

Y9 Term 4 Knowledge Organiser – World War Two (1939-1945)



Enquiries

Why was World War II a global conflict?

1. How successful were Allied responses to the Wehrmacht in Europe? [4]

2. What was the impact of the civilian experience of WWII? [1]

3. What were the experiences of the war in the Pacific Rim? [3]

4. How was 'victory' achieved in Europe and the Pacific? [2]

Key Words

Term	Definition
Aerial Offensive [air-ee-al off-en-sive]	An attack from the air (using planes).
Amphibious [amp-fib-ee-us]	In warfare, an attack or landing made via water.
Atlantic Wall [At-lan-tic]	A series of coastal defenses built by Germany to defend Western Europe from a potential coastal attack. It ran from northern Norway to Spain.
Attrition [at-trish-tion]	Tactic of wearing down your opponent with repeated attacks.
Blitz [Blitz]	German bombing campaign of Britain from Sept. 1940 to May 1941.
Blitzkrieg [blitz-kreeg]	'Lightning war' – German tactic of quick and intense attacks.
Bushido Code [Bush-ee-do Code]	Japanese Samurai code that said that only a samurai who was willing to die in battle could truly devote himself to his Lord.
Changi [Chang-gee]	Japanese camp for Allied Prisoners of War, located in Singapore.
Coral Sea [Co-ral See]	Sea to the north-east of Australia; location of a naval battle in which the USA and Australia fought to defend Australia from Japanese invasion.
Dunkirk [Dun-kirk]	Located in the north of France & a point of evacuation of British troops after the fall of France to German forces.
Evacuee [Ee-vac-u-ee]	Someone who has been removed from a place of danger to safety.
Expansionist [Ex-pan-tion-ist]	A person, group or government that favours territorial expansion.
Hawaii [Ha-why-ee]	US State comprised of a series of islands in the Pacific Ocean.
Hobart's Funnies [Ho-bart's Fun-nees]	Specially modified tanks designed to target specific obstacles or difficult terrain faced during the D-Day landings.
Home Front	Civilian experiences of the war in their home country.
Hurricane [Hur-ri-cane]	British plane notable for its tight turning circle.
Incendiary [In-send-ee-ary]	Causing fire; an incendiary bomb caused fire with the explosion.
Iwo Jima [I-wo Jee-ma]	Pacific Island controlled by Japan; valuable for its air bases.
Kamikaze [Kam-mi-ka-zee]	A Japanese Pilot who would commit suicide by diving his plane into a target to create maximum damage.
Lebensraum [Labe-bens-rowm]	Living space for the German population.

Term	Definition
Luftwaffe [Luft-waf-fah]	German Air Force
Manchuria [Man-chur-ree-a]	Province in north-eastern China invaded by Japan in 1931.
Nazi-Soviet Pact [Na-zi Sow-vee-et Pact]	Non-aggression pact between Hitler & Stalin (signed 23 Aug. 1939).
Okinawa [Ok-ee-na-wa]	Pacific Island controlled by Japan; close proximity to Japan made it important for Japanese defense.
Operation Barbarossa [Bar-ba-ross-a]	Codename for the German invasion of the USSR.
Operation Dynamo [Die-na-mo]	Codename for the British rescue of British troops from Dunkirk.
Operation Overlord	Codename for D-Day – the planned allied invasion of France.
Operation Sealion	Codename for the German planned invasion of Britain.
Pearl Harbour [Perl Har-bur]	US Naval Base located in Hawaii; attacked by Japan, 7 Dec. 1941.
Phoney War [Fone-ee War]	Eight month period at the beginning of WWII where there was limited military activity in Europe on land and in the air.
PoW	Prisoner of War – someone who has been captured by the enemy and kept in prison.
Propaganda [Prop-a-gand-a]	False or misleading information to make people think/act a certain way.
Radar [Ray-dar]	A system for detecting the presence, direction, distance and speed of aircraft, ships and other objects by sending out pulses of radio-waves that are reflected off of the object back to the source.
RAF	Royal Air Force (the British Air Force).
Rationing [Rat-tion-ing]	Allowing people only a small and fixed amount of certain items.
Spitfire	British plane notable for its speed and agility.
Stalingrad [Sta-lin-grad]	Russian city where Germany was badly defeated by Russia, 1942-3.
Volksdeutsche [Volks-doy-tsich]	German speaking / German blooded people.
Wehrmacht [Vair-mack-t]	Combined German defense force consisting of the <i>heer</i> (army), <i>kriegsmarine</i> (navy) & <i>Luftwaffe</i> (air force).

Key Individuals

Individual	Description
Winston Churchill	Prime Minister of England from 1940 to 1945 and again from 1951-1955.
Adolf Hitler	Leader of the German Nazi-Party and Chancellor of Germany from 1933 until his suicide in April 1945. Also called 'the Fuhrer'.
Franklin Roosevelt	President of the USA from 1933 until his death in office in 1934.
Joseph Stalin	Leader of the Communist Soviet Union from the mid-1920s until his death in 1953.
General Tojo	Japanese Prime Minister and Minister for War for most of WWII.
Harry S. Truman	Vice President to Franklin Roosevelt in 1945. He became President Roosevelt's death in 1945 and remained in office until 1953.

Timeline of Key Events

30 Jan. 1933	Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany
23 Aug. 1939	Hitler and Stalin sign the Nazi-Soviet Pact
1 Sept. 1939	Germany invades Poland.
3 Sept. 1939	Britain declares war on Germany.
10 May 1939	Germany invades France.
26 May – 4 Jun. 1940	Evacuation of defeated British troops at Dunkirk.
July-Sept. 1940	The Battle for Britain takes place between the RAF and Luftwaffe.
Sept. 1940 – May 1941	The Blitz takes place as German planes heavily bomb British cities in a series of night raids using 'blitzkrieg' tactics.
June 1941	Germany launches Operation Barbarossa, invading Russia.
23 Aug. 1942 – 2 Feb. 1943	German Army is heavily defeated by Russian troops at the Battle of Stalingrad.
7 Dec. 1941	Japanese planes attack the US Naval Base at Pearl Harbor.
8 Dec. 1941	USA declares war on Japan and its allies.
15 Feb. 1942	Japan captures Singapore, taking control of British naval bases there.
19 Feb. 1942	Japanese planes bomb the northern Australian city of Darwin.
4 May 1942	Japan is defeated in the Battle of the Coral Sea by the US and Australian navies.
July – Nov. 1942	Kokoda Campaign is fought between Australian and Japanese troops for control of Papua New Guinea.
6 Jun. 1944	D-Day (codename Operation Overlord) – the allied invasion of France begins.
19 Feb. – 26 Mar. 1945	Battle of Iwo Jima – USA captures the Japanese island.
1 Apr. – 22 Jun. 1945	Battle of Okinawa – USA captures the Japanese island and last line of defence.
30 April 1945	Hitler commits suicide as the Russians close in on Berlin.
8 May 1945	VE Day – Victory in Europe as Nazi-Germany surrenders unconditionally.
6 Aug. 1945	The atomic bomb 'Little Boy' is dropped on Hiroshima.
9 Aug. 1945	The atomic bomb 'Fat Man' is dropped on Nagasaki; the USSR invades Japanese occupied Manchuria.
15 Aug. 1945	VJ Day – Victory over Japan after the Japanese formally surrender.

Allied Powers	Axis Powers
<p>Britain France* USSR (from June 1941) USA (from 8 Dec. 1941)</p> <p><u>And other allied nations:</u> Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, Greece, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, South Africa, Yugoslavia.</p>	<p>Germany Italy Japan</p> <p><u>And their allies:</u> Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria.</p>
<p>*France (except under Nazi occupation, 1940 to 1944); however the French Resistance worked with British and U.S. forces to undermine the Nazi regime in France.</p>	

Map of Nazi Occupied Europe by 1940.

