



World War II European Theater

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Welcome Back!

- Bell Ringer- Complete Pacific Battles Review sheet with your neighbor.
- Battles Quiz- Thursday!

Start of the War...

- September 1, 1939
Hitler invades Poland.
- On hand 98 divisions, 1.5 million available for action. Had also 9 Panzer divisions. Each one had 328 tanks, 8 support battalions and 6 artillery batteries.
- Uses the tactic “blitzkrieg” or lightning War.
- End of September, German Army had control over the country.
- By November, Stalin invades Finland.

WORLD WAR II, EUROPEAN THEATER, 1940-1945



European Front

Invasion of France

- From fall of 1939 to Spring of 1940, war in Europe was known as the “Sitzkrieg” or sitting war.
- Attack begins in May. By June, Allied forces are evacuated from French town of Dunkirk to England (Operation Dynamo.)
- Paris is occupied June 14, 1940
- During this period, Hitler plans invasion of France through Belgium. Goal was to reach the English channel and force France to surrender.
- Southern part of France was controlled by a puppet government (“Vichy France”) and led by Marshal Henri Petain. Was pro-German.



Welcome Back...

- Bell Ringer....
 - What is Sitzkrieg?
 - What is Blitzkrieg?
 - What was the name of the planned evacuation of Allied troops?
 - What was the planned invasion to invade England?



The Battle of Britain

- “Operation Sea Lion”
- The German Luftwaffe had 2,800 aircraft, which outnumbered the Royal Air Force (RAF) four to one.
- August 1940, Germans begin to bomb Southern England.
- Objective was to land 160,000 German soldiers along a forty-mile coastal stretch of south-east England.
- Hitler hoped England would accept German domination of Europe.
- Postpones invasion until British air force could be destroyed.

The “Blitz”

- In Sept. Germans begin the “Blitz” and shift their bombing to London and abandon invasion.
- On the first day of the Blitz, 430 citizens were killed. The German bombers returned the next day and a further 412 died.
- Between Sept. 1940-May 1941 two million houses (most in London) were destroyed and 60,000 civilians were killed.
- Seen as a moral victory for the Allies.













Eastern Front

Invasion of the Soviet Union

- “Operation Barbarossa”
- Stalin did not believe an invasion would occur until 1942, when both England and France would be defeated.
- Total of 3400 tanks and 3 million men used in the invasion.
- Stalin uses “scorched-earth” policy.
- Outcome of Hitler’s Lebensraum policy to create a greater Germany.
- Attack begins June 22, 1941
- By August, Germans advanced to Leningrad (siege will last over 2 years.) By October head towards Moscow.

Mediterranean Front

Invasion of North Africa

- Italy declares war on the Allies in June 1940.
- Mussolini moves troops stationed in Libya to launch an attack on British forces in Egypt.
- Battles between **Afrika Corps** and British forces continue until the US landing of forces in North Africa in Nov. 1942 (**Operation Torch.**) creating a three front war.
- The British were able to launch a counteroffensive and take Libyan territory in January 1941.
- As a result, Hitler sends General Erwin Rommel (Desert Fox) to lead the Afrika corps.
- By May 1943, Allies are able to take Tunisia and capture 150,000 prisoners.
- Leads to **Operation Husky** ([invasion of Sicily in 1943.](#))



Battles

Siege of Leningrad

- September 8, 1941 - January 27, 1944
- Part of **Operation Barbarossa**
- people turned out shortly after the invasion and dug antitank ditches around the city. Two hundred thousand Red Army defenders protected 3,000,000 inhabitants.
- With the help of the Finnish, German Army invades 2nd largest city in USSR.
- City would be surrounded (siege). Shelling and air raids continued **for almost 900 days.**
- In 1942, 650,000 died during the siege
- Soviet offensive in 1944 was able to lift the siege.



Good Afternoon!

- Bell Ringer:
 - 1. What was the name of the German invasion of the Soviet Union?
 - 2. What was the name of Allied invasion of North Africa?
 - 3. How long did the Siege of Leningrad last?

The Battle of Stalingrad

- Considered turning point in WWII
- Goal to take oil fields and control communication lines. Final target was to take the city of Baku.
- Hitler ordered to “fight to the last bullet.”
- Gen. Von Paulus surrenders, 91,000 Germans taken prisoner.
- Fought during the winter of 1942 to 1943
- Battle was hand-hand combat, street by street. Over 2 million soldiers involved.
- Germans were unable to secure the city by winter.



Operation Citadel

Battle of Kursk

- July 1943
- German counter-offensive to Stalingrad.
- 300,000 civilians helped the Red army build defenses, laying of 400,000 mines (2,400 anti-tank and 2,700 anti-personnel mines every mile.)
- Largest tank battle of the war (1800)
- Goal was to break through a “bulge” in the Russian line at Kursk.
- By August, city was liberated.
- Last counter-offensive in USSR. 500,000 German casualties.



Operation Overlord

June 6, 1944 D-Day

- In November, 1943, Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt met in Teheran to discuss a second front in Europe.
- Objective was to liberate France.
- Largest air, land, and sea operation in history.
- The plan involved assaults on five beaches west of the Orne River near Caen (Sword, Juno, Gold, Omaha and Utah) by the British, American and Canadian forces.



from www.france-for-visitors.com

Operation Fortitude

- Germans believed that attack would happen at Pas-de-Calais.
- On June 5th, 4 airborne divisions (23,000) were used with the purpose to destroy enemy bridges and secure those for an offensive.
- Unable to secure its targets, however the Germans became confused. (with the help from French Resistance.)
Real invasion?
- British would transmit messages during spring of 1944.
- Radio traffic was faked, plywood and canvas installations were constructed, inflatable tanks and vehicles were used extensively in order to deceive the Germans.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES




D Day

- On 6th June, 1944, 2,727 ships sailed to the Normandy coast and on the first day 156,000 men landed along a 30 mile front to face 50 German divisions.
- At Omaha, US Army suffered 2,500 casualties.
- By end of the month Allies have secured the beaches and begin offensive to Paris.
- Paris is liberated on August 25, 1944.







Battle of the Bulge

Dec. 1944-Jan. 1945

- German counter-offensive to regain initiative on western front. Opposed by Hitler's Generals.
- Hitler's intention was to drive through Antwerp and cut off the British 21st Army Group and the U.S. First and Ninth Armies north of the Ardennes.
- Hitler sends a quarter million troops across an 85-mile stretch of the Allied front, from southern Belgium into Luxembourg.
- At first, able to surprise Allies due to poor weather. However, allied reinforcements were able to secure the bulge that occurred 50 miles into the Allied front.
- Americans suffered 75,000 casualties, Germans 100,000.
- Allies were driving the Germans from the west, the Red Army launches their offensive in the east. Race to Berlin is on!