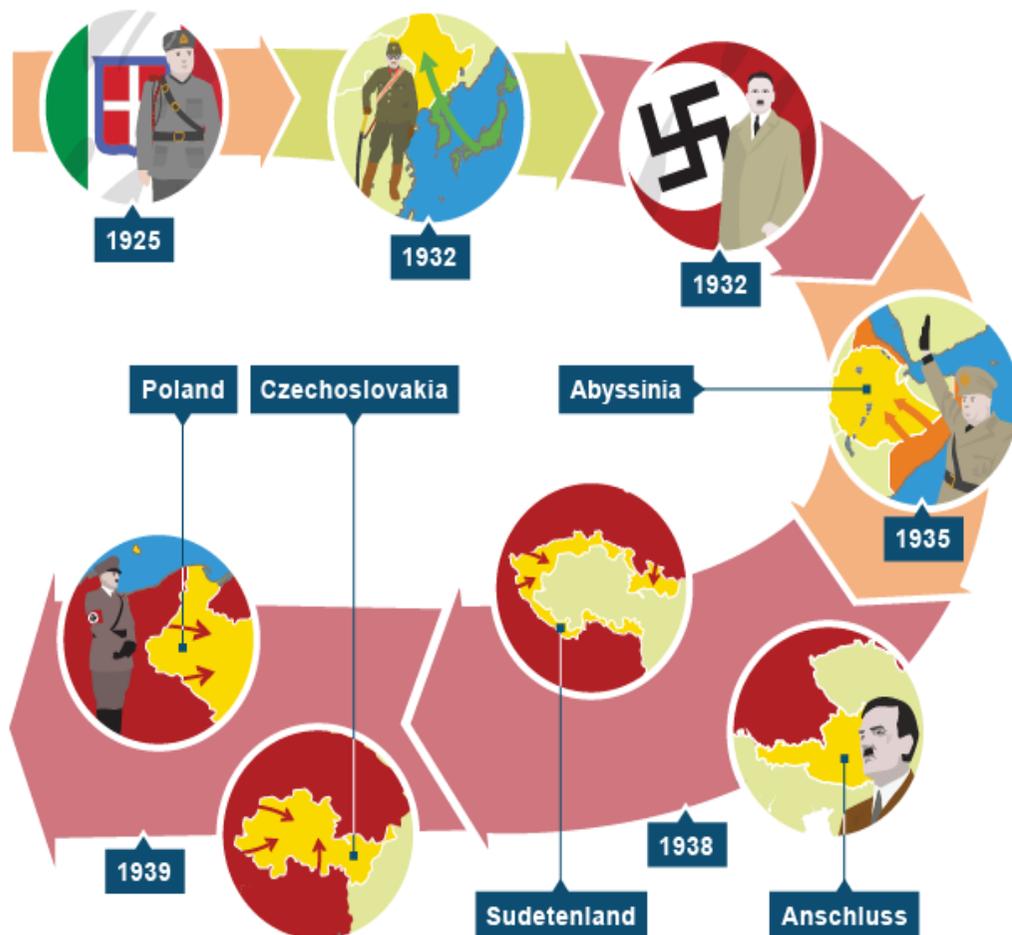


YEAR 9 SPRING TERM 1 — CHALLENGES FOR BRITAIN, EUROPE & THE WIDER WORLD: 1901—PRESENT DAY

WORLD WAR TWO

Why was World War One not 'the war to end all wars'?



Historians disagree about the causes of World War Two (WW2). Some trace it back to the anger created in Germany by the Treaty of Versailles. Some blame Neville Chamberlain and the appeasers for being too weak. Some point to Hitler's aggression.

Germany was punished very harshly by the **Treaty of Versailles** which brought World War One to a close in 1919.

- Valuable land was taken away, including Germany's empire. Many Germans would now be a living in another country: such as France, Poland or Czechoslovakia.
- Germany's armed forces were cut to—only 100,000 men allowed in the army and no air force or submarines were allowed. They considered themselves to be defenceless against attack.
- A huge bill £6.6 billion was presented to Germany to cover the cost of the war. Germany was very poor after the war and this was expected to lead to more suffering for ordinary Germans.
- Germany had to accept all of the blame for the war.

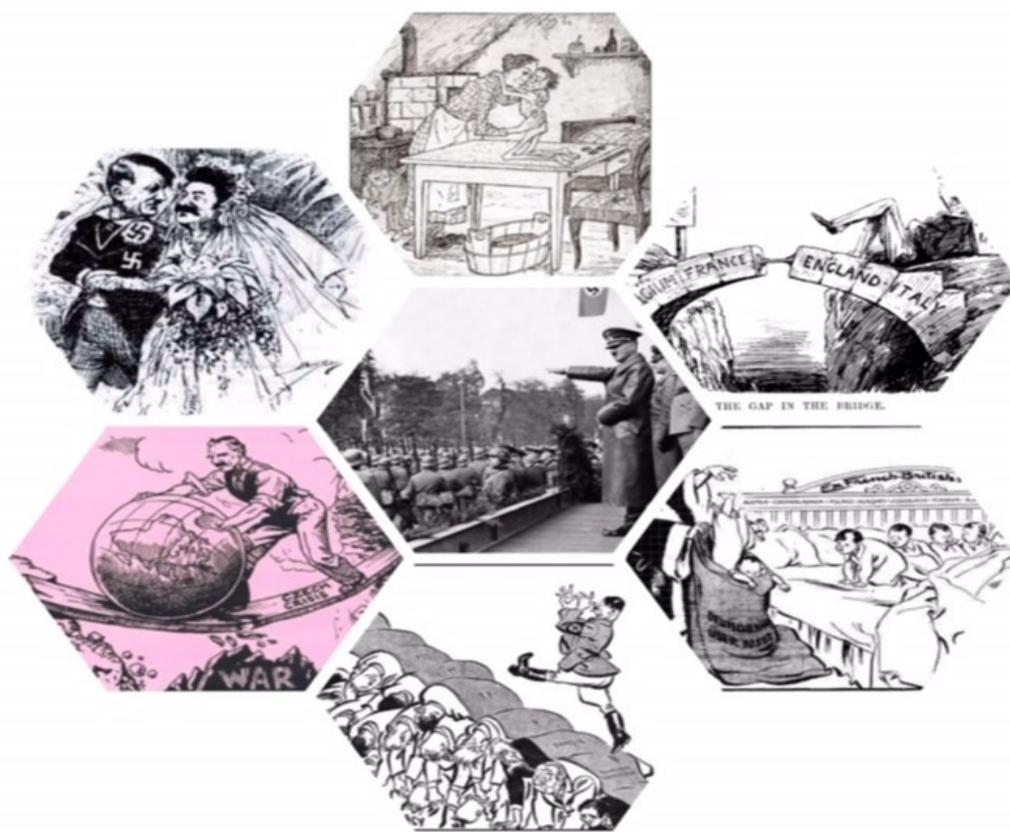
Many Germans thought that this was very unfair and wanted to gain revenge for their defeat and the punishment they received after the war.

One of these was Hitler and his promise to make Germany great again and overturn the peace treaty was one reason that he was able to come to power in Germany in 1933.

## FORMBY HIGH SCHOOL KS 3 KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

These cartoons show the events which helped to bring about World War II. You need to explain how each of them contributed to the war and which was the most important.

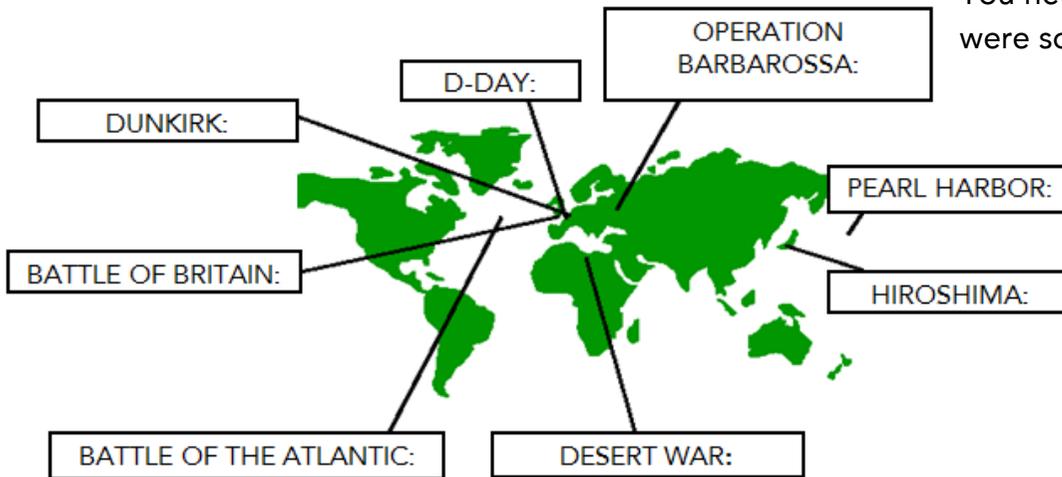
Clockwise from the top: Treaty of Versailles, League of Nations, Hitler's aggression; appeasement (positive and negative); the Nazi-Soviet Pact.



- The League of Nations had been set up to keep peace and avoid future wars through discussion and compromise. However, it was weakened by the USA's refusal to join, despite being the idea of its president, Woodrow Wilson.
- From October 1929 an economic depression, starting in America, spread across the world. Millions were thrown out of work – some starved to death.
- People were angry, and they turned to political extremists. In Germany and Italy, fascist dictators came to power. In Japan, the army took power.
- Countries became more aggressive — Japan invaded Manchuria in 1932. Italy invaded Abyssinia in 1935.
- Hitler built up a Greater Germany in central Europe. In 1938 he united Austria and Germany, known as the Anschluss, and demanded the Sudetenland, the German-speaking areas of Czechoslovakia. In doing so, he broke the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.
- Faced with aggression like this, the League of Nations was powerless.
- World leaders like the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, and France's Daladier tried a policy of appeasement – negotiating with Hitler and offering concessions.
- In September 1938, the Munich Agreement gave Hitler the Sudetenland. The Czechs were not asked what they thought about it. Hitler occupied the Sudetenland in the following month.
- Appeasement failed to stop Hitler. In March 1939, Hitler occupied the rest of Czechoslovakia. In September 1939, he invaded Poland, having signed the Nazi-Soviet Pact, with Stalin & the

What was the most significant event of World War Two?

You need to understand the key events of World War II and why they were so significant in the eventual outcome.



1. Dunkirk (May -June 1940)

Germany's Blitzkrieg attacks in Spring 1940 led to British troops being evacuated from Dunkirk, in Northern France. Hitler was now in control of western and central Europe. However, the British army did live to fight another day. This event has been viewed in different ways—as both a 'miracle of deliverance' or a 'military disaster'

The evacuation was given the codename Operation Dynamo. As a result, 330,000 soldiers were rescued (34,000 were left behind and were taken prisoner). The evacuation was partly carried out by the owners of small boats which sailed across the Channel to rescue soldiers. Many people in Britain thought that Dunkirk demonstrated true British character and that Nazism would be defeated in the end by this kind of bravery. The RAF and navy combined to help the rescue and were both intact.

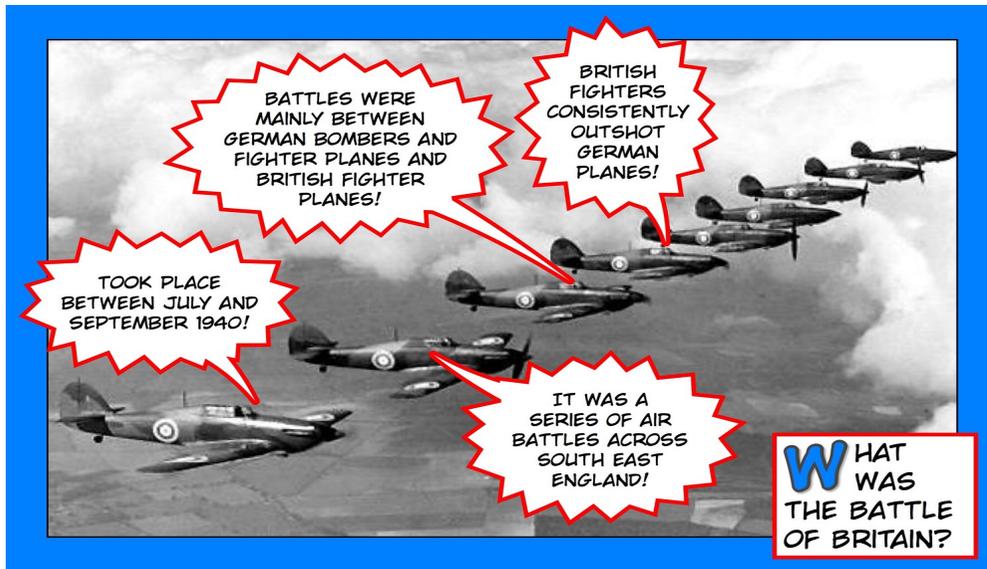
However, Britain was now alone as France's army was abandoned (10,000 French troops escaped) and France quickly surrounded. Although 70 heavy guns and 600 vehicles were rescued, most equipment, like tanks, were left be-



PM Winston Churchill

Dunkirk has been a miracle of deliverance. But we must be careful not to assign this deliverance the characteristics of victory. Wars are not won by evacuations.

## 2. Battle of Britain (July-Sept 1940)



Hitler now planned an invasion of Britain. He knew that he would need to defeat Britain's air force first to enable his navy to transport the troops across the English Channel. Three months of aerial combat took place as Germany's Luftwaffe tried to destroy the British air bases. They failed and the invasion was cancelled.

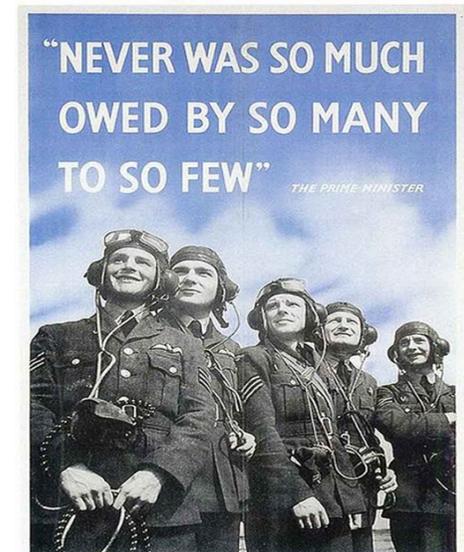
Instead, Hitler turned his attention to bombing Britain's cities—the Blitz.

Germany's invasion was codenamed Operation Sealion. Large numbers of troops and barges to carry them were gathered at French ports. To enable them to cross safely, Hitler wanted the RAF to be destroyed. In particular, Luftwaffe bombers were sent to destroy air fields and aircraft factories. British fighters were sent to intercept and destroy them.

Casualties were high on both sides, but due to the skill of the pilots and radar technology, more German planes were shot down. Between July and October 1940, 1116 British planes were lost and 1660 German planes. By September, Hitler and his air commander Goering decided that this plan was not working and postponed their invasion plans. As a result the British people were spared from an attack by the German army. Churchill thought that the small number of pilots (some from Poland and Czechoslovakia) had saved the country.

The Battle of Britain was important because:

- It was Hitler's first real setback and was good for British morale.
- It allowed Britain to remain in the war and to continue fighting, launching bombing raids on Germany and acting as the staging point for the invasion of Western Europe during D Day in 1944.
- However, it was not a victory and did not in itself defeat Hitler, who still controlled most of Europe. Britain, at this time still only has the empire supporting it in the war.





### 3. Operation Barbarossa, 1941

Hitler's ultimate dream was to smash the USSR and carve out an empire for his master race of Germans. By the summer of 1941, Hitler felt that the time was right to try to fulfil that dream. On 22 June 1941, Hitler launched Operation Barbarossa. Three million German soldiers in 153 divisions poured across the frontier into the USSR.

There were several disputes about tactics and timing between Hitler and his generals, but the *Blitzkrieg* against the Red Army had devastating effects. In the first three months of the campaign, the Germans destroyed the USSR's entire air and tank forces (7000 aircraft and 20,000 tanks). The Red Army suffered 4 million casualties (half of them deaths). By September 1941, Leningrad (the second city in the USSR) was under siege. In the south, German forces had control of the Ukraine and had reached as far as the Crimea. In the centre of Russia, the Germans almost reached the capital Moscow, and Stalin seriously considered surrendering.



German advances continued into 1942, but the Red Army had used the winter of 1941–42 to reorganise. In one of the most extraordinary turnabouts in history, the USSR survived and went on to play the key role in the defeat of Hitler. As Winston Churchill said, 'It was the Red Army which tore the heart out of the German army.'

The Germans failed to capture Stalingrad, despite laying siege to the city for months in the winter of 1942—43. 300,000 German troops surrendered there. Germany also lost the Battle of Kursk in 1943, where Russia's superior number and quality of tanks was obvious.

From 1941 to 1944, 85% of the German army was occupied on the Eastern Front. By 1945, the Germans were being defeated badly and Russian troops were advancing quickly into Germany.

Operation Barbarossa meant that Germany's forces were much weakened and gave Britain an ally against Hitler.

#### 4. Pearl Harbor, December 1941

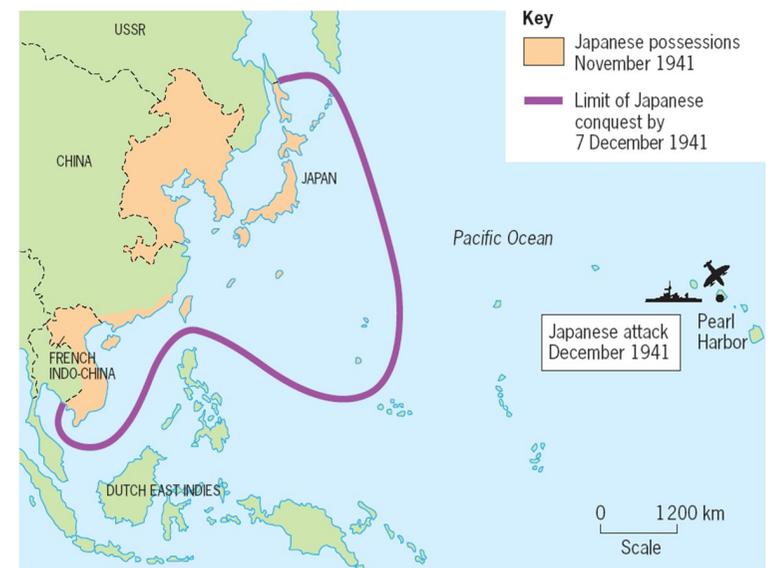
Japan successfully invaded China in 1937, but even bigger prizes beckoned once war in Europe broke out. Britain, France and the Netherlands all had large territories in the Far East that they could not possibly defend while they were at war with Germany. US President Roosevelt rightly guessed that Japan had designs on these territories and restricted the supply of important materials to Japan from 1940. Roosevelt was worried about American interests in China and in the Pacific, particularly in the Philippines.

This was Japan's dilemma. Japan wanted to carve out an empire in the Far East that would make it self-sufficient in vital materials such as rice, oil, coal and rubber. However, not only was this threatening to the USA, it also threatened Japan's other large and powerful neighbour, the USSR.

In June 1941, Hitler solved Japan's second problem when he invaded the USSR. Immediately afterwards, in July 1941, Japan took control of French Indo-China and it seemed that Japan had made up its mind to challenge the USA. Roosevelt froze Japanese assets and cut supplies of iron. This made Japan's leaders even more certain that they needed an Asian empire.

The tension grew. While fearsome battles raged between Germany and the USSR, the Japanese made their plans. Japan could not challenge the power of the USA outright, so cunning was needed. Admiral Yamamoto devised a plan to knock out the USA's Pacific fleet in one swift blow. This would give Japan time to create its new empire. By the time the USA had recovered, Japan would be able to draw on the resources of its empire and the USA would be unable to do anything.

On the morning of 7 December 1941, some 300 planes took off from Japanese aircraft carriers to launch their attack on the US Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor. The next day, the US Congress declared war on Japan. Three days later, on 11 December, Hitler declared war on the USA. Britain now had another powerful ally.

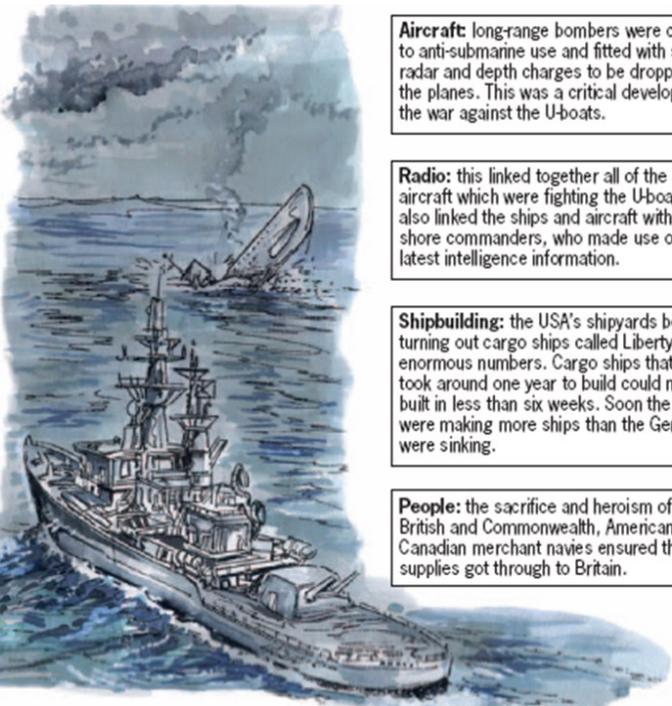


Japan failed to destroy the US fleet, as the aircraft carriers were out at sea. Replacements for the destroyed ships were quickly built and from 1942, the Americans began to fight Japan in the Pacific. Despite huge losses, by 1945, they and the British had pushed the Japanese back to their home islands and were ready to invade.

**Intelligence:** from late 1941 onwards, British code breakers at Bletchley Park got better at decoding German codes. If they **broke the German code**, they knew where the U-boats were and so could guide the convoys away from U-boat wolf packs. Between May 1942 and May 1943, they managed to steer 105 out of 174 convoys across the Atlantic without any interference from U-boats.

**New weapons:** a specially powerful explosive called Torpex was used in anti-submarine weapons. Another development was the Hedgehog depth charge, which fired clusters of bombs over a wide area.

**Naval tactics:** training for convoy commanders was improved. Special support groups of destroyers were created, fitted with powerful radar and listening equipment that could pick up radio signals from U-boats. These support groups were supported in turn by specialist aircraft.



**Aircraft:** long-range bombers were converted to anti-submarine use and fitted with special radar and depth charges to be dropped from the planes. This was a critical development in the war against the U-boats.

**Radio:** this linked together all of the ships and aircraft which were fighting the U-boats. Radio also linked the ships and aircraft with their on-shore commanders, who made use of the latest intelligence information.

**Shipbuilding:** the USA's shipyards began turning out cargo ships called Liberty ships in enormous numbers. Cargo ships that once took around one year to build could now be built in less than six weeks. Soon the Allies were making more ships than the Germans were sinking.

**People:** the sacrifice and heroism of the British and Commonwealth, American and Canadian merchant navies ensured that supplies got through to Britain.

### 5. Battle of the Atlantic

German U-boats attacked merchant ships sailing to Britain to block supplies from reaching it. By being able to locate and sink these submarines, the British were able to ensure the safe arrival of vital material and US troops.

Britain was dependent on the Atlantic for food, raw materials and military equipment from the USA, who were providing supplies before entering into the war fully. By mid-1940, working from bases in Norway and France, German planes and U-boats had sunk 25% of Britain's shipping. By 1941, Britain's imports were only at 40% of their normal peacetime levels. In 1941 1300 ships were sunk and there were 1660 in 1942.

But slowly radar and depth charges were improved. Special long-range aircraft were developed to hunt U-boats. From the end of 1943, more U-boats were sunk than Allied ships.

The Battle of the Atlantic was significant because:

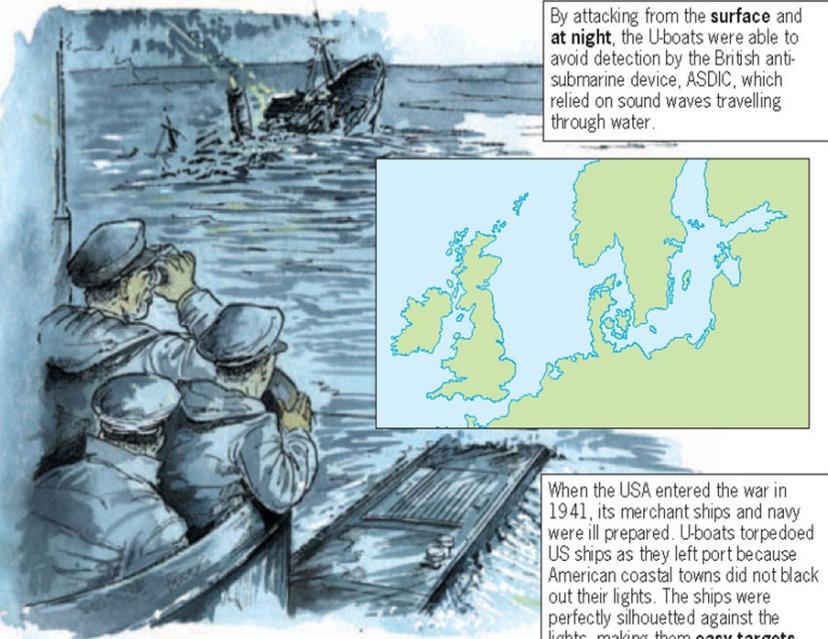
- There were very high casualties—25,000 allied merchant seamen & 28,000 U-boat crew were killed.
- Control of the Atlantic allowed Britain to survive. Without victory, it would have run out of food and supplies and would have had to have surrendered.
- Huge numbers of American troops could be shipped across the Atlantic, allowing D Day and the invasion of Europe to happen in 1944.

The capture of Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands and France in 1940 gave the Germans **secure naval bases** from which their U-boats could operate.

The U-boats laid **mines** around Britain's coasts.

The Germans used converted airliners (Focke-Wulf Condors) as **long-range anti-shiping bombers**. In 1940 alone, these aircraft sank 58,000 tons of shipping.

German intelligence had **cracked** some of the **codes** used by British ships. **Wolf packs** of U-boats were able to lie in wait and **torpedo** the convoys in mid-Atlantic. The U-boats were hard to detect as they deliberately limited the use of their radios to avoid detection.



By attacking from the **surface** and **at night**, the U-boats were able to avoid detection by the British anti-submarine device, ASDIC, which relied on sound waves travelling through water.

When the USA entered the war in 1941, its merchant ships and navy were ill prepared. U-boats torpedoed US ships as they left port because American coastal towns did not black out their lights. The ships were perfectly silhouetted against the lights, making them **easy targets**.

## 8. Hiroshima

Although Germans had surrendered, the Japanese fought on. The Americans were worried about how many lives would be lost in invading Japan and so In August 1945, the US dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.



Although the Japanese were being pushed back in 1943 and 1944, the Allied losses were huge. The Japanese fought fanatically for each island in the Pacific and each piece of territory in China, Burma and India.

In March 1945, British and US forces took the island of Okinawa. The Allies had to kill or capture every one of the 100,000 Japanese soldiers defending the island – none of them would surrender. Allied ships had also been badly damaged by Japanese kamikaze suicide bombers who crashed themselves deliberately into ships.

Truman accepted military advice to drop two bombs in quick succession to convince the Japanese that the USA had a large stockpile of the weapons (which it did not). The first bomb was dropped on Hiroshima by a B-29 bomber, the *Enola Gay*, on 6 August 1945. The second was dropped on the city of Nagasaki three days later. Both caused appalling damage and horrific casualties. They also left a

There were people on the Allied side at the time who felt that the use of these weapons was unnecessary. However, most were relieved there would be no bloody invasion of Japan. Attitudes towards the Japanese had hardened following the liberation of the Allied prisoner-of-war camps in 1944 and 1945. Accounts of horrific conditions and barbaric treatment by the Japanese guards fed a desire for vengeance against the Japanese.

The Japanese Emperor Hirohito the army to surrender after the Nagasaki bomb, but some of the military leaders attempted to overthrow Hirohito and continue the war. This proved to people on the Allied side that using the bombs was right. Hirohito's will prevailed and Japan surrendered on 14 August 1945.

The war was over, but the nuclear age had begun. Truman's decision has come under scrutiny ever since. Some have said the war was already won. The bomb served no military purpose and it was dropped because, as an anti-Communist, Truman wanted to scare the Soviet Union. It is also claimed that army leaders were desperate to test the bomb in real warfare and this was more important to them than the military need.



The damage caused by the Hiroshima bomb. At least 75,000 people died instantly. Tens of thousands more died from radiation poisoning in the years that followed.

## 6. El Alamein

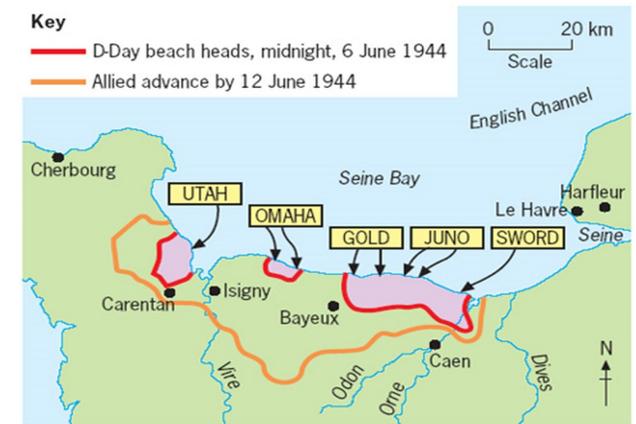
The British fought the Germans and Italians in the North African desert. Victory at the Battle of El Alamein in 1942 allowed them to drive the Germans out of North Africa and to control supplies coming through the Suez Canal in Egypt. In 1943 an invasion of Italy, first through the island of Sicily was launched from North Africa. In 1943 Italy surrendered and joined the

## 7. D-Day

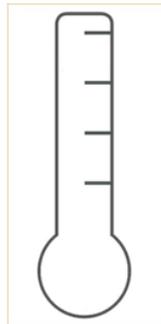
British and American troops successfully landed on beaches in Northern France on 6 June 1944. This then led to the Allied forces pushing the Germans back during the next year. By April 1945, the Germans were trapped between advancing soldiers from both east and west and surrendered, with Hitler committing suicide in May 1945.

The main objective was still to liberate France. It was a formidable task. The Germans had been in France since 1940. They had strong fortifications. They had well trained and experienced troops led by the very capable Field Marshal Erwin Rommel. It was undoubtedly a high-risk undertaking, but the start of Operation Overlord was nonetheless fixed for 6 June 1944.

Overlord began with a series of air attacks and decoy measures. Allied aircraft (facing only 400 Luftwaffe aircraft) pounded radar installations, rail links and bridges, and cut off the German defenders in Normandy from reinforcements. About two-thirds of the air attacks were actually away from the invasion area in order to confuse the defenders. Other measures such as false radio messages were also used to convince the Germans that attacks were taking place elsewhere. The invasion took place from several beaches and was supported by paratroopers dropped from planes or landed in gliders. Casualties were only 11,000 – in an operation that had brought 130,000 men across the channel by sea and 23,000 by air. But then the Allies had to break out of Normandy before the Germans could recover and trap them. They also needed armour, reinforcements and supplies, which were provided with great ingenuity. Giant floating harbours known as Mulberries were sailed across the Channel and huge floating piers were built. The Allies even built their own oil pipeline called PLUTO (Pipe Line Under The Ocean). From this point, the Allies used their air superiority to devastating effect against the German forces. Heavy bombers destroyed factories. Fighter bombers such as the American P-47 Thunderbolt and the British Typhoon roamed the countryside attacking German vehicles and trains. Resistance fighters disrupted German communications and destroyed supplies being taken to German forces.



## WHAT WAS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT EVENT OF WWII?

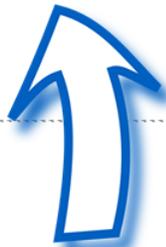


Great significance  
 Fairly significant  
 Slightly significant  
 Little significance



Shade in your thermometer to show how **significant** each event was - how it did help lead to the defeat of Germany and Japan?

How significant was Dunkirk?



Briefly explain your choice in the box

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/education/guides/z9s9q6f/revision>

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwtwo/ww2\\_summary\\_01.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwtwo/ww2_summary_01.shtml)

<https://www.bbc.com/timelines/zxq4kqt>

What do I need to know?

- What were the main causes of WWII?
- What were the most significant events of WWII?

### Significance

Which events were most significant in WWII?

See below to work out what significance actually means

Would events be more or less significant if you were looking at this from the point of view of Americans, Japanese or Russians?

### QUICK GUIDE TO... HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Historical significance is a meta-concept which cuts across all historical concepts & processes including cause, consequence, interpretation...

Consider developing students' ability in **THREE KEY AREAS...**

- 1 The ability to identify, apply and create their own criteria for measuring significance
- 2 The ability to analyse, evaluate and compare the significance of developments, events & people
- 3 The ability to set judgements about historical significance in the context of when they were made, understanding how and why views of significance change over time

**TURNING POINTS**

All events have consequences, but significant events have a lasting impact on the course of history, which is often abstract rather than concrete. This impact endures, and the event is often viewed as significant long after the short-term consequences have vanished.

#### PARTINGTON'S CRITERIA

OR CHOOSE OTHER CRITERIA SUCH AS...

<b>COUNSELL'S 5 Rs</b> REMARKABLE REMEMBERED RESONANT RESULTING IN CHANGE REVEALING	<b>PHILLIPS' 'GREAT'</b> GROUNDBREAKING REMEMBERED BY ALL EVENTS WERE FAR REACHING AFFECTED THE FUTURE TERRIFYING
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