

Anne Askew: extended writing ideas

Choose one of these ideas to help you create your own imaginative piece of writing based on the story of Anne Askew. We would love to see your work!

Idea 1: An account of the execution

Re-read the description of Anne's execution on pages 12 and 13. Now imagine you are one of the ordinary Tudor people in the crowd. Choose one of these characters or invent your own:

Mary Lovell



Mary is a cook in the house of a rich merchant. Today she left a servant girl in charge in the kitchen while she came out to watch the execution. Although she can't read and doesn't really understand what Anne did, Mary has heard a lot about her so was keen to see what she looked like.

More importantly, she never misses a burning – it's her favourite entertainment!

John Dudley



John is a poor, unskilled labourer who earns a few pennies each day carrying heavy baskets, crates and barrels for market traders. Today he came to the market as usual but found it set up for an execution. Normally he doesn't like to watch these events but today the buzz of the crowd drew him in. He has never heard of Anne Askew but has a daughter the same age.

Write a short account of Anne's execution from the point of view of your character.

Here are some things to consider:

- What was the atmosphere like as people waited for Anne to appear?
- What did you think when you saw Anne? What did she look like?
- What happened next? Could you see the priest, guards and the executioner who lit the fire?
- How did you feel when the logs burst into flame? Were you alarmed, thrilled, horrified or excited? Perhaps you felt a combination of emotions.
- Did you stay until the fire died down, or did you leave earlier? Why?



Idea 2: An interview with Anne

Imagine you had the chance to meet Anne!
What would you ask her, and how would she answer?

Write Anne's replies to these questions (one has been done for you),
or think of your own and make up her responses.

Why was studying so important to you?

"Firstly, I wanted to educate myself, then help teach other women, because I believe that we have as much right as men to learn and discuss interesting subjects. Secondly, I felt that many Catholic ideas are old-fashioned and needed to change. Finally, I hoped to use my knowledge of the Bible to help poor and sick people by praying with them and giving them comfort."

How did you feel when you left your children behind?

When you were on the rack, were you tempted to confess so the torture would stop?

Why did you write a poem in prison?

Do you hate the Lord Chancellor?

Do you regret anything you did or said?

If you had escaped execution, what might you have gone on to do?