

MIEP GIES A Dangerous Secret

Miep Gies didn't look like a criminal. To a casual observer, she appeared meek and obedient. But every day for two years, Miep Gies broke the law. Today, the world salutes her for having the courage and compassion to do that.

² In 1939, Miep (pronounced MEEP) was living and working in Amsterdam, Netherlands. She worked for a company that sold jam-making products. That fall, World War II broke out. A few months later, Hitler and his Nazi soldiers took over the Netherlands. Miep knew Hitler hated all Jews. Still, it was shocking to see Nazi soldiers begin to round up Jews and ship them off to forced labor camps. Miep Gies was not a Jew, but she hated what was happening. Rage smoldered inside her every time she saw a Nazi uniform.

³ By 1942, Miep's own boss was in danger. His name was Otto Frank. Mr. Frank desperately wanted to protect his wife Edith and their two daughters, Margot and Anne. But what could he do? As a Jew, he had no rights. He and his family weren't allowed to leave Amsterdam. They weren't allowed even to ride the local streetcars or own a bicycle. They had to wear big yellow stars on their coats so Nazi soldiers could spot them easily. And any day now, the soldiers would come and take them all away.

⁴ Miep knew that some Jews tried to avoid capture. Many ran for the coast, hoping to get onto a ship bound for England. Others snuck out to the countryside, hiding in abandoned shops or old barns. Miep wondered if the Franks had ever thought of fleeing. But she kept her questions to herself. She was sure Mr. Frank would do what he thought best.

⁵ Then one day, Otto Frank called Miep into his office.

⁶ "Miep," he said, "I have a secret to confide in you."

⁷ Miep listened as Otto explained his plan. There were some unfinished rooms in the attic above his office. He wanted to hide his family there. Would Miep be willing to help him?

⁸ It was a lot to ask. In order to help the Franks, Miep would somehow have to smuggle food into the attic every day. What if someone saw her? Besides, how would she get the food in the first place? Wartime rationing meant that people could buy only enough to feed their own families. If Miep started buying food for four extra people, surely someone would notice. The neighbors would become suspicious and report her to the authorities.

⁹ Furthermore, it was not just four people who would be hiding in the attic. Mr. Frank had invited a business partner to come with him, as well as the man's wife and son. So Miep would really need to take care of seven people.

¹⁰ Miep knew all this. She knew that if the Nazis found out, they would probably send her to a labor camp, too. Yet when Otto Frank turned to her, Miep never hesitated. Would she help? "Of course," she said quickly.

¹¹ Mr. Frank hoped to prepare the attic rooms before they moved in. He wanted to bring in clothing and arrange the beds. But there wasn't time. In early July, Margot Frank received a notice in the mail telling her she had been assigned to a labor camp. She was supposed to report right away. When Otto Frank heard that, he immediately contacted Miep. Early the next morning, they made their move. Miep brought Margot to the secret attic rooms. The rest of the group followed a short time later.

¹² And so began 25 months of hiding. The two families in the attic suffered in many ways. Their secret rooms were hot in the summer, cold in the winter. During the day, when the building was filled with office workers, they had to be very quiet. When sickness struck, they simply had to wait it out. There was no way they could get medical attention. Anne's eyes began to bother her, and she suffered from bad headaches. Her parents knew she needed glasses, but they couldn't risk sending her out to an eye doctor. Although all seven people worked together as best they could, their nerves grew jagged. At times, tension filled the air.

¹³ Miep, meanwhile, had problems of her own. Every morning she went to work early. She had to get to the office before the regular workers arrived. Quickly she slipped up to the attic, where her friends gave her a list of the food they needed. Then later each day, Miep went shopping. She tried to appear casual when she walked into a store and ordered large quantities of food.

¹⁴ After a while, Miep began to trust one particular grocer. He never asked questions, but filled her orders as best he could. Miep believed he understood—and approved of—what she was doing. But one day when she entered his shop, the grocer wasn't there. In his place was his terror-stricken wife.

¹⁵ "What's the matter?" asked Miep.

¹⁶ "My husband's been arrested," the woman whispered frantically. "They've taken him away. He was hiding Jews. Two Jews. I don't know what they'll do to him."

¹⁷ Miep's heart raced. She felt a wave of fear for this gentle man who had been so good to her. She knew it could just as easily have been she who had been discovered. In addition, she knew that now it would be harder than ever to get food for the people in the attic.

¹⁸ Luckily, Miep found another grocer who was willing to sell her extra food. Still, it was getting more and more difficult to find anything decent. The Nazis were diverting food supplies away from Amsterdam to feed their own troops. Sometimes Miep spent hours shopping and still wound up with half-rotten vegetables and spoiled meat.

¹⁹ The months dragged by. Miep struggled to keep up the spirits of those in the attic. She brought them news of the war—especially when the news was encouraging. She smuggled in armloads of books for them to read. She brought writing paper so young Anne could keep a diary. She managed to find sweets for the children. Once Miep and her husband even spent the night in the attic to help relieve their friends' boredom and unhappiness.

²⁰ Miep's life became even more stressful when she and her husband agreed to hide a Jewish boy in their own apartment. Miep also took pity on her dentist, a Jewish man named Fritz Pfeffer. She got the Franks' permission to bring him to the attic to live.

²¹ By the summer of 1944, Miep had reason to hope that the war would soon end. Hitler's troops were retreating from several European positions. But the war did not end

soon enough for the Frank family. Miep had been exceedingly careful. She had done all she could to protect the Franks and the others in the attic. She had tried never to draw attention to herself or her activities. Still, someone figured out what was going on and turned her in. Records show that the Nazis received an anonymous phone call telling them about the Jews in the attic.

²² On August 4, Nazis raided Miep's office building. They went directly to the secret rooms. The next thing Miep knew, her eight friends were being marched away by Nazi police. It was the last time she ever saw most of them.

²³ Miep herself was lucky. She was not arrested. After the Nazis took away her friends, she hurried to the attic. There, lying on the floor, she spotted Anne's diary. She picked it up and hid it in her desk drawer. It was a dangerous thing to keep, for it showed how deeply involved Miep had been in the conspiracy to save the Franks. But Miep didn't care. She promised herself she would keep the diary safe until Anne returned.

²⁴ Tragically, Anne Frank did not return. She and the others were sent to concentration camps. Although Otto Frank survived the ordeal, none of the others made it out alive. Miep was shattered when she learned the news.

²⁵ After the war, Miep gave Anne's diary to Otto. In time, he decided to publish it. That way, he hoped, others could learn how vibrant and kind-hearted his young daughter had been.

²⁶ Many years later, Miep herself wrote a book, which she called *Anne Frank Remembered*. In it she wrote, "I am not a hero.... I was only willing to do what was asked of me and what seemed necessary at the time." But on this point, the rest of the world disagrees. To people who know the story, Miep Gies is a hero. She is a woman of remarkable courage and conviction. She will always be remembered as a beacon of goodness and light during some of history's darkest days.

If you have been timed while reading this article, enter your reading time below. Then turn to the Words-per-Minute Table on and look up your reading speed (words per minute). Enter your reading speed on the graph on.

Reading Time: Lesson

_____:

Minutes

Seconds

A Finding the Main Idea

One statement below expresses the main idea of the article. One statement is too general, or too broad. The other statement explains only part of the article; it is too narrow. Label the statements using the following key:

M—Main Idea**B—Too Broad****N—Too Narrow**

- _____ 1. Every day Miep Gies shopped for food for the friends she was hiding in the secret rooms.
- _____ 2. Miep Gies hated the Nazis and did everything she could to oppose them.
- _____ 3. Risking her own life, Miep Gies hid the Frank family and other Jews from the Nazis for more than two years.

_____ Score 15 points for a correct M answer.

_____ Score 5 points for each correct B or N answer.

_____ **Total Score:** Finding the Main Idea

B Recalling Facts

How well do you remember the facts in the article? Put an X in the box next to the answer that correctly completes each statement about the article.

1. Miep agreed to hide the Franks in
 - ☐ a. her own apartment.
 - ☐ b. the attic above Mr. Frank's office.
 - ☐ c. an abandoned barn in the countryside.
2. The first person to move into the rooms was
 - ☐ a. Otto Frank.
 - ☐ b. Anne Frank.
 - ☐ c. Margot Frank.
3. During the day, the families in the secret rooms had to be quiet because
 - ☐ a. the building was filled with office workers.
 - ☐ b. the building was too hot in the summer.
 - ☐ c. Anne Frank suffered from bad headaches.
4. The grocer Miep trusted
 - ☐ a. made an anonymous call to the Nazi police.
 - ☐ b. sold her half-rotten vegetables and spoiled meats.
 - ☐ c. was arrested for hiding Jews.
5. After the Nazis took Miep's friends away,
 - ☐ a. the Nazis arrested Miep.

- ☐ b. Miep found Anne's diary.
- ☐ c. Miep published Anne's diary.

Score 5 points for each correct answer.

_____ **Total Score:** Recalling Facts

C Making Inferences

When you combine your own experience and information from a text to draw a conclusion that is not directly stated in that text, you are making an inference. Below are five statements that may or may not be inferences based on information in the article. Label the statements using the following key:

C—Correct Inference F—Faulty Inference

- _____ 1. The grocer approved of Miep's actions because he, too, was hiding Jews.
- _____ 2. Everyone in Amsterdam was helping the Jews hide from the Nazis.
- _____ 3. The people living in the secret rooms always got along very well.
- _____ 4. Miep Gies is a modest, hard-working woman.
- _____ 5. The Nazis discovered the hiding place because Miep had been careless.

Score 5 points for each correct answer.

_____ **Total Score:** Making Inferences

D Using Words Precisely

Each numbered sentence below contains an underlined word or phrase from the article. Following the sentence are three definitions. One definition is closest to the meaning of the underlined word. One definition is opposite or nearly opposite. Label those two definitions using the following key. Do not label the remaining definition.

C—Closest O—Opposite or Nearly Opposite

1. Rage smoldered inside her every time she saw a Nazi uniform.
- _____ a. cooled down
- _____ b. turned to ashes
- _____ c. burned slowly
2. At times, tension filled the air.
- _____ a. thick fog
- _____ b. a relaxed atmosphere
- _____ c. anxiety

3. "My husband's been arrested," the woman whispered frantically.

- _____ a. with great fear
 _____ b. calmly
 _____ c. very softly

4. Although Otto Frank survived the ordeal, none of the others made it out alive.

- _____ a. experiment
 _____ b. agreeable experience
 _____ c. terrible nightmare

5. She is a woman of remarkable courage and conviction.

- _____ a. strong beliefs
 _____ b. curiosity
 _____ c. faithlessness

_____ Score 3 points for each correct C answer.

_____ Score 2 points for each correct O answer.

_____ **Total Score:** Using Words Precisely

Enter the four total scores in the spaces below, and add them together to find your Reading Comprehension Score. Then record your score on the graph on.

Score Question Type

_____ Finding the Main Idea

_____ Recalling Facts

_____ Making Inferences

_____ Using Words Precisely

_____ **Reading Comprehension Score**

Author's Approach

Put an X in the box next to the correct answer.

1. The main purpose of the first paragraph is to

- ☐ a. describe Miep's appearance.
☐ b. inform readers about Miep's courage.
☐ c. convey a mood of fear.

2. Which of the following statements from the article best describes Miep Gies?
- ☐ a. "She appeared meek and obedient."
 - ☐ b. "She had tried to never draw attention to herself or her activities."
 - ☐ c. "She is a woman of remarkable courage and conviction."
3. In this article, "Miep's heart raced" means Miep
- ☐ a. had a heart condition.
 - ☐ b. was very frightened.
 - ☐ c. had been running too fast.
4. What does the author imply by saying "She will always be remembered as a beacon of goodness and light during some of history's darkest days"?
- ☐ a. Miep showed great bravery and caring at a time when Nazi cruelty and hatred controlled much of Europe.
 - ☐ b. Miep will always be remembered for bringing Anne Frank's diary to light.
 - ☐ c. Miep was good because she hid the Franks and other Jews from the Nazis.

_____ Number of correct answers

Record your personal assessment of your work on the Critical Thinking Chart on.

Summarizing and Paraphrasing

Put an X in the box next to the correct answer for questions 2 and 3. Follow the directions provided for the other question.

1. Complete the following one-sentence summary of the article using the lettered phrases from the phrase bank below. Write the letters on the lines.

Phrase Bank:

- a. her willingness to hide the Jewish families
- b. the arrest of Miep's friends
- c. how she managed to take care of them

The article about Miep Gies begins with _____, goes on to explain _____, and ends with _____.

2. Read the following statement about the article. Then read the paraphrase of that statement. Choose the reason that best tells why the paraphrase does not say the same thing as the statement.

Statement: Although the person who telephoned the Nazis remained anonymous, he or she must have been watching Miep's movements.

Paraphrase: Miep knew who made the phone call to the Nazis.

- ☐ a. Paraphrase says too much.
- ☐ b. Paraphrase doesn't say enough.
- ☐ c. Paraphrase doesn't agree with the statement about the article.
3. Choose the best one-sentence paraphrase for the following sentence from the article:
"Although all seven people worked together as best they could, their nerves grew jagged."
- ☐ a. Tensions arose in spite of the people's efforts to get along.
- ☐ b. The people living in the attic always felt nervous.
- ☐ c. The people living in the attic had a lot of work to do.

____ Number of correct answers

Record your personal assessment of your work on the Critical Thinking Chart on.

Critical Thinking

Put an X in the box next to the correct answer for questions 1 and 4. Follow the directions provided for the other questions.

1. From the article, you can predict that if the Nazis had not raided the secret attic
- ☐ a. Anne Frank and the others would have survived the war.
- ☐ b. Miep would have considered herself a hero.
- ☐ c. Anne Frank's diary would never have been published.
2. Using what you know about Miep Gies and what the article tells about her grocer, name three ways Miep is similar to and three ways Miep is different from the grocer. Cite the paragraph number(s) where you found details in the article to support your conclusions.

Similarities

Differences

3. Choose from the letters below to correctly complete the following statement. Write the letters on the lines.

According to the article, an anonymous phone call caused _____ to _____, and the effect was _____].

- a. raid the secret attic
 - b. all but one of those taken away died
 - c. the Nazi police
4. What did you have to do to answer question 2?
- ☐ a. find a contrast (how things are different)
 - ☐ b. find a description (how something looks)
 - ☐ c. find a comparison (how things are the same)

_____ Number of correct answers

Record your personal assessment of your work on the Critical Thinking Chart on.

Personal Response

A question I would like answered by Miep Gies is _____?"

Self-Assessment

Before reading this article, I already knew
