

The life of pi and
anne frank's the
diary: bright
examples of journal
writing and...



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A Compare and Contrast Essay on Journal Writing and How They Can Help People in Life or Death Situations in the Context of Yann Martel's The Life of Pi and Anne Frank's The Diary of Anne Frank

I intend to discuss the significance of journal writing for people in extreme situations. Journals are a way for people to express their feels about something, like an event that happened or an object that they saw. They help people to relieve stress and help them to direct that stress into energy that they can use towards their goals. For Piscine Molitor Patel, or "Pi" as he is called, the journals helped him make sense of the situation that he was in and helped him figure out how to deal with his situation, but not always rationally. For a young girl named Anne Frank, it helped her get over the fear and boredom of hiding in the loft above her father's old storehouse from the Nazis in Austria. For most people, it is a way to record the everyday process of their lives. I will examine the stories of "The Life of Pi" and "The Diary of Anne Frank" to compare their experiences and explain how they both show that journals can significantly help people in extreme situations.

Unexpected situations happen throughout lives that cause many twist and turns. For Pi, he was dropped into a lifeboat with a hyena, a crippled zebra, an orangutan, and an adult male Bengal Tiger. He is thrust into this position with no training and no way to escape from his predicament, and then he starts to write in a journal. He writes down all of the things that happened to him, and then he gets into the habit of writing things down as he starts to get a normal routine. His journal makes him feel as if he has a handle on things, and gives him some perspective on some of the ideas that float around his head so that he can make the best choice in his situation. When

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he runs out of ink in the pen that he is using, it dampens his spirits to the point that he stops fishing and he stops trying to live. Similarly, Anne Frank of Austria was put in a situation that neither her family nor Anne could have prepared for. Anne and her family were Jews. Her parents left Germany in order to save themselves from Hitler's regime. Mr. Frank owned a store in Poland where he did business. This business had living quarters above the head office, which the Franks and another Jewish family would hide for several months without being found. Anne being very young, needed something to do while she was hiding. She writes in her diary and writes down most of the events that take place during her stay in that room.

Both stories tell of people caught unaware during life-or-death situations, but they differ remarkably. For example, Pi wrote his journal in case he had been eaten by Richard Parker, the resident Bengal tiger on Pi's boat, or died of starvation and if anyone ever found it, they could figure out what happened to him while he was alive. Unlike Pi, Anne was writing in her diary because she believed that she would go back and look at her diary and remember what she had been through, but Anne Frank died in a Nazi concentration camp with her mother. Pi was able to go back and read his journal and he was able to have his journal written into a book. Anne was younger than Pi and had been born into a wealthy family, whereas Pi was born in poverty. My observation is that Anne Frank was in a situation where she should not have died, and Pi had something happen to him every day which should have killed him. What I mean by this is that Pi had multiple things that were against his survival, while Anne only had one. This shows that Pi's survival was nothing short of a miracle, and that what happened to Anne was a

terrible tragedy. Their differences show that even though they were in extremely different situations, they still took solace in their written records of what happened during a troubling time in each of their lives.

In both of these scenarios, these young people are put into situations that forced them to risk their lives. They may be very different scenarios, but both of them take time to write down what is happening to them. They brave through long months of dangerous activities and near-death experiences by writing in their journals about what they did or wanted to do. It helps them keep from losing their minds completely. Each of these people have pressure on them to give up, and they do not. They persevere through most of the danger they are in because they have something that they can use to relieve their negative emotions. I have examined the stories of *The Life of Pi* and *The Diary of Anne Frank* to compare their experiences and explain how they both show that journals significantly help people in extreme situations.