

Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl

Discussion Guide #1

Encourage critical thinking and support your students' literacy development by asking questions during reading. Here are some questions you can ask your readers to engage them in a discussion.

DIARY ENTRIES: June 12, 1942 – July 10, 1942

Comprehension:

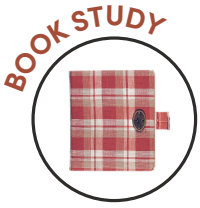
- What does Anne name her diary, and why does she give it a name?
- How did Anne and her family come to be in Amsterdam?
- At first, Anne and her family led a somewhat normal life in Amsterdam. When did things change, and why? How did things change for them?
- Anne writes quite frequently about Hello. Who is Hello, and what is his place in Anne's life?
- Who is Mr. van Daan, and why does Anne's mother go to see him?
- Anne says that she and her sister, Margot, pack their "most important belongings" to take with them into hiding. What kinds of things does Anne pack?
- Who are Miep and Jan Gies, and what is their importance to Anne and her family?
- Why do Anne and her family wear so many layers of clothing on the day they go into hiding?
- Where do Anne and her family go into hiding? Why is it a good place to hide?

Analysis:

- What does Anne mean when she says, "Paper has more patience than people"?
- Describe Anne's interaction with her math teacher, Mr. Keesing, as she relates it in her June 21, 1942, diary entry. What aspects of Anne's character does this interaction reveal?
- At certain points in Anne's diary, there are hints that her seemingly carefree life is about to change, even though she could not have known the extent of the coming change when she wrote them. What parts of Anne's diary foreshadow the coming change? When does the big change actually occur?

Personal Connection:

- Anne says that because she was so preoccupied with having to go into hiding, she packed the "craziest things." If you suddenly had to leave your home and go into hiding, what things would you pack? Would you pack practical things, or would you pack personally meaningful items? What would be the first thing you threw in your bag?



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DIARY ENTRIES: July 11, 1942 – November 9, 1942

Comprehension:

- In her early days and weeks in the Secret Annex, what does Anne find reassuring about her hiding place, and what does she find unsettling?
- After over a month without writing an entry in her diary, Anne picks up writing again on August 14, saying, ". . . so little has happened that I can't find a newsworthy item to relate every single day." However, something newsworthy had happened. What big change happened in the Secret Annex?
- Mr. van Daan tells the Franks about what happened after their departure from their home on Monday, July 5. What happened?
- What is added to the Secret Annex to make it even more hidden? Why is it added, and who helps add it?
- In what ways does Anne feel that her parents, especially her mother, and the others in the Annex mistreat her?
- While Anne often complains about her life and the other people living with her in the Secret Annex, it's clear from her diary that there are good things, too. What good things does Anne talk about?

Analysis:

- Consider the story that Mr. van Dan tells about what happened between him and Mr. Goldschmidt, the Franks' landlord. What does the story reveal about the preparations that the Van Daans and Franks had made?
- On Peter's 16th birthday in November, Anne writes that one of the biggest surprises comes when Mr. van Daan reports that the English landed in Tunis, Algiers, Casablanca, and Oran, locations in northern Africa. Mr. van Daan and the others believe that it's "the beginning of the end" of the war. However, Winston Churchill, the British prime minister, disagrees. What does he say? How is it different, and what does he want people to understand?
- The Franks and the Van Daans have clearly committed themselves to each other's safety and well-being. However, Anne writes of many conflicts between the two families living together in the Secret Annex. Why are there likely so many conflicts between members of the two families?

Personal Connection:

- Anne often writes about feeling that she's treated unfairly by others in the Annex. Have you ever felt unfairly singled out by a parent, teacher, or another person? What happened, and how did you handle it? Do you think your feelings were justified? Why, or why not?