



### KEY FACTS

- 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.
- The Blitz was the bombing of Britain by Nazi Germany between September 1940 and May 1941. The German airforce, called the Luftwaffe, used bombs to damage industrial areas like factories and docks. That meant it was hard for Britain to make and move things like the weapons that were needed to fight the Nazis. They also attacked civilian areas, the parts of cities where people lived. London was a key target. The Nazis were planning to invade Britain. They wanted to make ordinary people in the UK feel that Britain couldn't win - so that the British would put up less of a fight.
- Night after night, from September 1940 until May 1941, German bombers attacked British cities, ports and industrial areas. London was bombed every day and night, bar one, for 11 weeks. One third of London was destroyed. The German planes flew over to the UK in big groups for bombing raids. They dropped lots of bombs in a short amount of time making it a terrifying experience for the people on the ground.
- People were warned of a likely air raid by loud sirens, positioned in different parts of towns and cities. The sirens made a very loud and long signal or warning sound. When people heard the siren they would stop what they were doing and make for a shelter.
- Evacuation means leaving a place. During the Second World War, many children living in big cities and towns were moved temporarily from their homes to places considered safer, usually out in the countryside. The British evacuation began on Friday 1 September 1939. Being an evacuee must have been scary and exciting at the same time. The children had to leave their families and homes behind and try to fit in with host families in the country.
- Peoples lives changed in many ways during WW2 and the Blitz. One of these way was rationing of food. In addition, before the Second World War, women were expected to be 'housewives' or perhaps to do certain 'women's jobs', such as nursing or being a domestic servant or shop assistant. The war changed the world of work for women for ever. When men went to fight, women were called upon to fill their jobs, and this included many jobs that were previously thought of unsuitable for women.

#### NATIONAL CURRICULUM AIMS

- They should understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources
- They should regularly address and sometimes devise historically valid questions about change and cause.

### TOPIC VOCABULARY

**Invasion** - invading a country or region with an armed force.

**air raid** - An attack by planes dropping bombs.

**air raid drill** - Practice for what to do in air raid, such as going to the shelter

**air raid shelter** - A building to protect people from bombs.

**Allies** - Countries (including Britain, France, the Soviet Union and the USA) who joined forces to fight the Axis Powers.

**Blackout** - Wartime ban on street lights and other lights at night.

**Blitz** - German air raids

**Civilians** - People not in the armed forces.

**Evacuee** - Someone who was evacuated, moved from a danger area to a safer place.

**Gas mask** - Face mask to protect people against poison gas.

**Rationing** - Controlling the supply of food, clothes, petrol and other things.

**Refugee** - A person forced to leave their home, often by war.

**Siren** - Machine that made a wailing noise as a warning when enemy planes were seen.

**Significant** - sufficiently great or important to be worthy of attention

**Telegram** - A short message sent by phone, then printed out and delivered

**Change and continuity** – Are things changing or are they staying the same? Can you see patterns in these changes? What causes the changes?

**Compare** – identify similarities.

**Cause and consequence** – What are the causes of the event? Are they long term causes or short term causes?

**Empathy** – To understand the feelings of other people.

### ONLINE RESOURCES AND FURTHER READING

Letters from the Lighthouse by Emma Carroll  
 Carrie's War by Nina Bawden  
 The Lion and the Unicorn by Shirley Hughes  
 Goodnight Mister Tom by Michelle Magorian  
 The Buried Crown by Ally Sherrick

### OTHER USEFUL VOCABULARY

Primary evidence , Secondary evidence , artefact, Underground, prime minister, Nazi, occupied, liberate