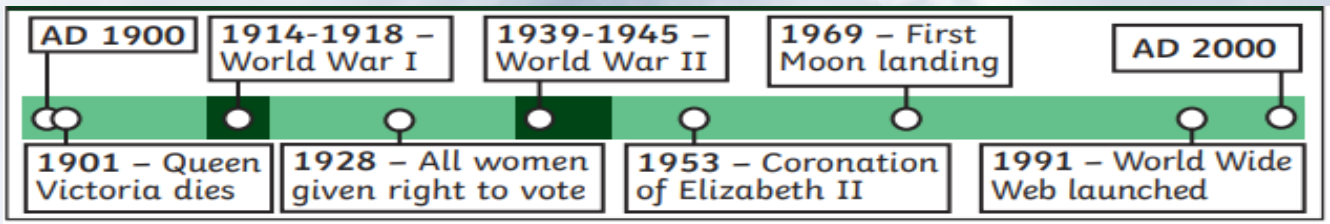
WW2

1939-1945



Key Questions:

- How significant was the battle of Britain?
- How did the actions of Chamberlain, Hitler, Stalin and Churchill affect WW2?
- When was the most dangerous time to live?
- How significant was the Blitz?
- What effect did evacuation have on children?
- What was rationing?

Vital Vocabulary

Allies: Countries that were on the side of Great Britain
Anderson Shelter: A shelter to protect against air raids
Blitz: When Germany launched a bombing attack against Britain
Communist: A government shares everything equally
Concentration Camp: A place where people were detained (kept) against their will.
Evacuate: children moved to a safer part of the country
Fascist: The government control everything
Fatality: Death
Holocaust: The mass murdering of people
Invasion: Taking over enemy territory by force
Liberated: Freed from the enemy
Luftwaffe: The German air force planes
Nazi: a member of the National Socialist German Workers' Party (German)
Propaganda: Information used to promote politics
Occupied: When forces had taken control of a territory
Persecuted: To suffer harassment from someone else
Rationing: To only be allowed a fixed amount of food
Spitfire: The Royal Airforce planes (British)

Areas of control during WW2

Major participating countries					
Allied Forces			Axis Powers		
Country	Date Joined	Flag	Country	Date Joined	Flag
France	3rd Sept 1939		Germany	1st Sept 1939	
United Kingdom	3rd Sept 1939		Italy	11th June 1940	
Soviet Union	22nd June 1941		Bulgaria	1st March 1941	
USA	8th Dec 1941		Japan	7th Dec 1941	

Did you know?

* Together with the Nazi party, Hitler wanted Germany to rule Europe. To gain more land and power, on the 1st Sep 1939 German troops invaded Poland.
* The bombing of London, known as the blitz lasted for 57 consecutive nights. Hitler wanted to quash the British spirits so they would surrender.
* The battle of Britain was the first military campaign fought solely in the air.
* Both the allies and the axis powers used propaganda posters to boost the moral at people at home and those fighting. It was also used to decrease the moral of the enemy.
* The atomic bomb dropped by the US on Hiroshima was known as 'Little Boy' and is the only nuclear weapon used in battle.

Key People:

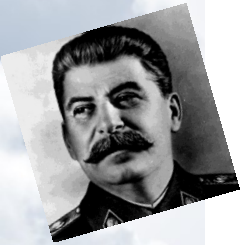
Sir Winston Churchill

(1874-1965)

British Prime Minister between 1940-1945. He took over after a disastrous start to the war where Nazi Germany had taken over much of Europe. He possessed excellent military knowledge and formed allies with USA and Russia

Joseph Stalin

(18878-1953)



Communist leader/dictator of the USSR. He signed a non-aggression act with Germany in 1939 but in 1941, Hitler broke this 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.

Franklin D Roosevelt

(1882-1945)

He was the 32nd president of the USA. While they remained neutral to begin with, he offered support to the UK. When Japan bombed Pearl Harbour on 7th December 1941 the USA entered the war with the Allies.

Key Events:

Event	Description	Dates
Outbreak of WW2	On 1st September 1939, Germany invaded Poland. Britain and France (Poland's allies) have Germany notice to withdraw their troops. When they did not, Neville Chamberlain declared war on 3rd September 1939.	1st – 3rd September 1939.
Evacuation of children	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.	September 1939 onwards
The Holocaust	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.	1933-1945
Evacuation of Dunkirk	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.	26th May – 4th June 1940
Battle of Britain	In the Battle of Britain, the Royal Air Force (RAF) successfully defended Britain from attacks by Nazi Germany's Luftwaffe planes.	10th July – 31st October 1940
The attack on Pearl Harbour	This was a surprise military attack by the Japanese on the naval base at Pearl harbour in Hawaii. It led to the US joining the Allies in the war.	7th December 1941
D-Day landings	Also known as the Normandy Landings, these were a series of landing operations by the Allies to claim back Europe.	6th June 1944
Hiter's suicide	With the German army facing defeat, Hitler married his partner Eva Broun on the 29th April and the next day they committed suicide.	30th April 1945
Germany surrenders	Germany officially surrender to the Allies, bringing and end to the fighting in Europe.	7th May 1945
USA drops atomic bombs on Japan	Japan refused to surrender. The US considered invading but instead dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima (6th August) and Nagasaki (9th August).	6th – 9th 1945
WW2 Ends	Japan surrendered on August 15th and this was formally signed on the 2nd September 1945.	2nd September 1945

Adolf Hitler

(1889-1945)

Leader of the Nazi party. Hitler's Germany invaded Poland in 1939 which started the war. He was responsible for starting the Holocaust and causing millions of deaths. It is believed he committed suicide in his bunker on 30th April 1945 when the war was lost.

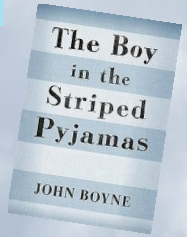
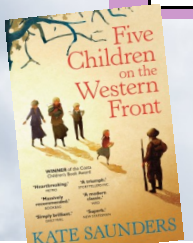
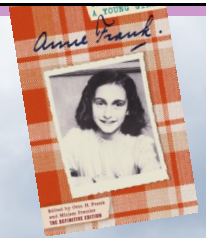
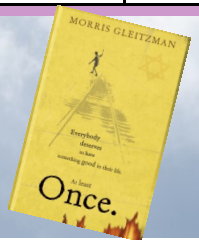
Benito Mussolini

(1883-1945)

Leader of Italy's National Facist Party. Italy entered the war on the side of Germany in 1940 but suffered some disastrous losses. In 1943, he was dismissed as leader and arrested. However he was then rescued by Hitler's paratroopers. Eventually he was recaught and executed in 1945.

Anne Frank

(1929=1945)

A German-born diarist. Asa 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. Anne died of Typhus in a concentration camp.

Recommended reads: