

How did the war begin?

World War II began when the UK and France declared war on Germany, after German troops led by Adolf Hitler had invaded Poland on 1 September 1939 to claim land there as their own. Hitler had already invaded Austria and Czechoslovakia, so the war began over his plan to take more land for Germany.

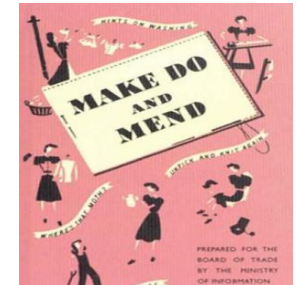
What you should already know:

- There have been two world wars.
- The UK was involved in World War I and World War II.
- The pattern of invasion throughout British history (Romans, Anglo-Saxons and Vikings.)

The Blitz

On the 7th September, 1940, the German air force changed its strategy of bombing the British air force and began to concentrate on bombing London. Nearly 2,000 people were killed or wounded in London's first night of the Blitz. The heavy and frequent bombing attacks on London and other cities was known as the 'Blitz'. Night after night, from September 1940 until May 1941, German bombers attacked British cities, ports and industrial areas. London was bombed every day and night, bar one, for 11 weeks and one third of London was destroyed.

Posters were used to keep up morale and war-time spirits.



Key Vocabulary

Allies – countries which fought on the side of Great Britain including the USA, France and eventually the Soviet Union (Russia).

artillery - consists of large, powerful guns which are transported on wheels and used by an army.

Axis – countries which fought on the side of Germany including Italy and Japan.

Blitz - a German bombing campaign against the United Kingdom in 1940 and 1941, during WWII. The term is the German word for 'lightning'.

chancellor - the title of the head of government in Germany and Austria..

evacuation – when someone is sent to a place of safety, away from a dangerous building, town, or area.

Nazi - members of the right-wing political party, led by Adolf Hitler, which held power in Germany from 1933 to 1945.

Prime Minister - the leader of the government in some countries.

propaganda - information, often inaccurate information, which a political organisation publishes or broadcasts in order to influence people.

rationing - the system of limiting the amount of food, water, petrol, or other necessary substances that each person is allowed to have or buy when there is not enough of them.



Adolf Hitler was an Austrian-born German politician who was the dictator of Germany from 1933 until his death in 1945.



Winston Churchill was the Prime Minister of Great Britain from 1940 to 1945 and he led the country through World War II and from 1951 to 1955

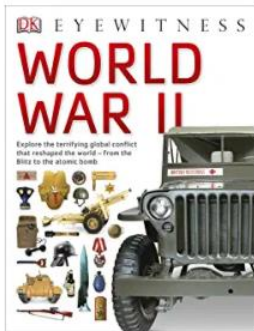


Arthur Neville Chamberlain was a British politician who served as Prime Minister of Great Britain from May 1937 to May 1940.

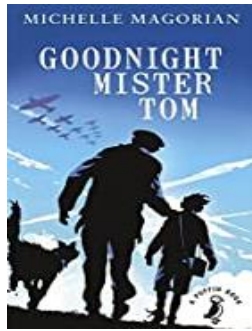
The map below shows the countries Adolf Hitler and his Nazi Party invaded.



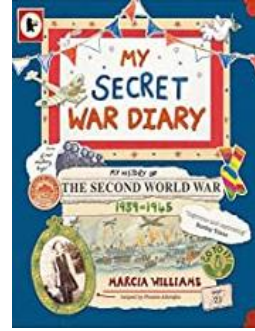
Books you might find useful...



WORLD WAR II
DK EYEWITNESS



Goodnight Mr Tom
Michelle Magorian



My Secret War Diary
Marcia Williams

Websites you might find useful...

- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwtwo/>
- <http://www.primaryhomeworkhelp.co.uk/Britain.html>
- <https://www.dkfindout.com/uk/history/world-war-ii/>
- <https://the1940sexperiment.com/100-wartime-recipes/>

Rationing

Rationing began at the start of WW2 with only petrol being affected, but soon foods like sugar, butter and bacon became scarce and had to be **rationed** too. **Ration** books were given to everyone in Britain, who then registered to a shop where they could receive food and supplies. Food rationing started in January 1940, four months after the start of WW2. It ran for the next fourteen years and changed eating habits for more than a generation. During rationing, men and women had the same quantities of food. Everyone needed a ration book, in addition to money, to buy weekly goods.

Home learning ideas

- Make do and mend! How could you revamp some of your old clothes to make new clothes? Maybe you could 'upcycle' some unwanted household items and make them useful in a whole new way! Bring them to school to show your classmates and share your ideas.
- Find some wartime recipes and make a typical meal using foods that would have been rationed at the time.
- Imagine that you were an evacuee and write a diary entry about what life is like in your new home.