

## From the diary of a Jewish girl

Anne Frank's diary is considered one of the most fundamental testimonies of the Holocaust. The story of Anne, a girl whose dreams, plans, and desires were brutally interrupted by the war and death in a concentration camp, show us the horrible consequences of racism and persecution of people for who they are. During this workshop, the participants will play the role of detectives tasked with locating the missing fragments of Anne Frank's diary. Their missions will make them aware of the challenges facing Jews who went in hiding during World War II.



### OBJECTIVES

The participant:

- extends their knowledge on how Jews lived during World War II
- knows the consequences of being persecuted for one's nationality or background
- practices working in a group
- learns to function in VR and to use new applications,
- develops their empathy.



### MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

- A VR headset with the Anne Frank House VR installed (before the workshop, go through the entire story to unblock the Explore option, which the participants will use),
- printouts of the missions and text fragments for the groups (Appendix 1)
- six envelopes (two for each mission),
- a screen or computer to play the video *Anne Frank – the girl who described the Holocaust*,
- pens, pencils, marker pens or crayons (as many as there are participants),
- pieces of A4 paper.



#### AGE

13+

#### DURATION

90 minutes

#### NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

10

## APPLICATION

Anne Frank House VR  
<https://www.oculus.com>



scan the QR code

**Note:** this script uses an app for the Oculus Quest 2 headset. If you have another headset, find a similar app that works with it.

## WORKSHOP

### Welcome

Greet the participants. Ask them to sit down in a circle and ask them to play a game where they have to imagine that they will have to go into hiding for a long time, and there is no telling how long, and they can take only one personal item. As the instructor, begin by saying 'My name is ..., and to go into hiding I would take ...', giving the name of the object. Then, the person to your right says: 'This is ... (giving your name) and she/he would take into hiding ...'. This is repeated by the successive participants until everyone has introduced themselves and say what they would take with them.

Ask the participants to reflect on how easy it was for them to pick a particular object, and why they chose it: was it sentimental reasons or practical considerations? Thank them for sharing their thoughts.

### Introduction to the subject

Tell the participants they will play the part of detectives in search of the lost fragments of the diary of Anne Frank, the girl who spent over two years during World War II hiding in a secret annexe of the building where her father's office was located. To introduce the participants to Anne Frank and the story of her *Diary*, play them the short YouTube video *Anne Frank – the girl who described the Holocaust* (in Polish) or find another similar video.

Tell them to watch the video carefully, because the information in it may be useful for one of their missions.

## Main part

Split the participants into two groups – either letting them do it themselves or drawing lots. Tell them they will perform missions that would help them find the lost fragments of Anne Frank's diary. They will receive envelopes numbered 1 to 3 containing the details of their missions. They must perform the tasks in the correct order so as not to interrupt another team, and they will have between 5 and 15 minutes to accomplish their mission, as stated in their detailed instructions. After they finish their task, they check their outcome with you. If they have been successful, they receive a fragment of Anne's *Diary*. Once they have all the fragments, the teams arrange them chronologically and read them out loud. After they have done that, they receive from you the final words written by Anne and the game is over.

The envelopes you will have prepared in advance contain the following missions:

**Mission 1: daily entertainment** – the group's task is to solve a crossword.

**Mission 2: return to the past** – the group's task is to answer the question using the app Anne Frank House VR.

**Mission 3: contemporary record** – the group's task is to prepare a post or a video (for TikTok/Instagram/Facebook) Anne could post if she were living today.

The missions and text fragments are in Appendix 1, and the instructions and answers for you are in Appendix 2.

After all the missions have been accomplished and the fragments have been obtained, ask the teams to arrange them chronologically and read out loud. Once they have, give them the final words Anne wrote (Fragment 7 of the *Diary*) and let the participants read them. Discuss the fragments, the emotions that the Jews in hiding may have experienced, and how they lived. Point out that they may have had worries and moments of terror, but they also experienced happier times: they argued, laughed, dreamed, had plans and hopes for the future, and there was a budding relationship between Anne and Peter. They were people like us, who found themselves in a situation that resulted in death for many of them just because someone deemed them a 'lower' or 'worse' race. Ask the participants if they could imagine finding themselves in a similar situation today. How would they feel, what would they do? Where would they look for help? Allow the participants to share their thoughts.

## Conclusion and evaluation

Thank the participants for their time. Hand out pens/marker pens and pieces of A4 paper and ask them to do the 'hands' evaluation exercise. Ask them to trace their palm on the paper. On each finger, they should write one thing about today's meeting:

- on the thumb: the best thing about the meeting
- on the index finger: what they will tell their friends about it
- on the middle finger: the weakest side of the meeting,
- on the ring finger: what they would change,
- on the little finger: what they have learnt/found out (what was surprising).

## Useful links

The Anne Frank website  
<https://annefrank.org.pl/>

The Google Arts and Culture Anne Frank homepage  
<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/GQUxAm6liAwA8A?hl=pl>

The film *My friend Anne Frank*  
<https://www.netflix.com/pl/title/81248111>

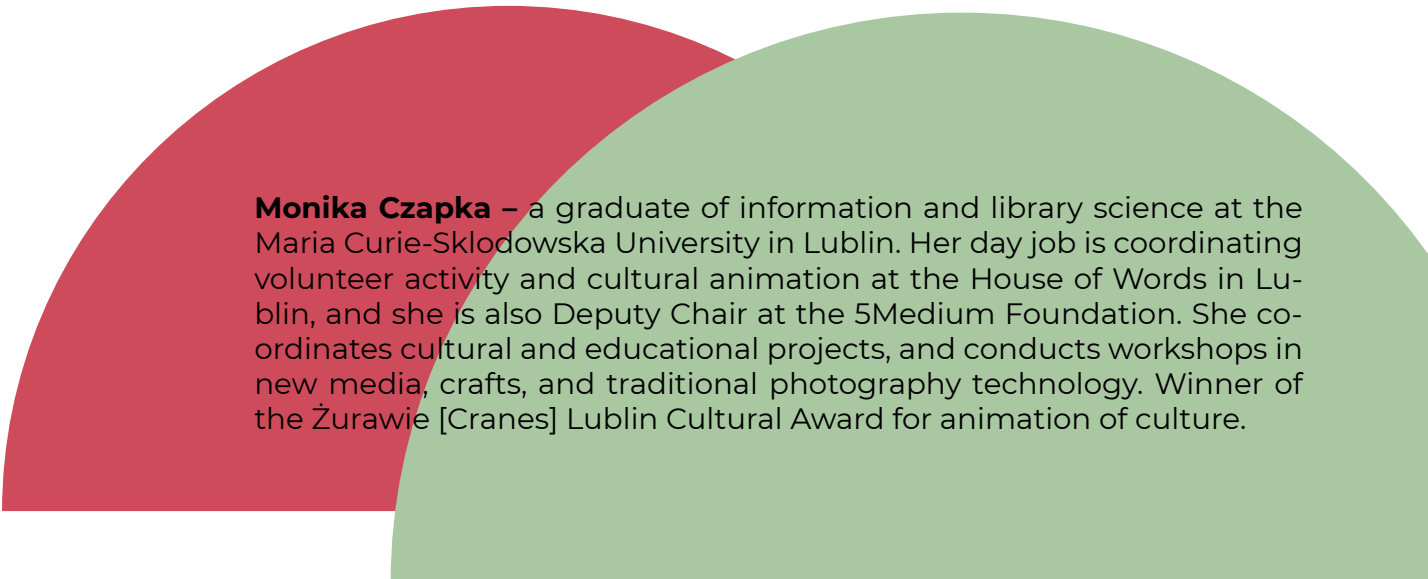
Podcast episode (in Polish): *Anne Frank's Diary – memory that survived the Holocaust*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-EQ9QI6WMg>

## Notes

1. The workshop is suitable for young adults, adults or senior citizens.
2. Before the workshop, review the story of Anne Frank in the VR app in order to unblock the option to explore her home.

## Appendixes

1. *Missions and text fragments for the groups*
2. *Directions for the instructor*



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