Year 6 History Knowledge Organiser

Why was WWII considered a world war?

A global conflict, lasting impact

Key Vocabulary

Allies	The countries that fought against Germany, Italy and Japan (including Britain, France, the USA, USSR and China).
Axis	The countries that fought against the Allies (Germany, Italy and Japan).
Nazi party	A German political party led by Adolf Hitler with racist and anti-Jewish ideas.
appeasement	A policy of giving in to demands to avoid war.
evacuation	The organised movement of children and vulnerable people to safer places.
Blitz	A German bombing campaign against British cities.
Dunkirk	The evacuation of British and Allied troops from France in 1940.
Kindertransport	A rescue operation that brought Jewish children to Britain from Germany and other countries.
D-Day	The Allied invasion of German-occupied France on 6 June 1944.
rationing	Controlling the amount of food, clothing and other goods people could buy.
Holocaust	The murder of over six million Jewish people and millions of others by the Nazi regime.
victory	The defeat of Germany in Europe (VE Day, 8 May 1945) and Japan in Asia (VJ Day, 2 September 1945).

Key Enquiry Question

Why was WWII considered a world war?

By the end of this unit, we will know...

- What led to the outbreak of WWII.
- Why the war involved countries across the world.
- The key events, people and experiences in different places.
- How the war ended and its lasting impact.

Key Figures


Adolf Hitler


Neville Chamberlain


Winston Churchill


Franklin D. Roosevelt

Timeline of Key Events

- **1938** – Appeasement (Munich Agreement)
- **1 Sept 1939** – Germany invades Poland
- **May–June 1940** – Dunkirk evacuation
- **Sept 1940 – May 1941** – The Blitz
- **6 June 1944** – D-Day landings
- **8 May 1945** – VE Day (Germany surrenders)
- **2 Sept 1945** – VJ Day (Japan surrenders)

WWII lasted from 1st September 1939 to 2nd September 1945 and involved countries and people right across the world.

What we will learn

1. Topic Launch



- Explore a range of primary sources.
- Ask questions to discover more about WWII.
- Consider what different items can tell us about life at the time.

2. Neville Chamberlain and Appeasement



- What was appeasement?
- How did Chamberlain try to respond to Hitler?
- Arguments for and against appeasement.
- How did these events lead to the start of WWII?

3. Dunkirk



- What led to the Dunkirk evacuation?
- Learn about the events and what happened afterwards.
- Read and summarise a first-hand account.
- How Churchill used Dunkirk to influence public opinion.
- Consider the significance of different parts of the event.

4. The Blitz



- What was the Blitz?
- Key events and features.
- The impact on different cities and people.
- Read a first-hand account.
- Explore artefacts and discuss their significance.

5. Children in the War



- Learn about evacuations.
- Describe the experiences of children during the war.
- Explore different sources of information.
- Discuss the effects on children in Britain.

6. Kindertransport



- What led to Kindertransport?
- Read and discuss children's experiences.
- Evaluate the significance of Kindertransport.

7. D-Day



- Learn about the preparations for D-Day and the events of the Normandy landings.
- Consider the significance of D-Day for the war and for individuals.

8. Victory



- How was victory achieved in the west and east?
- The final stages of the war.
- VE Day and VJ Day.
- What did victory mean for people during and after the war?

Why was it a world war?

It involved countries from across the globe – Europe, Asia, Africa, North America and Oceania.

- Fighting took place on land, at sea and in the air.
- It affected millions of people, not just soldiers but civilians too.
- The war was linked through alliances, global trade, empires and shared enemies.

It was a world war because it was truly a global conflict.

Map of the World in WWII



Fascinating Facts

- WWII lasted for 6 years.
- Over 50 million people died.
- The Holocaust saw the murder of around 6 million Jewish people.
- Children as young as 5 were evacuated.
- The Blitz lasted for 57 nights.
- D-Day involved over 156,000 Allied troops.
- VE Day was on 8th May 1945.
- VJ Day was on 2nd September 1945.

Key Questions to Think About

- Why do you think countries chose sides?
- Was appeasement a sensible decision?
- How did ordinary people's lives change during the war?
- What role did children play in WWII?
- Why was Kindertransport significant?
- How did events like Dunkirk and D-Day change the course of the war?
- What can we learn from WWII today?