

## 4. From the Diary of Anne Frank

(Anne Frank)

### ABOUT THE CHAPTER

#### Introduction

The extract is an excerpt from the personal diary of a thirteen-year-old Jewish girl who witnessed the horrors of the Nazi rule at the time of World War II. She wrote this diary while hiding in an attic with her family and four others in Amsterdam during the German occupation of Netherlands. This excerpt is not a traditionally recorded diary but is an insight into the thoughts of a young girl and her ability to write creatively.

#### Summary

Anne Frank considers diary writing to be a strange experience. She gives two reasons for this. Firstly, she has never written anything earlier and secondly, she thinks that neither she nor anyone else would be interested in the thoughts of a teenager. However, she feels an inner compulsion to write, so she decides to pen down her thoughts.

One day, when Anne was feeling unhappy and depressed, she recalled the saying that 'paper has more patience than people'. She continued to brood about this thought and concluded that it was indeed right. She decided that she would not let anyone, other than a true friend, read what she would write in the stiff-backed notebook – her 'diary'.

She records that the reason which prompted her to write a diary is that she does not have any friend. Clarifying the absence of a true friend in her life, Anne says that she might have seemingly friendly people around her (loving parents, a sixteen-year-old elder sister, thirty friendly people, and loving aunts) but a true close friend is missing. She can talk only about ordinary things to these people but

she cannot share intimate secrets with anyone of them. She accepts that her reserved nature prevents her from having any close friends. She decides to write a "diary" as she feels that her nature is not likely to change.

She considers her diary to be her imaginary "long-awaited" friend and names it 'Kitty'. She also resolves to adopt a novel method of writing it because nobody would understand a single word of what she writes, if she begins writing straight away. So, she gives a brief sketch of her family in the beginning.

Anne writes that her father is an adorable man and had married her mother when he was thirty-six and she was twenty-five. Her elder sister, Margot, was born in Frankfurt, Germany in 1926 and she herself was born on 12 June 1929. She lived in Frankfurt until the age of four and in September 1933, her father emigrated to Holland accompanied by her mother, Edith Hollander Frank. Meanwhile Anne and her sister were sent to Aachen to live with their grandmother. However, in December that year, her elder sister joined her parents while she reached later on Margot's birthday.

In Holland, she was admitted to the Montessori nursery school. Giving an interesting description of her school life, Anne makes a special mention of Mrs Kuperus, her teacher in the sixth form and the headmistress of the school. She was so dear to her that they both had a tearful farewell at the end of the year.

Anne's grandmother fell ill in the summer of 1941 and had to be operated upon. So, Anne had a simple birthday celebration that year. Sadly, her grandmother died in January 1942. Remembering her fondly and lovingly, Anne's birthday celebration in June 1942 had a candle lit for her grandmother along with the rest.

Anne next writes about June 20, 1942 - an account of her classroom experiences. She writes in her diary that her entire class was terrified

and nervous because the school teachers were going to have a meeting to discuss the annual results. However, Anne and her friend G. N. had a hearty laugh at the two boys sitting behind them - C. N. and Jacques. These boys had put at stake their entire holiday savings betting their respective results. Their silly arguments irritated Anne but neither her angry outbursts nor her friend's pleading glances had any effect on the two boys.

Here, Anne records her observation that her class had quite a few dumb students and nearly a quarter of the class needed to be kept back. She also observes that teachers are "the most unpredictable creatures" so the results could not be guessed.

Anne was not worried about herself and her girlfriends. She was sure they would all make it to the next grade. Although she was a bit doubtful about Mathematics, they all waited patiently and tried to encourage and cheer up each other.

Anne was quite friendly with all her teachers except, the "old fogey" Mr Keesing, her Mathematics teacher, who always remained angry with her because of her talkative nature. He warned her constantly to give up this habit. When all his warnings failed, he punished her by assigning extra homework. Anne was asked to write an essay on "A Chatterbox". She did not know what to write but noted down the topic and tucked it in her bag. After that she tried to remain quiet in the class.

In the evening, after finishing her routine home work, she thought about the topic 'chatterbox'. She decided to write convincing arguments for being a 'chatterbox' in place of rambling and writing haphazardly. In her three page assignment, she wrote that talking is natural to all students. Talking becomes more compulsive for her as her mother is a habitual talker and one cannot do much about inherited traits.

Mr Keesing, her teacher, had a good laugh at her arguments and Anne resumed talking through the next lesson. The teacher then gave her another assignment as punishment - "An Incorrigible Chatterbox." Anne handed over this assignment and things remained fine for the next two lessons. However, during the third lesson, Mr Keesing lost patience and told her to write an essay titled, "Quack, Quack Quack, Said Mistress Chatterbox." This made everyone, including Anne, laugh. However, she felt that she had already written enough about the topic, so she must write something new. Sanne, one of her friends, who was good at writing poetry, offered to write the entire essay in verse. This overjoyed Anne because she wanted to play the joke on her teacher who was trying to make her write on a ridiculous topic. The poem turned out to be a beautiful one. It was about a mother duck and a father swan with "three baby ducklings" who quacked and quacked and quacked. This angered the father swan and he bit the ducklings to death. The joke obviously was on Mr Keesing. He was amused to read the poem and took the joke sportingly. He read it to the entire class and several other classes, adding his own comments.

From then on, Anne was never given assignment as punishment and was also allowed to talk in the class. Mr Keesing too was a changed man and always cracked jokes.

### TITLE

The title of the extract is simple and clear. "From the Diary of Anne Frank" states that the excerpt is from the diary written by Anne Frank, a victim of holocaust. This extract gives an insight of the firsthand experiences of a Jew during the Nazi rule. Although Anne's real purpose behind writing her diary was that she wanted a true friend in whom she could confide, but today her diary has become an important historical record. This makes the title of the extract both informative and relevant.

### THEME

The extract describes the honest expressions of a young teenager. She is a reserved person who reveals her inner self to her diary whom she treats as a true friend. In the process, she records the sweet relationship shared by teachers and students. The anxiety of students before results and the irritation caused to the teacher when the students talk too much are common situations in every part of the world. So, the theme of the extract moves between the plain thoughts of a young girl and her opinion about school life.

### MESSAGE

The extract gives the message that writing a diary helps one to be honest because a diary makes up for the absence of a sincere and dependable friend. It never betrays you and always keeps the secrets entrusted to it close to its heart. It has more tolerance and patience than people in general.

Another message given by the extract is that teachers should discipline their students but should also allow them to retain their individuality. They should keep a balance between awarding punishment and inspiring creativity.

### HUMOUR

Anne Frank has a knack of using uncommon expressions that amuse the reader a great deal. To cite a few examples, one finds the expression "the stiff-backed notebook grandly referred to as a diary" quite interesting. The use of the expression "plunge right in" too makes interesting reading. One can't help laughing when she writes, "... I was plunked down on the table as a birthday present ...." The entire class "quaking in its boots" too is an enjoyable expression. The use of the word "dummies" for unintelligent students is also interesting. The statement regarding teachers being "the most unpredictable creatures on earth" is certainly very funny. The reader

also feels like laughing at the use of the expression "old fogey" for the mathematics teacher.

One also comes across quite a few amusing situations in the extract that tickle the reader. The author feeling lonely amidst a host of people makes the reader smile at her frankness. The pitiable condition of the students awaiting the verdict of the unpredictable teachers also amuses the readers. In addition, the description of the class and the activities of the classmates are really enjoyable. The idea of giving additional homework as punishment for excessive talking in the class too is unique and amusing. The topics assigned as extra homework - "Chatterbox", "An Incorrigible Chatterbox" and "Quack, Quack, Quack, Said Mistress Chatterbox" - are innovative and funny. The description of Mr Keesing, his unpredictable behaviour, and the way the author turns the tables on him creates plenty of humour.

## CHARACTERS

### *Mr Keesing*

Mr Keesing, the Mathematics teacher, is an interesting character and Anne Frank jokingly calls him an "old fogey". Though he is basically good at heart, he is strict and wants to maintain proper discipline in the class. He does not allow Anne to talk excessively in the class. As a dedicated teacher, he remains firm in improving her behaviour because he wants his students to do well in life. When all his persuasions fail to change the girl, he thinks of a unique method to correct her. He assigns her additional homework and tells her to write an essay on the topic "A Chatterbox". This shows that he is an ideal teacher who knows the skill of channelizing the energies of his students in a positive way. He continues to assign 'additional homework' on this topic till Anne comes up with a creative poem.

Mr Keesing is a genuine and warm person, so he takes Anne's jokes very sportingly. He laughs at the poem about the father swan biting

his talkative ducklings to death and even reads it to other students. He admires Anne's creative skill and allows her to talk in the class without holding any angst against her. His tough outward appearance has a tender heart inside. He is a teacher who always has the welfare of his students in his mind and loves them dearly.

In sum, he is a lovable character having some pardonable shortcomings.

### *Anne Frank*

Anne Frank was a Jewish girl, who spent many years living in fear of oppressive Germans and died at the tender age of about fifteen. A part of her life was spent in hiding and part in a concentration camp. She is "one of most renowned and discussed ... Holocaust victims."

Anne had a reserved nature and she did not confide easily in others. Even amid friends and family, she could not reveal her true self because of her reserved nature. This compelled her to seek companionship in her 'Diary' whom she treated like her very close friend and therefore gave her a name 'Kitty'.

Anne was a creative person, so she did not record her experiences in a common manner. She invented her original style that had witty remarks, lively descriptions, and honest observations. She expressed everything in a straight forward manner without mincing words.

Anne had a loving nature. She admired her family and particularly missed her grandmother after the latter's death. She was a great fan of her father and considered him to be the "most adorable" individual. She considered her family to be a very important part of her identity and gave a description about all the members before proceeding to write anything else in her diary.

Anne was only thirteen years old but was mature enough to assess correctly other people's nature and behaviour. She rightly sums up that teachers are unpredictable by nature.

Anne's subtle sense of humour is remarkable. She uses quite a few

expressions that make her descriptions funny. The entire incident about Mr Keesing, her mathematics teacher, displays her intelligent sense of humour.

The diary entries of this young girl reveal that she had a very balanced mind and could argue convincingly. Her argument that one couldn't do much about one's inherited traits is an example of her mature thoughts.

On the whole, Anne was an intelligent girl who could have become an interesting writer if the heartless Nazi rule hadn't killed her.

### EXTRACTS FOR COMPREHENSION

*Read the following extracts and answer the questions  
that follow in one or two lines.*

(I)

Oh well, it doesn't matter. I feel like writing, and I have an even greater need to get all kinds of things off my chest.

**(a) Who is 'I' here?**

'I' here is Anne Frank, the young teenager who wrote a diary about her experiences as a Jew under the Nazi rule.

**(b) What does 'it' here refer to? Why does 'it' not matter?**

'It' refers to the possibility that neither Anne nor anyone else would read her diary. It does not matter because Anne does not consider the 'musings' of a thirteen-year-old schoolgirl to be significant.

**(c) What does she/he decide to write?**

Anne decides to write such things that she cannot share with anyone else.

**(d) What kind of things do you think she/he had to get off her/his chest?**

The possible things that Anne had to get off her chest could be her

views about her friends, her family, teenage problems, the attitude of adults towards children and other such matters concerned with her generation.

### (II)

I don't want to jot down the facts in this diary the way most people would do, but I want the diary to be my friend, and I'm going to call this friend...

**(a) Who is 'I' in these lines?**

'I' in these lines is Anne Frank.

**(b) Which diary is 'I' referring to?**

Anne Frank is referring to her personal dairy, in which she wrote about her experiences as a Jew under the Nazi rule.

**(c) Why doesn't 'I' want to write this diary like most people?**

Anne doesn't want to write this diary like most people because it is not a mere book to her. She considers it to be her true friend in whom she can confide.

**(d) What name does 'I' give to his/her 'friend'?**

Anne gives her diary the name "Kitty".

### (III)

No one knows how often I think of her and still love her. This birthday celebration in 1942 was intended to make up for the other...

**(a) Who speaks these words and why?**

Anne Frank speaks these words because she is sad at having lost her dear grandmother.

**(b) Whom does the speaker think about often? Why doesn't anyone know about this?**

Anne often thinks about her grandmother. No one knows about this because she is a reserved girl and does not share her true feelings with anyone.

- (c) Which birthday was intended to make up for in 1942? Why?

In 1942, the birthday of 1941 was intended to be made up for, since grandma was ill in 1941 and had to be operated upon. So, that birthday had passed with little celebration.

- (d) What was done during the birthday celebrations in 1942? Why?

Grandma's candle was lit along with the rest during Anne's birthday celebrations of 1942. It was done so to pay a tribute to Grandma who was no more.

#### (IV)

The four of us are still doing well, and that brings me to the present date of 20 June 1942, and the solemn dedication of my diary.

- (a) Who speaks these words?

The speaker of these words is Anne Frank.

- (b) Who are the 'four of us'? Name them.

The four of us are Anne Frank, her elder sister Margot, their father Otto Frank, and their mother Edith Hollander Frank.

- (c) What 'diary' is the speaker talking about?

Anne is talking about her diary 'Kitty' in which she recorded her experiences as a Jew under the Nazi rule.

- (d) Why is that diary so important even today?

Anne's diary is important even today as it gives us an authentic first-hand account of the plight of the Jews during World War-II.

#### (V)

If you ask me, there are so many dummies that about a quarter of the class should be kept back, but teachers are the most unpredictable creatures on earth.

- (a) What do you think the word 'dummies' means here? Why does the speaker say there are so many of them in the class?

Here the word 'dummies' means students who fair poorly in

class. Anne says that there are many dummies in her class because most of the students were dull and weak in studies.

- (b) What does the speaker mean by 'should be kept back'?**

Anne means to say that the poor performers should not be given the pass certificate to go to the next grade.

- (c) Why do you think the writer considers teachers to be the 'most unpredictable creatures on earth'?**

Anne considers teachers to be the 'most unpredictable creatures on earth' because they keep scolding the children when they are careless but still promote them to the next class.

- (d) Which one of her teachers did the speaker find 'unpredictable'? Why?**

Anne found Mr Keesing, her maths teacher, to be 'unpredictable' because he was angry with her for talking too much, and still allowed her to talk after she wrote a poem about a chatterbox.

## (VI)

– what can you write about that? I'd worry about that later, I decided. I jotted down the title in my notebook, tucked it in my bag and tried to keep quiet.

- (a) What does 'that' here refer to?**

Here 'that' refers to the topic 'A Chatterbox' that Mr Keesing had assigned as extra homework to Anne.

- (b) Who is 'I' here? Why did she/he decide to worry about 'that' later?**

Here 'I' is Anne Frank. She decided to worry later about the topic 'A Chatterbox' because she had just been punished for talking.

- (c) What 'title' did she/he jot down in her notebook?**

Anne jotted down the title 'A Chatterbox' in her notebook.

- (d) Why did the speaker decide to 'keep quiet'?**

Anne decided to keep quiet because she did not want to give her maths teacher, Mr Keesing, another reason to get upset with her.

## (VII)

That evening, after I'd finished the rest of my homework, the note about the essay caught my eye. I began thinking about the subject while chewing the tip of my fountain pen.

- (a) Who is the speaker of these lines?

Anne Frank is the speaker here.

- (b) Which 'note' caught the speaker's eye?

The note that caught Anne's eye was the one in which she had jotted down the topic assigned to her as extra homework by her mathematics teacher, Mr Keesing.

- (c) What was the subject of the 'note'?

The subject of the note was "A Chatterbox".

- (d) Why did the speaker begin to think about the subject of the 'note'?

Anne began to think about the subject of the 'note' because she wanted to write down convincing arguments in support of her talkative nature.

## (VIII)

Anyone could ramble on and leave big spaces between the words, but the trick was to come up with convincing arguments...

- (a) Who makes this observation? When?

Anne Frank makes this observation when she sits down to write about the topic 'A Chatterbox', assigned as extra homework by her maths teacher, Mr Keesing, for talking too much in the class.

- (b) Why does the speaker want to come up with convincing arguments?

Anne wishes to come up with convincing arguments because she wants to justify her talkative nature and does not want to finish the assignment just for the sake of it.

- (c) What is the 'subject' of argument?

The subject of the argument is 'A Chatterbox'.

**(d) What do these lines tell us about the speaker?**

These lines tell us that Anne was a cheerful, yet sensitive girl who paid complete attention to every little task assigned to her.

(IX)

Mr Keesing was trying to play a joke on me with this ridiculous subject, but I'd make sure the joke was on him.

**(a) Who writes these words and how is Mr Keesing related to her/him?**

Anne Frank writes these words about Mr Keesing who was her mathematics teacher.

**(b) Why does 'I' feel that Mr Keesing was trying to play a joke on her?**

Anne feels that Mr Keesing was trying to play a joke on her because he was repeatedly assigning her extra homework on the same topic - "Chatterbox".

**(c) How does 'I' ensure that joke was on Mr Keesing?**

To ensure that the joke was on Mr Keesing, Anne wrote the assignment in verse describing the story of a father swan biting his three baby ducklings to death because they quacked too much.

**(d) What does this extract tell you about the character of Mr Keesing?**

This extract tells that Mr Keesing was a very wise teacher who could think of unique ways to make his students realize their shortcomings.

(X)

Since then I've been allowed to talk and haven't been assigned any extra homework. On the contrary, Mr Keesing's always...

**(a) Who is 'I' in the above extract?**

In the above extract, 'I' is Anne Frank.

**(b) Why has the speaker been allowed to talk?**

Anne has been allowed to talk in the class since she had come up

with interesting arguments in a creative way defending her talkative nature.

- (c) What 'extra homework' was she assigned earlier on?

Earlier Anne was assigned extra homework to write assignments on the topics "A Chatterbox", "An Incorrigible Chatterbox" and "Quack, Quack, Quack, Said Mistress Chatterbox."

- (d) What impression do you form of the speaker's character from this extract?

This extract shows that Anne is a cheerful girl who devotes complete attention even to the most insignificant tasks.

#### SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

(to be answered in about 30 – 40 words each)

- Q1.** What made writing in a diary a strange experience for Anne Frank? **Or** **(Textual)**

**Why was writing a diary a strange experience for Anne?**

Writing in a diary was a strange experience for Anne Frank because she had never written anything before. In addition, she thought that later on nobody, including herself, would be interested in the musings of a thirteen-year-old schoolgirl.

- Q2.** Why did Anne decide to write even though she felt that no one, including herself, would be interested in the musings of a thirteen-year-old schoolgirl?

Anne decided to write because it did not matter to her whether anyone read her diary or not. Besides, she wanted to write about such things which she could not share with anyone else. She felt a great need to get the burden of these things off her chest.

- Q3.** Why did Anne want to keep a diary? **(Textual)**

Anne wanted to keep a diary because she did not have any true

friend in whom she could confide. Besides, she believed that paper had more patience than people. So she could write her innermost thoughts and feelings in the diary without worrying about the opinion of others.

- Q4.** "I'm not planning to let anyone else read this stiff-backed notebook grandly referred to as a 'diary'." Why do you think Anne wouldn't like anyone to read her diary?

Anne wouldn't let anyone to read her diary because she was a very reserved person. She did not feel confident about sharing her innermost thoughts with any of the people she knew.

- Q5.** Why does Anne think she can confide more in her diary than in people? *Or* *(Textual)*

What does Anne wish to convey by saying that 'paper has more patience than people'?

Anne feels she can confide more in her diary than in people, because she believes that paper has more patience. She can pour all her feelings out on it without worrying about the type of things she would share with it. This would relieve her of the burden of such things which she cannot share with people.

- Q6.** Why does Anne Frank say that she does not have a friend? Is she really all alone?

Anne says that she does not have a friend because, to her, a friend is someone who is very close to the heart and in whom one can confide. However, she isn't really all alone since she has a family, loving parents, an elder sister and friends with whom she has a "good time".

- Q7.** How far do you think Anne Frank is responsible for her feeling of loneliness?

Anne Frank is wholly responsible for her feeling of loneliness because she admits that she has a reserved nature. This prevents

her from opening up her true self to others and thus makes her unable to find a true, patient and trustworthy friend.

- Q8. Why does Anne provide a brief sketch of her life before formally writing her diary? Or (Textual)**

Why does Anne need to give a brief sketch of her family? Does she treat 'Kitty' as an insider or an outsider? (Textual)

Anne provides a brief sketch of her life before formally writing her diary 'Kitty' because she believes that in the absence of a background, nobody would be able to understand a word of her stories to 'Kitty'. She confides in her diary like a true friend and so it becomes 'an insider' for her.

- Q9. How was Anne's relationship with her father? Support your answer with textual evidence.**

Anne had a very strong and loving relationship with her father. She admired him a lot and felt that he was excellent as a father. Appreciating him, she writes in one of her diary entries, "My father, the most adorable father I've ever seen."

- Q10. How were Anne's birthday celebrations different in 1941 and 1942?**

Or

What tells you that Anne loved her grandmother? (Textual)

Or

Why did Anne's birthday in 1941 pass with little celebrations?

Anne's grandmother had to be operated upon in 1941 so Anne's birthday passed with little celebrations that year. Unfortunately, grandma passed away in January 1942 and her death made Anne very sad. She missed her terribly, so she lit grandma's candle along with other candles on her birthday in 1942 as a tribute to her.

- Q11. Describe Anne's early schooling in Holland.**

Anne was sent to a Montessori nursery school when she joined

her family in February 1934 in Holland. She stayed there until the age of six at which time she started in the first form.

**Q12. Who was Mrs Kuperus? How was Anne's relationship with her?**

*Or*

**Why was Anne in tears when she left the Montessori nursery school in Holland?**

Mrs Kuperus was Anne's loving and affectionate teacher in her sixth form. She was also the headmistress and was devoted to her students. Anne was really fond of her and the two of them had a tearful farewell when the year ended.

**Q13. Why was Anne's entire class 'quaking in its boots'?**

*Or*

**How did Anne's class feel about the form results?**

*Or*

**Why was Anne's entire class anxious and nervous?**

Anne's entire class was 'quaking in its boots' because everyone was unsure about the upcoming results that were to decide which student had passed and which one had failed to get promotion to the next form. The anxiety and nervousness thus made the entire class 'quake in its boots'.

**Q14. What made the boys of Anne's class stake their entire holiday savings?**

*Or*

**'Half the class is making bets'. What were Anne's classmates making bets on?**

The teachers of the class had to meet to discuss the final result of the students. It was a day when the success or failure of every student was to be decided. This made the boys stake their entire holiday savings making bets on who would pass and who would fail.

**Q15. Why wasn't Anne worried about herself or her girl friends?**

Anne was not worried about herself or her girlfriends because

she was sure they would make it to the next class. Of course, they too were doubtful regarding the result of a particular subject like mathematics, but were not insecure like the boys who had staked their savings on the result.

**Q16. Who was Mr Keesing? Why was he annoyed with Anne? What did he ask her to do?** *(Textual)*

Mr Keesing was Anne's mathematics teacher. He was a strict disciplinarian and did not permit any disruption during the class. However, Anne talked so much that Mr Keesing got annoyed with her. After several warnings, he assigned her to write an essay on the subject 'A Chatterbox' as extra homework.

**Q17. Why did Anne not want to just "ramble on and leave big spaces between the words."?**

Anne was an intelligent student, and though she was naturally talkative, she did not want to create a poor impression in the class. So, she decided to come up with valid arguments justifying her talking instead of rambling to complete the assignment.

**Q18. How does Anne justify her being a chatterbox?**

*Or*

**What arguments does Anne present in the essay 'A Chatterbox'?**

*Or*

**What does Anne write in her first essay?**

*(Textual)*

In her first essay, 'A Chatterbox', Anne argued that talking is a student's trait and that she would do her best to keep her talking under control. But she would never be able to cure herself of this habit since she had inherited this from her mother who too talked a lot.

**Q19. How did Mr Keesing respond to Anne's first assignment?**

*Or*

**What was Mr Keesing's reaction to Anne's first essay 'A Chatterbox'?**

Mr Keesing responded to Anne's first assignment in a sporting way. He had a good laugh at her arguments but when she continued to talk through the next lesson, he assigned her another essay as extra homework.

**Q20. What were the second and the third assignments given by Mr Keesing to Anne?**

The second and the third assignments that Mr Keesing gave Anne were "An Incorrigible Chatterbox" and "Quack, Quack, Quack, Said Mistress Chatterbox" respectively. He assigned Anne these essays because she did not keep her promise to remain quiet in the class, that she had made in her first essay, "A Chatterbox".

**Q21. Why did the entire class laugh loudly when Anne was asked to write the third essay as punishment for talking too much in the class?**

The entire class laughed loudly because the topic of the essay, "Quack, Quack, Quack, Said Mistress Chatterbox", was very funny. It was the third punishment for Anne to stop her from talking too much in the class but it actually invited arguments about extreme talking.

**Q22. Why was Anne's third assignment 'something original'?**

*Or*

**Comment on the way Anne dealt with the third topic Mr Keesing had asked her to write on.** *Or*

**Why did Anne want her essay entitled "Quack, Quack, Quack, Said Mistress Chatterbox" to be unique?**

Anne wanted to come up with something 'unique and original' to respond to Mr Keesing's ridiculous punishment. So, she wrote her third assignment in the form of poetry with the help of her friend, Sanne. This poem was a kind of joke on her teacher

Mr Keesing as it described a mother duck and a father swan with three baby ducklings who were bitten to death by the father because they quacked too much.

**Q23. Do you think Mr Keesing was a strict teacher? (Textual)**

Mr Keesing was a disciplinarian who wanted his students to concentrate during the lesson. He devised unusual ways of instilling discipline in them and encouraged their original thoughts. The funny topics that he assigned Anne as punishment show that he was a liberal teacher.

**Q24. What made Mr Keesing allow Anne to talk in the class? (Textual)**

Anne made her point about her talkative nature in her third assignment by narrating the story of a cruel father swan biting his ducklings to death for quacking too much. This made Mr Keesing soften his stand on Anne and he allowed her to talk in the class.

**Q25. How does Anne turn the table on Mr Keesing in the end?**

In the end, Anne finally turns the table on her mathematics teacher, Mr Keesing, by drawing a parallel between him and the cruel father swan who bites the three ducklings to death for quacking too much. This made her teacher realize that talking is as natural to students as quacking is to ducklings.

**Q26. What change came about in Mr Keesing after Anne submitted her third assignment?**

*Or*

**Do you think the rapport between Mr Keesing and Anne improved after Anne completed the three tasks assigned by him?**

*Or*

**What was Mr Keesing's reaction after reading Anne's poem on the topic "Quack' Quack, Quack, Said Mistress Chatterbox"?**

After Anne submitted her third assignment, Mr Keesing took

the joke the right way. He read Anne's poem about the ducklings to the class, adding his own comments. He also read it to several other classes. After that he did not assign any extra homework to Anne, allowed her to talk in the class and also started making jokes.

### LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

(to be answered in about 100 – 150 words each)

- Q1.** Was Anne right when she said that the world would not be interested in the musings of a thirteen-year-old girl? (Textual)

Anne Frank wrote her diary while in hiding with her family and four friends in Amsterdam during the German occupation of the Netherlands in World War II. The diary was given to her for her thirteenth birthday and chronicles the events of her life from 12 June 1942 until its final entry of 1 August 1944. When Anne set off to write this diary she intended it to be the 'musings of a thirteen-year-old girl' and felt that later on no one, including herself, would be interested in it. However, this document is such a unique record that it was eventually translated from its original Dutch into many languages and became one of the world's most widely read books. Many films, television and theatrical productions, even an opera, have been based on this diary. Described as the work of a mature and insightful mind, the diary provides an intimate examination of daily life under Nazi occupation. Anne's diary, which she fondly called "Kitty", is not an ordinary piece of writing but a creative work that has generated interest in people from all age groups and all nationalities.

- Q2.** There are some examples of diary or journal entries in "Before You Read" section. Compare these with what Anne writes in her diary. What language was the diary originally written in? What way is Anne's diary different? (Textual)

Technically speaking a diary is a book having a separate page for each day in which one writes down one's thoughts and feelings or about what had happened on that day. A journal, on the other hand, is "a full record of a journey, a period of time, or an event, written everyday." What is written in the examples in the section "Before you read" follow the conventional format of diary and journal. However, this extract is different in the sense that it does not give a chronological day-to-day account of the writer's activities. This diary was originally written in Dutch language and the present extract is just a small excerpt from the main text. Anne adopts an unconventionally personal style of writing her diary. She records such thoughts that she is reluctant to share with anyone else. Therefore, Anne's diary is a peculiar genre crafted by a writer who was not formally trained in the art of writing.

- Q3.** What tells you that Anne loved her grandmother?

*Or*

**What kind of relationship did Anne have with her grandmother?**

Anne loved her grandmother dearly. The present extract has quite a few instances that show the immense love Anne had for her grandmother. When her parents emigrated to Holland in 1933, this four-year-old child, left in the charge of her grandmother in Aachen, did not raise any objections at all. It is too tender an age to be torn away from parents. But Anne loved her grandmother and was comfortable with her.

In the summer of 1941, Anne willingly did not have elaborate

birthday celebrations because her grandmother was unwell and had to be operated upon.

After her grandmother's death, Anne lit a candle along with her birthday candles in 1942, to pay tribute to her dear grandmother. Referring to her grandmother in one of her diary entries, Anne writes that "No one knows how often I think of her and still love her." All these instances show that Anne really loved her grandmother.

- Q4. How does Anne feel about her father, her grandmother, Mrs Kuperus and Mr Keesing? What do these things tell you about her?** *(Textual)*

Anne considers her father to be the "most adorable" father she had ever seen. She loves her grandmother dearly and lives happily with her even at the tender age of four in the absence of her parents who had already emigrated to Holland.

Anne has immense regard and love for her headmistress, Mrs Kuperus. It was heartbreak when she separated from her at the end of her sixth form. She lovingly considers her Mathematics teacher, Mr Keesing, to be an unpredictable "old fogey", but eventually wins his love.

All these things show that Anne was a cheerful young girl who viewed everyone around her optimistically. She was loving and appreciative about her elders and strengthened her relationships with affection. Her bond with the people she loved and respected was very strong and stable. This unique trait indicated Anne's level of maturity.

- Q5. Anne says teachers are the "most unpredictable creatures on Earth." Is Mr Keesing unpredictable? How?** *(Textual)*

Talking in general about teachers, Anne says, "Teachers are the most unpredictable creatures on earth." When the student is

unsure about passing a test, the teachers pass him, and when he is confident, they fail him. In a way, Mr Keesing too has an unpredictable nature. At one stage, he gets so annoyed with Anne for being a chatterbox that he assigns her extra homework. Anne's arguments supporting her talkative nature amuse him but he punishes her further when she resumes talking. However, when Anne expects punishment for indirectly mocking at him, he takes it lightly and allows her to talk in the class. Besides, he reads out her poem to the other students adding his comments and also begins to make jokes. Surely, Mr Keesing, too is an unpredictable teacher.

**Q6. What do the following two statements tell the reader about Anne Frank as a person?** (Textual)

- (i) We don't seem to be able to get any closer, and that's the problem. Maybe, it's my fault that we don't confide in each other.
- (ii) I don't want to jot down the facts in the diary the way most people would, but I want the diary to be my friend.
- (i) The first statement tells us that Anne is a reserved and introvert child who, in spite of having a friendly family and group, hesitates to confide in anyone. She avoids sharing her secrets with others and does not feel comfortable while expressing her true self. However, she is a very modest girl who owns up her shortcoming as the primary reason behind the absence of a true friend in her life.
- (ii) The second statement tells us that Anne does not believe in copying the standard way of writing and wants to be original in her purpose and style. She is innovative and treats her diary like a very close, alive and throbbing friend. Therefore, she even gives it a name 'Kitty'. Anne, thus comes out as a mature and sensible teenager.

- Q7.** What idea do you form about the writer from her use of the statement, "Margot went to Holland in December, and I followed in February, when I was plunked down on the table as a birthday present for Margot." *(Textual)*

The statement reveals Anne's subtle sense of humour. Her elder sister Margot, after staying in Aachen with their grandmother and Anne for some time, went to Holland in December 1933 to live with their parents who had emigrated in September 1933. Anne was younger, so she joined the family later in the month of February. Her day of arrival in Holland coincided with her sister Margot's birthday. But Anne does not record this event in her diary in a simple way. Instead she uses the expression that "I was plunked down on the table as a birthday present for Margot". This is indeed original and generates laughter because it aptly describes the situation where a younger sibling is thrust upon and tends to overshadow an elder sibling's birthday. The entire expression is innovative and the use of the word "plunked down" has a lasting impact on the reader's mind.

- Q8.** Write what you learn about Anne from her statement, "If you ask me, there are so many dummies that about a quarter of the class should be kept back, but teachers are the most unpredictable creatures on earth."? *(Textual)*

Anne's observation that, "a quarter of the class should be kept back" because they are dummies, tells us that she herself is intelligent and good at studies. She has a good sense of assessment that helps her to observe with clarity and certainty that about one fourth of her classmates do not deserve to be sent to the next form. However, she is not certain about the criterion according to which the teachers would decide promotion of students. That is why she calls them the 'most unpredictable

creatures'. This statement tells the reader that Anne analyses and weighs things objectively. She has a mind of her own and forms her opinions based on her keen sense of observation about people around her. She does not follow blindly the conventional information handed down to younger people.

- Q9.** What idea do you form about Anne from her observation "Anyone could ramble on and leave big spaces between the words, but the trick was to come up with convincing arguments to prove the necessity of talking."? *(Textual)*

The statement tells us that Anne was a perfectionist and did not like to finish her task just for the sake of it. She had a sense of commitment and devoted herself to every bit of work with sincerity. The statement also tells us that Anne believed in herself and could justify her actions with convincing arguments. In addition to this art of validating her behaviour, she also had a sense of humour. She could have resorted to the easy way of completing her extra homework that she got as punishment for talking in the class like a chatterbox. She could have simply rambled about the subject and could have left spaces and gaps to complete the essay, but she did not do anything like this. Instead, she thought of strong arguments to justify her talkative nature. She argued that talking is a natural trait of every student and she, in particular, had inherited it from her mother. Both these arguments stand valid and also generate humour.

- Q10.** Give an account of Anne's early life and family as written by her in her diary.

Anne's family consisted of five members – her grandmother, her parents, her elder sister and she herself. Her father, Otto Frank, was the 'most adorable' one for Anne. He married her

mother, Edith Hollander Frank, when he was thirty-six and she was twenty-five. Margot, her elder sister, was born in 1926 while Anne herself was born three years later on 12 June 1929. Her father and mother emigrated to Holland in September 1933, while she and her sister were sent to their grandmother in Aachen. Margot went to Holland in December and Anne joined the family a couple of months later in February on Margot's birthday. Anne started with Montessori nursery school right away. She stayed there until she was six, at which time she started in the first form. She had a loving teacher in the sixth form, Mrs Kuperus, who was also her headmistress. She bid her a tearful farewell to her at the end of school.

Anne loved her grandmother dearly and was very sad after her death in 1942 which was preceded by a period of illness. In July 1942, this family had to go into hiding to escape persecution by the Nazi government of Germany. Anne, her sister and their mother died while in concentration camps. However, her father survived the holocaust.

#### **Q11. When and why did Anne start writing her diary?**

**Or**

**Anne found a true friend in the form of her diary. Discuss.**

Anne Frank started writing her diary in June 1942 until she wrote its final entry on 1 August 1944. Anne was a very sensitive girl with a reserved nature and could not share her innermost thoughts with the family or friends around her. She had a loving family and a group of friends with whom she could laugh and have fun, but she could not confide in any of them. So, she always felt the need of one 'true friend' who had the patience to listen to all her musings. Her diary was given to her as a gift on her thirteenth birthday. She believed that 'paper had

more patience than people', so she considered her diary to be her 'true friend' whom she had been seeking for so long. She gave it a name "Kitty" and started recording her feelings and observations on a variety of subjects, unlike the traditional manner of diary-writing. Therefore, she found a true friend in the diary who listened to her patiently and kept all her secrets to itself.

- Q12. Anne believes that 'Paper has more patience than people'. Do you agree with this statement? Why/Why not?**

Anne's belief that 'Paper has more patience than people' is true. Paper is a passive and silent receptor that does not get restless like human beings if anything is written on it. It allows the writer to record as many and as varied thoughts as required by him/her. Anne had a loving family and a group of friends with whom she could have fun. But she could not confide in any of them because her reserved nature did not allow her to open up to others. She felt that her musings were not of any interest to people around her and they would lose patience if she would talk to them about her feelings and observations. So, she opted to write her thoughts in her diary that she lovingly named as "Kitty". This helped her to express herself freely without worrying about responses. "Kitty" was all paper and had unlimited patience to listen to all the relevant or irrelevant things Anne told it. So, the statement that 'Paper has more patience than people' is completely agreeable.

- Q13. Who was Mr Keesing? How and why did he punish Anne? How did Anne respond to these punishments? What character traits of Anne does her response highlight?**

Mr Keesing was Anne's mathematics teacher. Anne considered him to be an 'old fogey' who was much annoyed with her

because she talked too much. He gave her several warnings but when Anne still continued to talk, he assigned her extra homework as punishment. He told her to write an essay on the topic "A Chatterbox". Anne did not finish this task by rambling about and leaving big spaces in the essay. Instead she wrote valid arguments justifying her talkative nature. She wrote three pages and argued that talking is a student's trait and that she would do her best to keep it under control. However, she also wrote that she would never be able to cure herself of the habit since her mother talked as much as she did and there wasn't much that could be done about inherited traits. Mr Keesing had a good laugh at Anne's arguments, but when she proceeded to talk her way through the next lesson, he assigned her a second essay. This time it was on the topic "An Incorrigible Chatterbox". Anne dutifully handed in the assignment on time. All went well for two whole lessons. However, during the third lesson he finally lost patience and told Anne that as punishment for talking in class she had to write an essay titled "Quack, Quack, Quack, Said Mistress Chatterbox". In response, Anne took help from her friend, Sanne, who was good at poetry, and wrote the entire essay in verse.

The three assignments submitted by Anne highlight that she was a very lively and cheerful girl. She never took any task lightly and gave a serious thought to the topics every time. She was a very creative and intelligent girl and made extra efforts to complete her tasks.

**Q14. What was Anne's third essay? Whose help did she take in writing it? What effect did it have on Mr Keesing?**

*Or*

**How did Anne's third essay amuse Mr Keesing?**

Anne's third essay was on the topic "Quack, Quack, Quack, Said Mistress Chatterbox." She took help from her friend Sanne, who was good at poetry, to write this entire essay in verse. Anne was delighted when she completed this essay. She knew that Mr Keesing was trying to play a joke on her with that ridiculous subject, but she had made sure that the joke was on him. She wrote a beautiful poem about a mother duck and a father swan with three baby ducklings who were bitten to death by the father because they quacked too much. This way she indirectly hinted at Mr Keesing who was trying to stop Anne from her natural habit of talking. Luckily, Mr Keesing took the joke the right way. He read the poem to the class, adding his own comments, and to several other classes as well. Since then, Anne was allowed to talk and wasn't assigned any extra homework either. On the contrary, Mr Keesing was so amused that he himself started making jokes.

