

## How Did World War II Start?

The leader of Germany, Adolf Hitler, had plans to take over other countries. In March 1938, Germany invaded and **annexed** Austria, which made other countries worried. On 29<sup>th</sup> September 1938, British, French, German and Italian leaders signed a treaty called the Munich Agreement. This allowed Hitler to **annex** the Sudetenland (an area of **Czechoslovakia**) if he agreed not to invade anywhere else. However, in August 1939, Hitler broke the agreement and invaded the rest of **Czechoslovakia**, followed by Poland on 1<sup>st</sup> September. Britain, France and Poland had made a pact to support each other, so Britain and France declared war on Germany.

## Key People

Sir Winston Churchill – (1874-1965) was a British politician who served as the Prime Minister between 1940 and 1945 and again from 1951 to 1955. He took over after a disastrous start to the war in which Nazi Germany conquered much of Europe. He did his best to rally the nation in defiance of Adolf Hitler, possessed excellent military knowledge and forged crucial alliances with both the USA and Russia. Churchill is often characterised for his extraordinary leadership throughout World War II – he was bold, brave, and tireless in his resolve to take on the might of Nazi Germany.



Adolf Hitler – (1889-1945) was a German politician who was the leader of the Nazi party, Chancellor of Germany from 1933-1945, and the Führer of Germany from 1934-1945. In 1923, Hitler had attempted to seize power via a failed coup, and was arrested. However, he began to gain a loyal following through his populist ideas, powerful speeches and charisma. Hitler's Germany invaded Poland in Sep 1939 to start the war, and he initiated the Holocaust. He is therefore significantly responsible for millions of deaths. He committed suicide on 30<sup>th</sup> Apr 1945, when the war was clearly lost.



## Main Participating Countries

### ALLIED POWERS

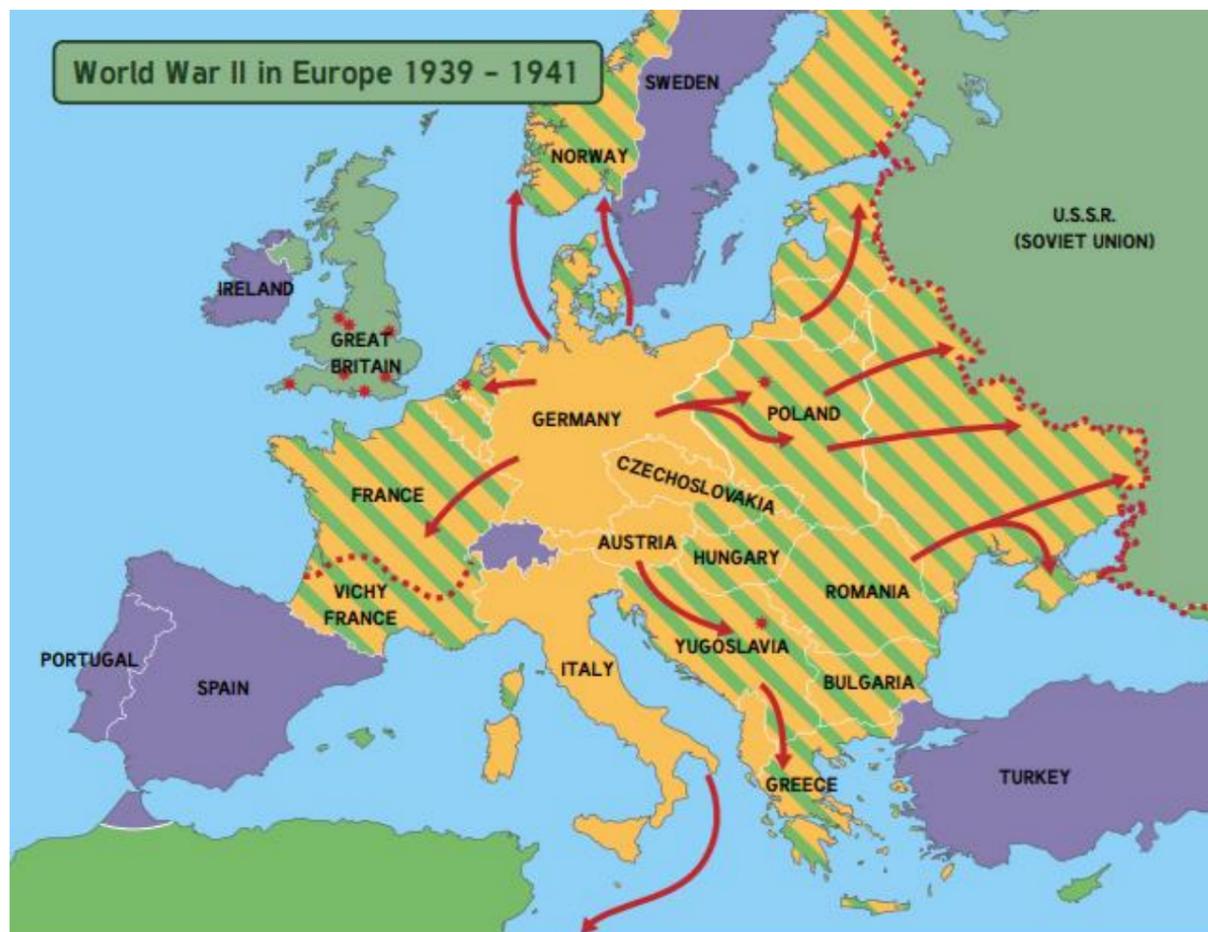
### AXIS POWERS

Country	Date Joined	Death Toll	Country	Date Joined	Death Toll
FRANCE 	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sep, 1939	600,000 1.44% of population in 1939	GERMANY 	1 <sup>st</sup> Sep, 1939	approx. 7,200,000 8.5% of population in 1939
UK 	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sep, 1939	450,900 0.94% of population in 1939	ITALY 	11 <sup>th</sup> Jun, 1940	approx. 500,000 1.14% of population in 1939
SOVIET UNION 	22 <sup>nd</sup> Jun, 1941	approx. 24,000,000 13.7% of population in 1939	HUNGARY 	27 <sup>th</sup> Jun, 1941	464,000 5.08% of population in 1939
USA 	8 <sup>th</sup> Dec, 1941	419,400 0.32% of population in 1939	JAPAN 	7 <sup>th</sup> Dec, 1941	approx. 3,000,000 4.1% of population in 1939

Event	Description	Dates
Outbreak of WW2	On 1 <sup>st</sup> September 1939, Germany invaded Poland. Britain and France (Poland's allies) gave Germany notice to <u>withdraw</u> their troops. When they did not, Neville Chamberlain declared war on 3 <sup>rd</sup> September 1939.	1 <sup>st</sup> – 3 <sup>rd</sup> September 1939
Evacuation of children	People expected cities to be bombed as the Germans <u>tried</u> to hit military or trade targets. This would put children in danger, so many were sent to live with <u>families</u> in the countryside until the war ended.	September 1939 onwards
The Holocaust	The Holocaust was a genocide committed by Germany <u>before</u> and during WW2. It involved the murder of over 6 million Jewish people and millions of others. Many <u>people</u> 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 <u>coast</u> of France. 800 British boats set out and rescued <u>many</u> of them against the odds, although many men died.	26 <sup>th</sup> May – 4 <sup>th</sup> June 1940
Battle of Britain	In the Battle of Britain, the Royal Air Force (RAF) <u>successfully</u> defended Britain from attacks by Nazi Germany's Luftwaffe planes.	10 <sup>th</sup> July – 31 <sup>st</sup> October 1940
The Attack on Pearl Harbour	This was a surprise military attack by the Japanese on <u>the</u> naval base at Pearl Harbour in Hawaii. It led to the US joining the Allies in the war.	7 <sup>th</sup> 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.	6 <sup>th</sup> June 1944
Hitler's Suicide	With the German army facing defeat, Hitler married his partner Eva Braun on the 29 <sup>th</sup> April and the next day <u>they</u> committed suicide.	30 <sup>th</sup> April 1945
Germany Surrenders	Germany officially surrendered to the Allies, bringing an <u>end</u> to the fighting in Europe.	7 <sup>th</sup> May 1945
USA drops atomic bombs on Japan	Japan refused to surrender. The US considered invading, but instead dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima (6 <sup>th</sup> August) and Nagasaki (9 <sup>th</sup> August).	6 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> August 1945
WW2 Ends	Japan surrendered on August 15 <sup>th</sup> and this was formally <u>signed</u> on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 1945.	2 <sup>nd</sup> September 1945

# Key Vocabulary

<b>Air-raid</b>	An attack by enemy planes dropping bombs.	<b>Gas masks</b>	Face masks to protect people from poisonous gas attacks.
<b>Anderson shelter</b>	A small shelter made from corrugated steel to protect people in air-raids.	<b>Genocide</b>	Deliberate action to destroy a people (usually defined as an ethnic, national, racial, or religious group).
<b>Allies</b>	Countries (including Britain, France, the Soviet Union and the USA) who fought the Axis Powers.	<b>Holocaust</b>	The mass murder of around six million Jewish people by the Nazis, as well as other persecuted groups.
<b>Annex</b>	To take another country's land and make it part of your country.	<b>Invasion</b>	When an army or country uses force to enter and take control of another country or area.
<b>Atomic bomb</b>	A powerful weapon that uses nuclear reactions as its source of explosive energy. First used in 1945.	<b>Liberated</b>	Freed from enemy control.
<b>Axis Powers</b>	Germany, Japan, Italy and other countries that fought against the Allies.	<b>Luftwaffe</b>	The German air force during the war.
<b>Blackout</b>	A wartime ban on streetlights and other lights at night, to reduce the risk of bombing by enemy planes.	<b>Occupied</b>	Taken over by enemy forces.
<b>Blitz</b>	A prolonged period of German air raids on Britain. From the German 'blitzkrieg' which means 'lightning war'.	<b>Nazi</b>	Short for National Socialist Party (in Germany) and the name given to supporters of Hitler.
<b>Concentration camps</b>	Prisons where Jewish people and other prisoners were held by the Nazis.	<b>Persecution</b>	Systematic mistreatment of an individual or group, especially because of race, religion or political beliefs.
<b>Evacuation</b>	Moving people from dangerous areas to safer places e.g. from big cities to the countryside to avoid bombing.	<b>Propaganda</b>	Information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view.
<b>Fascism</b>	A political system where the strength of the country is more important than the well-being of the people. Often ruled by dictators with unlimited power through suppression of any opposition and strict control of society.	<b>Rationing</b>	Controlling the supply of food, clothes, petrol and other products to avoid or reduce shortages.
<b>Führer</b>	German word meaning 'leader' or 'guide'. The title Hitler gave himself in 1934 when he gained absolute authority in Germany.	<b>Spitfire</b>	A British aircraft, particularly used during the Battle of Britain and known for its speed and agility.



Children being evacuated before the Blitz



Submarine Spitfire, essential to success in the 'Battle of Britain'



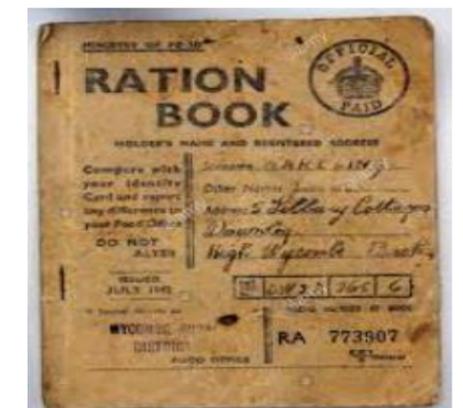
Devastation caused during the Blitz and other raids on British cities



Anderson Shelter



Swastika – symbol of the Nazi party



Rationing book used due to food shortages