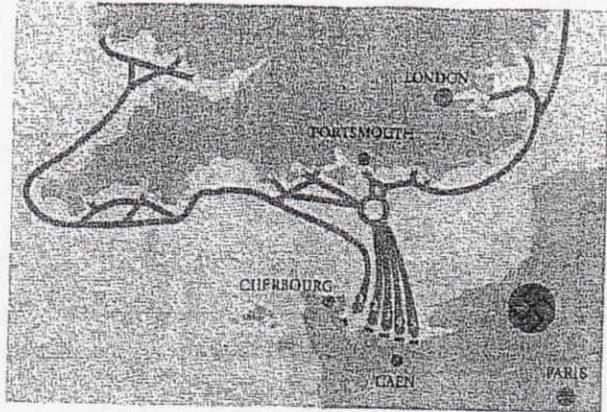


## D-Day

1

The Germans had been expecting an Allied invasion of Northern France for long time. However, they were not sure where the invasion would take place. The Germans concentrated their troops near Calais because it was nearest to the British Isles.

Early on June 6, 1944 Operation Overlord, the code name of the invasion, began. Commanded by Dwight D. Eisenhower about 3,000 ships and 176,000 soldiers crossed the English Channel and landed, to the surprise of the Germans, on the beaches of Normandy, much farther to the west than Hitler's generals had expected. Paratroopers dropped behind the German defence lines and captured bridges and railroad tracks.



The Allied Invasion

Although Germany was surprised by the attack, they fought back fiercely. At one landing site, named Omaha beach, Allied troops came under heavy fire and had difficulty staying on the shore. At the end of the day, Allied forces had managed to secure the coastline and create a harbour where more troops could land. By the end of June, 1944 about a million Allied troops had reached France.

After heavy fighting, American and British armies were able to move inland. They captured Paris on August 25, 1944. After advancing to eastern France and Belgium the Allied offensive moved on but as winter came was halted west of the Rhine River.

## WORDS

- **Allied** = the countries that fought against Germany, Italy and Japan during World War II
- **although** = while
- **attack** = an act of using weapons against an enemy in a war
- **capture** = to catch a person and keep them as prisoner
- **command** = to tell soldiers to do something; to be the leader of an army
- **concentrate** = focus on
- **create** = make
- **defence lines** = the front line that a country uses to stop enemy soldiers
- **difficulty** = trouble, problem
- **fierce** = violent, strong, intense
- **forces** = here: army, soldiers
- **halt** = stop
- **however** = but
- **inland** = in a direction away from the coast into the centre of a country
- **invasion** = when an army of a country enters another country and takes control of it
- **manage** = here: were able to do
- **paratrooper** = a soldier trained to jump out of plane using a parachute
- **secure** = make safe
- **shore** = coast
- **take place** = happen
- **troops** = soldiers

**1 ANSWER THE QUESTIONS IN YOUR OWN WORDS!**

Where were the Germans expecting the invasion? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did the invasion take place? \_\_\_\_\_

Who commanded the Allied forces? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the operation code-named? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the job of the paratroopers? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How did Germany react to the attack? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How many troops took part in the invasion? \_\_\_\_\_

How far did Allied soldiers move on after \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**2 TRUE OR FALSE**

	T	F
Hitler's defence lines were waiting for the Allied troops.		
One landing site was named Omaha Beach		
There were no enemies on the beaches waiting for the soldiers.		
By the end of June 1944, about a hundred thousand troops had reached France.		
In August the Allies captured Paris.		
The offensive in Europe was halted by the arrival of winter		

The Soviet victory at Stalingrad ended Germany's advance in eastern Europe. In the following years the Soviet army received supplies from Great Britain and the United States and started moving westward.

Soon after the Normandy invasion Stalin's armies attacked along a 700 km front. In July 1944 Soviet troops reached Warsaw and in the following months drove the Germans out of most of eastern Europe.

The final attack on Germany began in early 1945. Soviet soldiers reached the Oder River, about 65 km east of Berlin and Allied forces set themselves up along the Rhine River by March.

By this time it was clear that Germany could not fight much longer, even though Hitler ordered his men to fight to their deaths. A large number of German soldiers surrendered to the Allies every day.



The Allied leaders— U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin—met in Russia for the Yalta conference. There they planned Germany's defeat and the occupation of the country.

Meanwhile the Soviet army pushed on through Germany and by April 25, 1945 they had surrounded Berlin. Adolf Hitler realized that the war was over and committed suicide in his bunker on April 30. Germany surrendered on May 8, 1945.

As they marched on through Germany Allied soldiers discovered terrifying evidence of Nazi brutality. Even though they freed death camps thousands died of starvation after Germany's surrender.

MAY 8, 1945 IS KNOWN AS "VE DAY" OR VICTORY IN EUROPE DAY.



Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin (left to right) meet at Yalta

## WORDS

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| ● <b>advance</b> = march forward  | ● <b>reach</b> = get to, arrive   |
| ● <b>attack</b> = to start fighting against an enemy with weapons                           | ● <b>realize</b> = to find out, to see that something will happen           |
| ● <b>bunker</b> = a strong underground building that is built for soldiers and officers     | ● <b>receive</b> = get  |
| ● <b>commit suicide</b> = to kill yourself  | ● <b>starvation</b> = suffer or die because you do not get any food         |
| ● <b>death camp</b> = place where a large number of prisoners are killed or die             | ● <b>supplies</b> = food, clothes and other things you need to survive      |
| ● <b>defeat</b> = overthrow; to win against someone   | ● <b>surrender</b> = to give up because you see that you cannot win the war |
| ● <b>evidence</b> = facts that show that something exists or is true                        | ● <b>surround</b> = to be around something, from all sides                  |
| ● <b>forces</b> = soldiers  | ● <b>terrifying</b> = scary, horrible                                       |
| ● <b>front</b> = line that separates you from your enemy                                    | ● <b>troops</b> = soldiers  |
| ● <b>meanwhile</b> = in the time between two events   | ● <b>Yalta</b> = city in southern Ukraine                                   |
| ● <b>occupation</b> = when soldiers and other people enter a country and take control of it |   |

**1 ANSWER THE QUESTIONS IN YOUR OWN WORDS!**

From which country did the Soviet Union receive supplies during the second part of the war? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What happened in eastern Europe in 1943 and 1944? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Which leaders met at Yalta? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What did they plan there? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When did the Russians reach Berlin? \_\_\_\_\_

What did Hitler do when he realized that the war was over? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

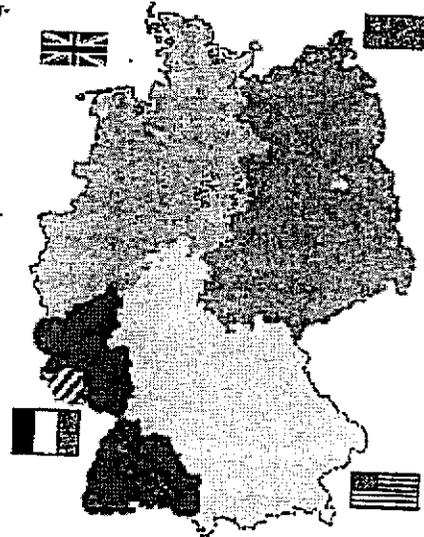
What did Allied soldiers discover on their march through Germany? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**2 TRUE OR FALSE**

	T	F
At the beginning of 1945 the Russians reached the Rhine River.		
At the end of the war many German soldiers surrendered to the Allies.		
British Prime Minister at that time was Winston Churchill.		
By the end of April the Soviet army had surrounded Berlin.		
Hitler was killed by his own men on April 30, 1945.		
Allied soldiers killed all the Germans who were in the death camps.		

After the end of the war, a conference was held in Potsdam, Germany, to set up peace treaties. The countries that fought with Hitler lost territory and had to pay reparations to the Allies. Germany and its capital Berlin were divided into four parts. The zones were to be controlled by Great Britain, the United States, France and the Soviet Union. The three western Allies and the Soviet Union disagreed on many things and as time went on Germany was divided into two separate countries: East Germany, which had a Communist government and West Germany, which was a democratic state. Berlin was also divided into East and West Berlin. Austria was also occupied by the four Allies from 1945 to 1955.



The division of Germany

One by one, the Russians started to take over countries in eastern Europe and install Communist governments there. The division of Europe was the beginning of the Cold War, between the democratic nations of the west and the Communist countries of eastern Europe. The Iron Curtain marked the border between these two regions.

After the war many Nazi leaders were arrested and punished for what they had done in the war. The most famous war trials were held at Nuremberg, Germany. Those who were responsible for brutal crimes were sentenced to death.

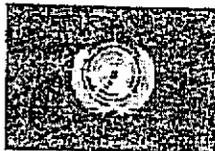


Planes waiting to take off from a Berlin airport

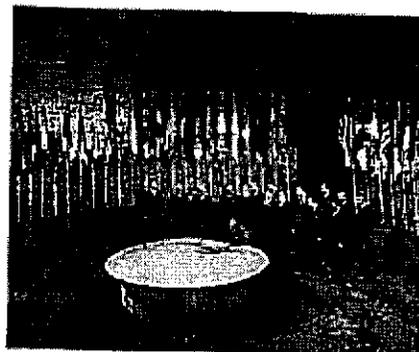
Many problems arose after the war was over. One of them focused on the city of Berlin which was deep inside the Russian zone. In June 1948, the Soviet Union tried to drive the western powers out of Berlin by blocking all routes to the city. For a whole year the Allies flew in food, fuel and other things that the population needed to survive. Finally, the Russians gave up and the blockade ended. In 1961 the Russians built a wall around Berlin to stop their citizens from escaping to the west.

The biggest task was to rebuild Europe, which lay in ruins. In 1948 the United States set up the Marshall Plan to help Europe's economy. 18 nations received 13 billion dollars worth of food machines and other goods.

During World War II, four of the Allied powers—the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and China—agreed to create an organization that should work for peace. In April 1945 fifty countries signed a charter and gave birth to the United Nations.



The signing of the UN charter in San Francisco and the UN flag



**1 ANSWER THE QUESTIONS IN YOUR OWN WORDS!**

Where was the peace conference at the end of the war held? \_\_\_\_\_

How was Germany divided after the war? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What happened to Berlin? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How did the Russians try to take control of Berlin? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What is the Iron Curtain? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Where was the biggest war trial held? \_\_\_\_\_

What happened to Nazi leaders? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How did the United States help Europe economically after the war? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Why did the Allied countries want to create the United Nations? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**2 TRUE OR FALSE**

	T	F
The countries that fought with Hitler lost some of their territory		
Austria was occupied by the Allied countries		
The Allies wanted to take over all of Berlin.		
In 1961 the Russians built a wall around Berlin		
The UN charter was signed in New York.		
The Allies had to fly in supplies to Berlin for about a year		