World War II Knowledge Organiser Year 6 Autumn Term

What was World War II?

World War II was a global war involving more than 100 million people and 30 countries. It was also one of the most deadly wars in history with between 50 and 85 million deaths. It began in 1939 when the Nazi's invaded Poland. It lasted for six years until the Allies (the four main countries were Britain, USA, USSR – Russia - and France) defeated Nazi Germany and Japan in 1945.

Famous Battles and Events

Many famous battles and events took place during World War II.

- Hitler invading Poland
- Rationing began
- Churchill became Prime Minister.
- Evacuation of Dunkirk – British Troops were trapped in the beaches and had to be rescued by anyone with a fishing boat.
- Battle Of Britain – Britain and the Nazi's battled in the skies.
- The Blitz – Britain was bombed relentlessly by the Nazis
- The Soviets liberated the Concentration Camps.
- The USA dropped two nuclear bombs for the first time in history. The world could see the devastating power of these bombs. None have ever been used since.

Timeline of events

Year	Event
1938	Hitler made clear his plans to unite all Germany speaking people. He took over Austria and parts of Czechoslovakia.
1939	Hitler invaded Poland. Britain, after giving the Nazi's many warnings, said it was now at war.
1940	Hitler invaded Denmark and Norway.
1940	Hitler heavily bombed Holland and Belgium. Both countries were occupied.
1940	The British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain resigned and Winston Churchill took over.
1940	The British Army were pushed back to the beaches in Dunkirk in France. They needed to take troops off the beaches. A call went out to all sea worthy vessels in Britain to come and rescue them.
1940 June	Italy enters the war.
1940 June	France surrenders to Germany.
1940 July-Oct	The Battle of Britain takes place, where Hitler heavily bombed Britain.
1941 June	Hitler attacks Russia
1941 Dec	Pearl Harbour in the USA is bombed. America now joins the war.
1942 Aug	Germany and Italy invade countries in North Africa.
1943 May	The Allies take back North Africa.
1943 Sep	Italy surrenders to the Allies.
1944 June	D-Day: The Allies attack Germany's forces in France. The Russians pushed the Nazi's from the East.
1945 April	Hitler Commits suicide.
1945 May	The Germans surrender.

Vocabulary

Term	Definition
allies / Allied Forces	Countries who fought together against the Nazis
axis powers	Countries who fought together with the Nazis.
invasion	Going into another country to take it over.
occupied	A country which had been taken over by the Nazis was said to be occupied.
surrender	Giving up your country's control to the other side.
concentration camp	A place where people were held as prisoners.
gas mask	A mask used to protect the wearer from inhaling airborne pollutants and toxic gases.
air raid	An attack in which bombs are dropped from aircraft on to a ground target.
anderson shelter	Also known as bomb shelters, were structures used to protect people against enemy attacks from the air.
Nazi	A member of a German fascist or dictatorship party that controlled Germany from 1933 to 1945 under Adolf Hitler
gestapo	The secret state police in Nazi Germany.
swastika	A symbol of Nazism.
ration book	A book showing an individual's entitlement to certain rationed goods.
evacuee	A child who has been moved from the city to the countryside during WWII for their safety.
soldier	A person who works in the army.
spitfire	A British fighter plane
Star of David	A six pointed star, a Jewish symbol.

1945 May 8th	V.E. Day – Victory in Europe was declared.	**Blitz** — The bombing of Britain by Nazi Germany.
1945 Aug	The Japanese refused to surrender. THE US dropped an atomic bomb on the city of Heroshima. Later that month they dropped a second bomb on Nagasaki. Japan then surrendered.	

Women in World War II

Before World War II, women were supposed to be 'housewives' or perhaps to do certain 'women's jobs', such as nursing or being a domestic servant. The world changed the world of work for women for ever. When men went to fight, omen were called upon to fill their jobs, and this included many jobs that were previously thought of as unsuitable for women. At first only single young women were called up to work, but by 1943 almost 90% of single women and 80% of married women were working. Some jobs undertaken by women were: Mechanics, engineers, tank drivers, building ships, working in factories making bombs and aircraft parts, air raid wardens, driving fire engines, plumbers, ambulance drivers and nurses.

Famous Figures

Neville Chamberlain	The Prime Minster of Britain at the start of the War. He wanted to keep peace with Hitler but the Nazi's went on to invade Poland.
Winston Churchill	He took charge after Chamberlain and encouraged to country to keep fighting.
Adolf Hitler	The Leader of Germany and of the Nazis. He started World War II by invading Poland.
Franklin Roosevelt **Harry Truman**	Roosevelt was the US President during World War II. He died towards the end of the war. Harry Truman became the next American president.

Joseph Stalin	He was the leader of the Soviet Union (Russian) and part of the Allied Forces.
Anne Frank	A young Jewish Girl whose family hid from the Nazis in an attic. During the years she was in hiding she wrote a diary. She was later found by the Nazis and taken to a Concentration Camp where she died.
Sir Nicholas Winton	He saved more than 600 Jewish children from the Holocaust by bringing them to Britain.