

## World War II MAP:

### **The Axis Powers Make Early Gains from 1939-1941**

Two days after Adolf Hitler ordered his armies into Poland, Great Britain and France declared war on Germany. The British and French thus ended their policy of “appeasement” which for five years had enabled Hitler to seize territory in Eastern Europe without opposition. But before the British and French could send help to Poland, the German “blitzkrieg” overran the country with tanks, infantrymen, dive bombers, and other aircraft.

After the fall of Poland, the German war machine swept through northern and western Europe. Denmark and Norway surrendered, then Belgium, Luxembourg, and The Netherlands. Allied forces in France found themselves in a desperate situation. With German armies closing in, the Allies retreated to Dunkirk, a port city along the northern coast of France. From there, more than 300,000 British, French, and Belgian troops managed to escape across the English Channel to Great Britain. Benito Mussolini, the dictator of Italy, announced that his country would never give up. Soon afterwards, France surrendered.

Great Britain was the only remaining Allied nation in Western Europe. In July 1940, the “Luftwaffe” – the German air force – began bombing British airfields and ports. Hitler hoped to force the British to surrender. But Prime Minister Winston Churchill vowed that his country would never give up. Britain’s Royal Air Force (RAF), though outnumbered, had better planes and pilots. Month after month, the Luftwaffe carried on a massive aerial bombardment. Nightly raids were made on London and other cities. Yet the British kept up a determined resistance. The RAF shot down more than 2,000 German planes and forced Hitler to abandon his plan for capturing the British isle. The Battle of Britain, as it became to be known, was one of the turning points of World War II. Not only was Great Britain saved, but the British showed that the Luftwaffe could be defeated.

Meanwhile, the Germans and Italians gained new territories in Eastern Europe and Africa. Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia joined the Axis Powers. Hitler sent the “Afrika Korps,” a highly motorized and heavily equipped army under General Erwin Rommel, to help the Italians seize lands in North Africa. Then, in the summer of 1941, 3 million Axis troops invaded Russia. Hitler expected a quick victory that would give him control over Russia’s vast supplies of food, petroleum, and other raw materials. But as the Russians retreated, they burned or destroyed their own factories, dams, railroads, food supplies, and other resources in order to prevent them from falling into German hands.

Use the map on page 928 to assist you in locating countries that existed before and during World War II.

### **On the map of Europe and North Africa**

1. Label GERMANY and ITALY, the leading Axis Powers in Europe. Print the names in CAPITAL LETTERS. Lightly shade these countries with a colored pencil, marker, lead pencil, or pen.
2. Label the following countries that were under Axis control by the summer of 1941. Print the names in CAPITAL LETTERS.

AUSTRIA	THE NETHERLANDS	ALBANIA	MOROCCO
CZECHOSLOVAKIA	FRANCE	GREECE	ALGERIA
POLAND	HUNGARY	LITHUANIA	TUNISIA
DENMARK	ROMANIA	LATVIA	LIBYA
NORWAY	BULGARIA	ESTONIA	EAST PRUSSIA
BELGIUM	YUGOSLAVIA	FINLAND	

Lightly shade these countries with the same colored pencil, marker, lead pencil, or pen as was used for Germany and Italy.

3. Print Adolf Hitler inside of Germany, and Benito Mussolini next to Italy.
4. Draw an arrow from Germany to Poland. Next to it, print 1939: World War II begins.

5. Label the two major Allied Powers in Europe that the Germans failed to capture – GREAT BRITAIN and RUSSIA. Lightly shade these two countries with a different color from Germany and Italy.

6. Label the countries that remained neutral:

PORTUGAL

SPAIN

SWITZERLAND

SWEDEN

IRELAND

Print the word neutral (in parentheses) below the name of each of these countries on the map. Lightly shade these countries with a different color.

7. Next to the symbol by London, print 1940-1941: RAF defeats Luftwaffe in Battle of Britain.

8. Draw two arrows from Germany to Russia to symbolize Hitler's invasion of Russia. Between the two arrows, print 1941: Germany attacks Russia.

9. Create a key for your map.