

The Second World War

Year 5 & 6

Autumn Term 2026

Key Area of learning: History

In this unit, children will explore the history of their local area in some depth, through the lens of the Second World War. As well as learning when and why the Second World War began, and finding out important facts about key events such as the Battle of Britain, they will also explore the impact of the War in the specific local context of Thorverton and Exeter. This will include discovering all about evacuation; learning what it was like to live with food rationing; and exploring the contribution made by women to the war effort.

PE

This half term, we will use netball to explore the key principles of invasion games. Children will practise passing and catching, moving into space and defending to win it back.

English

This half term, we will be using the example of *Shackleton's Journey*, by William Grill, to combine with our History learning and support the writing of an accurate account of how the Second World War began. Following this, we will be using Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* as the basis for writing a detailed character description. There will also be guided reading sessions every week and discrete spelling sessions, with explorations in using grammar and punctuation addressed throughout.

Maths

In Maths this half term we will begin by focusing on multiplication and division, looking in particular at the relationships of multiples and factors, and recognising prime, square and cube numbers. Following that, we will begin our first unit looking at Fractions, learning how to properly understand them in relation to division, understanding equivalence and then performing addition and subtraction operations using them. Regular arithmetic fluency practice will continue throughout.

Science

In Science this term, we are focused on the world of physics, as we explore some of the fundamental forces that govern our universe. For the most part, we will use our DT STEM Racing project as the basis for this exploration, looking at gravity, friction and air resistance in action, before we separately look into water resistance and the ability of levers, pulleys and gears to allow forces to have a greater effect.

PSHE

This term, we are going to be thinking about keeping ourselves safe and healthy. This includes looking into the dangers of smoking and alcohol, and the problem of peer pressure that can lead someone into doing something they should not or do not want to do. We will also be considering how we can look out for one another, specifically thinking about what happens if we witness someone being bullied.

RE

In RE this term, we will be asking ourselves the question, "What does it mean when Christians say that God is holy and loving?" We will explore these terms in depth and look to understand how that might affect how people choose to live.

In the second half of the term, we will be expanding our frame of reference to explore humanism in more detail and to consider what matters most to people of belief.

Computing

This term, we will start with a piece of work all about staying safe in the online world, specifically in relation to making friends and sharing images online.

In the second half of the term, we will explore vector drawing, looking at how different tools can help us create images.

Art

In Art this term, we will explore how artists use a variety of media to capture the spirit of a place. We will then be encouraged to experiment ourselves with a number of different media options, in order to find combinations that achieve the "feel" we want to evoke through our artwork.

Music

This half term we will be using the theme of World War II to explore the skills and power of singing in unison (all together) and in harmony (different, complementary tunes sung alongside one another). We will also consider the way that singing has often been used to stir emotion and offer hope.

SMSC/Values

Our focus value for this half-term will be Community. We will be exploring what it means to be a part of a community and to show this value towards others. We will be looking at St Paul's letters, to ask how we can contribute towards communities where everyone can shine brightly.

BUILDING ON PRIOR LEARNING	PREPARING FOR FUTURE LEARNING	KEY VOCABULARY	
History studies in Lower Key Stage 2 work on developing children's knowledge of key historical facts and events, as well as their understanding of how these fit into the chronology of British history in particular. They will have worked hard to understand how people at different times and in different places have lived, and will be beginning to compare and contrast this information with their own context. In Years 5 and 6, we will work to expand this foundational knowledge to dig a little deeper, trying to understand not just *what* has happened in the past, but to consider *why* it happened the way that it did. We will also try and ask ourselves what impact those events might have on our lives today, allowing children to consider themselves part of a bigger historical picture.	The intention in Upper Key Stage 2 is to begin to provide children with the tools necessary to independently explore the world around them: knowing how to navigate the grey areas that underpin human history, taking care to check the sources of their information, and becoming comfortable with the idea that different individuals may experience the same events differently. This should help them become more reflective individuals, who know what to do and where to go when more complex questions occur to them. This should also prepare them for Secondary School, where more sophisticated and detailed work will be looked at, exploring the cause and effect connections between events, and the relationships of societies to one another in both time and place.	battle factories industrial revolution invasion memorial migration railways rural transport urban war	active service Allies annex Axis blackout The Blitz Czechoslovakia D Day evacuation Nazi occupation rationing

Homework in Class 4 consists of:

- reading (daily wherever possible)
- practising spellings (see the homework sheet for more information)
- practising times-tables (this may have been discussed as a specific target, but all general practice is good!)
- Pick 'n' Mix activities

Your child will have a copy of the Pick 'n' Mix Homework Sheet, containing ideas for the current half term's homework. These Pick 'n' Mix ideas will enable your child to practise skills that they are developing in class and to become really engaged with the type of learning we are doing. They also give you a chance to connect with your child's school learning at home.

Your child is expected to complete **at least one piece** of homework, to bring into school in the final week of the half term and share with everyone else on our Homework Afternoon – but they are welcome to complete more than one piece if they are inspired to do so! However, on-going homework like reading and spellings are very much a priority. If you find you only have limited time for work at home, make sure you do some reading first!

MEMORABLE MOMENT: the class will be receiving a visit from Alex Fice, a member of the local community with extensive knowledge of the history of the village and, in particular, the impact of the Second World War in and around the area.