Key Vocabulary

axis	Countries which fought on the German side including Italy, Germany and Japan.
allies	Countries which fought on the British side (including: USA, Great Britain, France and Russia.
Nazi	Member of the German political group which came to power in 1933.
evacuation	Organised movement of children and the vulnerable from towns and cities to safe zones.
evacuee	Someone who was evacuated, moved from a danger area to a safer place.
blitz	A series of bombing raids on the UK.
propaganda	Controlling news media (such as radio) to depict the war effort .
Holocaust	Murder of Jews and other groups of people by the Nazis.
Luftwaffe	The German Air force.
RAF	The Royal Air force (British).
refugees	A person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war.
blitzkrieg	offensive warfare designed to strike a swift, focused blow at an enemy using mobile forces,

'Wish me luck as you wave me goodbye' WW2

World War 2 was a battle between two groups of countries – the 'Allies' and the 'Axis'. The major Allied powers were Britain, France, Russia, China and the United States. The major Axis powers were Germany, Italy and Japan.

Adolf Hitler, together with the Nazi Party, wanted Germany to rule Europe. To gain more land and power, on 1 September 1939 German troops invaded Poland. After Hitler refused to stop the invasion, Britain and France declared war on Germany – World War II had begun.

During the course of the war, German forces advanced through Europe. By the summer of 1941 they had invaded France, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, Denmark, Norway, Greece, Yugoslavia and the USSR.

Millions of Germans were imprisoned and killed because they didn't fit the image of the 'perfect' German. Hitler wanted to create what he thought was the 'best' and strongest race – and to the Nazi Party, this excluded certain groups, such as Jews, Gypsies and those with physical and mental disabilities.

The group most heavily targeted by the Nazis were the Jews. Around six million Jewish people were killed during World War 2 in one of history's most terrible events – the Holocaust. Racist in his views, Hitler blamed Jewish people for Germany losing World War I and claimed they were dangerous to German people and society.

The US didn't join the war until 1941, when Japan attacked the United States at their Naval Base at Pearl Harbour in Hawaii. On 8 December 1941 (the very next day), the US declared War on Japan and, in turn, its German allies.

Some countries remained 'neutral' in World War 2. Such countries were Spain, Sweden and Switzerland – who chose not to join either side.

The Germans surrendered on 8 May 1945. Allied armies invaded Germany, forcing the Germans to surrender. After nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan also surrendered to Allied forces in August the same year. World War 2 had ended.

1940 – 1941
Germany invaded France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Norway and other countries

27th May 1940
340,000 British and French troops were evacuated from Dunkirk in France, unable to hold out against the advancing German forces.

10th June 1940
Italy declared war on France and Britain.

7th September 1940
The London Blitz began. Other British cities including Plymouth, Cardiff, Liverpool and Coventry were badly bombed during the war, with huge loss of life.

20th September 1940
Germany, Italy and Japan signed an agreement called the Tripartite Pact, where they agreed to join forces.

7th December 1941
The Japanese bombed Pearl Harbour in Hawaii, USA. The following day, the USA joined the war on the side of the Allies.

15th February 1942
Japan invaded Singapore.

8th November 1942
The Allies seized back control of North Africa

6th June 1944
Allied troops landed in northern France and began seizing control of more of europe.

January 1945
Russian allied troops continued to fight from the east. By January 1945, they had control of much of Poland and Hungary. The Allies continued to defeat Axis forces and it was clear that an allied victory was only a matter of time

30th April 1945
Hitler committed suicide in his underground bunker in Berlin

7th May 1945
Germany surrendered to the Allies.

8th May 1945
VE Day (Victory in Europe Day).

6th August 1945
The USA drop atomic bombs on the Japanese cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki

15th August 1945
VJ Day (Victory over Japan Day). Japan announced they were going to surrender although their surrender wasn't official until the 2nd of Septmeber 1945.