

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY



History, Literacy, PSHE



11 - 13 years old



30 minutes - 4 hours

What is Holocaust Memorial Day?

Holocaust Memorial Day takes place on 27 January every year. On this day, people across the world take part in activities to commemorate the tragedy of the Holocaust that occurred during the Second World War. The day is a time to remember the genocide that resulted in the deaths of six million Jews and 11 million others, by the Nazi regime and its collaborators.

Anne Frank

To the right is an article about Anne Frank, a young Jewish diarist who lived in hiding with her family in Amsterdam.

Read the article and then complete the comprehension questions and the vocabulary task.

Why not talk to a teacher, guardian or member of your family about this task and Holocaust Memorial Day?



Anne Frank statue located on Westerkerk Plaza near the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam

The Life of Anne Frank

Annelies Marie Frank, or Anne to everyone that knew her, was born in Frankfurt, Germany on 12 June 1929. Her father Otto was a businessman and her mother Edith stayed at home taking care of Anne and her older sister Margot. Anne was an outgoing and spirited child and would get into more trouble than her quiet and serious sister. She liked to play games and listen to her dad tell stories. She liked to read and dreamed of being a writer. The Franks were a liberal Jewish family, they observed some of the religion's customs and traditions but not all of them. This did not prevent them from being persecuted.

In the early 1930s there was worldwide economic depression. This hit Germany hard and many people were unemployed and disillusioned with the government. This led to the rise of a new leader, Adolf Hitler, with his party the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei – NSDAP (National Socialist German Workers' Party) generally referred to as the Nazi Party. Hitler was a charismatic speaker and many German people wanting change and a better life listened and believed him. In the 1932 election, the Nazi Party won, and Hitler was made leader of Germany.

Hitler hated Jewish people and blamed them for many of the problems in Germany. While the persecution of Jews was not the initial focus of the Nazi regime, it did start as soon as they came to power and this antisemitism continuously escalated. Between 1933 and 1938 over 400 antisemitic laws were brought in. These laws limited every area of life for Jewish people.

Anne Frank

The persecution of Jewish people and the poor economic situation in Germany were the deciding factors for the Frank family to move to Amsterdam in the Netherlands. Otto founded a small but successful company that traded in pectin, a gelling agent for making jam. The family moved to Amsterdam in the autumn of 1933.

The family settled quickly into their life in Amsterdam and felt at home there. Anne learned the language and in 1935 she started school near her home. She was an energetic and popular student with many friends.

On 1 September 1939, when Anne was 10 years old, Nazi Germany invaded Poland and the Second World War began. Not long afterwards on 10 May 1940, the Nazis invaded the Netherlands. The Dutch army resisted but five days later they surrendered. The Nazis introduced laws and regulations that made the lives of Jewish people very hard. They were no longer allowed to own their businesses. To prevent his business being confiscated, Otto Frank transferred his company to trusted, non-Jewish friends. Jewish children had to go to separate Jewish schools. Jewish people could no longer visit parks, cinemas, or even buy from non-Jewish shops. Many places that Anne and her family would go to became off-limits.

The Nazis forced all Jewish people to wear a badge in the form of a yellow star to identify themselves as Jewish. This was intended to humiliate them and make it easy for people to identify them so they could be easily segregated and discriminated. This policy also made it easier to identify Jewish people for deportation to camps.

In the spring of 1942, Otto Frank began preparing a hiding place in a secret annex behind the offices of his business premises. He had help from four close friends to organise this.

On Anne's 13th birthday, she was given a red and white checked journal, she called it 'Kitty'. When she wrote in it, it was as though she was writing to a friend named 'Kitty'.

This year, Margot turned 16. She received a call to report to a labour-camp to work in Nazi Germany on 5 July 1942. Her parents were very suspicious and decided she would not go. They went into hiding in the annex the next day.

During their time in the annex, Otto Frank's four close friends would bring food, books, and news of the outside world. Four other people were to join the Franks in the annex, the van Pels family (Hermann, Auguste, and Peter) and Fritz Pfeffer.

The hiding place was very cramped. They all had to keep very quiet during the day as the offices were open for business. There were dark, heavy curtains at the windows that had to remain closed all the time. Life was difficult and Anne was often afraid. She initially used her diary to record her life in the annex along with her thoughts and feelings. One day when everyone was listening to the radio when the offices were closed, she heard the Minister of Education of the Dutch government make an appeal for people to keep their war diaries and documents. Anne was inspired and began to write her diary as a story, 'The Secret Annex'.

On 4 August 1944, the annex was discovered, and everyone was arrested, separated, and sent to concentration camps. A friend of Otto Frank's, Miep Gies, returned to the annex and took documents before it was cleared by the Nazis. This is how Anne's diary was removed and preserved.

Anne and her family were sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration and extermination camp. Anne, her mother and sister were placed in the labour camp for women. The journey took three days and there were over a thousand people cramped together in the cattle wagons they were transported in. Food and water were limited and there was only a barrel for a toilet.

In early November 1944, Anne and her sister were deported to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, but their parents stayed in Auschwitz. The conditions in Bergen-Belsen were terrible too. There was little food, it was cold, wet, and contagious diseases were prevalent. Anne and Margot contracted typhus and in February 1945 they both died.

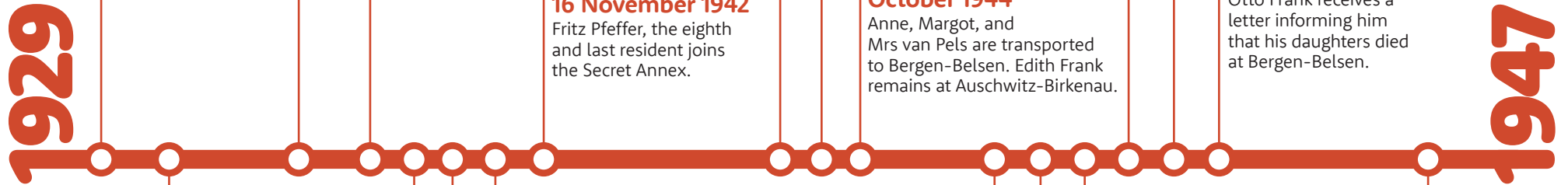


Postage stamps celebrating Anne Frank's life

Otto Frank was the only person from the Secret Annex to survive the war. He was liberated from Auschwitz by the Russians. On his journey back to Amsterdam he learned his wife Edith had died. Once in Netherlands he searched for his daughters but later discovered both Anne and Margot had also died.

Miep Gies gave Otto the papers she saved from the Secret Annex when he returned to Amsterdam, among these was Anne's diary. Otto read in his daughter's diary that she wanted to be a journalist or a famous writer. He learned a lot about his daughter from her diary and it made a deep impression on him. Otto's friends spoke to him and suggested he publish her diary and in June 1947, 3,000 copies of The Secret Annex were printed. The book has since been translated into around 70 languages and has been adapted for stage and screen. Otto always hoped that readers of the diary would become aware of the dangers of discrimination, racism, and antisemitism.

Anne Frank Timeline



12 June 1929

Annelies Marie Frank is born in Frankfurt, Germany.

10 May 1940

The German army invades the Netherlands.

12 June 1942

For Anne's 13th birthday, she receives a diary and begins her journal.

16 November 1942

Fritz Pfeffer, the eighth and last resident joins the Secret Annex.

13 July 1942

The van Pels, another Jewish family, join the Franks in the Secret Annex.

6 July 1942

The Franks go into hiding in the Secret Annex.

5 July 1942

Margot Frank receives a call to report to a labour camp in Germany.

Summer 1933

Adolf Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany and the first anti-Jewish laws are established.

The Franks decide to move to Amsterdam, in the Netherlands to avoid persecution by the Nazi Party.

4 August 1944

The residents of the Secret Annex are discovered and arrested.

3 September 1944

The Franks, van Pels and Mr Pfeffer are transported in cattle wagons to Auschwitz- Birkenau. When they arrive, the men and women are separated.

October 1944

Anne, Margot, and Mrs van Pels are transported to Bergen-Belsen. Edith Frank remains at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

15 April 1945

Bergen-Belsen is liberated by British forces.

3 June 1945

Otto Frank arrives in Amsterdam. He knows his wife has died but does not know his daughters have died too. He is given documents retrieved from the Secret Annex, including Anne's diary.

24 October 1945

Otto Frank receives a letter informing him that his daughters died at Bergen-Belsen.

February 1945

Anne and Margot die within days of each other of typhus at Bergen-Belsen.

27 January 1945

Otto Frank is freed from Auschwitz-Birkenau by the Russian army. He begins to make his way back to Amsterdam.

6 January 1945

Edith Frank dies at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

June 1947

Otto Frank publishes Anne's diary.

Comprehension Questions

What was Anne's full name?

What do you think Anne's early childhood was like from reading the text?

Why were people unhappy in Germany in the 1930s?

Why did the Franks leave Germany when Anne was young? Where did they go?

Why did life become difficult for the Franks in Amsterdam?

List two persecutions the Nazis implemented against Jewish people.

How did the Nazis identify Jewish people? What do you think of this?

Explain what life was like in the annex for the eight people.

How long had the Franks been in the Secret Annex before they were discovered?

Why did Otto Frank decide to publish Anne's diary?

The Second World War saw great disruption for people throughout the world and many children had to flee the safety of their homes at short notice. They did not know when they would see their homes again. Before entering the Secret Annex, Anne and her sister were told to pack what they wanted to take with them into their school bags.

What would you take with you if you had to leave your home at short notice? Why would you take the objects you have chosen?

Extension Activity

The Second World War brought disruption to a great many people including children. Imagine you are Anne and you have just been told by your father that you will all be going into hiding.

Write a diary entry from her perspective on the night before you go into hiding. What are your feelings and thoughts? What will you miss the most?

An open notebook with a vibrant, multi-colored geometric border in shades of orange, red, and yellow. The notebook is open to two blank, lined pages. The left page has a small, teal-colored word "Date" at the top left, followed by a horizontal line. The rest of the page and the entire right page are filled with horizontal teal lines. The notebook is set against a dark, textured background.

Vocabulary Activity

What do the words from the article mean?

Try and figure out the context from the text but use a dictionary if you need to.

Liberal

Persecuted (persecute)

Antisemitism

Confiscated (confiscate)

Segregated (segregate)

Suspicious

Preserved (preserve)

Deported (deport)

Liberated (liberate)



The Anne Frank Tree at the Arboretum

When you are able to visit the Arboretum, why not visit the Anne Frank tree located in the Garden of the Innocents? When the tree comes into bud, the blossoms are cut each year on the 12 June, the anniversary of Anne's birthday. This symbolises that Anne was never able to blossom fully as a person; she was never able to become an adult.

These activities are inspired by resources available on the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust's website.

For more resources and information about how you can mark Holocaust Memorial Day, please visit: hmd.org.uk