

Year 6—World War II Knowledge Organiser



World War II lasted from 1939 to 1945. It was fought in Europe, in Russia, North Africa and in Asia. Children as well as adults were affected by the war.

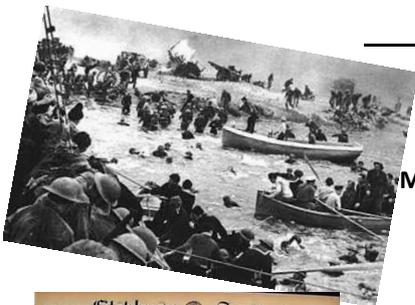
It was a global military conflict, which was fought between the Allied powers of the United States, United Kingdom, and Soviet Union against the Axis powers of Germany, Italy, and Japan, with their respective allies. The Allied powers sought to stop Nazi Germany in its conquest for European domination. The war was sparked when the Nazis invaded Poland, leading to France and the United Kingdom declaring war on Germany.

What followed was six years of turmoil. Hitler's aim was the destruction of the Jewish race. It is estimated that six million Jews died in the reign of Hitler, what was later to be called the Holocaust.

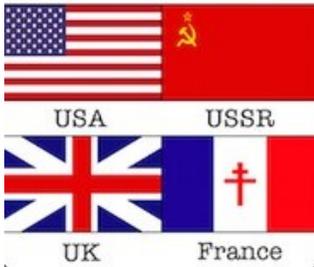
Battles were fought at sea, air, and land. Approximately 73 million people were thought to have died in the conflict, including Hitler himself who took his own life after realising that Nazi Germany was defeated in 1945. There were roughly 40 million civilian deaths.

Timeline

September 1st 1939	Germany invades Poland, led by Hitler.
September 3rd 1939	France and Great Britain declare war on Germany (the war begins).
January 1940	Rationing is introduced across the UK
May 10th to June 22nd 1940	Germany uses quick strikes called blitzkrieg, meaning lightning war, to take over much of Western Europe including the Netherlands, Belgium, and northern France. Dunkirk is evacuated and France surrenders to Germany.
May 30th 1940	Winston Churchill becomes leader of the British government.
June 10th 1940	Italy enters the war as a member of the Axis powers.
July 10th 1940	Germany launches an air attack on Great Britain. These attacks are known as the Battle of Britain. The Blitz begins in the UK.
September 22nd 1940	Germany, Italy, and Japan sign the Tripartite Pact creating the Axis Alliance.
December 7th 1941	The Japanese attack the US Navy in Pearl Harbor. The next day the US enters World War II on the side of the Allies.
June 6th 1944	D-day and the Normandy invasion. Allied forces invade France and push back the Germans.
April 30th 1945	Adolf Hitler commits suicide as he knows Germany has lost the war.
May 8th 1945	Germany surrenders to the Allies. VE day (Victory in Europe Day) - war is over!
September 2nd 1945	Japan surrenders signaling the end of WWII
July 1954	Rationing ends in the UK



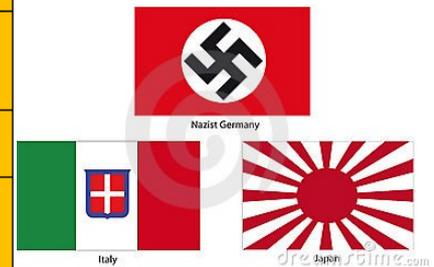
Allied Forces



'History will be kind to me for I intend to write it.'
Churchill

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

AXIS FORCES



'It is not truth that matters, but victory.'
Hitler

Key Vocabulary

Air raid	An attack by enemy planes dropping bombs.
Air Raid Shelter	A building to protect people from bombs dropped by planes Anderson Shelter: made of corrugated iron. Usually at the end of the garden Morrison Shelter: metal cage used inside the house—could be used as a kitchen table
Allies	Countries which fought on the British side (including: France, the Soviet Union and the USA).
Axis Alliance	Countries who fought on the German side (including: Japan and Italy)
Blackout	Wartime ban on street lights and other lights at night so that no lights could be seen by enemy planes dropping bombs.
Blitz	German bombing raids on the UK (mainly large cities were bombed). The word 'blitz' comes from a German word 'blitzkrieg' which means 'lightning war'.
Concentration camp	Prison where Jews and other prisoners were kept by the Nazis.
Evacuee	Someone who was evacuated, moved from a danger area to a safer place. Often from the cities to the countryside.
Gas masks	Face mask to protect people against poison gas.
Holocaust	Mass murder of Jews and other groups of people by the Nazis.
Nazi	Short for National Socialist Party (in Germany), a follower of Hitler was also called a Nazi.
Propaganda	Controlling news media (such as radio) to show your side in the best way.
Rationing	Controlling the supply of food, clothes, petrol and other things. This meant everybody had a fair share of the limited supplies.
Luftwaffe	The German air force (responsible for the Blitz).

Launceston during WWII:

- The air raid siren was sounded from the police station on the first Monday of every month
- Launceston Hospital prepared beds for evacuated patients
- Over 16,000 sandbags were filled and placed around the hospital. Brownies, cubs and local men and women all took part in this job.
- 9,000 acres were to be devoted to growing wheat, oats, barley, dredge, potatoes, and sugar-beet with the choice of crop being left to the discretion of each individual farmer.
- Rationing affected fuel supplies and agricultural workers were given a special license during harvest time. Driving was only allowed for business so there were hardly any cars on the roads.
- Women took on jobs such as driving ambulances, first aiders and joining the land army (replacing the 10,000 men who had to leave their farms to join the war).
- A small army camp with searchlight and gun was set up at Werrington Park with American troops. German and Italian P.O.W.s worked the farms here like the Women's Land Army
- London evacuees arrived by train to Launceston and stayed with local residents
- Men from 18-41 were called to sign up to serve in the army
- Steam trains leaving Launceston were loaded with guns and army equipment
- Launceston fire brigade were called to help Plymouth during the Blitz