

SOCIAL STUDIES / HISTORY · YEAR 4-6 / GRADE 3-5

Knowledge Organiser: World War 2

Y4-6 history

Note for teachers

WW2 is taught at primary level as 'a study of an aspect or theme of British history that extends pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066'. The focus tends to be on the home front (the Blitz, evacuation, rationing) and key British figures — not the full military history. THIS IS A SENSITIVE TOPIC. Children may have family members who lived through the war, including refugees and Holocaust survivors. Sensitivity matters more than coverage. Use this KO as a structured spine; add depth carefully and at the right level for your class.

KEY DATES

When	What happened
1 September 1939	Germany invades Poland
3 September 1939	Britain declares war on Germany
September 1939	First wave of evacuation — 1.5 million children sent from cities to the countryside
May-June 1940	Dunkirk evacuation — 338,000 Allied troops rescued by 'little ships'
July-October 1940	The Battle of Britain — RAF defends Britain from German air attack
September 1940 - May 1941	The Blitz — German bombing of British cities
8 May 1945	VE Day — Victory in Europe
15 August 1945	VJ Day — Victory over Japan; war ends



KEY VOCABULARY

Word	Meaning
Allies	The countries fighting against Germany — including Britain, France, USA, USSR, Australia, Canada
Axis	The countries Britain fought against — Germany, Italy, Japan
Evacuation	Moving children (and others) from cities to safer countryside areas
The Blitz	The German air raids on British cities, especially London (1940-41)
Rationing	Limiting how much food, clothing or fuel each person could buy
Air-raid shelter	A safe place to hide during bombing — Anderson and Morrison shelters
Gas mask	Protective mask carried in case of poison gas attack
Land Girls	Women who took over farm work while men were fighting
Home Front	Life in Britain during the war — civilians, factories, farms
Conscription	When men had to serve in the armed forces by law
RAF	Royal Air Force — Britain's air force
Spitfire / Hurricane	British fighter aircraft of the Battle of Britain
VE Day	Victory in Europe Day — when war in Europe ended

KEY PEOPLE

Person	Why they matter
Winston Churchill	British Prime Minister 1940-45. Famous for inspiring speeches and leadership during the war



Person	Why they matter
King George VI	King of Britain through the war. Stayed in London during the Blitz
Adolf Hitler	German leader (Führer) and dictator who started the war by invading Poland
Anne Frank	Jewish girl who wrote a famous diary while hiding from Nazis in Amsterdam
Lord Beaverbrook	Minister of Aircraft Production — vastly increased Spitfire and Hurricane production

LIFE ON THE HOME FRONT

BIG IDEAS



QUESTIONS TO ANSWER BY THE END

