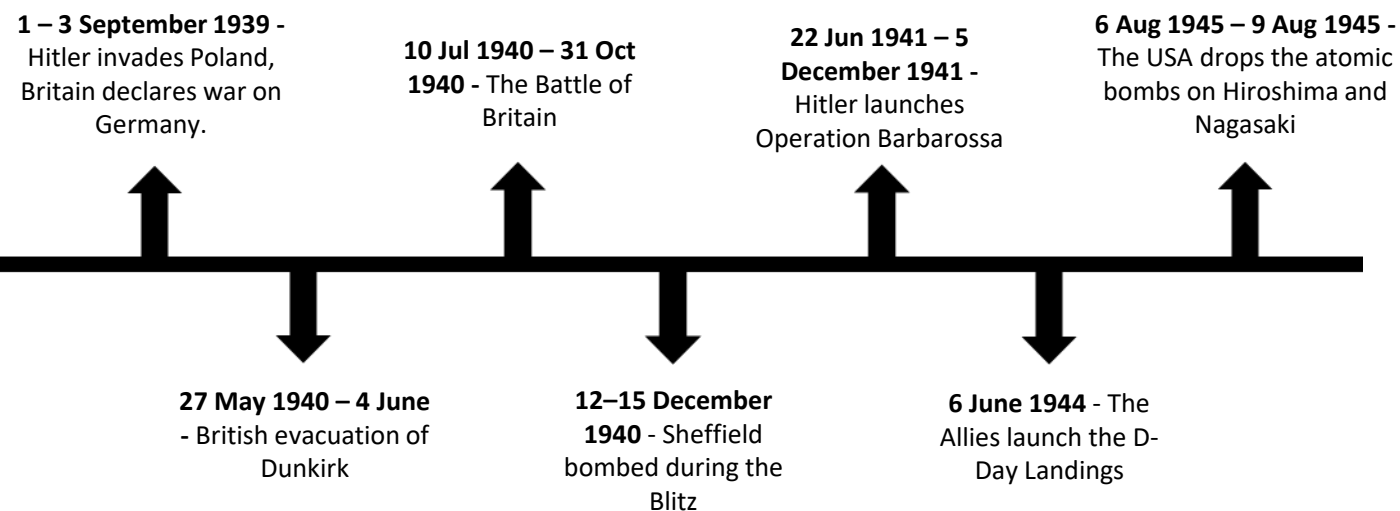


Knowledge Organiser: What was the most significant moment of WW2?

Topic Summary:

This topic investigates many key moments of the Second World War. You will learn about how the war affected different parts of the world and consequently changed the way war would be fought forever. You will ultimately reach a decision about which event you think was the most significant moment of the Second World War. Our second order concept is SIGNIFICANCE.

Key Dates:



Key People:



Adolf Hitler

The dictator of Nazi Germany, led the country during World War Two. Started the conflict by invading Poland seeking to expand German territory.



Joseph Stalin

Soviet leader during World War Two. Stalin commanded the Red Army and played a key role in defeating Nazi Germany.



Winston Churchill

British Prime Minister during World War Two. He inspired the nation with his speeches and helped secure victory against Nazi Germany.



Harry Truman

U.S. President during the final stages of World War Two. Truman made the decision to drop atomic bombs on Japan, leading to the war's end in 1945.

Vocabulary:

Treaty		A binding formal agreement between two or more countries. Usually takes place after a war.
Appeasement		Giving in to someone's demands as far as is reasonably possible to avoid conflict.
Evacuation		The process of moving or taking a person or group of people away from a dangerous place to a safer place.
Radar		A device which allows the army to detect incoming enemy aircraft and send warnings.
Blitz		Nazi German air raids on major cities in Britain 1940-1941.
Invasion		A military action involving the armed forces of one country taking over another country, usually with the aim to take complete control.
Pearl Harbour		A surprise military strike in December 1941 in which imperial Japan attacked a US naval base on Honolulu, Hawaii.
Home Front		The contributions and sacrifices made by the civilian population of Britain.
Atomic Bomb		A bomb whose great power is due to the sudden release of the energy in the nuclei of atoms.
Significant		Determining how impactful or life-affecting a historical event has been.

Core Knowledge:

Lesson 1: How significant was the Treaty of Versailles?	The Treaty of Versailles (1919) was a peace agreement that ended World War I, but its harsh terms towards Germany, including heavy reparations, territorial losses, and military restrictions, caused resentment. Many historians argue that it contributed to the rise of Nazism and the outbreak of World War II.
Lesson 2: How significant was the evacuation from Dunkirk?	The Dunkirk evacuation (1940) was a pivotal moment during World War II, where over 300,000 British and Allied troops were rescued from the beaches of Dunkirk, France. Although it was a military retreat, it became a symbol of hope and resilience, boosting British morale.
Lesson 3: How significant were 'the few'?	"The Few" refers to the pilots of the Royal Air Force (RAF) who defended Britain during the Battle of Britain (1940). Their success in repelling the Luftwaffe was crucial in preventing a German invasion of Britain and marked a turning point in the war.
Lesson 4: How significant was Operation Barbarossa?	Operation Barbarossa (1941) was Nazi Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union. It was the largest military operation of World War II and marked a crucial shift in the war, eventually leading to Germany's defeat on the Eastern Front due to the resilience of Soviet forces and harsh winter conditions.
Lesson 5: How significant was the home front?	The home front refers to the civilian efforts during World War II, including rationing, the role of women in the workforce, and morale-boosting activities like war bonds and propaganda. The collective effort was essential in supporting military operations and maintaining national resilience.
Lesson 6: How significant were the D-Day landings?	The D-Day landings (1944), known as Operation Overlord, were a massive Allied invasion of Nazi-occupied France. It marked the beginning of the liberation of Western Europe from Nazi control and was a crucial turning point in the eventual defeat of Germany.
Lesson 7: How significant was the use of the atomic bomb?	The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (1945) by the United States led to Japan's surrender and the end of World War II. However, the bombings sparked ethical debates about the civilian casualties and the long-term impact of nuclear weapons, influencing global politics during the Cold War.
Lesson 8: Enquiry Outcome	<p>You will be creating a 'living graph' of the key moments from World War Two, along with a concluding paragraph explaining your most significant moment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You need to produce a well-presented living graph that is clear to read.• You need to write in clear formal language that uses lots of key words from this enquiry focus.

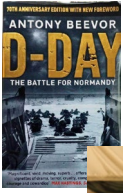
What do historians say?

Anthony Beevor, *D-Day: The Battle for Normandy*

“The Allied landings in Normandy on 6 June 1944 were the turning point of the Second World War. Operation Overlord, the greatest amphibious assault in history, not only marked the beginning of the liberation of western Europe but also triggered the eventual collapse of Nazi Germany. Without the establishment of a strong foothold in Normandy, the Soviet advance from the east might have been delayed, and Europe could have remained divided between East and West in a different balance of power.”

Arthur Marwick, *The Home Front: The British and the Second World War*

“The British home front was the backbone of the entire war effort. Without the total mobilization of civilian society—factories producing war matériel, women entering the workforce, and the careful management of food and resources—victory against Nazi Germany would have been unthinkable. The Blitz and the hardships endured brought the nation together in a shared struggle, not only against the external enemy but also in the collective effort to sustain life on the home front, maintaining morale and resilience. It was this unity of purpose that would ultimately secure Britain’s survival and triumph.”



How can I find out more?

Podcast: The rest is History
Operation Barbarossa



Documentaries:

- World War II in Colour (Netflix)
- Fighting for King and Empire: Britain’s Caribbean Heroes (BBC iPlayer)
- Blitz Spirit with Lucy Worsley (BBC iPlayer)

