

Key Vocabulary

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| Allies | The United Kingdom, France and Poland, later joined by other countries, including the USSR (Soviet Union), the United States of America and China. |
| atomic bomb | A very high-energy bomb made of radioactive material. |
| Axis | The Axis Powers were originally Germany, Japan and Italy. Other countries joined them later. |
| evacuation | When people have to leave a dangerous area and move to a safer place. |
| Nazi party | A German political party with racist and anti-Jewish ideas, led by Adolf Hitler. |
| persecution | When a group of people are targeted and treated in a cruel or unfair way, such as changing laws to punish them or imprisoning them unfairly. |
| rationing | To limit how much of something people can have, such as food and fuel. |

How Did the Second World War Begin?

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 30th September 1938, British, French, German and Italian leaders signed a treaty which allowed Hitler to annex the Sudetenland (an area of Czechoslovakia) if he agreed not to invade anywhere else. However, Hitler broke the agreement, first invading the rest of Czechoslovakia and then Poland on 1st September. The **Allies** (Britain, France and Poland) had made a pact to support each other, so Britain and France declared war on Germany.

The Role of Women

Before the war, most women stayed at home and did not go out to work. Some women worked but their choice of job was limited, such as nursing or working as a shop assistant. However, when men went to war, women were needed to take on jobs such as making weapons, driving buses and trains or working in engineering or shipbuilding. Some joined the armed forces themselves. After the war, many women lost their jobs. However, their experiences led them to campaign for equal working rights and pay so that they could continue to lead more independent lives.

Rationing

Supply ships were targeted by German bombers and it was necessary to conserve as much food as possible.

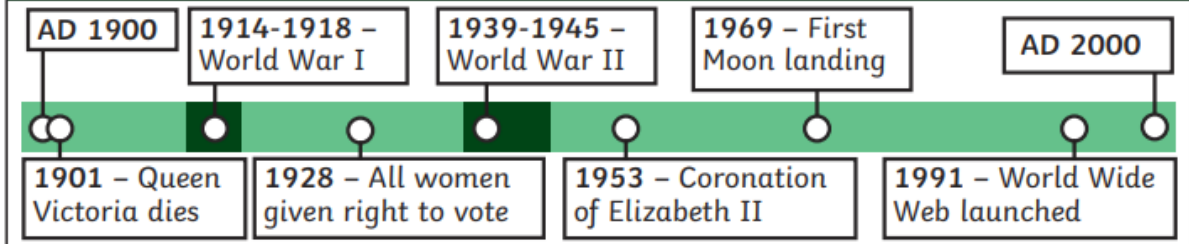


A ration book

Rationing meant that each person was only allowed a fixed amount of foods. Ration books were issued, with coupons that showed people how much of each item they were allowed. Shopkeepers would remove or stamp the coupons when they were used.

| Key Events | | |
|------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 1939 | 1 st September | German troops invade Poland. |
| | 3 rd September | Britain and France declare war on Germany. |
| 1940 | 10 th May | The Battle of France begins. |
| | 26 th May | Allied forces are evacuated from Dunkirk in France. |
| | 10 th July | The Battle of Britain begins. |
| | 7 th September | The Blitz begins. |
| 1941 | 22 nd June | Germany invades the USSR (Soviet Union). |
| | 7 th December | Japan bombs Pearl Harbor in the US. |
| 1943 | 16 th and 17 th May | The Dambusters bombing raid is carried out. |
| 1944 | 6 th June | The D-Day landings. |
| 1945 | 7 th May | Germany surrenders to the Allies. |
| | 6 th and 9 th August | The US drops atomic bombs on two cities in Japan. |

Timeline



Evacuation

During the Second World War, over 3.5 million children, some of their teachers and helpers, mothers with very young children, pregnant women and people with disabilities were **evacuated** from the cities to the countryside. It was believed they would be safer here from bombing as cities were more likely to be bombed during the Blitz.



The Holocaust

The Holocaust was a period of time during the Second World War when millions of people were **persecuted** and killed in Europe. The majority of the people who suffered during the Holocaust were of Jewish heritage and faith. Other groups were targeted too, including members of the LGBTQ+ community and disabled people. It is thought that over 10 million people died during the Holocaust. This is known as genocide.



On 27th January each year, the Holocaust is commemorated on Holocaust Memorial Day.