

**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.

# VE DAY 75



History, Art and Design, Literacy



Key Stage 3 & 4



30 minutes - 4 hours

## Communicating 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 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](http://bbc.com/historyofthebbc/anniversaries/may/ve-day-broadcast)



### 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 others had been working in their home country.

### ACTIVITY:

Imagine you've been away from home during the war and are returning home. Write a diary 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?

[illegible]

## 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 the 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?

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

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## 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?

# Service and Sacrifice Today

Today those who served and sacrificed in the Second World War are some of the most vulnerable, and Covid-19 poses a bigger threat to this generation than it does to most of the population.

Members of the emergency services, including doctors, nurses and police people, are working tirelessly to limit the spread of Covid-19 and protect those who are most vulnerable. Meanwhile, the whole population is making sacrifices and adhering to social distancing rules.

## ACTIVITY:

List some of the similarities and differences between the service given by members of the emergency services today and the armed services in the Second World War:

### SIMILARITIES

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## Service and Sacrifice Today

Vera Lynn's **'We'll Meet Again'** was very popular in the war. In 2020 the song is in the charts again after the Queen appeared to reference it in her speech on 5 April.

### ACTIVITY:

Take a look at the lyrics. Explain why you think the song means so much to people during challenging times.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

*We'll meet again  
Don't know where  
Don't know when  
But I know we'll meet again some sunny day  
Keep smiling through  
Just like you always do  
'Till the blue skies drive the dark clouds far away*

*So will you please say "Hello"  
To the folks that I know  
Tell them I won't be long  
They'll be happy to know  
That as you saw me go  
I was singing this song*

*We'll meet again  
Don't know where  
Don't know when  
But I know we'll meet again some sunny day*

*We'll meet again  
Don't know where  
Don't know when  
But I know we'll meet again some sunny day*

*Keep smiling through  
Just like you always do  
'Til the blue skies  
Drive the dark clouds far away  
So will you please say "Hello"  
To the folks that I know  
Tell them it won't be long  
They'll be happy to know  
That as you saw me go  
I was singin' this song*

*We'll meet again  
Don't know where  
Don't know when  
But I know we'll meet again some sunny day*

To discover more about VE-Day, you can visit our online exhibition **Tea for II** at **[www.thenma.org.uk](http://www.thenma.org.uk)**