

End of Unit 3 Assessment: Write a Narrative in Interview Form

(Example for Teacher Reference)

Upstander Model: “Interview with Anna Jensen”

Introduction and Biography:

I interviewed Anna Jensen on March 22, 2008, near her home in Jupiter, Florida, at the local library where Anna still volunteers. At the time of the interview, Anna was eighty-eight years old. Anna relayed events from her early life in Amsterdam as the middle child of five siblings, and shared her experiences in the war, which began when she was a young student, at age twenty-two. Anna was involved in the resistance movement and worked to smuggle Jews to safety. After the war, Anna moved to the United States where she worked as a teacher and librarian, married, and raised three children, one of whom was present at our interview session.

Sets a context and organizes the sequence naturally using interview questions.

Interview:

Question 1: Anna, you are known as a rescuer. I would like to know more about your story. Can you tell me how you came to do this work?

Anna’s Response:

The reason I got started with this work is actually because of a terrible event I witnessed. I remember it so well. It was a beautiful spring day in 1942 in Amsterdam. I was studying to be a teacher and had so much work to do that night that I knew I wouldn’t have time to make dinner. I stopped at the local Jewish bakery for a loaf of fresh-baked rye bread. The baker made such wonderful bread—the whole neighborhood loved his bakery.

Follow-Up Question: And then what happened?

Anna's Response:

As I turned the corner, I heard shouts and scuffling. At first I couldn't tell what was going on, but suddenly I realized that my friend the baker was surrounded by two German soldiers with swastikas stitched on their uniforms. They were dragging him out of his bakery. "Dear God, no," I whispered to myself and for that instant, time stood still. Horrified, I watched the soldiers muscle him into a military truck and drive away. As the siren's scream filled the air, I could barely hear beneath that sound the muffled screams of the baker—and then they were gone. The muffled screams of the baker, the baker's apron hanging there on a hook as if the baker had just stepped out for a moment to buy butter. But a dreadful emptiness filled the bakery. I never saw him again.

Uses dialogue and description to explore a significant moment and develop the experience that led Anna to act as an upstander.

Question 2: How did your experience affect you?

Anna's Response:

After watching this I was ashamed at myself. I stood and watched it happen; and I *still* feel shame for not trying to stop the soldiers. I knew the baker well—his shop was in my neighborhood, a few blocks away from my father's shop. I still remember the image of him being pulled away, and the fear in his face. I began to wonder how someone so talented and trusted could be wrong or bad? A good man was taken away by the Gestapo. I could not ignore what was happening right in front of me anymore. I decided to act.

Uses reflection to develop Anna's reaction and response to her experience, and names this moment as the one that propelled her to act.

Question 3: So, what did you decide to do to take action?

Anna's Response:

I spent the rest of the war resisting. I found other people like myself and we helped our Jewish neighbors find safe houses and bunkers in the countryside. It was terribly risky and complicated work, and with every person we hid there was a chance of being caught and sentenced to death or sent to Auschwitz. Yet, I knew that if I did not help, I would not be able to live with myself. For every person I was able to save, I thought of my baker and wished I had acted in time to save his life.

Relevant descriptive details show how Anna acted as an upstander. Reflection develops experience and highlights its connection to her work during the Holocaust.

Question 4: Now that you are looking back at your experience as a resistor, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Anna's Response:

Well, I would say it has made me realize two things. One is that if there is any way we can prevent evil like the Holocaust from happening again, we need to do it. Hitler, after all, was elected. It now seems so important to me to think about how we choose our leaders and make our laws—for our country, for our communities. The second is that life is full of small choices and those can have a large impact on other people. I need to watch carefully for those moments and ask myself how my reaction can impact others. I know it is hard to tell, but my hope is that my actions will lead to good in the world.

Reflection and descriptive details develop Anna's experience. She reflects on important takeaways from her work as an upstander and explains its impact on her.

Question 5: Now that this is many years later for you, is there any advice you have for people my age?

Anna's Response:

Overall, I wish you never have to make the choice I had to make. I hope you never have to see your friend the baker being dragged away. However, there will be times when you see opportunities to make a choice and step in, and help and do good in the world. All around you there will be choices. These might be big—like opportunities to vote in a few years, or small - like supporting a neighbor who needs help unloading groceries. When you see an opportunity to alleviate suffering, or to build a better world, take it.

Conclusion follows from and reflects on Anna's experience and allows her to share advice for future generations. She refers back to her experience and acknowledges importance of taking action to make a difference.