

Changing World – WW2 (1939-1945)

Enquiry question: 'How did WW2 change the world?'

Brief Timeline

1933
Adolf Hitler became leader of Germany.

1939
Germany begin to invade countries such as Poland. On the 3rd September, Britain declared war on Germany.

1940
Germany attacked countries in Western Europe. More countries joined the war. Battle of Britain occurred.

1941
Germany invaded Russia. USA joined the war.

1942
Germany declared war on USA.

1943
Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Italy surrendered, swapped sides and declared war on Germany.

1944 - D-Day

1945
Adolf Hitler committed suicide and the German soldiers surrendered. World War 2 ended in Europe on 8th May which we now celebrate as VE Day. The United States dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima on 6th August. The World War ended officially on 3rd September.

World War II in Europe 1939 - 1941



Children in WW2

Children in Britain were evacuated to the countryside to escape the bombing. They were put onto trains with a label on like they were parcels. They would live with another family in the countryside. It was a difficult time for children as they were split from their family.



Key Vocabulary

- Adolf Hitler** - leader of Germany throughout World War 2.
- Air raid** - an attack in which bombs are dropped from aircraft on to a ground target.
- Allies** - the people who were fighting along side us.
- Anne Frank** - a young Jewish girl who hid from the Nazis during the war and wrote a diary.
- Atomic Bomb** - a nuclear bomb that causes an enormous, devastating explosion.
- Axis** - the people we were fighting against (the enemy).
- Blackout** - when towns or cities are made dark so that they cannot be seen by enemy planes.
- Concentration Camp** - where Hitler sent Jewish people to be killed.
- Gas Chamber** - a room into which gas would be pumped.
- Jew** - a Jewish person - someone who follows Judaism.
- Nazi** - a member of the German political party National Socialists.
- War** - a state of armed conflict between different countries or different groups within a country.

The Nazis

Adolf Hitler led a political party called the National Socialists which they shortened to Nazis. Hitler wanted Germany to be 'perfect'. This meant that anyone who was different or did not fit his 'perfect' image was killed. Hitler killed German citizens who were Jewish. Jewish people were treated differently. Anne Frank says in her diary, 'Jews were required to wear a yellow star, Jews were forbidden to use trams, Jews were required to turn in their bicycles, Jews were forbidden to use any public sports centres, Jews were not allowed to watch any form of entertainment.' All Jewish people were eventually taken to concentration camps which were like prison camps. The weak were quickly killed or died of starvation. Those left would be led into gas chambers in large groups to be killed with poison gas.



The Blitz

Blitz is short for the German word Blitzkrieg (lightning war). The Blitz happened from September 1940 - May 1941 when Germany frequently bombed London and other British cities. Night after night Germany would drop bombs from planes on ports, harbours and industrial areas. Over one third of London was destroyed. People were warned of an air raid by loud sirens. During the blitz, they became an almost daily part of life. When people heard the siren they would stop what they were doing and make for a shelter.



UK World War 2 Soldiers

When the war started, some men volunteered to join the army. But it was not enough. In 1940, two million British men aged between 19 and 27 were ordered to fight. Soldiers carried a water-bottle, ammunition, pouches, entrenching tool (spade), a groundsheet and a haversack containing; mess-tin, tinned rations, extra iron rations, spare socks and laces.



Axis

Germany, Italy and Japan

Allies

Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Greece, India, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States, USSR and Yugoslavia.