

Children at war class assembly

Narrator 1: It's 1939

Narrator 2: That's seventy years ago to you.

Narrator 1: And..... we are inside the Odeon picture house, Wimbledon.

Narrator 2: That's London to you.

Narrator 1: In front of you is an excited audience watching the latest Disney film, Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs. They had no television in those days, so they

Narrator 2: Or DVDs

Narrator 1: So they.....

Narrator 2: Or computers

Narrator 1: So they.....

Narrator 2: Or play stations.....

Narrator 1: Or any other form of home entertainment that required mains electricity or batteries, except the use of a wireless

Narrator 2: That's a radio to you.

Narrator 1: So every Saturday morning they would visit the local picture house – that's cinema to you.

Narrator 2: Can we watch the film? Can we? Can we?

Narrator 1: Alright!

Children are on stage watching Snow White. Music stops, children freeze, and Chamberlain's speech is broadcast.

Narrator 1: So Hitler invaded Poland.

Narrator 2: What, all by himself?

Narrator 1: No! His army did, and consequently we declared war on Germany.

Narrator 1: Anyway, our story is set in this country. The British Government decided it was likely that our large cities would be bombed. Therefore they planned to encourage as many people as possible to leave the cities and move out into the countryside.

Narrator 2: These included school children and their teachers, preschool children and their mothers, expectant mothers and the blind or disabled.

Narrator 1: And, as it happens, in front of you is a group of school children. Half of these would leave the city for the safety of the countryside, whilst the other half would stay with their parents.

Narrator 2: So what happened to the ones that stayed?

Narrator 1: By 1940 our cities were being heavily bombed. During an air raid people took shelter. If you lived in London, and you were close enough, you could go to your local underground station, though most people built shelters in the garden, or even inside their homes.

Narrator 2: Let's go and see a typical family.....

Seven children are on stage. Two huddling together, five with suitcases. A group of 5 children stand behind huddled children.

Mo: Hello, I'm Mo. Me and my sister, Mary, live in London. Our friends have all been evacuated to the countryside; but Mum said she couldn't bear to leave us, so we stayed here, in Kenilworth Road. It seems like every night you'll hear the sirens, and then the inevitable drone of the planes' engines. The bombing is like the worst thunder storm you could imagine. The walls shake, the windows rattle and you pray that a bomb doesn't have your name written on it. Anyway, during the raids we have to take shelter, which is under the kitchen table. Dad reinforced it with metal bars and chicken wire.

Planes can be heard

Mary: I'm scared, Mo. I'm really scared.

Mo: Don't worry, Mary. Quick, under the table. It's the waiting that's the worst, wondering whether you're next.

Mary: Mo, I want Mum.

Mo: It's alright Mary, Mum's gonna be back soon. Mum's a nurse in the local hospital.....Mary thinks Mum might not come home one day...to tell the truth so do I, but I can't let on, not for Mary's sake. Oh, and Dad's away...fighting the Nazis.

Bombs are heard

Mo: Can you hear them? I don't feel happy when it's all over, but grateful.. , 'cause if it they haven't got us, they've hit someone else. The doodlebugs frighten me the most. They're like flying bombs. You can hear the engines drone on and on....and when the engine cuts you know the bomb is going to fall.

Doodlebug is heard

Large crash lights go out - Nightmare children

London Bridge is falling down,
Falling down, Falling down.
London Bridge is falling down,
My fair lady.

Planes and bombs will wake you up
Wake you up, wake you up
Planes and bombs will wake you up
My fair lady.

Bombs and house do not mix,
Do not mix, Do not mix.
Bombs and houses do not mix,
My fair lady

Tears and screams won't help you now
Help you now, help you now
Tears and screams won't help you now
My fair lady

Can you hear the engine cut
Engine cut, engine cut?
Count to ten, your eyes are shut
My fair lady

Bombs are getting closer now
Closer now, closer now
Bombs are getting closer now
The next one is for you.

Screams heard and the lights go out.

Narrator 2: Gosh, what happened to them?

Narrator 1: You'll have to wait and see.

Narrator 2: And the children that were evacuated?

Narrator 1: Well, they'd pack up a suitcase and head for the railway station.

Keith: Come on, Terry. It's my turn to carry the sign.

Terry: Don't be daft. You couldn't even lift it.

Keith: Yes I can. And you said I could carry it when I got to the station.

Vern: It's my turn next, squirt! You shouldn't be in this group anyway.

Susan: You leave Keith alone, Vernon Phillips, you big bully. Go on Terry, let Keith have a go.

Terry: Why should I?

Susan: 'cause if you don't I will kick your shins.

Mary: You did promise him, Terry.

Terry: Alright

Mary: I wish I knew where we were going.

Susan: Miss Roberts says nobody knows – so the enemy won't find out
and bomb the train

Vern: Somebody must know.

Mary: Not necessarily.

Vern: Of course they must, dunce head. The train driver must know
Otherwise he couldn't take us there.

Mary: Yes, he could. He's only got to follow the rails. He doesn't
Have to steer or anything.

Keith: I want to go to the lav.

Susan: You'll have to wait until we get on the train.

Terry: I hope we're going to the seaside.

Susan: I'd rather go to the country. I,ve never been there.

Mary: I feel all excited. It's like going on holiday.

Vern: You don't take gas masks on holiday.

Mary: I hope we don't have to wear them again. I nearly suffocated
when we had to have that practice.

Vern: That was good fun.

Susan: I'm surprised you're not still wearing yours. You looked better
in it.

I

Roberts: Fighting again, Alan.

Susan: He pulled my hair.

Vern: He kicked me.

Keith: I want to go to the lav

Roberts: You'll have to wait until you've got on the train.

Evacuee 1 Can we go next to the engine, Miss?

Evacuee 2 Can I sit by a window, Miss?

Evacuee 3: Billy's got a catapult, Miss.

Roberts: All right, children- just calm down. I'll deal with you all in a minute -once you have moved up the platform. And I want you all on your best behaviour.

Keith: Look there's Dad.

Susan: And Mum.

Dad: Have you got your toothpaste?

Mum: Look after your little brother, Susan. Don't let him out of your sight.

'We Don't Know Where To'

The whistle is blowing, so soon we'll be going,
but we don't know where to.

We're very excited, at being invited,
But we don't know where to

Had this sudden invitation to an unknown destination,
Where do you think it can be?

Seems that we've no way of knowing where exactly we are going,
Some say we're off to the sea.

But though we want to get on board and underway,
We wish that mum and dad could come with us today.

Goodbye, goodbye, Mum please don't cry
'cause we're not down hearted, we want to get started,
Though we don't know where, we don't care where,
We don't know where to

Terry: Why's he still waving. We must be miles away by now.

Susan: He's not hurting you.

Child 1: Here get off my foot

Keith: I couldn't help it. They fill half the train

Child 1: You cheeky blighter. I'll box your ears.

Keith: You do and I'll set my sister on you.

Child 1 : Her, she couldn't knock the custard off a trifle.

Susan punches the child

Child 1: Here, that hurt.

Susan: It was meant to.

Child 2: I hope you brought some spare nappies for him.

Child 3: And his dummy.

Mary: Take no notice of them, Keith. Come and sit by me.

Child 2: There isn't room.

Mary: Yes there is, if you move your fat backside. Here, Keith, have a bit of my chocolate.

Keith: Mrs Roberts said we weren't to eat until we got there.

Terry: Vern and I ate ours in the playground.

Keith: I'll tell on you.

Terry: You blooming better not.

Susan pushes Terry to the seat

Susan: Sit down. You're making the place untidy.

Vern: Flipping kids. Who'd have them?

Mary: Go on. Have a bite. Mrs Roberts won't find out.

Lights go out and the children scream.

Keith: I told you she'd find out.

Terry: That's just a tunnel, twerp.

Keith: I won't to go to the lav.

Susan: Oh no, not again.

Child 1: It's the station.

Roberts: Get your bags ready children.

Mary: Is it the seaside or the countryside?

Terry: Has it got a football team?

Susan: Has it got a Woolworths?

Roberts: You'll have to wait and see.

Narrator 1: Once they arrived at their destinations, the evacuees were often taken to the village hall, where the local people would choose who they were to look after. The evacuees didn't have a say in the matter.

Roberts: Come on children. Line up just as if you were at assembly back at home, smallest at the front, tallest at the back.

*Take your pick, people, take your pick
You've a choice of tall or small or thin or thick.
We're just ordinary laddies, some are good and some are baddies.
But for Pete's sake, make it quick and take your pick.*

*Take your pick, people, take your pick,
Promise we won't bite or butt or spit or kick
We're all trying to be cheerful, but we might give you an earful
If you cannot make it quick and take your pick*

*Take your pick, people, take your pick
Just because we're children, please don't take the Mick.
And though we seem calm and quiet, there will be a ruddy riot,
If you're not quick, and take your pick.*

Children leave with adults leaving two children on stage.

Keith: Why haven't we been picked? What if we aren't picked?

Susan: Because you keep sticking out your tongue.

Keith: I'm frightened Susan.

Susan: Chin up, things won't be that bad.

When you feel fed up and frightened,
Don't be a whining weed, Throw out your chest, plan for the best,
Hope is the thing that you need.
Don't be a grey Jimmy Dismal
We are the bulldog breed
Mustn't give in, you can still win.
Hope is the thing that you need
You need hope....don't let it go
Hope...just let it grow
Don't think that you are a failure
You know you can succeed.
We're all agreed, it's guaranteed,
Hope is the thing that you need.

Mrs Carlton: I've only got room for one, I'm afraid.

Roberts: Oh, but they're brother and sister, If you could possibly take both.

Susan: I'm not leaving my brother. I promised Mum.

Mrs Carlton: Well, I guess I could squeeze one more in . Come on you two.

Narrator 2: So, they had a holiday in the country.

Narrator 1: Well, it's not that simple. Some children did find loving homes, but many ended up with families that didn't want them, and many brothers and sister were separated. Or they simply didn't get on with the local children.

Izaak and Joe return to the stage

Vern: There's nothing to do in this village

Terry: It's a dump.

Vern: When you've seen one cow, you've seen 'em all

Terry: Now, if I was back in London i'd be down the football

Vern: And for tea...the chippy.

Terry: But here it's back to the house for tea. And that won't be for hours.

Vern: Mind your manners. It's not tea but dinner...'cos we're posh round here.

Terry: One does apologise

Vern: Does one?

Terry: One does.

Vern: Spiffin'

Terry: Remember at home we'd always look round the shops on Saturday.
Well, it takes about thirty seconds to walk round the shops here.

Vern: If you walk slowly.

Local 1: Look what we've found. It's the vaccines.

Local 2: You can smell them from here

Local 3: Stupid city kids

Terry: Stupid yourself

Local 1: Did you hear that? One of them spoke

Locals: City kids eat silly grub
City kids don't use a tub
Poo! They don't half need a scrub
Silly city kids.

Evacuees: Country kiddies live in pits
Country kids are silly twits
Walk and talk like Ancient Brits
Silly country kids.

Locals: City kids don't play fair
City kids pull your hair
City kids don't half swear
Silly city silly city silly city kids.

Evacuees: Country kids eat funny bread
Country kids live in sheds
Sleep on straw instead of beds
Silly country, silly country, silly country kids.

Roberts: What is going on here? I'll be telling your parents and I'll be telling your teacher.

Narrator 2: Wow. I thought the evacuees had it easy. But I still want to know what happened to Mo and Mary.

Narrator 1: In 1945 the war ended and children could return to their parents. Look, here's Keith and Susan.

Children reunited with Mum and Dad. Play White Cliffs of Dover.

Susan: Mum, where's Mo?

Mum and Dad Point into the distance. Mo and Mary appear.

Narrator 2: Great, happy ending. I reckon we deserve a break.

Narrator 1: What have you got there?

Narrator 2: Crisps, chocolate bars and fizzy drinks.

Narrator 1: Haven't you heard of rationing. Food was in short supply so you had to make do with much less than nowadays...so no crisps, no chocolate bars and no fizzy drinks. There will be a short interval were we will serve tea and biscuits made using a war time recipe.

Narrator 2: But first let's say goodbye to all our evacuees.

In the Mood plays.

ANNE FRANK

Narrator 3: In 1933 the Nazi Party, lead by Adolf Hitler, took control in Germany, and, If you didn't fit their idea of a perfect person you were in trouble. One such group were the Jews. Many Jews left Germany for other countries including Britain and America.

Narrator 4: We are going to follow the story of one such family, the Franks; Otto, Edith and their children Anne and Margot. It is 1940 and they have already fled Germany for the safety of Holland but Holland has been occupied by the Nazis. We know about the following events because Anne kept a diary throughout this time.

Edith: Is it true, Otto, the Dutch army has surrendered?

Otto: Yes, I'm afraid Holland is now under Nazi rule.

Edith: I thought we'd escaped, left that all behind.

Otto: I know, but that won't change matters now. We need to go into hiding

Edith: Can't we leave the country? Surely there is somewhere we can go. No, the streets will be teeming with soldiers within hours. Quick, go and get the girls.

Edith returns with Anne and Margot

Otto: Margot and Anne, I want you to go and pack your clothes and just a few things you hold dear. Hurry now, and please don't argue.

Anne: But why Daddy? I'll have to leave friends again. Surely the Dutch people won't let the Nazis...

Margot: Stop us playing in the park, stop us going to school, stop us travelling on the buses or trains, stop us wearing the Star of David... so people won't spit on us as we walk in the street. Why can't you just listen to father for once.

Edith: Quiet. That's quite enough. We've got no choice.

Otto: Margot is right. The Nazis' policies against Jews will be put in place Here too. We must go into hiding.

Anne: But where are we going?

Otto: I can't say. Not until we are there. Now hurry.

Family move off stage and return up central aisle

Edith: Your offices, but surely we'll be noticed?

Otto: I have been planning it for a while. There is an annexe on the top two floors consisting of four rooms. We have friends in the office, they will look after us, but this is to be our home until the end of the war. Quick, inside, we don't want anyone to see us. Up the stairs now, and through the offices

Family move into house

Margot: But where is Annexe?

Otto: Behind the bookcase. Girls, you'll share this room.

Girls run around beds

Edith: Anne and Margot, you must learn to be quiet. I know it's difficult, but when the office staff are downstairs you mustn't make a sound. When they've gone home you can talk and move around a little. For now, you'll have to read or Anne, you could write more of your diary.

Anne sits at a table, pen in hand

Anne had brought her diary with her

Anne:

Dear Diary

I hope I shall be able to tell you everything, as I've never been able to tell anyone, and hope you will be a great source of comfort to me.

Margot: Anne, I thought you wanted to be a dancer or a film star not a writer.

Margot tries to look over Anne's shoulder.

Anne: Well not anymore; and no you can't look, diaries are private. I know I can write. A few of my stories are good, my descriptions of the Secret Annex are humorous, much of my diary is vivid and alive, but... it remains to be seen whether I really have talent.

Anne gets up and looks through the window

Anne: Look Margot, there's the old man on his bicycle I told you about. I see him every day. I'm sure he's a British spy. And the horse chestnut tree is beginning to show its leaves.

Margot: You spend so long looking out that window. I can't bear to see the outside because I know it's out of reach. I know we're trapped.

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Anne: Look Margot, there's the old man on his bicycle I told you about. I see him every day. I'm sure he's a British spy. And the horse chestnut tree is beginning to show its leaves.

It's not just my imagination- looking at the sky, the clouds, the moon and the stars really does make me feel calm and hopeful, ready to face every blow with courage.

Edith: Thank you, Miep. God bless. I'm afraid it's only potato and cabbage, again.

Edith receives a basket of food

Anne: Our own helpers...have managed to pull us through so far... Never have they uttered a single word about the burden we must be...That's something we should never forget: while others display their heroism in battle or against the Germans, our helpers prove theirs every day by their good spirits and affection.

Margot: Is it true, Daddy. The allies have landed in France. We're going to be saved

Otto: Yes, at last. They're saying that Amsterdam may be liberated with weeks.

Anne: I don't want to have lived in vain like most people. I want to be useful, or bring enjoyment to all the people, even those I've never met. I want to go on living after my death.

There is a knock on the door. Otto and Edith go to the children. Otto comes on to stage. Picks up Anne's diary. Moves to front of stage.

Otto: Again and again small groups of survivors returned from different concentration camps and I tried to hear something from them about Margot and Anne. I found two sisters who had been with Margot and Anne in Bergen-Belsen. They told me about the final sufferings and the death of my children. I returned to the Annexe, where I found Anne's diary. I wanted to publish her words, to help the World understand and learn from the horror we faced. But how could I. They were Anne's own private thoughts... but as I read her words, they spoke to me, as if Anne was speaking to me. She wanted to go on living after her death. She'd given me her permission. She'd given me her blessing.

Narrator 3: When Otto returned to Amsterdam he found Anne's diary. When he realised Anne would never come home, he decided to publish it as a book, so people would remember his daughter, and the millions of other men, women and children who died in the Holocaust.

Narrator 4: Over 1.5 million children were murdered in the concentration camps. If each of their names were read out, one after the other, night and day... we would still be reading the list in 53 days

Children join hands around the room and speak their name.

Narrator 4: And if they all hands of those adults and children murdered in the concentration camps the line would stretch from here to beyond New York.

Narrator 3: When Otto returned to Amsterdam he found Anne's diary. When he realised Anne would never come home, he decided to publish it as a book, so people would remember his daughter, and the millions of other men, women and children who died in the Holocaust.

Narrator 4: Anne's diary is still an inspiration to people today because even though Anne knew what was happening to her Jewish friends and neighbours, and even though she was trapped in her hiding place, Anne always believed in the true goodness of people. The words and ideals of this young girl from sixty years ago remind us that we need to respect each other and appreciate and understand each other's differences.

Anne: It's difficult in times like these; ideals, dreams and cherished hopes rise within us, only to be crushed by grim reality. It's a wonder I haven't abandoned all my ideals, they seem so absurd and impractical. Yet I cling to them because I believe, in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart.