World War Two Interactive Timeline and Map

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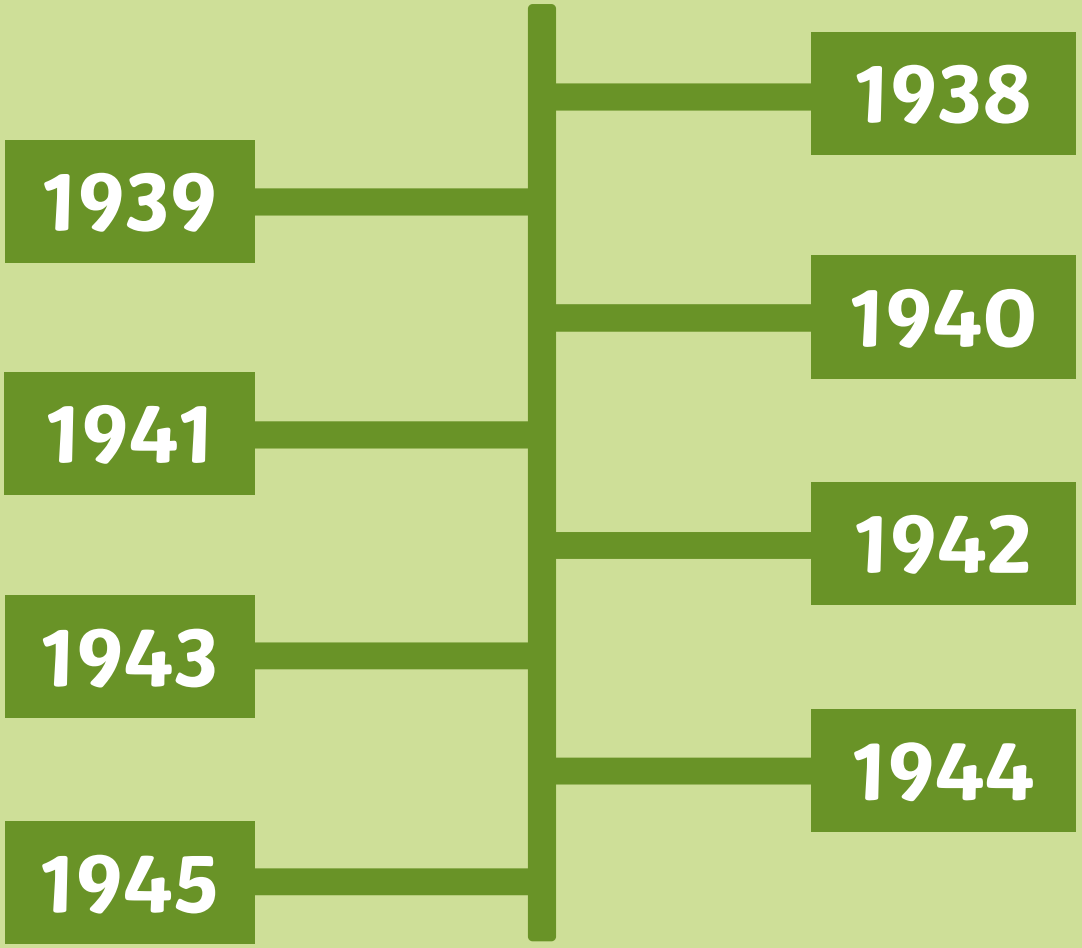
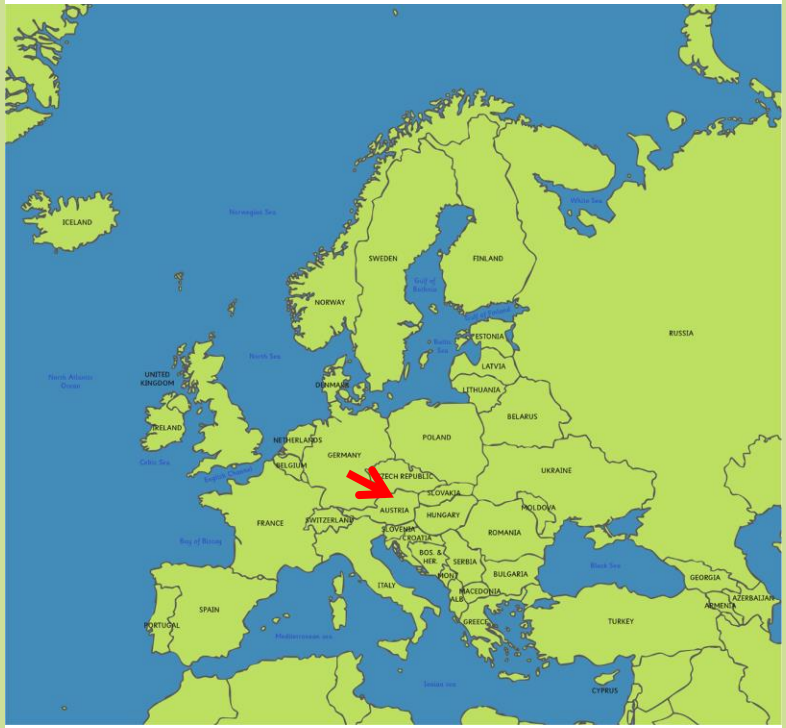
Quality Standard Approved

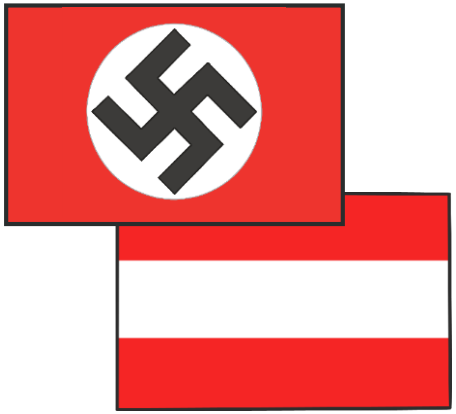
Click on a year of the war on the timeline for more information.





1938

12th March



Germany's expansion begins as German troops march into Austria.

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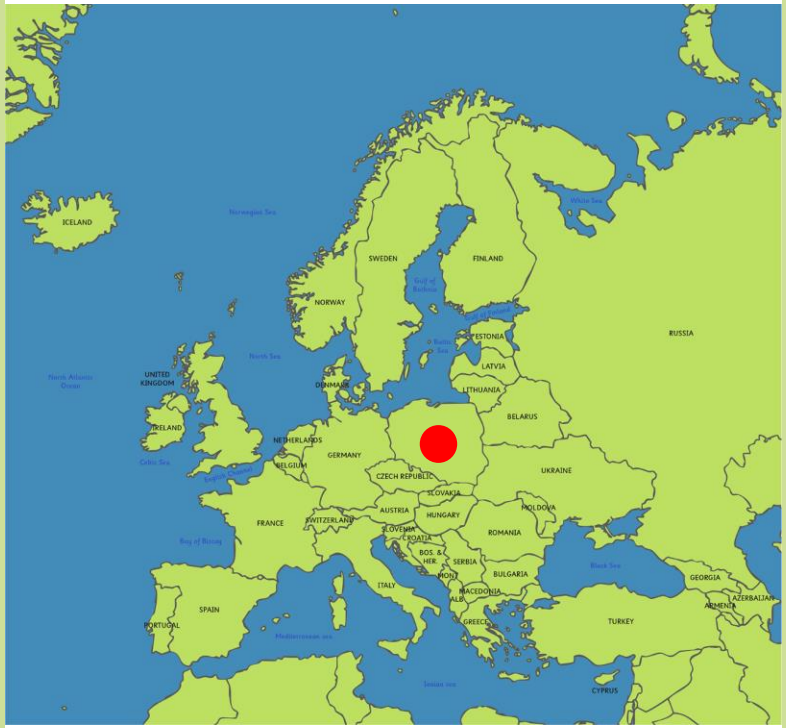
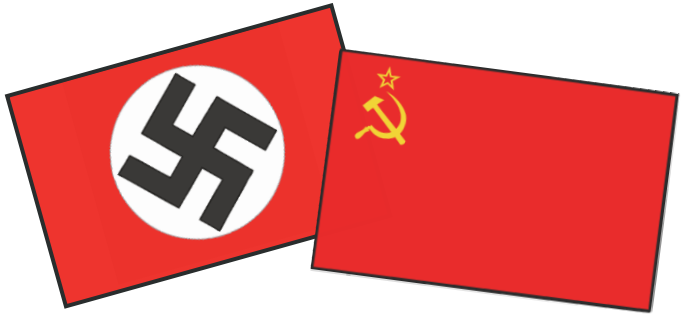


1939

23rd August



Germany and the Soviet Union sign a pact promising not to invade each other. They secretly agree to divide Poland between them once it has been invaded.

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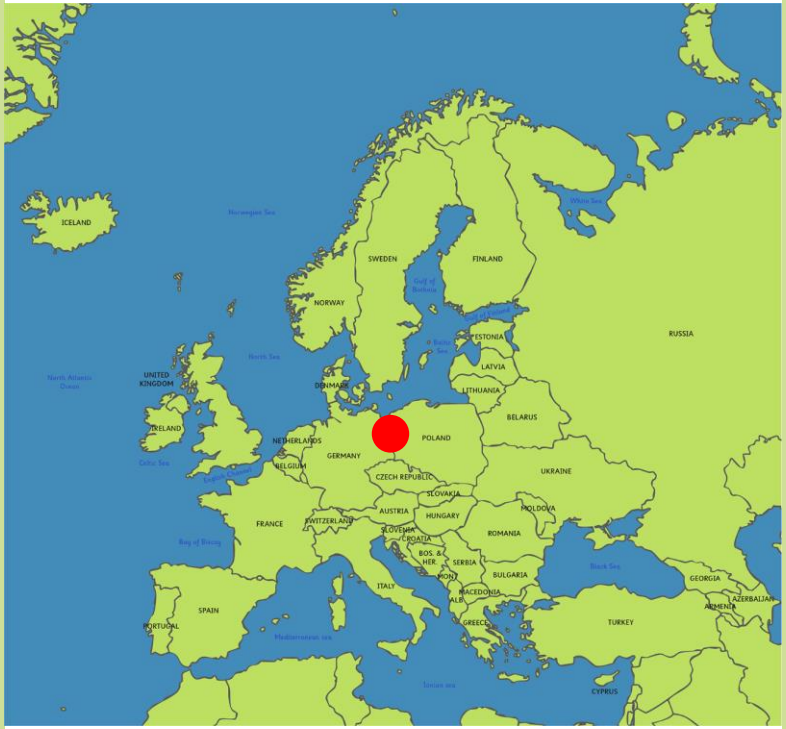
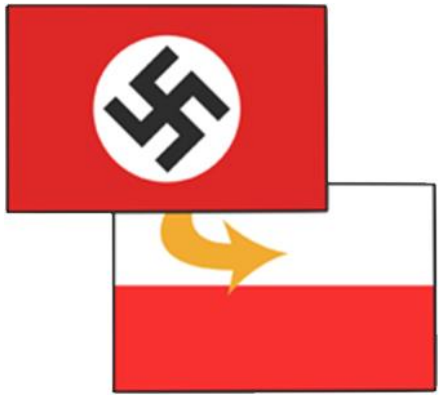
Timeline

Next



1939

1st September – 6th October



Germany invades Poland.

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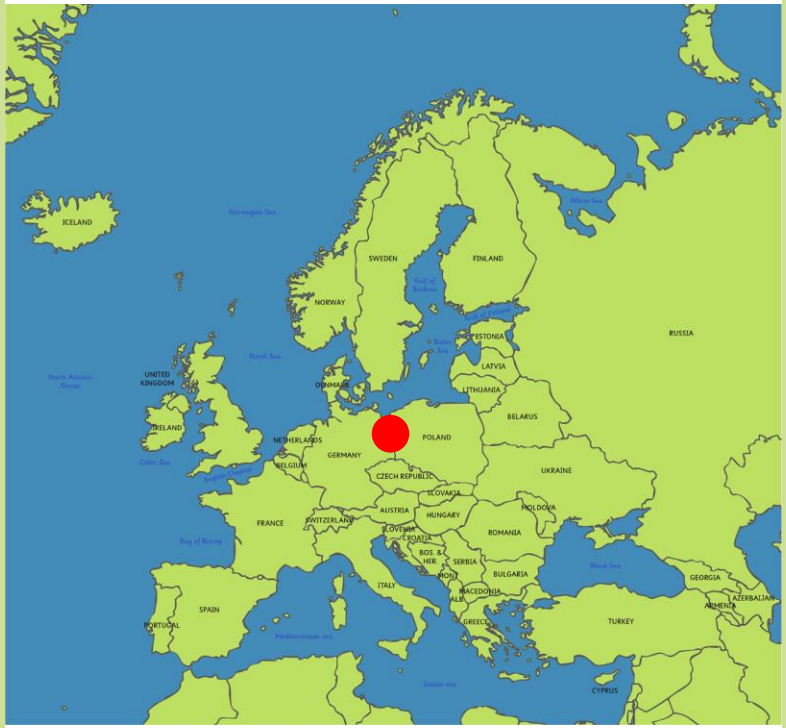
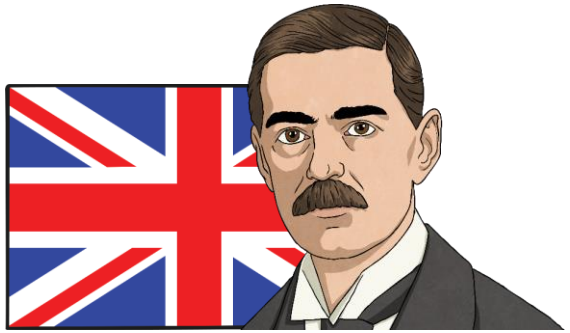


1939

3rd September



Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain declares war on Germany.

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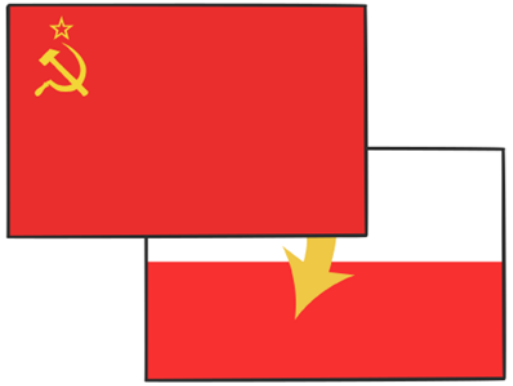
1939
3rd September

Canada, Australia, France and South Africa also declare war on Germany.

1939
17th September



The Soviet Union invades Poland.

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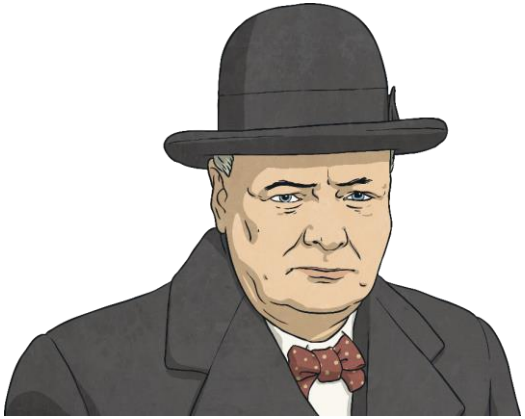
1940
10th May



Winston Churchill becomes the new Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

1940
10th May

Germany attacks Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

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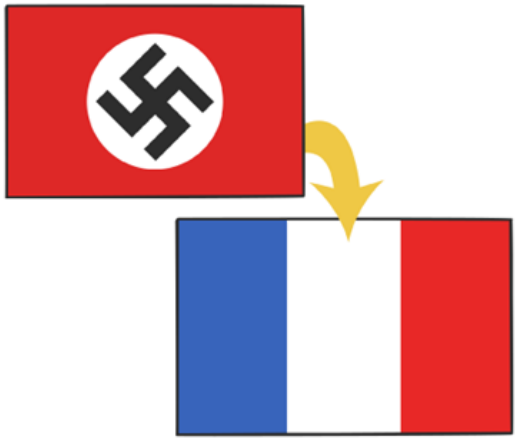
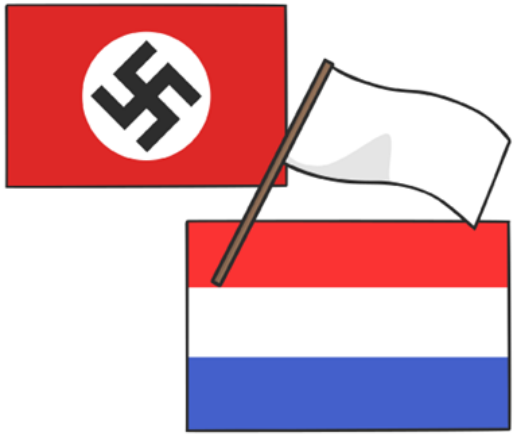
1940
10th May



Germany begins its invasion of France.

1940
14th May



The Netherlands surrenders to Germany.

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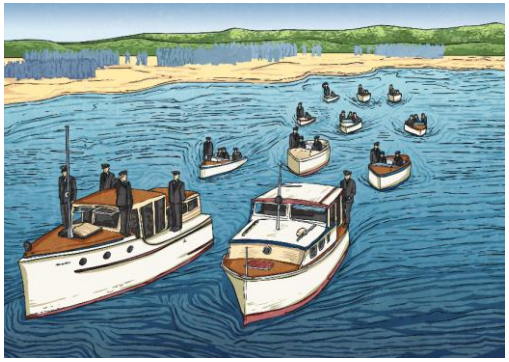
1940

14th May

The Home Guard is formed.

1940

26th May – 4th June



The Dunkirk evacuation. Nearly 340,000 Allied troops are evacuated after being surrounded by German troops.

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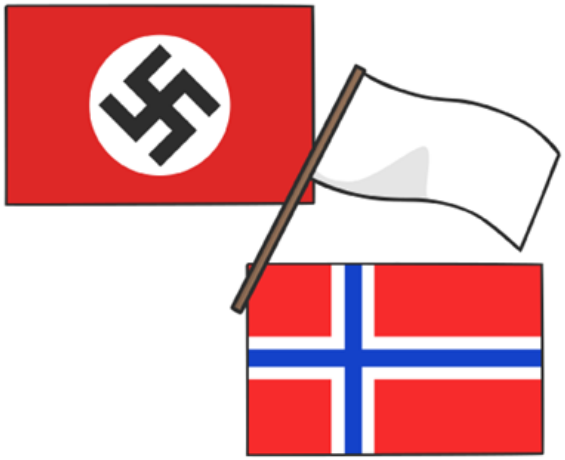
1940
28th May

Belgium surrenders to Germany.

1940
10th June



Norway surrenders to Germany.

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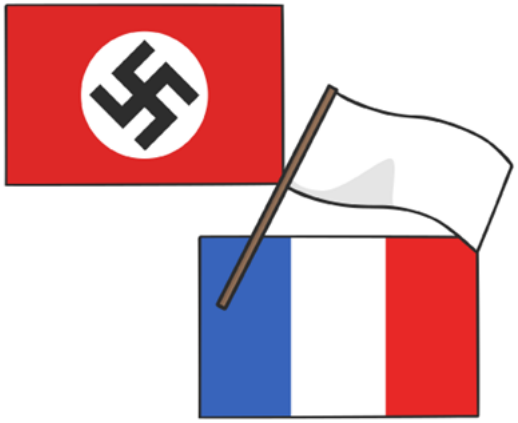
1940
10th June

Italy declares war on France and the United Kingdom.

1940
22nd June



France surrenders to Germany.

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1940
10th July

The Battle of Britain begins.

1940
7th September

The London Blitz begins.

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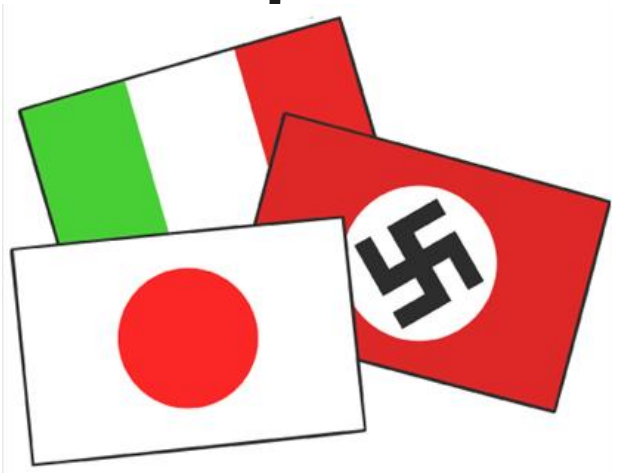
1940
13th September

Italy invades British controlled Egypt.

1940
27th September



Germany, Italy and Japan join forces and sign the Tripartite Pact.

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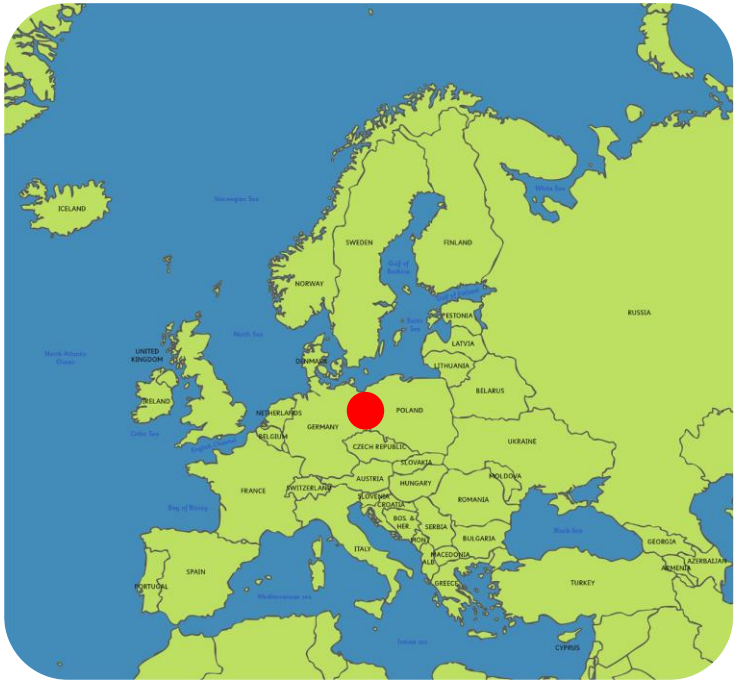

1940
November

Slovakia, Hungary and Romania also sign the Tripartite Pact, joining forces with Germany, Italy and Japan.

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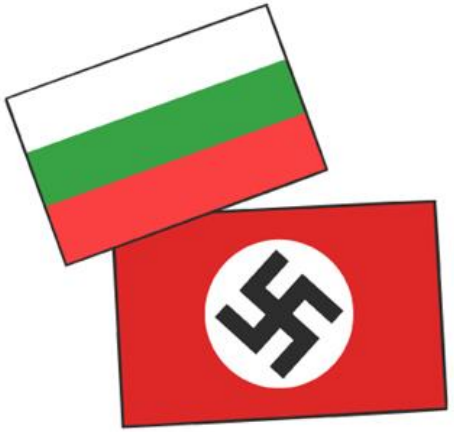
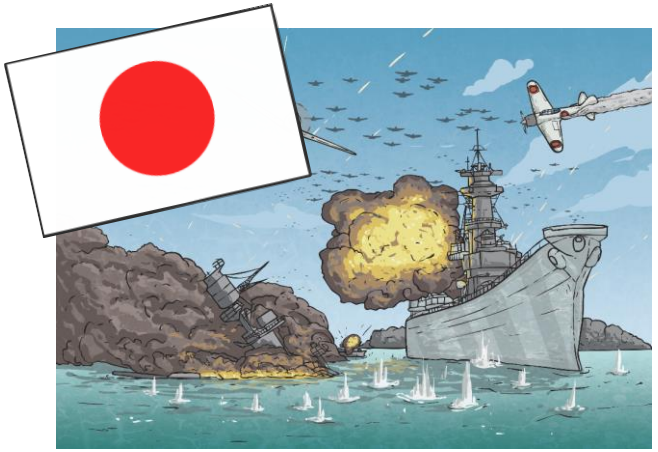
Next

1941
1st March



Bulgaria signs the Tripartite Pact and joins with Germany.

1941
7th December



The Japanese attack Pearl Harbour in Hawaii, USA.

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1941
8th December

The United States declares war on Japan.

1941
11th December

Germany and Italy declare war on the United States.

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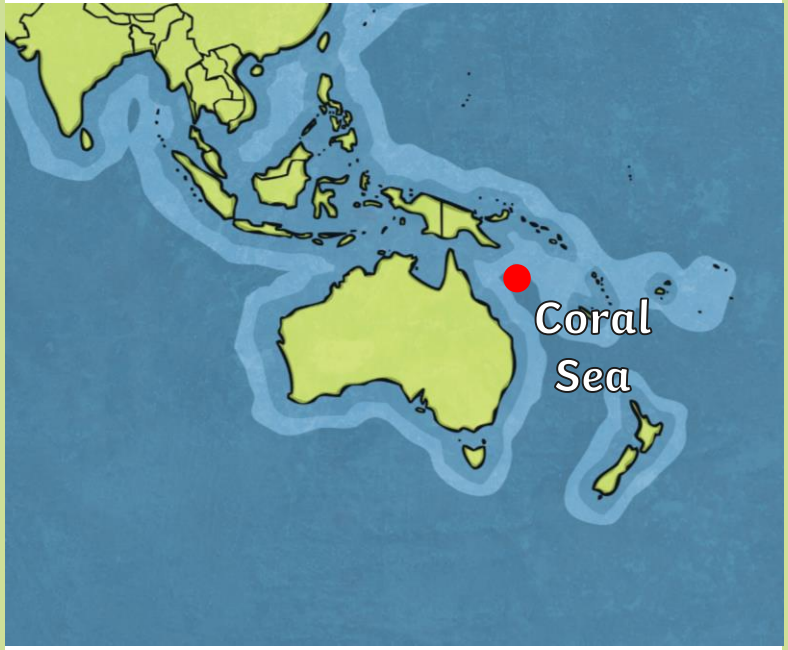
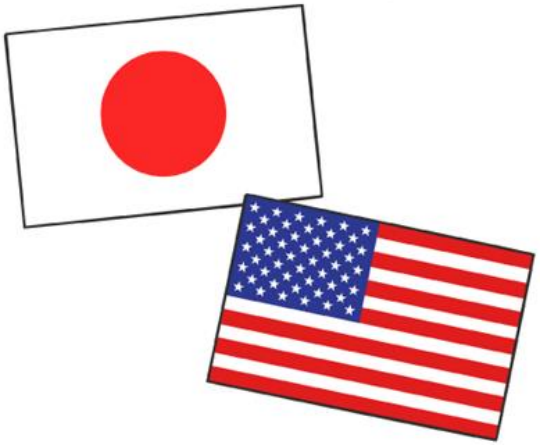


1942

5th May



The Battle of the Coral Sea between the USA and Japan.

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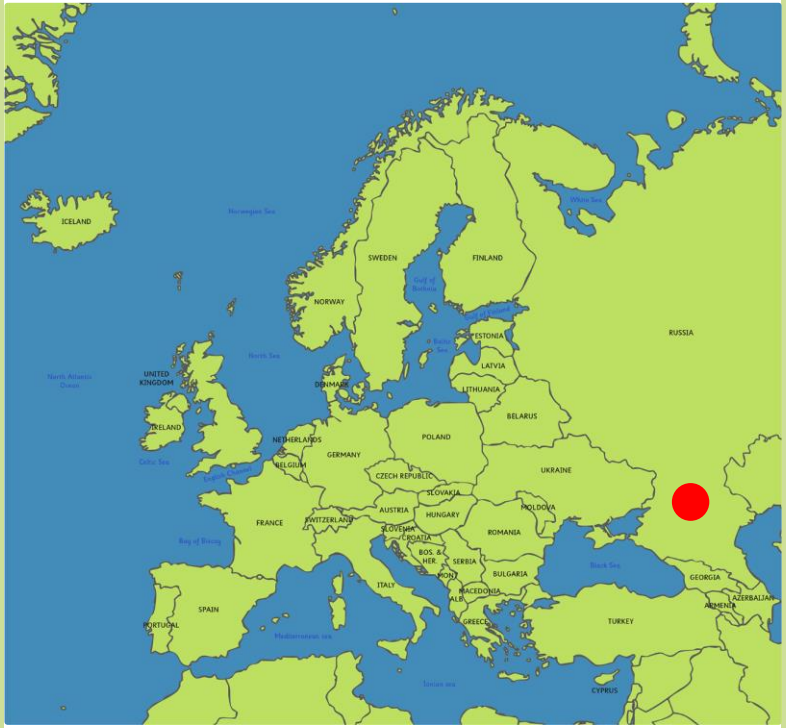
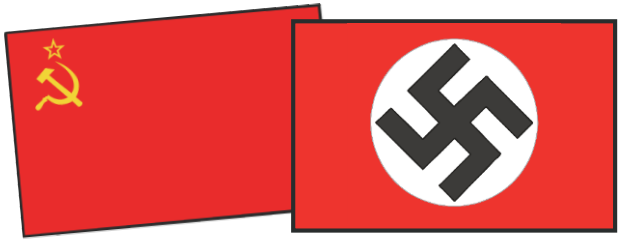


23rd August 1942 – 2nd February 1943

The Battle of Stalingrad

German forces attempt to take control of Stalingrad from the Soviet Union.
The Soviet army is victorious and the Axis forces surrender.



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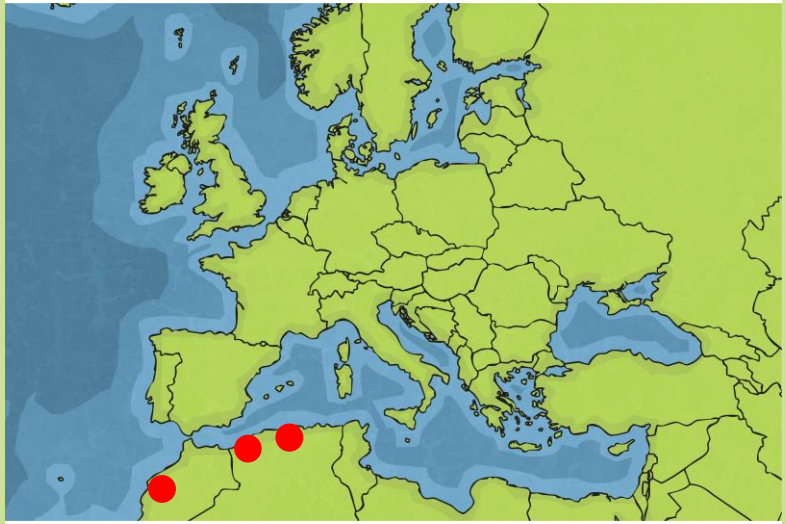

1942

8th – 16th November

Operation Torch

British and US troops take back North Africa, attacking several places at once. The Vichy French in the region, who were formally allied with Germany, join forces with the Allies after their defeat.

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1943

19th April – 16th May

The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising begins.

Jews at the Warsaw Ghetto rise up against German forces and are defeated. 13,000 Jews are killed.

1943

16th May

The Dam Buster raids are carried out on two German dams as part of Operation Chastise.

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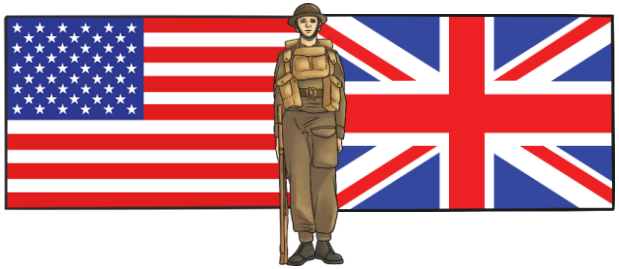
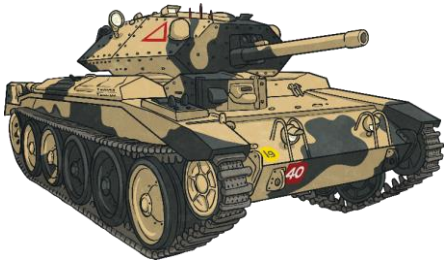
1944
6th June



D-Day

British and US troops land on the beaches of Normandy and begin the largest seaborne invasion in history.

1944
16th December



The Battle of the Bulge begins.

Allied and German forces meet in the last major German offensive campaign of the war. It ends on 25th January 1945 with an Allied victory.

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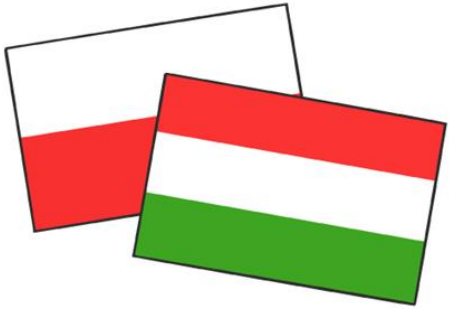
1945
12th January



The Soviet Army begins the East Prussian Offensive. Over the next few months, they displace the German Army from Warsaw, Krakow and Budapest.

1945
February

After remaining neutral, Turkey Joins the Allies for what would end up being the final months of the war.

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1945

30th April

Hitler kills himself. Command of the German forces is passed to Joseph Goebbels.

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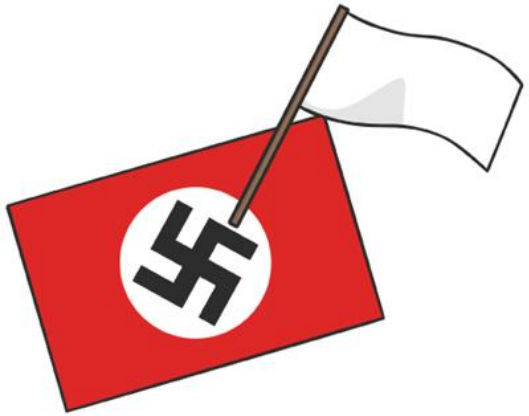
1945
7th May



Germany surrenders to the Allied Forces at the Western Allied Headquarters in France.

1945
8th May

The end of the Second World War in Europe. The day is celebrated across the continent as Victory in Europe (VE) Day.

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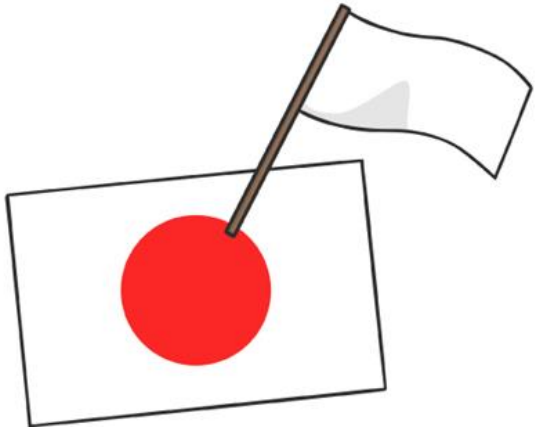
1945
6th August

The first atomic bomb is dropped on Hiroshima, Japan by US forces. A second bomb is dropped on Nagasaki, Japan 3 days later. The bombs killed over 200,000 people.

1945
2nd September



Japan formally surrenders to Allied forces.
The Second World War is over.

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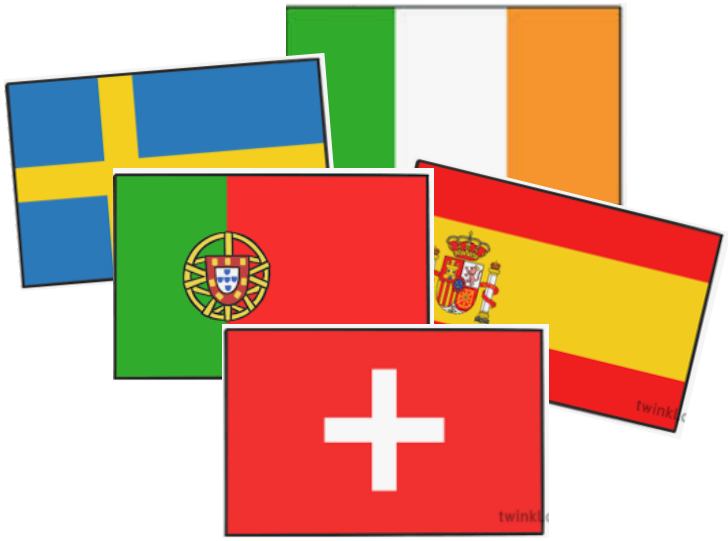
1939-1945



Sweden, Ireland, Spain, Portugal and Switzerland all remained neutral throughout WW2.

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