**WWII – course and consequences**

**What were the main events during WWII?**

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| **Date** | **Details** |
| 31 August 1939 | Members of the German SS dressed in Polish uniforms and **attacked** a German radio station. |
| Sept 1939 | **1 September 1939** -> Hitler used this as an excuse to **invade** Poland.  **3 September 1939** -> Britain and France **declared war** on Germany, this started WW2.  The German army used **blitzkrieg** (‘**lightening war’**) against the Polish which led to a quick victory. |
| 1939-1940 | Many people expected the fighting to continue, but instead came a 7-month period with no fighting called the **Phoney War**.  Britain, France and Germany used this time to **build up their defenses**, **military** and **supplies**. |
| April 1940 | To secure the German **iron ore supply**, Hitler conquered **Denmark** and **Norway** in April 1940.  The Nazis overran Denmark in one day.  They used the German navy and paratroopers to capture **Norway** and install a **sympathetic** president called **Vidkun Quisling**. |
| 10 May 1940 | Hitler used **blitzkrieg** tactics to attack Holland, Belgium, Luxemburg and France.  He bypassed the **Maginot Line** and attacked France through the **Ardennes Mountains**.  This surprised French and British troops who ended up trapped in **Dunkirk**. |
| 27 May-4 June 1940 | **Operation Dynamo** was launched.  This was the **evacuation of French and British troops** trapped at Dunkirk.  Britain sent all available boats – naval vessels, tugboats, paddle steamers- to evacuate over 300**,000 soldiers.** |
| 22 June 1940 | Hitler easily conquered the rest of France and forced France to **surrender** in the same railway carriage that Germany had surrendered in at the end of WW1.  The **Fall of France** was now complete.  10,252 Germans were lost, while 1.2 million Dutch, French, Belgian and British prisoners were taken.  France was now **split in 2**. The northern half was ruled directly from Germany while **Vichy France** was a **puppet state**.  **76,000 French Jews** were deported, including 11,400 children. |
| July - October 1940 | Hitler now set his sights on **Britain** (**Operation Sea Lion**).  Hitler knew he needed to **control the skies** over the English Channel.  This meant a battle between the **RAF** and the **Luftwaffe**.  The Luftwaffe attacked **shipping** in the Channel, then **airfields** and **radar stations** along the British coast.  13 August, 1940 (**Day of the Eagle**) -> almost **1500 planes** attacked Britain.  **Spitfires** and **Hurricanes** VS Stukas and **Heinkels**.  Britain used **radar** to detect incoming planes, this gave them an advantage. |
| Sept 1940-41 | **The Blitz**.  German planes **bombed British cities** to destroy cities and dampen moral.  During the Blitz, London was bombed **71 times**, including 57 nights in a row.  **Belfast** was bombed four times.  **568 people** were killed in Coventry in one night.  **40,000 people** were **killed** during the Blitz.  Children were **evacuated** to the countryside.  People installed **Anderson Shelters** in their gardens. They also slept in the **London Underground** or in **air-raid shelters**.  The **Lend-Lease scheme** -> America provided Britain with **supplies**, this helped Britain to **survive** the Battle of Britain and the Blitz. |
| June 1940 | **Mussolini’s** Italian forces **joined** the War.  Despite having **1 million Italian soldiers** in North Africa, Italy was rapidly pushed back 800km by **36,000** British soldiers.  Hitler was forced to send **General Rommel** and the Afrika Korps to help the Italians. |
| June 1941-1942 | Hitler hated communism and wanted to obtain **lebensraum** (living space) in Eastern Europe.  So, on 22 June 1941 he launched **Operation Barbarossa**.  Hitler used **blitzkrieg** tactics in a **3-pronged attack** against **Leningrad**, **Moscow** and **Kiev**.  The **Luftwaffe** took control of the air and German tanks and infantry quickly advanced into Russia as the Soviet army **retreated**.  Stalin called on Russians to fight the ‘**Great Patriotic War’** against Germany.  Stalin moved heavy industry east of the **Ural Mountains**, so that they could continue to produce tanks, planes and weapons.  As the Russians retreated, they used a **scorched earth policy** (they **burned** everything in their path as they retreated so that the Germans couldn’t use it).  Hitler’s early progress was halted by the Russian **winter** of 1941-42. Lorries, tanks, planes and soldiers **froze**.  The Germans captured Kiev but **failed** to capture Moscow and Leningrad.  1942 -> Hitler’s armies advanced towards **Stalingrad** and the **Caucasus oil fields**.  The German army, under **von Paulus**, fought **vicious street battles** against the Russians.  **Stalin ordered the city must not be lost.**  The Russians **trapped** the German army in the city and cut off their supplies. **100,000** German soldiers were forced to **surrender**.  This was another important **turning point** in the War. |
| 7 December 1941 | **Pearl Harbor** -> 7 December 1941. **Japan** attacked the American naval fleet in Hawaii. This happened during the middle of Operation Barbarossa.  **2,400** were killed.  The **USS Arizona** and **USS Utah** were destroyed.  Hitler **declared war on America** and the US entered the War. |
| 1942 | The **Battle of El Alamein**. Montgomery led the British Eight Army to victory over Rommel.  Rommel was forced to retreat to **Tunisia**. This was another **turning point** in the War. |
| 1943 | From Feb 1943, after the **Battle of Stalingrad**, the Allies started **pushing back** the Nazis.  August 1943 -> the Soviets won the **Battle of Kursk**, the largest tank battle in the war.  Sept 1943 - British and American troops invaded **Sicily** and then mainland Italy.  Mussolini **fled** to northern Italy. |
| 6 June, 1944 | **D-Day**, **Operation Overlord** -> the Allies opened a **second front** in the west.  The Allies, led by **General Eisenhower**, selected France’s Normandy coast for their invasion.  Thousands of Allied planes bombed Hitler’s **Atlantic Wall** (defenses).  **Paratroopers** were dropped behind enemy lines.  130,000 American, British and Canadian soldiers landed on five beaches – **Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword** - in flat bottomed landing crafts.  Around 4,000 Allied soldiers were killed on the first day VS 1,000 German soldiers.  **Mulberry Piers** (floating, artificial harbours) were set up to bring tanks and supplies across the English Channel.  **PLUTO** (pipeline under the ocean) was used to supply oil.  By August 1944, **Paris** had been **liberated**.  The Allies suffered a setback at the **Battle of the Bulge** in Luxembourg, but the German advance was quickly **halted**. |
| 1944 | By the end of 1944 the Soviets had reached **Warsaw** but refused to help the Polish Resistance during the **Warsaw Uprising** and so the Poles were brutally crushed by the German army. |
| 1945 | As the Russians advanced from the east and the Americans and British from the west, Hitler was **trapped** in his bunker in Berlin.  Hitler, his wife, Eva Braun, and close followers, like Goebbels, committed **suicide** in April 1945.  Germany **surrendered** unconditionally on 7 May 1945.  VE (**Victory in Europe Day**) was celebrated on **8 May 1945**. |
| August 1945 | The War in the East continued, however.  After vicious fighting and American victories in the **Battle of Midway** and the **Battle of Iwo Jima** (only 1,000 Japanese soldiers survived out of 23,000), Japan still refused to surrender.  **President Truman** decided to drop **atomic bombs** on **Hiroshima** and **Nagasaki**. Both cities were destroyed and around **120,000** people were killed.  Japanese **Emperor Hirohito** surrendered on **15 August 1945**.  **VJ-Day** was celebrated.  WWII was over. |

**Technology and historical change: nuclear power**

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| **Origins** | In Berlin, Germany, in 1938 Otto **Hahn**, Lise **Meitner** and Fritz **Strassman** discovered **nuclear fission.**  When an atom of radioactive material **splits** into lighter atoms, there’s a sudden, powerful **release of energy**. The discovery of nuclear fission opened up the possibility of nuclear technologies, including **weapons**. |
| **WWII** | Most early atomic research was focused on developing weapons for the second world war, under the code name **Manhattan Project**.  On 6 August 1945 an American B-29 bomber dropped the world’s first atomic bomb (**Little Boy**) over the Japanese city of **Hiroshima**.  The bomb immediately killed about **80,000 people** and tens of thousands would later die of **radiation exposure**. |
| **After WWII** | The **Cold War** started an **arms race** which led to the development of the **H-bomb** and **InterContinental Ballistic Missiles** to carry these bombs.  When the **Cuban Missile Crisis** brought the world to the brink of war in 1962, efforts were made to control the use of nuclear weapons.  Nuclear energy also influenced historical change.  The first **nuclear power station** was built in **Obninsk**, Soviet Union in 1954.  The USA, Britain, France and China soon followed by building their own **power stations**.  These power stations contributed to **economic growth** in the 1950s. |

**What were the main consequences of WWII?**

Immediate consequences:

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| **Consequence:** | **Explanation:** |
| 1. Deaths and injuries | **Civilian casualties**:  Axis powers = **5.1 million**  Allied powers = **25.4 million**  **Military casualties**:  Axis powers = **5.9 million**  Allied powers = **18.6 million** |
| 2. Destruction and economic revival | Cities, roads, railways and harbours were **destroyed** throughout Europe.  America used **Marshall Aid** to help European governments to rebuild. |
| 3. Refugees | By 1950, **11.5 million** Germans had left Eastern Europe.  Many Jews leaving concentration camps found their homes had been taken and so had to live in camps before **emigrating** to countries like **Israel** and the **USA**.  **2 million** Poles left Soviet occupied territory. |
| 4. War Crimes Trials | The **Nuremberg War Trials** put leading Nazis on **trial** e.g. **Göring** and **Ribbentrop**.  12 were **sentenced to death** e.g. **Hans Frank**.  3 were given **life sentences** e.g. **Albert Speer**.  3 were **acquitted** e.g. **Franz von Papen**. |

Long term consequences:

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| **Consequence:** | **Explanation:** |
| 1. The fate of Germany | Germany was initially **split** into **4 occupied sectors** before being split into the **German Democratic Republic** (GDR) and **Deutsche Demokratische Republik** (DDR) (East Germany).  Germany remained divided until **3 October, 1990.** |
| 2. The fate of Japan | Japan was **occupied** by US forces until **1952**.  Following US withdrawal, they still retained **military bases** in Japan. |
| 3. The growth of the **superpowers** | The US and USSR emerged as **superpower** following WWII.  Their **conflicting ideologies** led to the **Cold War**.  The USA worked to **contain communism**, while the USSR installed **communist government** in Eastern Europe. |
| 4. The **end** of **European supremacy** | Britain and France were no longer strong enough to hold onto their empires and from the 1940s-1960s their empires were **decolonised**. |
| 5. Move towards **European unity** | European leaders **promoted** European unity, this eventually led to the formation of the **European Union**. |
| 6. The United Nations | The League of Nations failed to prevent WWII, so a new organisation called the **United Nations** was set up.  The USA and USSR joined. |