

COULD YOU HAVE SURVIVED WWII?

Curriculum Subject - History

Summary

World War II involved many countries around the globe fighting against each other, including the UK. It lasted six years, from 1939-1945.

The War became a global conflict after the German military, led by Adolf Hitler, invaded Poland in 1939 because he wanted to take some of their land for Germany. France and Britain declared war on Germany because they didn't think what Germany was doing was right, then Italy joined with Germany, and gradually other countries in Europe and around the world became involved with either the Allies or the Axis powers.

Life during the Second World War was very difficult. Today, we mark special days to remember the many millions of people who fought and died during World War II.

Main Participating Countries					
ALLIED POWERS			AXIS POWERS		
Country	Date Joined	Flag	Country	Date Joined	Flag
FRANCE	3 rd Sep, 1939		GERMANY	1 st Sep, 1939	
UK	3 rd Sep, 1939		ITALY	11 th Jun, 1940	
SOVIET UNION	22 nd Jun, 1941		BULGARIA	1 st Mar, 1941	
USA	8 th Dec, 1941		JAPAN	7 th Dec, 1941	

Key Vocabulary

- Allies** - The United Kingdom, France and Poland, later joined by other countries, including the USSR (Soviet Union), the United States of America and China.
- Axis** - The Axis Powers were originally Germany, Japan and Italy. Other countries joined them later.
- Nazi Party** - A German political party with racist and anti-Jewish ideas, led by Adolf Hitler.
- Atomic Bomb** - A very high-energy bomb made of radioactive material.
- Annex** - To take another country's land and make it part of your country.
- Czechoslovakia** - A European country. Now two countries: the Czech Republic and Slovakia.
- Propaganda** - Information designed to promote a political idea or opinion.
- Active Service** - Taking part in a military operation as part of the armed forces.

7 Key Facts

- On 1st September 1939, Germany invaded Poland. Britain and France (Poland's allies) gave Germany notice to withdraw their troops. When they did not, Neville Chamberlain declared war on 3rd September 1939.
- People expected cities to be bombed as the Germans tried to hit military or trade targets. This would put children in danger, so many were sent to live with families in the countryside until the war ended.
- The Holocaust was a genocide committed by Germany before and during WW2. It involved the murder of over 6 million Jewish people and millions of others. Many people perished in concentration camps.
- Large numbers of British, French and Belgian troops were surrounded by German soldiers on the northern coast of France. 800 British boats set out and rescued many of them against the odds, although many men died.
- In the Battle of Britain, the Royal Air Force (RAF) successfully defended Britain from attacks by Nazi Germany's Luftwaffe planes.
- Also known as the Normandy Landings, these were a series of landing operations by the Allies to claim back Europe
- Germany officially surrendered to the Allies, bringing an end to the fighting in Europe.. 7th May 1945.

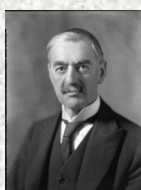
Leaders		
1	Adolf Hitler	Leader of the Nazi Party and Chancellor of Germany, 1933 - 1945 (<i>also referred to as the Führer meaning leader</i>)
2	Winston Churchill	UK Prime Minister, 1940 - 1945 (and again from 1951 - 1955)
3	Neville Chamberlain	UK Prime Minister, 1937 - 1940 (<i>infamous for failed attempts to satisfy Hitler's demands prior to the war</i>)
4	Franklin D. Roosevelt	US President, 1933 - 1945 (<i>took the US into the war following the Pearl Harbor attacks</i>)
5	Harry S. Truman	US President, 1945 - 1953 (<i>responsible for the decision to drop Atomic bombs on Japan</i>)
6	Joseph Stalin	General Secretary of the Communist Party and Leader of the USSR, 1929 - 1953

Key Events		
1939	1 st September	German troops invade Poland.
	3 rd September	Britain and France declare war on Germany.
1940	10 th May	The Battle of France begins.
	26 th May	Allied forces are evacuated from Dunkirk in France.
	10 th July	The Battle of Britain begins.
1941	7 th September	The Blitz begins.
	22 nd June	Germany invades the USSR (Soviet Union).
	7 th December	Japan bombs Pearl Harbor in the US.
1943	16 th and 17 th May	The Dambusters bombing raid is carried out.
1944	6 th June	The D-Day landings.
1945	7 th May	Germany surrenders to the Allies.
	6 th and 9 th August	The US drops atomic bombs on two cities in Japan.



Adolf Hitler - Germany

Neville Chamberlain.
British Prime Minister at the outbreak of war.



Winston Churchill.
British Prime Minister for the majority of the war.