



Bio4Kids: Anne Frank (1929-1945)

Brief Outline

Born on June 12, 1929, in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, Anne Frank was a young Jewish girl caught in the middle of a terrible situation. In 1933, a man named Adolf Hitler became the leader of Germany. He and his government—known as the Nazis—were prejudiced against people who were Jewish. They told people to not shop in stores owned by Jews and passed laws that made life very difficult for the Jews. Around this time, Anne and her family moved to Amsterdam, Holland, to avoid to being harassed because of their religion.

Unfortunately, they were not safe for too long because the Germans invaded Holland in 1940 and began persecuting the Jews. Anne and her sister Margot were forced to go to a separate school for Jewish children. Anne's father was not allowed to own his business because of the new rules the Nazis made. For other Jews, the situation was much worse. Many were killed by the Nazis and others were sent to concentration camps. These camps were really prisons where some Jews and others were forced to work under horrible conditions. Millions of people died at the camps.

Despite the fear and anxiety about what the Nazis would do next, Anne seemed like a normal teenage girl. She has been described as talkative and playful. In June 1942, Anne received a diary as a birthday present and what she wrote in it showed another side of her personality. The diary became a place where Anne could express her hopes, dreams, and fears.

Otto Frank, Anne's father, had many fears too. He was afraid that something terrible would happen so he decided to build a secret room in the attic of his business warehouse. Anne and her family were forced to hide there in the summer of 1942 after Margot was ordered to go to Germany. Her family knew that this order meant Margot was to be sent to a concentration camp. To save the family, Otto Frank, Anne's father, had an attic in the warehouse of his business turned into a livable space. Anne, her family, and four others stayed in this place for two years. Several people helped them by providing food and news of the outside world.

All the while, Anne wrote in her diary. She captured the details of her days in hiding and studied those around her. A part of her diary included short stories and part of a novel. Anne explored her feelings and thoughts in the pages of her diary. As she wrote, she realized that she wanted to be an author when she grew up and that her experiences in hiding would make a great novel.

Tragically, she did not live to see this dream come true. Someone let the authorities know about their hiding place and they were all arrested in August 1945. Anne and her sister Margot were sent to a concentration camp called Bergen-Belsen where they both died.

A friend of the family had been able to save Anne's writings and gave them to her father when he returned to Amsterdam after the war ended. Her father later edited her diary, which was first published in Holland in 1947. American readers first got a chance to read about Anne Frank's life when the diary was published in the United States in 1950.

Although she was only fifteen years old when she died, Anne Frank has been able to touch the lives of millions of people with her powerful writing. Her diary has been translated into more than 30 different languages and sold millions of copies since it was first published. Students often read *The Diary of Anne Frank* in school as a way to better understand what it was like to grow up during the Holocaust. Anne's story continues to live on through her many readers.

Related Websites

The Anne Frank House

<http://www.annefrank.org/content.asp?pid=1&lid=2>

Anne Frank Center

http://www.annefrank.com/1_life.htm

Anne Frank Museum in Amsterdam

<http://www.annefrank.org/content.asp?pid=1&lid=2>