

# Reading Activities:

The first reading task I'd like you to complete is based around a special day coming up on 8<sup>th</sup> May, VE Day. Read the information given carefully and then answer the questions attached.

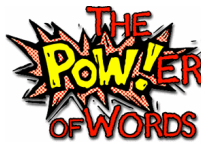
Remember, when answering our reading questions we use our five reading domains...



Retrieval



Inference



Language



Summarise  
+predict



Content

# VE Day

## What is VE Day?

VE Day stands for Victory in Europe Day and is celebrated on 8th May. It was the end of six years of suffering, misery and courage during the Second World War in Europe. Although it was not the end of the Second World War, it was the end of warfare in Europe.

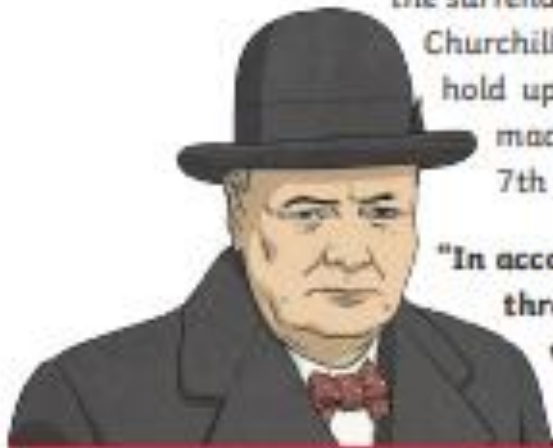
## How did it happen?

On the morning of 7th May, 1945, following Hitler's death in the April, the German President of the Third Reich, Grand Admiral Donitz, gave orders that General Jodl should go to the American Head Quarters based in France. Jodl surrendered on behalf of the Germans, to the Western and Russian officers, and agreed to all their demands.

## The Announcement

The British people began celebrating as soon as they heard the news. Although no official announcement had been made, bell ringers in the churches around the country, were on standby to ring out the good news when an official notice was given.

Joseph Stalin, the leader of the Russians, was taking his time to announce the surrender, but the British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, did not want to give Stalin the chance to hold up what everyone already knew! Churchill made the following announcement at 19.40, 7th May.



**"In accordance with arrangements between three great powers, tomorrow, Tuesday, will be treated as Victory in Europe Day and will be regarded as a holiday."**



## The Effects of War

In Britain, during the war in Europe, half a million homes were destroyed, thousands of ordinary people were killed and millions of lives had been torn apart.



### Did you know ...?

The three great powers were Britain, France and the Soviet Union, now known as Russia.

### Bring on the Celebrations!

People began decorating the streets with banners, bunting and ribbons. They organised street parties where neighbours shared food, which was still rationed, and listened to the radio news broadcasts.

King George VI and the Queen appeared eight times on the balcony of Buckingham Palace, and their two daughters, Princess Margaret and

Princess Elizabeth – who is now Her Majesty the Queen – walked amongst the crowds! Churchill told the crowds, "This is your victory!"

Churchill spoke to the nation, reminding them that although Japan still had to be defeated, and the war was not yet over, for now Great Britain "May allow ourselves a brief period of rejoicing. God Save the King!"

### The End of the VE Day

At 21:00, King George VI made a final broadcast to the nation. Buckingham Palace was lit up in floodlights for the first time since the start of the war, and two searchlights formed a V, the sign of peace, above St Paul's Cathedral in London.

All the lights were turned off again the next day.



Although everyone was pleased the war in Europe had ended, for many the celebrations would have been a sad reminder of the loss of many loved ones. They would have been fighting abroad, caught by the enemy or died in air raids attacks. This meant that many did not completely feel the lasting joy of the time.

# Questions

1. In detail, explain why the VE Day ended.

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2. What did General Jodl do?

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3. What does 'the bell ringers were on standby' mean?

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4. Explain, in your own words, the effects of war in Europe, on Britain.

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5. What did Stalin do, and how did this affect Britain?

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6. What date was VE Day?

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7. Name two ways people might have lost loved ones during the war in Europe.

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8. Describe how people celebrated VE Day.

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VE Day

9. Why do you think the author has used an exclamation mark when commenting on the princesses walking around in the crowds in London?

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10. Was this the end of the war? Explain your thoughts.

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11. Why do you think two searchlights were lit in the shape of a V?

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Our next reading activity is a fiction text, there are a number of different style questions for you to try (some retrieval, inference etc). Read the questions carefully and decide which reading domain each question is asking you to look at.

‘Get a blooming move on!’

Dad’s voice echoed through the tiny flat, sending shockwaves resonating through Trick Hope’s body. The thirteen-year-old lay for a moment longer, thinking about the day ahead, before swinging his legs out from beneath the covers. He shambled to his feet, scratched and stretched. Hooking the vertical blinds aside, he peered out of the window. London sprawled before him.

Trick lifted the lucky pendant round his neck to his lips, giving it a swift ritual kiss before letting it fall back on to his chest. He sifted through the clothes on his bedroom floor for his school shirt and drainpipes.

After squeezing into the jeans, he tugged on the shirt – still buttoned from the night before – and slipped the knotted tie over his head like a noose.

He stepped into his once-white trainers, then walked over to the shelves beside the door. They were loaded with his comic collection, weeklies bought religiously from Super Freaks in Soho.

Trick wasn’t looking at the comics, though. His focus was on the terrarium nestled between the piles of back issues. There was no movement within the glass tank; the foliage and webs were motionless. Shelob had clearly been hungry in the night, polishing off the last of her crickets.

‘You’ll be late!’

Trick rolled his eyes, making no attempt to quicken his pace. He shrugged his blazer on, the maroon sleeves threadbare from the various scrapes he’d got himself into over the years. Lifting the flap on his backpack, he checked the contents: a half-empty box of Tic Tacs, a tatty exercise book and a couple of biros. Hardly the ingredients for academic

success. Trick shrugged. What had school ever really taught him, apart from how to run and hide? He swung the bag over his shoulder and headed out of his bedroom.

#### Retrieving Information

- 1) Find and copy **one** word that shows that Trick’s blazer is old.
- 2) Find and copy **one** word that shows that Trick never forgets to buy his magazines

#### Making Inferences

- 3) What type of creature lives in the terrarium and how do you know?
- 4) Why do you think Trick kisses his necklace?
- 5) Is Trick’s room tidy? Give 2 pieces of evidence to support your answer.

#### Writer’s Choices

- 6) Why has the writer chosen to describe the knotted tie as “like a noose”? What does this tell us?
- 7) Why has the author selected words like “shrugged” and “shambled” to describe how Trick moves?

#### Challenge Question (extended answer)

- 8) Describe what you think Trick might be like at school, using quotes from the text to support your answer.

