Dussel) emigrates  
to the Netherlands

## **May 10, 1940**

Germany invades the Netherlands.

## **May 15, 1940**

Nazis occupy Amsterdam

## **April 1933**

The Nazis declare a boycott of Jewish  
businesses and medical and legal  
practices and laws are passed causing the  
removal of Jewish people from  
government and teaching positions.

## **September 15, 1935**

Nuremberg Race Laws established.  
These laws declared Jews as non  
citizens and a mixed marriage  
between an Aryan and Jew illegal

## **November 9 and 10, 1938**

Kristallnacht "The Night of Broken Glass".  
Nazis in Germany and Austria looted and  
destroyed Jewish owned businesses and  
synagogues.

## **September 1, 1939**

Germany invades Poland.  
World War 2 begins.

## **May 14, 1940**

Germans bomb the city of Rotterdam;  
the Netherlands surrender to the Nazis.

# The Complete Timeline 3

## **May 1941**

Jews are not allowed on the beach, to parks, swimming pools, or hotels.

## **September 1941**

'Forbidden for Jews' signs appear on libraries, restaurants, sports fields, markets, reading rooms, and museums.

## **January 20, 1942**

The Wannsee Conference is held during which the plans for the "evacuation" and "appropriate treatment" of 11 million European Jews is laid out.

## **June 1942**

Jews have to hand in their bicycles and other means of transport. Jews are not allowed to play sports.

## **July 5, 1942**

Margot is "called up" for deportation to a labor camp.

## **July 13, 1942**

The Van Pels (Van Daan) family moves into the "Secret Annexe"

## **November 16, 1942**

Fritz Pfeffer (Mr. Dussel) moves into the "Secret Annexe"

## **February 22-23, 1941**

Deportation of Dutch Jews begins

## **December 11, 1941**

Germany declares war on the United States in response to the U.S. declaration of war against Japan, Germany's ally, after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

## **May 3, 1942**

The "Yellow Badge" is introduced in the Netherlands

## **June 12, 1942**

Anne receives a diary for her 13th birthday

## **June 14, 1942**

Anne makes her first entry into her diary. It starts: "On Friday, June 12th, I woke up at six o'clock and no wonder; it was my birthday."

## **July 6, 1942**

The Frank family moves into the "Secret Annexe," 10 days earlier than planned.

## **August 31, 1942**

Bookcase placed in front of the entrance to the "Secret Annexe"



# The Complete Timeline 4

## March 1943

"All Jews must be out of the German-occupied countries before July 1. [...] Between May 1 and June 1 the provinces of North and South Holland." Because so few responded to this decree, violent raids erupted in the weeks that followed.

## March 29, 1944

Anne hears the call for writings from diaries after the war on the radio

## July 20, 1944

German officers attempt to assassinate Hitler

## August 4, 1944

The inhabitants of the "Secret Annex" are discovered, arrested, and taken to Westerbork to await transport

## September 3, 1944

The members of the "Secret Annex" are transported to Auschwitz. The trip takes 3 days. Upon arrival, the men and women are separated. This is the last time Anne sees her Father and Peter.

## January 31, 1943

Germans surrender in Stalingrad. This is the first major battle won against the Nazis.

## Monday, July 25 1943

The area in which the "Secret Annex" is located is bombed

## September 1943

Talk of suspicious warehouse workers in the "Secret Annex"

## June 6, 1944

D-Day: The Allied forces land in Normandy.

## August 1, 1944

Anne makes her last entry in her diary. It ends: [...] "I can't keep that up; If I'm watched to that extent, I start by getting snappy, then unhappy, and finally I twist my heart round again, so that the bad is on the outside and the good is on the inside and keep on trying to find a way of becoming what I would so like to be, and what I could be, if...there weren't any other people living in the world.

Yours, Anne"

# The Complete Timeline 5

## January 1945

Nazis begin abandoning Auschwitz and force prisoners to walk to their next camp: Mauthausen. According to records, Peter survived the walk only to fall ill once arriving.

## February 1945

Mrs. Van Pels begins transport to Theresienstadt. She dies during transport.

## April 15, 1945

Bergen-Belsen is liberated.

## May 2, 1945

Peace negotiations with Germany begin

## May 7, 1945

Germany declares "unconditional surrender," ending the war in Europe

## June 3, 1945

Otto Frank returns to Amsterdam

## June 25, 1947

Anne's diary is published for the first time with the title "Het Achterhuis" ('The Secret Annexe')

## 1952

Anne's diary is translated into English

## October 1944

Margot, Anne, and Mrs. Van Pels moved to Bergen-Belsen. Mr. Van Pels sent to the gas chamber at Auschwitz

## January 6, 1945

Mrs. Frank dies at Auschwitz

## January 27, 1945

Auschwitz is liberated, Otto Frank among the 8,000 left behind at the camp.

## February/March 1945

Anne and Margot contract typhus and die within days of each other.

## April 30, 1945

Hitler commits suicide

## May 5, 1945

Mauthausen is liberated.

## May 10, 1945

Peter Van Pels dies from illness

## July 1945

Otto receives official word of Anne and Margot's death. Miep reveals she had been keeping Anne's diary for her and gives it to Otto.

## December 10, 1948

The United Nations adopts the Universal Declaration of Human Rights





# Erasure Poetry Diary Excerpt

SATURDAY, 20 JUNE, 1942

I haven't written for a few days, because I wanted first of all to think about my diary. It's an odd idea for someone like me to keep a diary; not only because I have never done so before, but because it seems to me that neither I- nor for that matter anyone else- will be interested in the unbosomings of a thirteen-year-old schoolgirl. Still, what does that matter? I want to write, but more than that, I want to bring out all kinds of things that lie buried deep in my heart.

There is a saying that "paper is more patient than man"; it came back to me on one of my slightly melancholy days, while I sat chin in hand, feeling too bored and limp even to make up my mind whether to go out or stay at home. Yes, there's no doubt that paper is patient and I don't intend to show this cardboard-covered notebook, bearing the proud name of "diary," to anyone, unless I find a real friend, boy or girl, probably nobody cares. And now I come to the root of the matter, the reason for my starting a diary: it is that I have no such real friend.

Let me put it more clearly, since no one will believe that a girl of thirteen feels herself quite alone in the world, nor is it so. I have darling parents and a sister of sixteen. I know about thirty people whom one might call friends- I have strings of boy friends, anxious to catch a glimpse of me and who, failing that, peep at me through mirrors in class. I have relations, aunts and uncles, who are darlings too, a good home, no- I don't seem to lack anything. But it's the same with all my friends, just fun and joking, nothing more. I can never bring myself to talk of anything outside the common round. We don't seem to be able to get any closer, that is the root of the trouble. Perhaps I lack confidence, but anyway, there it is, a stubborn fact and I don't seem to be able to do anything about it.

Hence, this diary. In order to enhance in my mind's eye the picture of the friend for whom I have waited so long, I don't want to set down a series of bald facts in a diary like most people do, but I want this diary itself to be my friend, and I shall call my friend Kitty. No one will grasp what I'm talking about if I begin my letters to Kitty just out of the blue, so, albeit unwillingly, I will start by sketching in brief the story of my life. [...]



# Erasure Poetry Diary Excerpt

SUNDAY, JUNE 13, 1943

Dear Kitty,

My birthday poem from Daddy is too good to keep from you. As Pim usually writes verses in German, Margot volunteered to translate it. Judge for yourself whether Margot didn't do it brilliantly. After the usual summary of the events of the year, this is how it ran:

Though youngest here, you are no longer small,  
But life is very hard, since one and all  
Aspire to be your teacher, thus and thus:  
"We have experience, take a tip from us."  
"We know because we did it long ago."  
"Elders are always better, you must know."  
At least that's been the rule since life began!  
Our personal faults are much too small to scan,  
This makes it easier to criticize  
The faults of others, which seem double size.  
Please bear with us, your parents, for we try  
To judge you fairly and with sympathy.  
Correction sometimes take against your will,  
Though it's like swallowing a bitter pill,  
Which must be done if we're to keep the peace,  
While time goes by till all this suffering cease.  
You read and study nearly all the day,  
Who might have lived in such a different way.  
You're never bored and bring us all fresh air.  
Your only moan is this: "What can I wear?  
I have no knickers, all my clothes are small,  
My vest might be a loincloth, that is all!  
To put on shoes would mean to cut off toes,  
Oh dear, I'm worried by so many woes!"

There was also a bit about food that Margot could not translate into rhyme, so I shall leave it out. Don't you think my birthday poem is good? [...]





## Erasure Poetry Diary Excerpt

MONDAY EVENING, 8 NOVEMBER, 1943

[...]At night, when I'm in bed, I see myself alone in a dungeon, without Mummy and Daddy. Sometimes I wander by the roadside, or our "Secret Annexe" is on fire, or they come and take us away at night. I see everything as if it is actually taking place, and this gives me the feeling that it may all happen to me very soon! Miep often says she envies us for possessing such tranquility here. That may be true, but she is not thinking about all our fears. I simply can't imagine that the world will ever be normal for us again. I do talk about "after the war," but then it is only a castle in the air, something that will never really happen. If I think back to our old house, my girl friends, the fun at school, it is just as if another person lived it all, not me.

I see the eight of us with our "Secret Annexe" as if we were a little piece of blue heaven, surrounded by heavy black rain clouds. The round, clearly defined spot where we stand is still safe, but the clouds gather more closely about us and the circle which separates us from the approaching danger closes more and more tightly. Now we are so surrounded by danger and darkness that we bump against each other, as we search desperately for a means of escape. We all look down below, where people are fighting each other, we look above, where it is quiet and beautiful, and meanwhile we are cut off by the great dark mass, which will not let us go upwards, but which stands before us as an impenetrable wall; it tries to crush us, but cannot do so yet. I can only cry and implore: "Oh, if only the black circle could recede and open the way for us!"

Yours, Anne



# Erasure Poetry Diary Excerpt

SATURDAY, 12 FEBRUARY, 1944

Dear Kitty,

The sun is shining, the sky is a deep blue, there is a lovely breeze and I'm longing- so longing- for everything. To talk, for freedom, for friends, to be alone. And I do so long...to cry! I feel as if I'm going to burst, and I know that it would get better with crying; but I can't, I'm restless, I go from one room to the other, breathe through the crack of a closed window, feel my heart beating, as if it is saying, "Can't you satisfy my longings at last?"

I believe that it's spring within me, I feel that spring is awakening, I feel it in my whole body and soul. It is an effort to behave normally, I feel utterly confused, don't know what to read, what to write, what to do, I only know that I am longing...!

Yours, Anne





# Erasure Poetry Diary Excerpt

TUESDAY, 7 MARCH, 1944

[...]How did I appear at school? The one who thought of new jokes and pranks, always “king of the castle,” never in a bad mood, never a crybaby. No wonder everyone liked to cycle with me, and I got their attentions.

Now I look back at that Anne as an amusing, but very superficial girl, who has nothing to do with the Anne of today. Peter said quite rightly about me: “If ever I saw you, you were always surrounded by two or more boys and a whole troupe of girls. You were always laughing and always the center of everything!”

What is left of this girl? Oh, don’t worry, I haven’t forgotten how to laugh or to answer back readily. I’m just as good, if not better, at criticizing people, and I can still flirt if...I wish. That’s not it though, I’d like that sort of life again for an evening, a few days, or even a week; the life which seems so carefree and gay. But at the end of that week, I should be dead beat and would be only too thankful to listen to anyone who began to talk about something sensible. I don’t want followers, but friends, admirers who fall not for a flattering smile but for what one does and for one’s character.

I know quite well that the circle around me would be much smaller. But what does that matter, as long as one still keeps a few sincere friends? [...]

[...]I don’t think then of all the misery, but of the beauty that still remains. This is one of the things that Mummy and I are so entirely different about. Her counsel when one feels melancholy is: “Think of all the misery in the world and be thankful that you are not sharing in it!” My advice is: “Go outside, to the fields, enjoy nature and the sunshine, go out and try to recapture happiness in yourself and in God. Think of all the beauty that’s still left in and around you and be happy!”

I don’t see how Mummy’s idea can be right, because then how are you supposed to behave if you go through the misery yourself? Then you are lost. On the contrary, I’ve found that there is always some beauty left- in nature, sunshine, freedom, in yourself; these can all help you. Look at these things, then you find yourself again, and God, and then you regain your balance.

And whoever is happy will make others happy too. He who has courage and faith will never perish in misery!

Yours, Anne



# Erasure Poetry Diary Excerpt

TUESDAY, 4 APRIL, 1944

[...]And now it's all over. 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.

"Eva's Dream" is my best fairy tale, and the queer thing about it is that I don't know where it comes from. Quite a lot of "Cady's Life" is good too, but, on the whole, it's nothing.

I am the best and sharpest critic of my own work. I know myself what is and what is not well written. Anyone who doesn't write doesn't know how wonderful it is; I used to bemoan the fact that I couldn't draw at all, but now I am more than happy that I can at least write. And if I haven't any talent for writing books or newspaper articles, well, then I can always write for myself.

I want to get on; I can't imagine that I would have to lead the same sort of life as Mummy and Mrs. Van Daan and all the women who do their work and are then forgotten. I must have something besides a husband and children, something that I can devote myself to!

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.

I can shake off everything if I write; my sorrows disappear, my courage is reborn. 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.

I haven't done anything more to "Cady's Life" for ages; in my mind I know exactly how to go on, but somehow it doesn't flow from my pen. Perhaps I never shall finish it; it may land up in the wastepaper basket, or the fire...that's a horrible idea, but then I think to myself, "At the age of fourteen and with so little experience, how can you write about philosophy?"

So I go on again with fresh courage; I think I shall succeed, because I want to write!

Yours, Anne