

What was the Battle of Britain and why was it a turning Point in History?

Vocabulary	Definition
Airborne	An activity that happens in the air
Air raid	To attack from the Air
Blitz	An intensive attack
Conflict	A serious disagreement often ending in Battle
defeat	To be beaten by the opposition.
Evacuation	To be sent out of a place.
Evacuee	Someone sent to live in safety in another place..
The "Few"	Airmen of the Royal Air Force and aviators of Royal Navy who fought in the Battle of Britain
Home front	The population of a nation whose armed forces are nagged in war.
invasion	To attack
Luftwaffe	The German Air Force
Opposition	The people or person on the other side.
Propaganda	Information used to promote a political point of view.
Radar	A system for detecting objects far away.
RAF	Royal Air Force (British)
rationing	To control the amount of something that people are allowed.
Seaborne	An activity that happens at Sea

What was it ?

- The Battle of Britain was an important battle in World War II.
- It happened **between 10th July and 31st October 1940.**
- After Germany and Hitler had conquered most of Europe, including France, the only major country left to fight them was Great Britain.
- The Battle of Britain was when Germany bombed Great Britain in order to try and destroy their air force and prepare for the "Operation Sealion" invasion.

Who were the Key People?

Neville Chamberlain	Winston Churchill	Adolf Hitler
		
The Prime Minister of Great Britain when World War I was declared	The Prime minister of Great Britain at the end of the war.	The Leader of Germany during World War 2

Which aircraft featured in the Battle of Britain

Britain 		Germany 	
Spitfire	Hurricane	Messerschmitt	Stuka Dive Bomber
			

What was Operation Sealion?

- Was the name given to Hitler's plan to attack Britain from the sea.
- To make it easier to invade, he sent the Luftwaffe to destroy the RAF and make Britain weaker.
- When Germany did not manage to defeat Britain, the Battle of Britain ended.
- The war still continued for 5 more years but Operation Sealion was called off.

Who were "The Few"

- Nearly 3000 men took part in The Battle of Britain and these became known as 'The Few' after Churchill's speech.
- Although most of them were British, there were pilots from other countries too.

What were the Key Dates in The Battle of Britain?

- July 1940- Hitler gave orders for **Operation Sealion** and sent the Luftwaffe to weaken Britain.
- **10-12 July-Phase 1** The Luftwaffe attacked coastal targets and British shipping in the English Channel
- **13th August-Phase 2- 'Eagle Day'** -Attacks moved inland concentrating on airfield and communication centres.
- 18th August 'The Hardest Day'. Both sides suffered many casualties in intense fighting.
- **19th Aug- 6th September- Phase 3-** Towns cities and airfields attacked in on the South Coast, Midlands and North East.
- **Phase 4-** Attack shifted to London and 'The Blitz' began on Black Saturday 7th September.
- 15 September 1940- Hailed as 'Battle of Britain Day'. On this heavy day of fighting, Fighter Command shoots down 56 German aircraft. This costly raid convinces the German High Command that the Luftwaffe cannot achieve air supremacy over Britain.
- 17 September 1940, Hitler postpones 'Operation Sea Lion', the invasion of Britain until further notice.

Why was the Battle of Britain a Turning Point?

- If the RAF had not held off the Luftwaffe, Hitler would have probably continued with 'Operation Sealion' and invaded the British Isles.
- Germany needed to control the English Channel to invade Britain and the battle prevented this happening.

What was the Blitz?

- The Blitz was Phase 4 of The Battle of Britain.
- It began on 4pm Saturday 7th September- known as 'Black Saturday'.
- London was attacked for 57 consecutive nights.
- The Blitz continued after The Battle of Britain until May 41.
- One third of London was destroyed.
- At first, the raids were by day but soon Hitler began bombing at night to make people feel even less safe.

What was it like living in the Blitz?

- During the Blitz, it was very dangerous to live in cities.
- Many children were evacuated to live in the country where it was safer. These children were known as 'evacuees'.
- People carried **gas masks** that would allow them to breathe clean air no matter how dirty or poisonous the air around them was after a bombing.
- Air raid **sirens** would let people know that a bomb might go off soon, and that they should run to the nearest air-raid shelter.
- **Air raid shelters** were small, strong structures, sometimes put underground, that protected people inside from being hurt during explosions.
- To prevent the Germans from seeing where the towns were, a blackout was enforced at night.
- Rationing was introduced because there was shortage of food due to shops being bombed



What happened locally?

- The Larkhill Trials- tests for the first military flights happened here at Larkhill before World War I and is where Military flying began. Without this The Battle of Britain in World War 2 may never have happened.
- The Hangars on Fargo road, where the trials happened, are still there.
- The Spitfire, the most important aircraft in The Battle of Britain was made in Southampton before and during World War 2
- After the Spitfire factory was bombed by the Luftwaffe, secret factories were set up in Salisbury, Trowbridge and Reading.
- Many women and young girls along with a handful of engineers worked in secret factories in Salisbury to manufacture the Spitfires.

