Second World War (WWII)

Background Information

World War II involved many countries around the globe fighting against each other, including the UK. It lasted six years, from 1939-1945.

The War became a global conflict after the German military, led by **Adolf Hitler**, invaded Poland in 1939 because he wanted to take some of their land for Germany. France and Britain declared war on Germany because they didn't think what Germany was doing was right, then Italy joined with Germany, and gradually other countries in Europe and around the world became involved with either the Allies or the Axis powers.

Life during the Second World War was very difficult. Today, we mark special days to remember the **many millions of people who fought and died** during World War II.
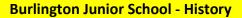
In this unit children will:

Understand when the war started/ended

Research the countries that fought in the World War

Investigate what rationing was

Look at which places were bombed and why

Study what the Blitz was and who was affected

Look at what evacuation meant

Understand what D-Day was

Know why propaganda was important

Look at the role of men and women during the war

Understand how the Second World War changed the world

Key places:

Key Figures:

Neville Chamberlain	The British Prime Minister when the war began. He was blamed by many for not stopping Hitler sooner. **Quote:** "…consequently this country is at war with Germany."
Winston Churchill	British Prime Minister for most of the war. **Quotes:** "Never in the field of human conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few." "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender."
Adolf Hitler	German dictator and leader of the Nazi party. Began the persecution of the Jews, which we now know as the Holocaust.
Franklin D. Roosevelt	President of the United States of America during the war.

Timeline

1939 - Sept	Germany invades Poland causing Britain and France to declare war.
1940 - May	Winston Churchill becomes the British Prime Minister.
1940 - May	300,000 British troops are evacuated from Dunkirk to escape the German army.
1940 - June	The Battle of Britain begins.
1941 - Dec	Japan attacks the USA at Pearl Harbour causing the USA to join the war.
1944 - June	D-Day (the Allies' invasion of Normandy) begins.
1945 - May	Germany surrenders. Hitler dies. VE day (Victory in Europe)
1945 - Aug	Japan surrenders ending the Second World War.

Vocabulary:

Axis Powers - The countries who fought against the Allies - they wanted more land and power

Allies Powers - The countries who fought against the Axis

Blitz - The bombing attacks on Great Britain by the Germans

Evacuee - A child sent to live in the countryside for safety

Rationing - Food and other supplies were 'rationed' meaning that you could only purchase a certain amount of items using tokens from your ration book

Refugee - the men, women and children (Jews) who were forced from their homes in German territory, they sought safety in neighbouring countries.

Invasion - Forcefully taking over another country

Chancellor - The person in charge

Home Guard - were volunteers who defended the five thousand miles of Britain coastline in the event of an invasion by Germany

The Holocaust - was the persecution and murder of six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators

Transferable vocabulary and concepts:
Talking points to discuss at home- why does humanity embark upon acts of war? Who led the war? Why did the war begin? What were the main events of WWII? What was life like in Britain during WWII? How far would you go to protect your way of life? Should we always believe what we are told in the media? Would you have gone to war?