

VE-DAY 75



History, Art and Design, Literacy



Key Stage 3 & 4



30 minutes - 4 hours

Communicating VE-Day

On 3 September 1939 Britain entered the Second World War. The war lasted for six years and involved countries from across the world.

British people served alongside those from Commonwealth countries, including India, Australia and Canada, and the Allies, which included Russia, United States of America and France. They fought against the Axis Powers which included Nazi Germany, Imperial Japan and Italy.

On 7 May 1945, Nazi Germany surrendered and the war in Europe was over. On 8 May, people in Britain and across the world celebrated Victory in Europe, also known as VE-Day. Street parties took place across the country and people gathered to celebrate the end of the war in Europe and remember those who had served.

However, the war was not over as Britain and its allies were still caught in conflict with Japan in Asia. Japan did not surrender until 15 August 1945, known as Victory over Japan or VJ-Day.

This year marks 75 years since the end of the Second World War so we are remembering those who served and sacrificed for their country. Discover more about the Second World War and VE-Day.

In the 1940s there were far fewer methods of communication than there are now. The radio and newspapers were the main methods of mass communication. Late in the evening of 7 May, radio programmes were interrupted to tell people that the following day would be a VE-Day. On VE-Day itself Prime Minister Winston Churchill and King George VI both gave speeches which were broadcast over the radio.

You can listen to some of the VE-Day broadcast here:

bbc.com/historyofthebbc/anniversaries/may/ve-day-broadcast



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ACTIVITY:

The day after VE-Day, the newspapers were full of stories about the celebrations. Write a front page newspaper article to report on the events that took place on VE-Day. You'll need to use the internet to do some further research about what happened on the day. Your feature should include the date, a headline and a photograph or drawing.

TIP: The catchiest headlines usually have an alliteration. For example *The Peoples' Party*, or *Ecstatic Europe*.

Coming Home

When the war ended many people were able to return to their home. Some had been serving in the army, navy or air force abroad while other had been working in their home country.

ACTIVITY:

Imagine you've been away from home during the war and are returning home. Write a dairy entry for your first day home. What are you most excited to do now you are home? Will you miss the friends that you made while living away during the war?

ACTIVITY:

When soldiers returned home they were given a demob suit (short for demobilization). This consisted of a jacket and trousers or a three piece suit. Both were supplied with a hat.

If our British Armed Forces were given civilian clothing when they returned home today what would this be?

Draw a modern day demob suit in space below.

Women and War

During the war, many men were away so women started doing many of the jobs that had previously only been done by men. When the war ended many women lost their jobs.

ACTIVITY:

Using the internet, do some research about the types of jobs that women did during the Second World War. Can you list five of them?

Do you think that women get enough credit for winning the war? Explain your answer.

ACTIVITY:

Design a memorial to remember the women who lived and served through the Second World War. Will your memorial be for a specific group, act or profession?

