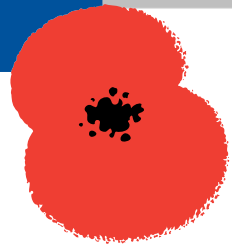


The Second World War

Assemblies for D-Day 65th Anniversary



DAY 1: THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Script

Show photograph -The British 2nd Army assembling on SWORD beach at 8.30 am on 6 June while under intermittent enemy mortar and shell fire. In the foreground are Sappers Jimmy Leask (left) and Cyril Hawkins of No. 1 Platoon, 84 Field Company RE, who both survived the war. (photo Imperial War Museum B 5114)

Has anyone heard of the Second World War?

Well it is a war that lasted from 1939 to 1945 – and that probably seems like a long time ago now. This war took place all around the world, involving many countries and people. It affected the lives of lots of people - men, women and children.

The war started in Europe in 1939 when Nazi Germany invaded the country of Poland and then went on to invade nearly all of the countries of Western Europe as well as many in Eastern and Southern Europe. In the end, the only countries of Europe that continued to fight Nazi Germany so that they wouldn't be taken over, were Britain and Russia.

All across the world, other countries and peoples were also fighting, either to prevent being invaded by Nazi Germany and its supporters, or to help nearby countries or the Allies (Britain, her Empire and the Commonwealth). After the end of 1941, one of the countries fighting alongside Britain was the United States of America. They joined the war after being attacked by the Japanese at Pearl Harbour.

There was fighting in North Africa, Asia, the Pacific and the Middle East – everyone was affected.

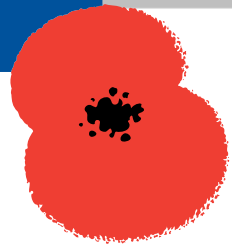
As part of the plans to defeat Germany and the Axis Powers (Germany's supporters) Britain and its Allies needed to invade Europe to free or liberate those counties that had been taken over by Germany.

The people in the British Armed Forces fighting for Britain and the Allies were mainly men and some women aged 17 to mid forties (although some older men and women were involved in other roles). The women were not allowed to actually fight on the front line but were involved in many dangerous supporting roles such as nursing and driving vehicles.

How many of you have relatives and friends who are that age or nearly that age?

Those who we say 'served' with the Armed Forces would have done very brave things. They fought all across the world and many were killed or injured.

One of the biggest battles to free Europe was the invasion of France, known as D-Day. The anniversary of D-Day is at the end of this week – it will be 65 years since it was fought. So over the next week we are going to learn about some of the people who served and risked their lives by invading France to free Europe from war. The first one we will learn about is:



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John Adlam

Army, Coldstream Guards, Gold Beach – a fitter who got tanks ready for action.

Sergeant John Adlam of the Coldstream Guards survived the D-Day invasion through several strokes of luck and his own strength of character. Having been woken abruptly at 4.00 am on 6 June 1944 and told to mobilise at once, Adlam made the journey to Gosport in Hampshire to meet his regiment and travel across the Channel to Bayeux. A humble man, he says he was determined to just do his job and take it all in his stride.

Adlam's luck may have had something to do with his positive and determined attitude. When talking about his fellow soldiers he says, "I met some rogues, but never met a bad man."

Moment of Reflection:

We remember anniversaries of wars so that those men and women who served, and all those affected by war (including children) will always be remembered. Many of those who fought all across the world were young. They gave their futures so that we can live in peace

Show photograph - Soldiers crossing the Channel on D-Day (photo Imperial War Museum BU 001181)

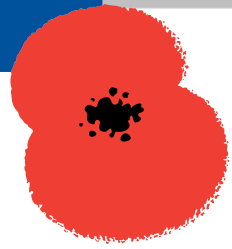
Poem or prayer

Anthem for Doomed Youth

by Wilfred Owen

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries for them; no prayers nor bells,
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs, --
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.



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Night in Al-Hamra by Saadi Youssef

A candle on the long road
A candle in the slumbering houses
A candle for the terrified stores
A candle for the bakeries
A candle for the journalist shuddering in an empty office
A candle for the fighter
A candle for the doctor at the sick bed
A candle for the wounded
A candle for honest talk
A candle for staircases
A candle for the hotel crowded with refugees
A candle for the singer
A candle for the broadcasters in a shelter
A candle for a bottle of water
A candle for the air
A candle for two lovers in a stripped apartment
A candle for the sky that has folded
A candle for the beginning
A candle for the end
A candle for the final decision
A candle for conscience
A candle in my hand