Topic: The Second World War	Year: 6	Strand: British History

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.
conscripted	Required by law to serve their country in some way, usually in the armed forces.
dogfight	An intense, in-air, close-range battle between individual or small groups of aircraft.
commemorate	Mark or remember a past event.
home front	Doing things at home to support the war was called 'fighting on the home front'.
rationing	Only allowing people to have a certain amount of something.
evacuation	Taking people from a dangerous place to a safer one.

Commemorative Events

Every year, special celebrations are planned to honour and remember the people whose lives were affected by the war. Large commemorations are usually held for events including the evacuation from Dunkirk, Holocaust Memorial Day, VE Day, D-Day and the Battle of Britain, as well as for Remembrance Day.

The Home Front

In order to make food and other supplies last as long as possible and ensure they were shared fairly, many items were rationed.

The government's 'Dig for Victory' campaign encouraged people to grow their own food. Some people also reared their own animals for meat and eggs. Clothes and other items were mended or made into new things.

Although national sports events were suspended during the war, there was plenty of entertainment. The radio was very popular and people also went to the cinema or dance halls. Children played outside or with board games, cards or handmade toys.

Over 3.5 million people, mostly children, were evacuated from the cities to the countryside, where it was believed they would be safer from bombing.

With men away at war, women took on important jobs to help the war effort. Jobs included working in factories, engineering and shipbuilding, driving ambulances and nursing, working as Land Girls or air-raid wardens, or joining the armed forces themselves.

The Armed Forces

Before the war, people volunteered for the armed forces but as the war progressed, men and women had to register for National Service. This conscription meant that they could then be 'called up' into the armed forces or into other jobs to help the war effort. Women were not given combat roles but they did many different jobs in the armed forces.

The Battle of Britain

In July 1940, Germany planned a secret mission to invade Britain. They began by sending the Luftwaffe (German air force) to bomb British ships, airfields and other targets. RAF (Royal Air Force) planes fought back in what were known as dogfights.

Believing they were winning, the Luftwaffe moved on to bombing London on 7th September 1940 (the start of the Blitz). On 15th September, the Luftwaffe launched another attack but the RAF fought back and it was clear that the Germans would not be able to win. This date is commemorated every year as the end of the Battle of Britain.

What should I already know?

Causes and consequences of WWII in Britain (evacuation, rationing, women at work)

The location of the United States of America, Russia and some European countries, including Germany and France
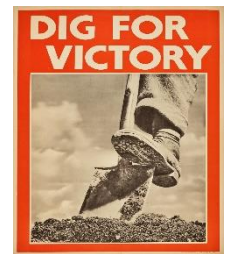
The key leaders of Britain (Neville Chamberlain and Winston Churchill) and the Nazi Party (Adolf Hitler).

Nazi soldiers under the command of Hitler invaded some European countries

Some of the ways that we commemorate events of the Second World War

Key People

Sir Winston Churchill – (1874-1965) was a British politician who served as the Prime Minister between 1940 and 1945 (most of World War II) and again from 1951 to 1955. He took over in May 1940, after a disastrous start to the war in which Nazi Germany had conquered much of Europe. He did his best to rally the nation in defiance of Adolf Hitler, possessed excellent military knowledge and forged crucial alliances with both the USA and Russia.

Adolf Hitler – (1889-1945) was a German politician who was the leader of the Nazi party, Chancellor of Germany from 1933-1945, and the Fuhrer of Germany from 1934-1945. Hitler's Germany invaded Poland in September 1939 to start the war, and it was he who initiated the Holocaust. He is therefore significantly responsible for the deaths of millions. He committed suicide on 30th April 1945, when it was clear the war was lost.

Franklin Roosevelt – (1882-1945) was the 32nd President of the United States, from 1933-1945. Whilst the USA remained officially neutral at the start of the war, Roosevelt offered diplomatic and financial support to the UK, Russia and China. After the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on 7th December 1941, he declared war on the Axis powers. The US helped the Allies to win the war – He died months before it ended.

Benito Mussolini – (1883-1845) the leader of Italy's National Fascist Party. He was Prime Minister from 1922-1945 –from 1925 onwards this was not democratically as he established a dictatorship. Italy entered the war on the side of Germany in 1940, but suffered some disastrous losses. In 1943, Mussolini was dismissed as leader and arrested, but was rescued by Hitler's paratroopers. He was later caught and executed in 1945.

Joseph Stalin – (1878-1953) was the Communist leader/ dictator of the USSR during WWII. He had signed a non-aggression pact with Germany in August 1939, but in June 1941, Hitler broke it and the Germans invaded. Although initially suffering heavy losses, the USSR's key victories in pushing the Germans back signalled a shift in the war in favour of the Allies.

Anne Frank – (1929-1945) was a German-born diarist. As a young Jewish girl, her family were forced into hiding, fleeing Germany for a secret attic in Amsterdam. She wrote a diary of her time there. After years in hiding, her family was betrayed and arrested, and Anne died of Typhus in Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Her diary became famous after her death.

Legacy

Population changes, changing role of women

United Nations. Remembrance

Timeline of Major Events

1 Sep, 1939 – Germany invades Poland - WWII begins	Apr-Jun 1940 – Germany invades Denmark and Norway	May-Jun 1940 – Germany takes over most of Western Europe	Jul-Oct 1941 – The Battle of Britain	22 Jun 1941 – The Axis attack Russia	7-8 Dec 1941 – Japan attack US. US joins Allies	4 Jun 1942 – Battle of Midway. US beats Japan	3 Sep 1943 – Italy surrenders	6 June 1944 – D-Day – allies invade Normandy	25 Aug 1944 – Paris liberated from German control	7 May 1945 – Germany surrenders	Aug 1945 – The US drops atomic bombs on Japan	2 Sep 1945 – Japan surrenders – WWII is over.