

World War II What was the Battle of Britain and

Year 6

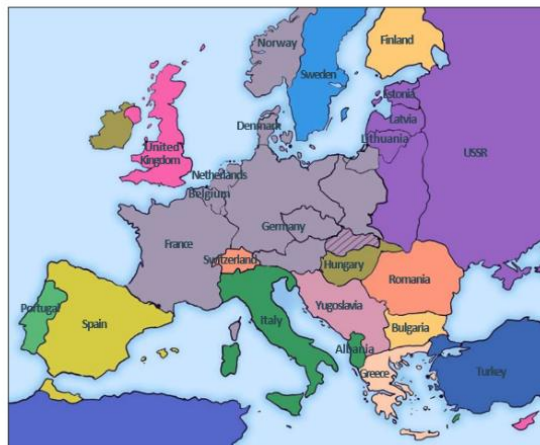
why was it a significant turning point in British History?

Britain's Home Front

The war affected all people, whether on the front line (in Europe) fighting or the home front (back in Britain). The Home Front mainly involved the nation's civilians. Life changed dramatically for Britain's Home Front, especially for:

- **Children** – many were evacuated to safer areas. This meant being separated from family and friends for long periods.
- **Women** – With millions of men serving in the armed forces, women were required to fill the jobs that the men left behind. The contributions made by women in different workplaces were crucial to the war effort.

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.



Map showing German-controlled territory by June 1940.

Tier vocabulary

Words I should already know	invade invasion war destroy battle power defend natural resources enemy attack
Tier 2 Vocabulary	civilians inferior intercept engage supremacy occupation evacuation mission bombard strike
Tier 3 Vocabulary	Allies Axis Spitfire Luftwaffe dogfight Blitzkrieg Messerschmitt the Blitz

Evacuation

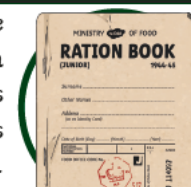
During World War II, over 3.5 million children, along with some of their teachers and helpers, mothers with very young children, pregnant women and people with disabilities, were evacuated from the cities to the countryside, where it was believed they would be safer from bombing. All evacuees had to take their gas mask, ration book and identity card. When they reached their destination, a billeting officer would arrange a host family for them.

Evacuation happened in waves, beginning on 1st September 1939. Other waves occurred at the start of the Battle of Britain and at the start of the Blitz.

Rationing

Supply ships were targeted by German bombers and it was necessary to conserve as much food as possible. 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. People were also encouraged to 'Dig for Victory' and grow as much of their own food as possible.

Petrol, soap, clothing and timber were also in short supply. Clothing ration books were issued and people were encouraged to 'make do and mend'.



A ration book

Hitler's rise in popularity

The new German government attempted to rebuild Germany after World War I. Signing the **Treaty of Versailles** meant that Germany had **crippling debts**. This led to **unemployment** and a **shortage of goods**. Hitler and the Nazi party saw a failing Germany as an **opportunity to claim power**. In 1932, the Nazis were **the largest party** in the Reichstag, and then in 1933, Hitler became the **Chancellor** of Germany.

The outbreak of WW2

On **1st September 1939**, Hitler invaded Poland. Britain and France declared war on Germany two days later. Britain's prime minister at the time, **Neville Chamberlain**, addressed the nation with a speech. There was a widespread belief that Britain needed to stand firm against the **threat of Nazi aggression**. '**Keep Calm and Carry On**' was the government's motivational message to its citizens at the start of WW2. Everyone felt that they were **part of the war**. The war effort in Britain was known as the **Home Front**. Children's lives changed dramatically during the war as many of them were **evacuated**. Women's lives also changed as they had to help **produce goods**.

How did the Second World War continue?

The bombing of British cities, called the **Blitz**, continued for some time. Still, due to the huge defeat at the **Battle of Britain**, the **German Luftwaffe** would never have the same military power it had before, so it was minimal in comparison.

On **6th June 1944**, American, Canadian and British troops landed on the beaches of Normandy and stormed the German defences. Within months, **Paris was liberated**, and the Allies continued their **march towards Berlin**.

With the **Soviets** marching from the east and the Allies marching from the west, it was not long until the battle reached Berlin.

Finally, on **8th May 1945**, news reached the world that **Berlin had fallen** and the Nazi Government had signed a **peace treaty**. **Hitler was dead**. **The war was over**.



Britain

1250 aircraft destroyed
544 pilots killed



Germany

1700 aircraft destroyed
2662 pilots killed

Statistics showing the aircraft and personnel loss during the Battle of Britain.

The Role of Women

Before the war, most women stayed at home and didn't go out to work. Those who did work were paid less than men and were generally restricted to 'women's jobs', such as nursing or working as a shop assistant. However, when men were called up for **active service**, women were needed to do 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 carry on leading more independent lives.



Examples of posters produced to support Britain's Home Front.



LEAVE HITLER TO ME
SONNY - YOU OUGHT
TO BE OUT OF LONDON