

Annelies Reading Group Guide

Questions and Topics for Discussion

1. In *Annelies*, Anne and her father, Pim, often have a thorny relationship as they cope with their trauma of surviving the war in different ways. How would you describe their different approaches in attempting to rebuild their lives?
2. Perhaps the most famous passage in Anne Frank's diary concerns her belief that people are basically good at their core. How do you think the novel *Annelies* addresses this? Does the fictional character of Anne believe this to be true, after her horrific experiences in the camp?
3. The relationship between the character of Anne and the boy, Raaf, is fraught with contradictions and danger. Why do you think Anne propelled herself into this relationship?
4. How do you think the Jewish concept of *tikkun olam*—"repairing the world" and taking moral responsibility for the welfare of others as well as one's own welfare—helped Anne repair herself?
5. Anne feels a tremendous amount of guilt surrounding the death of her sister, Margot. Do you think her guilt is warranted? How well do you think the character of Anne resolves her feelings of guilt by the end of the novel?
6. The real Anne Frank has become an international symbol of the loss perpetrated by the Holocaust, and became a powerful voice of hope through her diary. In what ways has she become mythologized? Did reading *Annelies* change the way you thought about her?
7. *Annelies* focuses on how anti-Semitism was still very present in Europe despite the fall of the Nazi regime and the liberation of the camps. Did this surprise you? How is this different than other WWII novels?
8. When you first picked up the book reimagining Anne Frank as having survived the Holocaust, what did you think of that starting place? Did your opinion change after finishing the book?
9. At the end of the book, the author includes a list of fictional letters from readers responding to *The Diary of Anne Frank*. How did you think the young letter-writers in the book experienced Anne's diary differently than we do?
10. This novel is based on real people and events. Did knowing that transform your reading experience? Do you read differently when characters are purely fictional?