

**Caribbean**  
**THINK**  
**BOOK**  
for 4 and 5 May

**TEACHER'S GUIDE**



**Nationaal Comité**  
**4 en 5 mei**

# Connecting

**T**he National Committee for May 4 and 5 (Dutch: Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 mei) creates educational material about commemorating, celebrating, remembering and freedom. In the Netherlands the committee has published the *Think Book for May 4 and 5* for primary school students for years. Because we have an eye for similarities and pay attention to differences, we realized that we needed to do more justice to events and conditions in the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom. That is why we made a first special Caribbean edition of the *Think Book for May 4 and 5* in 2018. In front of you is an updated, revised version that we created in the context of 80 years of freedom since the end of the Second World War. In recent years we have had many conversations with users of the *Think Book* on the islands. We have used this input and our experience to improve the *Caribbean Think Book* and have it tie in even better to the stories that live on the islands.

As a result of our experience with the *Caribbean Think Book*, we have also adapted the edition for the Netherlands. Students in the Netherlands are now also learning a lot more about what happened on the Antillean islands during the Second World War. They hear how important the oil from Curaçao and Aruba was in ending the Second World War and what sacrifices the residents of the islands made for it.

People in the Netherlands and on the Caribbean islands of the Kingdom of the Netherlands share their history but have not experienced the same. In the Netherlands, the term ‘freedom’ is closely associated with the Second World War, whereas in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom it refers to the period of slavery that was eventually abolished in 1863. The colonial period, in which the inhumane slavery took place, changed drastically in the wake of the Second World War. A more equal relationship between the islands and the Netherlands emerged in 1954, and in 2010 Curaçao, Aruba and Sint Maarten became independent countries within the Kingdom. Saba, Sint Eustatius and Bonaire became special municipalities of the Netherlands.

We want to use the *Think Book* in the Netherlands and on the islands to introduce students to our shared history related to the Second World War. We would like them to experience that we are one in diversity. In this way, the *Think Book* connects children in the Netherlands and on the islands, which is what May 4 and 5 also stands for. We hope this teacher’s guide will help you to work with the *Caribbean Think Book* and that it will broaden your knowledge of the history of the Second World War.

— National Committee for May 4 and 5



# CARIBBEAN THINK BOOK: COMMEMORATE & CELEBRATE TOGETHER

This teacher's guide contains information about how to work with the *Caribbean Think Book for May 4 and 5*. It contains background information about the Second World War in the Caribbean. Also, you will find ideas for deepening your lessons and accompanying materials.

**W**ith the *Caribbean Think Book*, children learn about...

- ... the overall course of the Second World War;
- ... the course of the Second World War in the Caribbean;
- ... the impact of the war on daily life in the Caribbean;
- ... who we commemorate on May 4 and why;
- ... what we celebrate on May 5 and why;
- ... the rituals of commemoration;
- ... thinking about the importance of commemoration;
- ... thinking about the value of freedom for oneself and others.



## Attainment Targets

The *Caribbean Think Book* ties in with the following attainment targets.

## Focus on yourself and the world

### MAN AND SOCIETY

37 Students learn to model their behavior based on respect for generally accepted values and norms.

### TIME

- 51 Students learn to use simple historical sources.
- 52 Students learn about the defining aspects of the period of world wars and the Holocaust.
- 53 Students learn about important historical persons and events from Dutch and local history and can connect them with world history.



## Background information for the teacher

# THE SECOND WORLD WAR IN THE CARIBBEAN

**The Netherlands Antilles – as the region was known at the time – were, as part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, officially at war with Germany. However, the Antilles were not occupied. Still, the islands played a crucial role in world history, because they supplied oil for the ships and airplanes of the Allied forces.**

**O**n May 10, 1940, Nazi-Germany invaded the Netherlands. The States of the Netherlands Antilles gathered and expressed their support to Queen Wilhelmina and the government in exile. There is great dismay on the islands. People do not know what is about to happen and sympathize with the people in the Netherlands. Almost immediately, about 200 Germans and Austrians are arrested and imprisoned on all islands. Among those were also crew members of German ships that just happened to be moored in

surrender on May 14, 1940. The Antilles are now also officially at war.

The first year of the war, people notice little of the war, but the threat of Nazi Germany is definitely felt. It is known that the Nazis want to block the supply of oil. The islanders are prepared for air raids, even though it seems more likely that the Nazis will not bomb the oil refineries themselves, because they hope to be able to use them later.

In February 1942, security was scaled up: 1,400 American soldiers came to Curaçao and 1,100 to Aruba. The arrival of the Americans creates a lot of work. The soldiers need to eat, but they also want to be entertained. The influence of the Americans on especially young people is great: they adopt the American clothing style, they drink Coca Cola and listen to American music.

### Almost immediately, about 200 Germans are arrested and imprisoned on all islands.

the harbors that day. Some of the boats are sunk by the German crew, so that they do not fall into the hands of the Allied forces. Also, 41 Dutchmen with pro-German ideas are arrested together with their families, as well as a group of German and Austrian Jews. They are all locked up together in a camp on Bonaire.

In the days that follow, first French marines and then hundreds of British soldiers arrive on Aruba and Curaçao to protect the oil refineries. Small groups of soldiers are also stationed on the other islands. The local police force, the militia, also helps to protect the islands. Conscripted men from all islands are deployed for this. After the bombing of Rotterdam, the Netherlands



An unexploded torpedo on the beach of Curaçao.



**The arrival of the Americans creates a lot of work. The soldiers need to eat, but also want to be entertained.**

Early 1942, the war reached the Antilles. German submarines carry out a surprise attack on oil tankers and oil refineries on Curaçao and Aruba. In the night of February 15 to 16, the first torpedo is fired on an oil tanker near Aruba. That same night, four other boats are sunk. An attack on the refinery in Aruba fails. In April 1942, the Germans carried out several attacks on oil installations on Curaçao. The people of the islands sympathize greatly with the occupied part of the Kingdom. Charity events are organized everywhere, from galas to sports matches. There are lotteries, clothing and money are collected, and people knit warm blankets. Crate full of packages are sent to the Netherlands. After the war, the Netherlands express their gratitude to the islands with a monument in Willemstad.



Torpedoed oil tanker off the coast of Curaçao.

**In the Netherlands, several young Antilleans, often students, are active in the resistance.**

In the Netherlands, several young Antilleans were active in the resistance. Often, they had come to the Netherlands to study. One of these students was Boy Ecury. When the war started in the Netherlands, his parents wanted him to return to Aruba. But Boy did not want that. He wanted

to fight the Nazis. He joined the resistance and helped in various ways. For example, he prepared an attack on a train track and helped Allied soldiers to hide. As an Aruban man he attracted attention, so he frequently had to move to another city to avoid being arrested. Still, he remained active in the resistance movement. Eventually, he was arrested in November 1944. The Nazis made him a proposal: he could return to Aruba if he would betray the members of his resistance group. Boy refused to help the Nazis. The next day, he was murdered.

During the war, Princess Juliana and Prince Bernhard visit the islands. This royal visit made a huge impression on the people. It confirms the important role the islands played in the Second World War.



Resistance hero Boy Ecury and the monument to him on Aruba.



# THINK BOOK IN THE CLASSROOM

## Guidebook

The *Caribbean Think Book for May 4 and 5* helps students on Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, Sint Eustatius, and Sint Maarten get acquainted with the local history of the Second World War. The stories from that time challenge the students to think about the meaning of freedom. There is a copy of the book for each student. They can freely browse, read, and write in the book. Here you will find tips and ideas to get started with the *Think Book*.

### TIP 1 Independent reading

First, browse through the *Think Book* yourself, to prepare the lessons for this subject. This way, you will get a good idea of the contents of the book and be able to determine how much class time and explanation are needed to properly discuss the curriculum in your own class.

### TIP 2 Think

The *Think Book* encourages thinking, that is the goal. The stories are presented in different ways, and in many places in the book students are challenged to think for themselves: What do they think? What could it mean for them? Could someone else have a different opinion? Various topics are discussed, from the history of the Second World War and from the present. The book is full of questions for the students. You can actively pay attention to these questions and discuss them together with the students or let them talk about it among themselves.



### TIP 3 Arouse interest

Various themes are discussed in the *Think Book*. In addition, opinions and reactions from your students' peers are discussed on various pages in the book. In your lesson preparation, determine which themes or pages are most interesting and appealing to your students. Start with these, if possible. After all, interest can be contagious. You can also let the students leaf through the book themselves and let them choose which pages they find most interesting. Then discuss this in class.



### TIP 4 Lesson ideas

There are several themes in the *Think Book*, such as Commemorate, the Second World War and Resistance. To give you an idea of possible lessons, we have provided lesson ideas for various themes. You will find these on pages 8 and 9 of this guidebook.



**TIP 5 Eyewitnesses**

Watch the videos with eyewitness stories in class. In these videos, Caribbean eyewitnesses from various islands talk about their childhood during the Second World War. These are videos with interesting stories, but also with impressive authentic images from that time. Watching the videos makes the *Think Book* even more meaningful.

Go to [www.4en5mei.nl/caribisch-denkbboek](http://www.4en5mei.nl/caribisch-denkbboek).



Ismaël Soliano, Bonaire



Catalina Lampe, Aruba

You could also see the *Think Book* as a workbook.

**TIP 6 Cut, paste, write**

The *Think Book* is intended for learning, but also for writing down thoughts and ideas. You could see the *Think Book* as a workbook: students can read, write, cut, paste, and so on in it. As a result, the *Think Book* also becomes theirs. The first page is about the students themselves. Have students complete this page. Other pages are suitable for completing together or in small groups. The more students are allowed to write in it, the more it becomes their own *Think Book*.

**My THINK BOOK**

This *Think Book* is for you! You can browse, write and draw in it.

Draw yourself here. What are you good at? Or what do you like? Draw that here too.

Do you know someone who has experienced a war?

☐ yes, namely: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ no

What words match freedom? Write down three.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

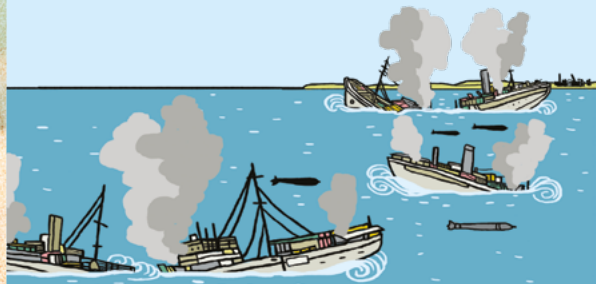
I AM: \_\_\_\_\_

Take the *Think Book* home with you. Talk about it. This is how we pass on the stories together.



**TIP 7 Take it home**

Allow students to take the *Think Book* home when you think you have sufficiently discussed the book at school. Encourage students to show the *Think Book* at home and talk about it. It might elicit stories, affecting not only the knowledge of the children, but also of family members, friends, or other acquaintances.



# LESSON IDEAS AND THEMES

Choose one or more subjects from the *Caribbean Think Book*. These pages contain a thematic layout of the book and extras and lesson ideas.

Themes	Extras and lesson ideas
THEME SECOND WORLD WAR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- p. 8-13 <b>The Second World War</b> <i>In this timeline, students see the global course of the Second World War, with the most important dates.</i></li><li>- p. 32-35 <b>Locked up on Bonaire</b> <i>Here it is explained who were imprisoned in the camps on Bonaire and what the conditions were like there.</i></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Invite a guest speaker to talk about a specific wartime event. Perhaps there is a family member of a student who can share his/her memories.</li><li>- Watch the video 'De oorlog in 7 minuten' (The war in 7 minutes) with the class: <a href="https://tiny.cc/Oorlogin7minuten">tiny.cc/Oorlogin7minuten</a> and then the video 'Wereldoorlog in de west' (World War in the West) <a href="https://tiny.cc/WOinwest">tiny.cc/WOinwest</a></li><li>- Watch the video 'Jong in Oorlog, Het Caribisch gebied in de oorlog' (Young at War, The Caribbean at War) on <a href="https://Schooltv.nl">Schooltv.nl</a> or at <a href="https://tinyurl.com/Caribischgebiedinoorlog">tinyurl.com/Caribischgebiedinoorlog</a></li><li>- Watch the video 'Ismaël Soliano about the camps on Bonaire' at <a href="https://tinyurl.com/ismaelsolano">tinyurl.com/ismaelsolano</a></li><li>- There is a nice interactive timeline on <a href="https://Denkboek.nl/tijdlijn">Denkboek.nl/tijdlijn</a></li><li>- What questions do the students have about the Second World War or about war in general? Create a question wall in the classroom with the group. Have the students write their question on a piece of paper or post-it note. Divide the board into research questions (E.g.: When was the tank invented? How old was Anne Frank when she died?) and into thinking questions (E.g.: Would you have joined the resistance during the war?). Hang the yellow post-it notes with questions on the board. Then let the students work on the questions in groups to find answers.</li></ul>
THEME COMMEMORATE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- p. 52-55 <b>Commemorate, how do you do that?</b> <i>Who do we actually commemorate and why?</i></li><li>- p. 56-57 <b>Where do we commemorate?</b> <i>An overview of the commemorations on Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Saba and Sint Eustatius.</i></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ask the class which commemorations they know. Who is commemorated? And in what way? Let the students think about the similarities between the different commemorations. Which rituals are the same? Why do people commemorate this event/ these events?</li></ul>
THEME LIFE IN WARTIME	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- p. 14-19 <b>Life changes</b> <i>Daily life changed during the Second World War. A number of characteristic changes are highlighted.</i></li><li>- p. 40-43 <b>Knitting sweaters for the Netherlands</b> <i>On Bonaire, Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Saba and Sint Eustatius they were keen to support the Netherlands during the war. They organized collection campaigns and knitted warm clothing for the Dutch people..</i></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Watch the videos of eyewitnesses on the Caribbean islands during the war with the class at <a href="https://www.4en5mei.nl/caribisch-denkboek">www.4en5mei.nl/caribisch-denkboek</a>.</li><li>- During the war, there was a shortage of everything, especially in Europe: food, fuel and clothing. People came up with all kinds of solutions for this. Even in our time, children are still confronted with scarcity: for example, due to war or natural disasters such as hurricanes and floods, or due to poverty. If it feels safe enough to do so, invite students to talk about their own experiences and let them think about practical solutions: What do they think should happen? What solutions do they know from their own daily lives?</li></ul>

- Some examples of inventive wartime solutions (such as bicycles with wooden wheels, a sweater made of dog hair and a mini stove) can be found at [www.tweedewereldoorlog.nl/100voorwerpen](http://www.tweedewereldoorlog.nl/100voorwerpen).
- Also watch a video about the daily life of children in the Netherlands in wartime. Go to [www.schooltv.nl](http://www.schooltv.nl) and search for 'Oorlog in het dagelijks leven' (War in everyday life).
- Even now, countries support each other in times of war or after a natural disaster. Give examples of contemporary relief efforts and, together with the students, think of ways to raise money for people in need.

THEME RESISTANCE

- **p. 28-31 Small city for a big hero**  
*What is a hero? The students read the comic strip about George Maduro.*
  - **p. 36-39 Stand up for another**  
*The Aruban Boy Ecury lived in the Netherlands during the war and he resisted the Nazis. Read the comic strip about Ecury's life with the students and learn more about resistance and the role of Antilleans in it.*
  - **p. 44-49 Fighting injustice**  
*Anton de Kom took action against injustice. The students read his story in comic strip form and talk about what they can do against injustice.*
- Talk more about heroism. When do you call someone a hero? Can a hero also have bad qualities? Who decides whether someone is a hero? Do you know any heroes of our time?
  - Talk to the class about resistance during the war. What did people resist? Why was it dangerous to resist? Are people who were in the resistance heroes?
  - Talk to the class about Anton de Kom. He resisted Nazi Germany in the war, but also fought against racism. What do the students know about slavery? Do any students in your class celebrate the abolition of slavery? How can you fight against injustice?
  - Discuss fragments from Anton de Kom's comic strip, such as 'At school, students are only allowed to speak Dutch'. What do the students think about that? Is it good that Anton drew attention to the inequality between white and black people with his book? Relate these questions to the present. Do you also see these situations today?

THEME PERSECUTION

- **p. 20-21 Jews in the Caribbean**  
*The students read about the life of Jews on the Caribbean islands.*
  - **p. 22-26 Excluded, persecuted, murdered**  
*Timeline about the persecution of the Jews that makes clear how the Jews were gradually removed from Dutch society.*
  - **p. 26 Lothar**  
*An ordinary 10-year-old boy becomes a victim of the Second World War.*
- Talk about the step-by-step process from exclusion to persecution: first, Jews were deprived of their civil rights and could no longer participate in public life. After that, life was effectively made impossible for them, until they were finally murdered. It all started with prejudices. Do the students themselves have prejudices? And how can you deal with that?
  - Discuss the word 'discrimination' with the students. Do the students know what this is? Have they ever had to deal with this? Or do they know someone who has had to deal with it? Discuss a number of situations with the class. What can you do against discrimination?

THEME WAR AND FREEDOM

- **p. 1 My Think Book**  
*The students personalize the book and write down what they already know about war and freedom.*
  - **p. 50-51 Flee**  
*About fleeing then and now.*
  - **p. 58-61 What do you know?**  
*Students give their opinion about freedom, war and commemoration.*
  - **p. 62-63 What is freedom?**  
*What does that mean: freedom?*
  - **p. 64-65 Freedom according to Izaline Calister**  
*Singer and theater maker Izaline Calister explains what freedom means to her.*
  - **p. 66-67 What do you think about freedom?**  
*Statements about freedom.*
  - **p. 68-69 Questions about freedom**  
*The students discuss various questions with each other. What do they consider important?*
- Watch a video of 'Het Klokhuis' about human rights with the class: [schooltv.nl/video/het-klokhuis-mensenrechten](http://schooltv.nl/video/het-klokhuis-mensenrechten).
  - At the end of the Second World War, 30 million people were on the run in Europe. That is why the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was established in 1951. In 2023, more than 117 million people were on the run worldwide. Finding a place for all these refugees is a difficult problem. There are many children among the refugees. Talk about reasons why people flee (wars, economic conditions) with the class.
  - Discuss with the students the questions that were also asked to the children in the article 'What do you know?' Do the students agree with each other? What do they disagree about?
  - The end of the Second World War also marked the beginning of the end for the colonial empire of the Netherlands. The inhabitants of Indonesia, Suriname and the Antilles were separated from their motherland during the war, and this strengthened existing independence movements. Look at the map in the front of the *Think Book* with the students.
  - Talk with the students about freedom. What do they think of when they hear this word? Have students create word clouds and elaborate on what they say. If necessary, make a link to the end of slavery.



# FROM READING TO DOING

When your students' interest in the Second World War and commemorating has been aroused by reading the *Caribbean Think Book*, you can choose to actually do something with the subject. Let the class organize their own commemoration or give them a role in an already existing commemoration.

**D**edicate several lessons to this topic. Invite someone who is often present or involved in the organization of the annual May 4 commemoration and let him or her talk about the commemoration on your island. Or invite someone with memories of the Second World War. That person can explain why commemoration is important to him or her. These stories are often impressive and give the past a face.

## Organizing a commemoration

Now that the students know more about the May 4 commemoration, they can take the next step: organizing (part of) a commemoration. The students first think about why they want to commemorate. This is an important step. Why is commemoration not

only about the past, but also about the present? Why is it important for us not to forget history?

## Rituals

Based on this motivation, they can think of what rituals they want to perform. For example, they can read out the names of the victims, recite a self-made rap or lay flowers. You can choose to organize your own commemoration at a war memorial or in the school, whereby your students organize everything from the invitation to the program. Or you can join the organization of the local May 4 commemoration and give the students a role in it.



Students from the Pelikaanschool recite a poem during the commemoration ceremony on Bonaire.



## FOR TEACHERS

- Liesbeth van der Horst, Wereldoorlog in de West. Suriname, de Nederlandse Antillen en Aruba. (World War in the West. Suriname, the Netherlands Antilles, and Aruba). Uitgeverij Verloren 2004.
- Jos Rozenburg, De Antillen in de Tweede Wereldoorlog. (The Antilles during the Second World War). Uitgeverij U2pi B.V. 2014.
- Ted Schouten, Boy Ecury. Een Antilliaanse jongen in het verzet. (Boy Ecury. An Antillean Boy in the Resistance). Walburg Pers 2003.
- Junnes E. Sint Jago, Wuiven vanaf de Waranda. (Waving from the Veranda). Gopher Publishers 2007.
- Marjan Brouwers and Jeanette Ditzhuizen, Ren Janina ren! Tien jaar oud en op de vlucht voor de nazi's. (Run Janina Run! Ten years old and on the run for the Nazis). LM Publishers 2016.
- [www.nationaalarchief.cw/geschiedenis](http://www.nationaalarchief.cw/geschiedenis)
  - WO2 en de Cariben in 100 foto's (WW2 and the Caribbean in 100 photos)
  - George Maduro
  - de interneringskampen (the internment camps)
- [www.guera-na-korsou.com/en/](http://www.guera-na-korsou.com/en/)
- [www.verzetsmuseum.org](http://www.verzetsmuseum.org) Set the language to English. In the menu click the heading WW2 info and select 'Kingdom of the Netherlands'. Then select 'Suriname, Antilles, Aruba' to find more information about the Second World War in 'the West'.
- [www.georgemaduro.com](http://www.georgemaduro.com)
- [www.oorlogsgravenstichting.nl](http://www.oorlogsgravenstichting.nl)  
This website is in Dutch only. Type a place name in the search bar to get more information about the victims that fell in or originated from that area.

## FOR STUDENTS

- [tiny.cc/WOindewest](http://tiny.cc/WOindewest)  
Wereldoorlog in de West (World War in the West), film of the resistance museum.
- [www.oorlogsbronnen.nl](http://www.oorlogsbronnen.nl)  
Search by keywords: 'Juliana' and 'Antillen'. Color film of the visit of Princess Juliana to the Netherlands Antilles from February 26 to March 5, 1945.
- [tinyurl.com/RonnieMartina](http://tinyurl.com/RonnieMartina)  
In the tiny city of Madurodam, Ronnie Martina tells children about George Maduro.
- [www.schooltv.nl](http://www.schooltv.nl)  
On Schooltv, you can find plenty of useful videos about the Second World War (in Dutch). For example the video 'Oorlog overzee' (War overseas).
- [tinyurl.com/13indeoorlog](http://tinyurl.com/13indeoorlog)  
A television series about the Second World War from the perspective of a child.
- [www.4en5mei.nl/onderwijs/jong-in-oorlog](http://www.4en5mei.nl/onderwijs/jong-in-oorlog)  
People who experienced the war as a child talk about their experiences in short videos.

## COLOPHON



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Ministerie van Volksgezondheid,  
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