



# The Secret Annex

Anne Frank was born in Frankfurt am Main, in Germany, in 1929, but her family left Germany because of the economic crisis and the antisemitism accompanying Hitler's rise to power. They resettled in the Netherlands. Anne was ten years old when Germany invaded Poland and World War II began. About six months later, Germany invaded and occupied the Netherlands, instituting curfews and anti-Jewish rules specifying where Jews could go, and separating Jews from others at schools and businesses. During this period, Anne's family tried several times to emigrate to other countries, including the U.S., but were unsuccessful. When Anne's mother received notice that she was to report to a German work camp, the desperate family went into hiding in a secret apartment behind an office. The Van Pels family joined them a week later. Six months later, another person, Fritz Pfeffer, took up residence in "the secret annex." They all lived there together for a little over two years.

This hiding space was fairly spacious, consisting of multiple rooms in an office building owned by Otto Frank. Business continued to be conducted in the front of the building. The entrance to the annex was concealed by a moveable bookcase.

They had to remain continuously quiet. The office workers brought them food, clothes and books, and helped them to maintain contact with people in the outside world. Anne occupied herself a great deal with her diary, in which she recorded both what happened in the annex and things about herself. She heard the Minister of Education on the radio asking people to

keep war diaries, and decided to use the material from her diary to create a novel called *The Secret Annex*. She was in the process of rewriting her diary when she and the others in hiding, along with two of the people who had been helping them, are arrested. The Franks and the others in hiding were deported to Aushwitz. After the arrest, several of the other office workers collected Anne's diary and other papers from The Secret Annex. To this day, no one is really sure how the annex was discovered.

Of the eight who had been in hiding together, only Otto Frank, Anne's father, survived. He returned to the Netherlands to live with friends, and learned of his wife's death. Several months later he learned that his daughters died of disease and malnutrition in Bergen-Belsen. When his friends give him Anne's diary, he is surprised at the young woman he discovers there. Upon reading of Anne's desire to become a novelist, he has 3,000 copies of her diary published as a novel called *The Secret Annex*. For the rest of his life he answers letters by people who have read the book. The novel sells successfully in many translations, and is even made into a film.

1. Which of the following is NOT a main idea of the article?

- A. What happened to Otto Frank's business during WWII
- B. Life in the Secret Annex
- C. About the book *The Secret Annex* by Anne Frank

2. On a separate sheet, summarize the article.