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Youth activity:

Marking the 75th anniversary of the arrest of Anne Frank on August 4, 1944



For group leaders

This activity revolves around three readings: two of the final entries in Anne's diary (one written three weeks and one written just three days prior to her arrest), plus a reading from one of Anne's stories that were written simultaneously with her diary.

The aims of this commemorative activity

To encourage reflection, empathy, self-expression, leadership, and an appreciation of the freedoms and opportunities participants enjoy.

Timing and location of activity

4 August 2019 falls on a Sunday. If necessary, this activity could be done on any day the preceding or following week.

The activity is expected to take between 30 and 45 minutes, depending how long the discussion at the end takes. It can be repeated for different age groups and smaller groups if necessary.

If conducted **indoors**, you will require space depending on numbers, and optional chairs or seating for a discussion. An image of Anne Frank can be projected on to a screen or wall.

If conducted **outdoors**, you will require a quiet location to avoid any noisy distractions, and a dry, grassy area to sit for the discussion.

Allocation of readings

Prior to starting this activity, you will need to allocate readings to eleven different participants, or **more people** if you wish to shorten each person's reading and involve more members of the group. Each reader should have a copy of the full script so they are aware of who precedes and follows their reading.

The readers you choose should be encouraged to rehearse prior to the event. They should read slowly and clearly and give a feel that the words have been written by a teenager like themselves.

Starting the activity

All participants gather together, whether indoors or outdoors, and form a circle.

First reader:

In the summer of 1944 in the height of World War 2, fifteen-year-old Anne Frank, along with her parents and older sister Margot, had spent over two years in hiding from their Nazi persecutors.

The Frank family were Jewish and the Nazis were planning to murder all the Jews in the countries they occupied. The Frank family had fled Hitler's Germany in 1933 and come to live in Amsterdam, where Anne and Margot had enjoyed a very happy childhood. But in 1940 they had witnessed the terrifying invasion of their new homeland, the Netherlands, and by 1942 they understood that if they were captured, they would be deported and sent to certain death in a concentration camp for being Jewish.

The Frank family's secret hiding place was a series of rooms above Mr Frank's business in the centre of Amsterdam. For two long years,

Annelies Marie Frank, known to everyone as Anne, was separated from the outside world and her many friends. It was extremely difficult for her as she was bright, chatty and intelligent.

For two years Anne's life was confined to a small set of rooms, where she hid along with her family, three other adults and a teenage boy called Peter van Pels, with whom she fell in and out of love.

Second reader:

Anne's surrogate friend while in hiding was her little red checked diary, a gift she had received for her thirteenth birthday, shortly before fleeing into hiding. She wrote in it nearly every day, recording many aspects of her life. These included her transition from childhood to adolescence, her changing body and emotions, and her fear of being caught and deported to a concentration camp.

Anne loved nature and the outside world and wrote about this several times. She would have loved the opportunity to spend the summer surrounded by the beautiful nature and scenery we are enjoying here.

She also wrote about the world she would love to see when the war was over, and the person she would hope to become.

Third reader reads the first extract from Anne's diary:

Anne Frank wrote these words on 15th July 1944 when she was 15:

'It's twice as hard for us young people to hold on to our opinions at a time when ideals are being shattered and destroyed, when the

worst side of human nature predominates, when everyone has come to doubt truth, justice and God.

...It's difficult in times like these: ideals, dreams and cherished hopes rise within us, only to be crushed by grim reality. It's a wonder I haven't abandoned all my ideals, they seem so absurd and impractical. Yet I cling to them because I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart.

...It's utterly impossible for me to build my life on a foundation of chaos, suffering and death. I see the world being slowly transformed into a wilderness, I hear the approaching thunder that, one day, will destroy us too, I feel the suffering of millions.

And yet, when I look up at the sky, I somehow feel that everything will change for the better, that this cruelty will end, that peace and tranquillity will return once more. In the meantime, I must hold on to my ideals. Perhaps the day will come when I'll be able to realize them! Yours, Anne M. Frank

Fourth reader:

On 6 June 1944, American and British armies had landed on the beaches of northern France to liberate Europe from the Nazis. Anne described her excitement in her diary on that day, writing that she hoped she could return to school by the Fall.

By the beginning of August hopes are high among the Frank family and the others in hiding that they will soon be liberated. On 1st August, Anne takes the opportunity to explore the conflict between

the two different sides of her personality, and how she is trying to make sure the better side wins.

Fifth reader: *(if time is limited, the first paragraph can be omitted)*

The second diary reading is from 1st August 1944:

'I'm split in two. One side contains my exuberant cheerfulness, my flippancy, my joy in life and, above all, my ability to appreciate the lighter side of things. By that I mean not finding anything wrong with flirtations, a kiss, an embrace, a saucy joke. This side of me is usually lying in wait to ambush the other one, which is much purer, deeper and finer. No one knows Anne's better side, and that's why most people can't stand me. Oh, I can be an amusing clown for an afternoon, but after that everyone's had enough of me to last a month.

...My lighter, more superficial side will always steal a march on the deeper side and therefore always win. You can't imagine how often I've tried to push away this Anne, which is only half of what is known as Anne – to beat her down, hide her. But it doesn't work, and I know why.

Sixth reader:

...The nice Anne is never seen in company. She's never made a single appearance, though she almost always takes the stage when I'm alone. I know exactly how I'd like to be, how I am . . . on the inside. But unfortunately, I'm only like that with myself. And perhaps that's why – no, I'm sure that's the reason why – I think of myself as

happy on the inside and other people think I'm happy on the outside. I'm guided by the pure Anne within, but on the outside I'm nothing but a frolicsome little goat tugging at its tether.

Seventh reader:

...The happy-go-lucky Anne laughs, gives a flippant reply, shrugs her shoulders and pretends she couldn't care less. The quiet Anne reacts in just the opposite way. If I'm being completely honest, I'll have to admit that it does matter to me, that I'm trying very hard to change myself, but that I'm always up against a more powerful enemy.

...I get cross, then sad, and finally end up turning my heart inside out, the bad part on the outside and the good part on the inside, and keep trying to find a way to become what I'd like to be and what I could be if . . . if only there were no other people in the world.

Yours, Anne M. Frank

Eighth reader:

These were the final words of Anne's diary.

Three days later on 4th August, an anonymous person made a call to the Nazi headquarters in Amsterdam and gave them the address where they suspected Jews were in hiding.

Nazi officers and Dutch police wasted no time in heading over there and bursting in to the hiding place, escorting out the eight terrified people at gunpoint. They were taken to a Gestapo prison and

interrogated and then put on a train to the Dutch transit camp of Westerbork.

Ninth reader:

At the beginning of September, all eight prisoners who had been in hiding together above Mr Frank's office were transported to the dreaded Auschwitz extermination camp in Poland. One month later, the sisters Margot and Anne Frank were transferred to Bergen-Belsen camp in Germany. There they endured a freezing winter, and the two teenage girls died of disease and starvation within a day of each other, not even knowing that their beloved father had already been freed from Auschwitz camp and was searching for news of them. Tragically they died just a few weeks before the camp's liberation by American and British soldiers.

The only member of the eight people in hiding together in Amsterdam to survive the Holocaust was Anne's father Otto Frank, who went on to publish her diary as a book. He wanted people to read it to understand about his two daughters, and millions of others, who had died because of hatred and persecution.

Tenth reader:

Can we all please join hands now and bow our heads.

We will now have one minute of silence to remember Anne Frank and her life, cut tragically short because of prejudice and hatred.

One minute's silence follows.

After one minute the group leader thanks everyone and asks the participants to sit.

Eleventh and final reader:

In a story written while she was in hiding from her persecutors, and in fear of being betrayed and killed, Anne Frank wrote: ‘How wonderful it is that no-one need wait, but can start right now to gradually change the world.’

When we return home from camp, let us continue to remember Anne Frank and her words. Let us live our lives according to her ideals and appreciate the freedom and opportunities we enjoy and that she was so cruelly denied.

To end the activity, the Group Leader can choose to lead a short discussion on how each participant feels they can carry out Anne Frank’s ideals in their own life.



From her hiding place in Amsterdam, Anne’s only connection to the outside world was the chestnut tree she could see from the attic window. As she watched the seasons changing through the tree, it helped her to feel alive and filled her with hope.

Saplings from this very tree have been planted by the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect in locations around the United States. The most recent was at the United Nations on 12 June 2019 to mark what would have been Anne’s 90th birthday.

A short message for all the participants:

We hope that you had a memorable experience in commemorating the 75th anniversary of the arrest of Anne Frank. Please let your family and - when you return to school after the summer break - let your teachers know that you have played a part in this important worldwide commemoration.

This activity has been brought to you by the **Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect**, the American partner organization of the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam. Based in New York City, the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that educates young people and communities throughout the US.

MISSION:

The Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect honors Anne Frank and the continuing relevance of her diary to educate young people and communities in the US about the dangers of intolerance, anti-Semitism, racism, and discrimination, and to inspire every generation to build a world based on mutual respect.

VISION:

Inspiring every generation to build the more compassionate world Anne Frank envisioned.



For more info:

If you are interested in a program, exhibit or activity for your school or community, would like to volunteer or financially support the work of the Anne Frank Center, please do get in touch.

Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect

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www.annefrank.com