

## Beginnings of World War II

### Teacher version

#### Directions:

Work with your table group to complete the narrative below (using the Word Bank) about the beginnings of World War II. If you are not sure on a particular blank to fill in, do the best you can. We will eventually go over the answers.

World War II (as did World War I) involved the use of **allies**. In 1936, Hitler and Mussolini had signed an agreement which made Germany and **Italy** allies. The name of their treaty was the Rome-Berlin **Axis**. Mussolini had already invaded **Ethiopia**. In 1938, Hitler took over the country of **Austria**, where he had been born and then set his eyes on invading the Sudetenland, a part of Czechoslovakia.

At this point, the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain met with Hitler and they settled on the **Munich Agreement**. It said that Germany would be allowed to gain control of the Sudetenland and then they would stop any more land grabbing. This was the idea of appeasement, trying to make Germany happy so that war could be avoided. However, other people, such as the future British Prime Minister, **Winston Churchill** (who would lead England through most of World War II) realized that this was a bad idea.

On Sept. 1, 1939, World War II began when Germany invaded the country of **Poland**. One month before this, Germany had reached an agreement with the **Soviet Union** that they would not attack one another so Germany had one less country to worry about. In conquering Poland, Germans used a style of quick warfare with tanks, men, and airplanes that came to be known as **blitzkrieg** or "lightning war." 2 days after Germany started World War II, Great Britain and **France** declared war against Germany. They would be a part of the **Allied Powers** against Germany.

Germany continued their offensive attack and in 1940 captured Denmark, Norway, Belgium, and the Netherlands. Then, in June 1940, Germany overran **France**, the birthplace of the famous Notre Dame cathedral. During this time, thousands of Allied troops were rescued from France by ship in the famous **Dunkirk** evacuation, made famous by a 2017 movie.

After Germany had conquered France, they set their sights on another country. The **Battle of Britain** occurred in the summer and fall of 1940 where Germany heavily bombed London and other British cities. However, Britain's Royal **Air Force** held them off magnificently and Germany was halted.

Also, in 1940, the country of **Japan** joined Italy and Germany and the three of them would be known as the **Axis** powers.