

# Knowledge Organiser

Through the ages

## World War Two

| Main Participating Countries |                            |   |             |                            |  |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|---|-------------|----------------------------|--|
| ALLIED POWERS                |                            |   | AXIS POWERS |                            |  |
| Country                      | Date Joined                | Flag  | Country     | Date Joined                | Flag   |
| FRANCE                       | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sep, 1939  |  | GERMANY     | 1 <sup>st</sup> Sep, 1939  |  |
| UK                           | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sep, 1939  |  | ITALY       | 11 <sup>th</sup> Jun, 1940 |  |
| SOVIET UNION                 | 22 <sup>nd</sup> Jun, 1941 |  | BULGARIA    | 1 <sup>st</sup> Mar, 1941  |  |
| USA                          | 8 <sup>th</sup> Dec, 1941  |  | JAPAN       | 7 <sup>th</sup> Dec, 1941  |  |

### Key People

**Sir Winston Churchill** – (1874-1965) was a British politician who served as the Prime Minister between 1940 and 1945 (most of World War II) and again from 1951 to 1955. He took over in May 1940, after a disastrous start to the war in which Nazi Germany had 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.



**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. Hitler's Germany invaded Poland in September 1939 to start the war, and it was he who initiated the Holocaust. He is therefore significantly responsible for the deaths of millions. He committed suicide on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1945, when it was clear the war was lost.



**Franklin Roosevelt** – (1882-1945) was the 32<sup>nd</sup> President of the United States, from 1933-1945. Whilst the USA remained officially neutral at the start of the war, Roosevelt offered diplomatic and financial support to the UK, Russia and China. After the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on 7<sup>th</sup> December 1941, he declared war on the Axis powers. The US helped the Allies to win the war - He died months before it ended.



**Benito Mussolini** – (1883-1945) the leader of Italy's National Fascist Party. He was Prime Minister from 1922-1945 –from 1925 onwards this was not democratically as he established a dictatorship. Italy entered the war on the side of Germany in 1940, but suffered some disastrous losses. In 1943, Mussolini was dismissed as leader and arrested, but was rescued by Hitler's paratroopers. He was later caught and executed in 1945.



**Joseph Stalin** – (1878-1953) was the Communist leader/ dictator of the USSR during WWII. He had signed a non-aggression pact with Germany in August 1939, but in June 1941, Hitler broke it 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.



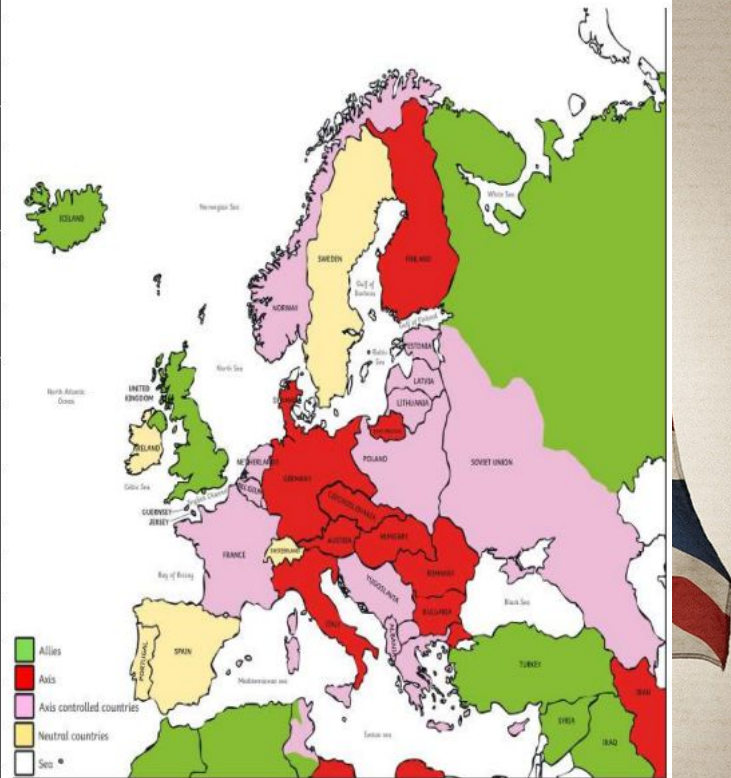
**Anne Frank** – (1929-1945) was a German-born diarist. As a young Jewish girl, her family were forced into hiding, fleeing Germany for a secret attic in Amsterdam. She wrote a diary of her time there. After years in hiding, her family was betrayed and arrested, and Anne died of Typhus in Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Her diary became famous after her death.



| Event                                  | Description  | Dates   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Outbreak of WW2</b>                 | On 1 <sup>st</sup> September 1939, Germany invaded Poland. Britain and France (Poland's allies) gave Germany notice to withdraw 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      |
| <b>Evacuation of children</b>          | 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                                |
| <b>The Holocaust</b>                   | 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   |
| <b>Evacuation of Dunkirk</b>           | 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.                 | 26 <sup>th</sup> May - 4 <sup>th</sup> June 1940      |
| <b>Battle of Britain</b>               | In the Battle of Britain, the Royal Air Force (RAF) successfully defended Britain from attacks by Nazi Germany's Luftwaffe planes.   | 10 <sup>th</sup> July - 31 <sup>st</sup> October 1940 |
| <b>The Attack on Pearl Harbour</b>     | 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.  | 7 <sup>th</sup> December 1941                         |
| <b>D-Day Landings</b>                  | 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                             |
| <b>Hitler's Suicide</b>                | With the German army facing defeat, Hitler married his partner Eva Braun on the 29 <sup>th</sup> April and the next day they committed suicide.  | 30 <sup>th</sup> April 1945                           |
| <b>Germany Surrenders</b>              | Germany officially surrendered to the Allies, bringing an end to the fighting in Europe.   | 7 <sup>th</sup> May 1945                              |
| <b>USA drops atomic bombs on Japan</b> | 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          |
| <b>WW2 Ends</b>                        | Japan surrendered on August 15 <sup>th</sup> and this was formally signed on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 1945.   | 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 1945                        |

Key Vocabulary

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



Areas of Control during World War Two - Map of Europe in 1941