



Year 9 History Knowledge Organiser

History – World War I: *Silence or Speak Out? Dissent and Duty in World War I*

■ Core Knowledge

1. Did Europe sleepwalk into war—or were deeper forces pulling the strings?

- Long-term causes: militarism, alliances, imperialism, nationalism
- Short-term trigger: Assassination in Sarajevo

2. Who caused WWI—and why does it still matter who we blame?

- Assigning responsibility: Germany? Alliances? Empires?

3. Why did so many men sign up—and were they truly free to choose?

- Patriotism, peer pressure, propaganda, conscription

4. How did WWI turn women into workers, warriors, and game-changers?

- Roles in munitions, nursing, transport
- Early steps toward women's rights and suffrage

5. Were conscientious objectors brave activists—or selfish traitors?

- Pacifism, prison, public backlash

■ Trench Warfare, Leadership & Legacy

1. Why do we remember World War I—and who decides what we remember?

- Memorials, poems, national narratives, remembrance

2. Was life in the trenches all mud, blood, and misery?

- Disease, boredom, fear—and moments of humour, friendship




3. What did soldiers really experience beyond bullets and barbed wire?

- Daily life, letters, relationships, mental health

4–5. Was General Haig a hero, a scapegoat, or the Butcher of the Somme?

- Mixed interpretations of leadership and sacrifice



 Key Vocabulary	 Common Misconceptions	 Key Questions
Militarism Alliance Imperialism Nationalism Conscription Propaganda Trench warfare Shell shock Courage Remembrance Armistice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All soldiers volunteered freely for war• Conscientious objectors were cowards• Trench life was constant fighting• The Treaty of Versailles ended all conflict	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Who showed the most courage in WWI—and how should we define bravery?2. How do we balance honouring soldiers with questioning the war itself?3. What lessons can we learn from WWI about leadership, loyalty, and legacy?



History – Dictators: *Power Grab – How Dictators Rose from the Ashes of War*

Core Knowledge

1. How did the chaos after WWI open the door to dangerous leaders?

- Economic crisis, national humiliation, political instability
- Rise of extremism and promises of “strong” leadership

2. Was Mussolini a strong leader—or just a master of propaganda?

- Fascism in Italy, the Blackshirts, media control

3. Did Mussolini deserve the title ‘The New Caesar’?

- Image vs reality—military success, cult of personality

4. How did Stalin use fear and force to silence resistance?

- Purges, gulags, censorship, cult of personality
- Acts of bravery: dissidents, writers, protestors

Dangerous Power

1. Was Hitler born a monster—or did people let him become one?

- Nazi rise to power, enabling acts, societal complicity

2. Who was the most dangerous dictator—and how do we decide?

- Compare Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini: ideology, methods, impact

4. Who else ruled by fear—and why are some dictators forgotten?

- Franco, Pol Pot, Mao – methods, memory, silence

5. Could it happen again?

- Modern authoritarianism, warning signs, civic responsibility



🔑 Key Vocabulary	⚠️ Common Misconceptions	❓ Key Questions
<p>Totalitarianism Fascism Propaganda Cult of personality Censorship Fear tactics Authoritarianism Dissident Impression question Dictatorship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dictators only come to power through violence• Hitler and Mussolini were the same• Ordinary people had no role in enabling dictators• Once gone, dictators leave no lasting impact	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What makes a dictator rise—and why do people follow them?2. How do dictators use fear, fame, and propaganda to hold power?3. Can history help us prevent dangerous leaders from rising again?



History – WWII: *When the World Fought Back*

Core Knowledge – Term 03.01

1. Was the world pushed or dragged into another war in 1939?

- Tensions after WWI, Treaty of Versailles, rise of dictators

2. Appeasement: Weakness, wisdom, or warning?

- Policy of appeasing Hitler (e.g. Munich Agreement)
- Views of Chamberlain and Churchill

3. Who was responsible for the outbreak of WWII?

- Germany, Britain, France, League of Nations—shared blame?

4. How did Hitler conquer Europe—and why did so few resist?

- Blitzkrieg tactics, fear, appeasement's legacy

5. Was Dunkirk a heroic rescue or a desperate retreat?

- Operation Dynamo: facts vs national memory

6. Dunkirk: Fact, myth, or media masterpiece?

- Role of propaganda, press coverage, and morale

Global Resistance and Turning Points

1. How did Londoners keep their spirits up during the Blitz?

- Bombing, evacuation, community resilience, censorship




2. Was Stalingrad a key turning point in the war?

- Soviet resistance, Nazi failure, turning tides in Europe

3. How did WWII come to an end?

- D-Day, VE Day, Hiroshima/Nagasaki, global cost of victory



 Key Vocabulary	 Common Misconceptions	 Key Questions
Appeasement Blitzkrieg Allies / Axis Dunkirk Blitz Propaganda Turning point Evacuation Morale Occupation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Britain stood alone from the start of the war• Dunkirk was a clear victory• Appeasement was only cowardice• WWII ended after Hitler died (Japan continued fighting)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Was WWII inevitable—or could it have been avoided?2. How did different people resist Nazi aggression—militarily and on the home front?3. What shaped how WWII is remembered—and what stories still need telling?