

History Subject Knowledge Bank Year 6: World War II and its legacy

<u>Vocabulary</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Controversy	Discussion and argument
Bias	Inclination for a point of view
Cold War	A conflict with no fighting
Superpowers	A very powerful and influential nation
Legacy	Long lasting impact of events
Causation	Looking at the cause and effect of events
Decolonisation	A state withdrawing from a colony
Continuity	Things that stay the same
Hypothesising	An idea that is proposed and then tested

What was Windrush?

- People arriving in the UK between 1948 and 1971 from Caribbean countries have been labelled the Windrush generation. It refers to the ship MV Empire Windrush, which docked in Tilbury on 22 June 1948, bringing workers from Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and other islands, to help fill post-war UK labour shortages.
- 492 people from the Caribbean were on board the HMT Empire Windrush, 70 of them were women plus 86 children. They were going to the mother country which was seen by that generation as an opportunity to help rebuild it after the devastation of war.
- Many of the people from the Caribbean islands took up the British Government's offer to come to the country as 'citizens of the UK and its Colonies'. Many came to live in West Yorkshire, becoming an integral part of the social fabric of today's local communities in Huddersfield, Leeds, Doncaster and beyond.

What happened in World War II?

- Britain declared war on Germany on 3 September 1939. World War Two was a global conflict that involved most of the world's countries. These countries formed two opposing military alliances, which fought against each other throughout the war. These alliances were known as the Allies (UK, USA and Russia) and the Axis Powers (Germany, Italy and Japan). The war ended in 1945. Germany surrendered in May and their ally, Japan, surrendered in September.

What was the legacy of World War II?

- **United Nations** allies worked to establish ways of avoiding future conflicts and dealing with war crimes. In 1941, Franklin Roosevelt expressed the wish that all people should have freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. These Four Freedoms became part of the charter of the United Nations. Its goals included world peace, security, and respect for human rights.
- **Nuremberg War Crimes Trials**- instead of punishing all Germans, the Allies held Nazi leaders responsible at the Nuremberg Trials. A similar set of trials brought Japanese leaders to justice.
- **Geneva Conventions**- to catalogue war crimes, many nations of the world met at Geneva, Switzerland, in 1949. The Geneva Conventions prescribed the proper treatment of the wounded, prisoners of war, and civilians.

What happened after the war?

- **Global shift in power**- the global balance of power shifted from Europe to the USA and Russia. The USA rose to superpower status as did Russia.
- **Cold War**- both Russia and the USA faced off against each other as the emergence of the Cold War saw the beginning of the nuclear era.
- **Communism and the Division in Europe**- the impact of the spread of communism from Russia into eastern Europe and eventually China became significant as Europe was now divided into Communist and non-Communist areas.
- **Creation of the United Nations**-the war also ended America's relative isolation from the rest of the world and resulted in the creation of the United Nations- an organisation designed to avoid war in order to maintain peace.
- **European Unity**- many countries were now in favour of the idea of an economically and politically unified Europe and consequently set their sights on such a union.
- **The end of the European Age**- with the growing desire for independence by the subject peoples of the colonial world, there was an increased pressure to decolonize and liquidate the empire. Everything seemed to point to the relative decline of Europe as a force in the world.

What was the Cold War?

- The consequences of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were huge: Hundreds of thousands of people were killed, while many more suffered terrible injuries. Many who survived the dropping of the bombs suffered from poor health, caused by exposure to radiation in the aftermath of the bombs.
- By the 1950s, the USA and Russia had developed a more powerful weapon, known as the hydrogen bomb. This could cause even more destruction than the atom bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
- The dropping of the atom bombs on Japan was a globally significant event. Many historians believe that it changed the world forever. This is because it led to the development of even more powerful weapons and because it had a huge impact on relationships between countries.
- After WWII, there was a lot of tension between the USA and Russia, but they did not start a war with one another because both countries had nuclear weapons. For many years, people lived with great fear that there could be a nuclear war. This period of tension was known as the Cold War.

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