



Welcome to your Discovery Box

Here you will find exciting activities and fun facts to prepare you for your next unit of study.

Within this box you will find:

- fun facts and information
- craft activities
- puzzles and games
- a recommendation of books to look for in the library

We hope you find these activities engaging and entertaining, but most of all that they make you **curious** to learn more.

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Interesting facts about the First World War

The First World War lasted for 4 years from 1914 to 1918.



The war was fought between:

- Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and their allies.
- Great Britain, France and Russia and their allies.

The Western Front was made up of deep trenches that both armies stayed in. They would become very muddy and uncomfortable.

The Front Line was where the trenches closest to the enemy were and soldiers would have to climb up to attack. The area between trenches was called No Man's Land. This was covered in craters, barbed wire, bodies, and sometimes unexploded shells.

The Battle of the Somme is known as one of the worst battles in history. British and French troops fought the Germans from both sides of the River Somme in France. The battle lasted for more than five months and over a million men were killed or wounded. It was the first time that a tank was used in combat.

Women worked tirelessly in the factories making munitions (weapons) as nearly all the men had been sent to war.

On Christmas Day 1914, there is evidence to suggest that there was a temporary ceasefire (where all fighting stopped) and German and British men played football and sang songs.

Investigate!

Can you find out what the Military Cross was awarded for in the First World War?

Bullet point your findings here.

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What does the Military Cross look like?

Draw and colour the Military Cross below.

Rations

Lots of food was sent away to feed the soldiers fighting the war. Ships that were bringing supplies to Britain were often attacked by German U boats so there was less food at home. Food became more expensive. The government introduced rationing—a new law that meant all food was shared out fairly.

War cake

Ingredients:

290g raisins
720ml water
300g sugar
110g butter
375g flour

1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp cinnamon
½ tsp ground ginger
½ tsp cloves
½ tsp nutmeg



Makes 16 servings

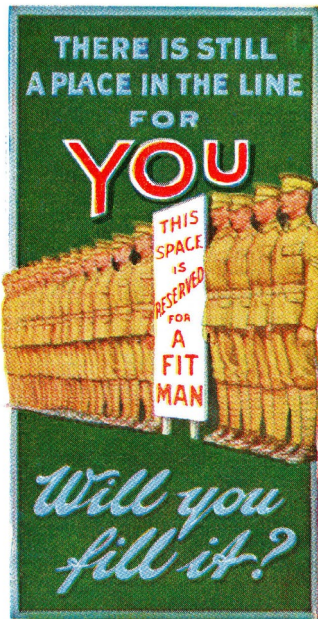
Instructions:

1. In a small saucepan, combine the raisins and water. Bring to the boil and continue to boil for about 10 minutes.
2. Remove from the heat and stir in the sugar and butter. Stir until the butter is melted and the sugar is dissolved. (This step can be done a day in advance if you prefer.) Let this mixture cool for at least a couple of hours until it reaches room temperature.
3. Sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and spices.
4. Pour the raisin mixture onto the dry ingredients and stir with wooden spoon until well blended but do not over mix the batter.
5. Pour the batter into a well-greased and floured loaf tin.
6. Bake at 175°C for about 45 minutes–1 hour or until a toothpick inserted into the centre comes out clean.
7. Cool in the tin for 10 minutes before turning the cake out onto a wire rack to cool completely. Store in an airtight container or cake tin.

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Conscription and propaganda

Propaganda was used to try to make people think a certain way. It was used to influence men and encourage them to volunteer by making them feel guilty if they had not yet signed up for the war. In 1916, conscription was introduced through the Military Service Act. This meant that every unmarried man aged between 18 and 41 had to come forward and enlist for military service. A second Act was passed shortly afterwards to extend conscription to married men. This eventually expanded the British army to a force of around 4–5 million men.



On a piece of A4 or A3 paper, create a propaganda poster to encourage men to enlist in the war.

You could research some more First World War propaganda posters for some ideas.

Interesting facts about the Second World War

The Second World War lasted for 6 years from 1939 to 1945.

Great Britain declared war on Germany on 3 September 1939. It was announced by Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain.

The main countries and leaders who made up the **Allied powers** were:

- **Great Britain** led by Prime Ministers Neville Chamberlain, then Winston Churchill
- **United States** led by Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt then Harry S. Truman
- **France** led by President Albert Lebrun, then Marshal Philippe Pétain and General Charles de Gaulle
- **Soviet Union (USSR)** led by Joseph Stalin
- **China** led by Chiang Kai-shek.

The three main countries and leaders who made up the **Axis powers** were:

- **Germany**, the Nazis, led by Adolf Hitler
- **Italy**, the Fascists, led by Benito Mussolini
- **Japan**, known at that time as the Empire of Japan, led by Hideki Tojo; the emperor of Japan during the Second World War was Emperor Hirohito.

The code name for the evacuation of Allied troops from Dunkirk in the summer of 1940 was 'Operation Dynamo'.

The Second World War ended in Europe on 8 May 1945—this is also known as VE Day (Victory in Europe Day).

The Second World War carried on for a few months after it had ended in Europe, and officially ended when Japan formally surrendered to the Allies on 2 September 1945.

Who fought in the Second World War

Research and use this key to colour both the Allied and Axis powers.



Allied powers



Axis powers



Were there any countries that were neutral during the Second World War?

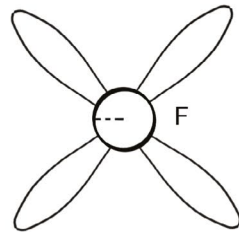
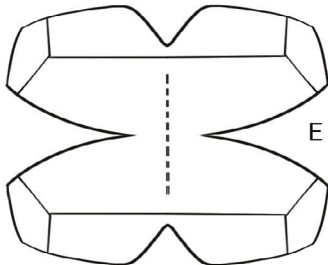
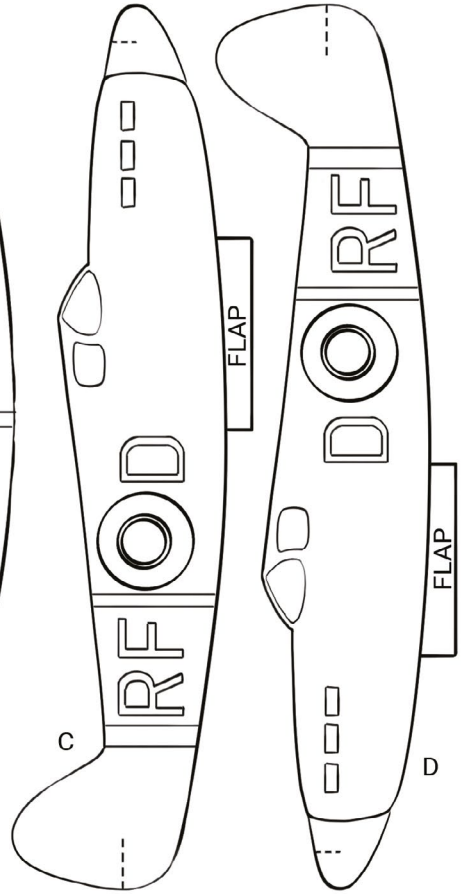
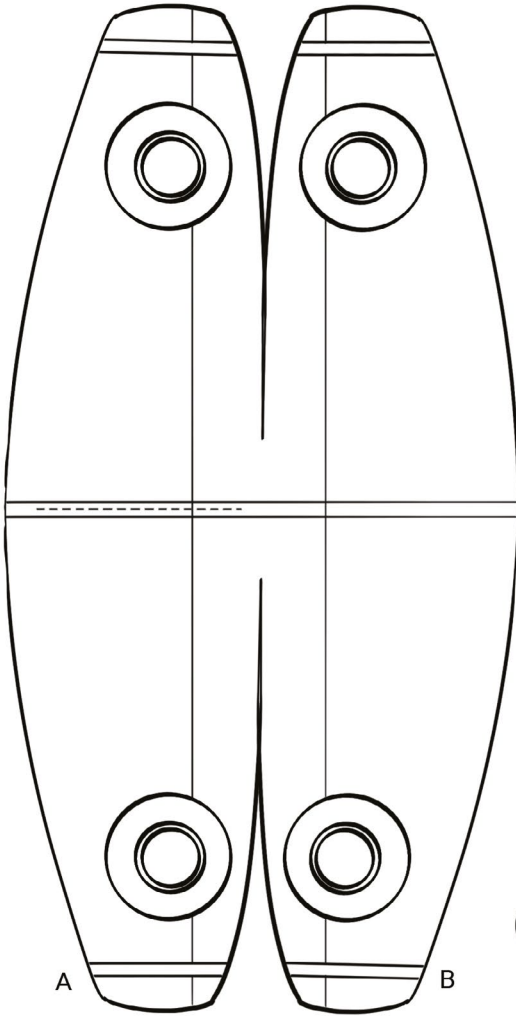
The Spitfire



The Spitfire is the most famous plane used in the Second World War. Its design was revolutionary and gave Britain an advantage when fighting against the German Luftwaffe. The Spitfire was fast and could manoeuvre easily and also had excellent firepower. In June 1944, Spitfires played a crucial role in the D-Day landings by providing vital air support attacking the German ground forces.

Instructions:

1. Colour in the plane parts in camouflage colours.
2. Cut out all of the parts carefully.
3. Fold over and glue the wing top and bottom (A and B) to make the complete wing.
4. Cut the dotted line in the middle of the wing to make a slit.
5. Stick the two sides (C and D) together but do not glue the flaps.
6. Push these flaps through the slit in the wing.
7. Fold the flaps out and glue on the underneath of the wing.
8. Cut a slit down the dotted line on the plane's tail.
9. Glue the two halves of the rudder (E) together.
10. Cut a slit in the rudder along the dotted line and slot it into the tail slit.
11. Cut out the propeller (F), cut the slit, and insert it into the front of the plane.
12. Give each propeller a slight twist for authenticity!



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Evacuation

At the beginning of the Second World War, the government evacuated children, mothers, and infants from British towns and cities as they feared German bombing would cause many civilian deaths. Over the course of 3 days, 1.5 million evacuees were sent to parts of the countryside which were thought to be safe.



Many children were sent away to live with strangers. Some mothers brought their children back after the threat of bombing didn't come but the government urged them to send them back. There were more evacuations in 1940 and the Blitz encouraged people to send their children to safety. The Blitz was a time where towns and cities were bombed by German aircraft.

Write a diary entry as if you were an evacuated child. How do you think they felt? What would they have been thinking?

Recommended books



DK findout! World War II by DK

DK findout! World War I by DK

See inside The First World War by Usborne

See inside The Second World War by Usborne

War Horse by Michael Morpurgo

