

Project glossary

air raid

An attack in which bombs are dropped from aircraft.

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alliance

A group of countries who have agreed to work together because of shared aims.

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Allied Powers

A group of countries that formed an alliance during the First and Second World Wars. In the First World War, the Allied Powers were Great Britain, France and Russia. In the Second World War, they were Great Britain, the Soviet Union, the United States and British Commonwealth countries.

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appeasement

Giving the opposing side something they have demanded to prevent further disagreement.

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armistice

An agreement made between opposing sides in a war to stop fighting and hold peace talks.

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arms race

A race between enemy countries for the development and accumulation of weapons.

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artillery

Large guns that are usually moved on wheels.

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Axis Powers

A group of countries that formed an alliance during the Second World War. The Axis Powers were Germany, Italy and Japan.

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battle

A sustained fight between large, organised armed forces.

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blackout

A time when all lights must be hidden from enemy view by law, including covering windows and turning off streetlights.

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Blitz

A German bombing campaign against British towns and cities during the Second World War in 1940 and 1941.

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blitzkrieg

A fast, aggressive attack on a town or city, usually involving bombing raids before invasion by land or sea.

campaign

A group of connected actions that forms part of a war strategy.

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Central Powers

A group of countries that formed an alliance during the First World War. The Central Powers were Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire.

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civilian

A person not in the armed services or the police force.

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colony

A nation controlled by another country.

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combat

Fighting between armed forces.

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Commonwealth

An international association of countries, most of which were former territories of the British Empire.

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conflict

A prolonged armed struggle.

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conscription

Forcing people by law to join the armed services.

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D-Day

6th June 1944 during the Second World War, when Allied forces invaded northern France by landing on beaches in Normandy.

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defence

The action of defending from or resisting attack.

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dictator

A ruler with total power over a country.

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Eastern Front

The line of fighting along Europe’s eastern border with Russia, from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, during the First World War.

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enlist

To enrol in the armed services.

evacuation

The relocation of children out of British towns and cities to safer areas in the countryside.

expansionism

A policy of increasing a country’s size by expanding its territory.

fascism

A set of political beliefs based on a powerful leader, state control, powerful armed forces and no political opposition.

First World War

An international conflict from 1914 to 1918 involving countries from Europe, the United States, the Middle East and other world regions.

genocide

The deliberate killing of large numbers of people from a particular nation or ethnic group in order to destroy them.

ghetto

An area of a town or city where mainly people from a particular ethnic group live away from other ethnic groups, usually in poor conditions.

Holocaust

The mass murder of large numbers of Jewish people and other minority groups in concentration camps under the German Nazi regime.

home front

The people who stay in their own country during a foreign war and take part in activities to support the war effort.

imperialism

The desire to conquer and colonise other countries.

invasion

An instance of invading a country or region with an armed force.

League of Nations

An international peacekeeping organisation founded at the end of the First World War.

liberate

To set someone free from imprisonment, slavery or oppression.

Luftwaffe

The German air force.

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militarism

The belief that it is necessary to build up and use strong armed forces to gain power, money and land.

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munitions

Military weapons, such as guns and bombs.

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nationalism

A great love of your own country, often resulting in the belief that your country is better than any other.

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Nazi Party

A political organisation that ruled Germany from 1933 until 1945.

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neutral

Not taking one side or the other, especially in a war.

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no man's land

An area of land on a battlefield between opposing trenches that no one controls.

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occupation

An event where an army or group takes control of a place.

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offensive

A planned military attack.

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operation

The coordinated military actions in response to a situation.

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patriotism

A love and pride for your country and the desire to defend it.

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persecution

Hostility and ill-treatment, especially because of a person's race, political or religious beliefs.

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propaganda

The spreading of information only giving one side of an argument with the intention of influencing people's opinions.

radar

A device that uses radio waves to determine the direction, distance and speed of aircraft and ships.

rationing

A system of limiting the amount of something each person is allowed to have.

rebellion

An act of armed resistance to an established government or leader.

reparation

Payment made by a defeated country after a war to pay for damages it caused to another country.

resistance

The refusal to accept or comply with something.

retaliation

The action of returning a military attack.

Second World War

An international conflict from 1939 to 1945 involving the Axis Powers of Germany, Italy and Japan and the Allied Powers of Great Britain, the Soviet Union, the United States and British Commonwealth countries.

stalemate

A situation in which neither side can get an advantage and no action can be taken.

surrender

To stop resisting an enemy or opponent and submit to their authority.

tactic

An action or strategy carefully planned to achieve a specific goal.

Treaty of Versailles

The peace agreement that ended the First World War.

trench

A deep, narrow channel dug into the ground by soldiers and used as a place to hide and attack the enemy.

truce

An agreement to stop fighting for a period of time.

U-boat

A German submarine used in the First and Second World Wars.

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victory

An act of defeating an enemy or opponent in a battle.

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war

A period of intentional actions, including armed fighting, between two or more countries or groups of people to force the enemy to adhere to their will.

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Western Front

The line of trench warfare from the Belgian coast to the Swiss border during the First World War.