

# War Facts

## World War I

World War 1 started on August 4th 1914 when Germany invaded Belgium. It began when Europe had split into two large families of countries. The Allies; Britain, France, Belgium, Russia and later the USA. Against the Central Powers of Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey.

The war lasted for just over 4 years and ended on November 11th 1918. It was one of the largest wars in history.

Healthy men and boys between the ages of 18-41 were ordered to go and fight. Women were not allowed to.

In 1918 the world was hit with a pandemic that killed more people than the war. 500 million people had been infected. It was known by name as the Spanish flu.

Soldiers lived in trenches. They were terrible living conditions. Men had to endure rats, lice infestation & dead bodies. With just 30 meters apart from the enemy line, men had to be on guard 24 hours a day and ready to shoot at the enemy.



Soldiers used big tanks like this one. The British

Sherman was used in WW2 but tanks like this were also used in WW1. They were equipped with guns and easy to move around in the mud.

# War Facts

## World War II

World War 2 was the most devastating war to date. It was a battle between two groups of countries, the Allies; Britain, France, Russia, China & the USA against the Axis; Germany, Italy & Japan.



A man named Adolf Hitler worked for the Nazi party and wanted to rule Europe. He had a hatred for certain groups of people, including those with disabilities. The most targeted were the Jewish community. Hitler blamed Jewish people for losing WWI. Six million Jews were killed in WWII during the Holocaust.

World War 2 started on September 1st 1939 when Germany invaded Poland. It went on until May 8th 1945 when they eventually surrendered.

By 1941, German forces had invaded France, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, Denmark, Norway, Greece, Yugoslavia & USSR. The USA joined forces in 1941 when they were attacked by Japan.

Some countries decided to stay neutral and not join either side. Switzerland, Sweden & Spain were among these.

# Life During the War

## Dangerous Times

Back home families had to do whatever necessary to stay safe during air raids. People made air raid shelters under the ground that they could escape to when the sirens went off.



During both wars, gas masks were provided as protection against poisonous gases that German forces used in their weapons. Also to protect civilians during deadly gas raids.

The Blitz was a German bombing campaign against the United Kingdom between 1940-1941. For 8 months the Luftwaffe (German airforce) would drop bombs on London and other cities.

It was named the Blitz after the German word blitzkrieg meaning 'lightening war'.

During the Blitz, families had to be very cautious and weren't allowed to draw attention to themselves. People had to board up their windows and not have any lights on after dark as the enemy aircraft would see.

Fighter planes were used for observing the enemy from the air and tracking their movements. They would try to shoot the enemy's bomber planes & protect their own bombers. Fighter planes were armed with high powered machine guns & cannons.



**Spitfires**

# Life During the War

**Times were tough during the war. Even for families on their own soil. Women weren't allowed to go to war but they were kept busy working in factories, shops, offices and on farms.**

**Women worked tirelessly growing food and making weapons.**



**When the war was over, the men did not want the women to work & so many of them had to return to the home. However some protested about their rights to work & this led to women fighting their right to vote.**

**Food was rationed so women would cook meals with all they had so that food would go further, such as casseroles & stews.**

**During the war, children faced tough challenges. Many were sent to boarding schools and separated from their families. Children were made to wear gas masks in school. Many children were evacuated & sent to live in the country where they would be safe.**



**Boy scouts & girl guides were given tasks to help with the war efforts. Making bandages for the wounded soldiers & finding conkers to be used for explosives were just two of the tasks children had.**



# Life After the War

The economy suffered as people were trying to get back into work. Many homes had been destroyed and families had suffered the loss of loved ones.

Soldiers who did survive and return home suffered mental scars from fighting and the awful things they had seen.

Food was scarce so rationing had to continue for 9 years after the war ended.

On May 8th 1945 Victory in Europe was celebrated after 6 years of conflict. This is known as VE Day every year on this day.

Prime Minister at the time, Winston Churchill made a speech on the radio from Downing Street announcing that Nazi Germany had surrendered. The nation gathered in the streets to celebrate.



King George VI made an appearance outside Buckingham Palace to greet the nation. Church bells rang to share the news and people waved flags in celebration.



Each year the country recognises VE Day as a holiday. The year 2020 was the 75th Anniversary.

# Remembering Those Lost

**Seventeen million people died during World War 1.**

**Around 64 million people died in World War 2.**



**In Normandy there are 9,388 American military buried. Many of whom were killed during the invasion of Normandy. People go here to pay their respects to the dead.**

## **The Meaning of the Poppy**

**The pretty red flowers were the only things that grew on the bloody battlefields of Western Europe. Among the chaos and the destruction, the beautiful red Flanders poppies grew in thousands.**



## **Remembrance Day**

**Each year on the eleventh day of the eleventh month on the eleventh hour, we have a moments silence in memory of all those that sacrificed their lives during the war. We wear poppies as a sign of respect.**

# Quiz

**What year did World War 1 start?**

- a) 1938**
- b) 1914**
- c) 1918**

**Which of these two countries were part of the German central powers in WW1?**

- a) France & Italy**
- b) Austria & Turkey**
- c) Belgium & Russia**

**How old did men have to be to go to war?**

- a) 25**
- b) 16**
- c) 18**

**Where did soldiers have to sleep and be on guard for enemy watch?**

- a) In storage rooms**
- b) Behind walls**
- c) Inside trenches**

**How long did WW1 last for?**

- a) 3 years**
- b) 6 years**
- c) 4 years**

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# Quiz

**What year did WW2 start?**

- a) 1928**
- b) 1939**
- c) 1941**

**Who was prime minister a year into WW2?**

- a) Neville Chamberlain**
- b) Winston Churchill**
- c) Clement Attlee**

**Which country were among those who stayed neutral during WW2?**

- a) Russia**
- b) Switzerland**
- c) Italy**

**What was rationing?**

- a) A certain time of the day when you had to keep lights out**
- b) A limit of food that families had each week**
- c) A room in the house that was a safe place**

**Why did people have to wear gas masks?**

- a) To prevent them from breathing in poisonous gases**
- b) For the smells that people had to endure**
- c) To help people breathe in warm conditions**

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**Who was the King during WW2?**

- a) Henry VIII (8th)**
- b) George VI (6th)**
- c) George V (5th)**

**What was one of the jobs that women did during the war?**

- a) Factory work**
- b) Window cleaning**
- c) Truck driver**

**How many people died during WW2?**

- a) Around 17 million**
- b) Around 64 million**
- c) Around 20 million**

**How did people celebrate when the war was over?**

- a) People stayed home and kept quiet**
- b) People had a big party in the streets and waved flags**
- c) Life just went back to normal**

**Which red flower do people wear every year to remember those lost in both wars?**

- a) Rose**
- b) Tulip**
- c) Poppy**

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# **Glossary**

**Invade;** When a country starts attacking another country.

**Infestation;** A large number of insects or animals in a place that can cause damage or disease.

**Rationing;** A small amount of something such as food that is in high demand and short supply.

**Holocaust;** Was a deliberate killing of a large number of people from a different religion or background, mainly Jewish people.

**Economy;** Its the way people make money and spend money.

**Surrender;** When one side gives up.

**Evacuated;** Having to leave and be put somewhere safe.

**Neutral;** When someone does not want to get involved.

**Air Raid;** When airplanes drop bombs on the enemy from the sky.

**Destruction;** A huge amount of damage caused by something or someone.

**Remembrance;** A day that we remember something or someone.



# Wordsearch

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**Winston Churchill**

**Spitfire**

**Great Britain**

**Trench**

**Poppies**

**Holocaust**

**Bomber**

**Gas Masks**

**Rations**

**Allies**

**Air Raid**

**Flag**

**Blitz**

**Evacuate**

**Soldiers**

**Surrender**

**Tank**

**Enemy**

**Nazis**

**War**

**Normandy**