

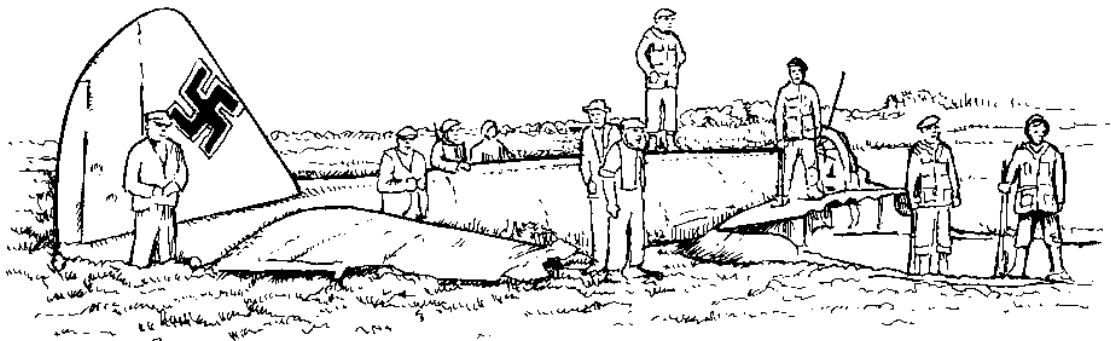
Everybody's War



Why was it different?

The Second World War was the most important event (happening) in British history since 1930. Britain had fought many wars before this one. But most of the fighting had happened abroad or on the sea. These wars did not change the lives of people at home much.

The Second World War was different. It lasted a long time. No person or place was safe from enemy bombs, so everybody was involved. This was the first and only time in British history when this has happened.



A German fighter shot down over Britain, August 1940

When was it?

The Second World War lasted for almost six years. It began in 1939 and ended in 1945. We say its dates were 1939 to 1945, or 1939–45.

Many countries around the world joined in the fighting. That is why we call it a World War. It was not like a football match – all the fighting did not start or stop at the same time.

Why was Britain fighting?

In the 1930s the governments of Germany and Japan fell into the hands of evil men. The Germans and Japanese then began to attack and take over other countries. The Germans entered Austria and Czechoslovakia. The Japanese attacked China.

Independence

After the Second World War the countries of the British Empire were gradually given their independence (freedom). For example, India became independent in 1947, Nigeria in 1960 and Kenya in 1963.

The British Empire was replaced by the Commonwealth, a group or club of countries who joined together because they wanted to. They all used to be in the British Empire.

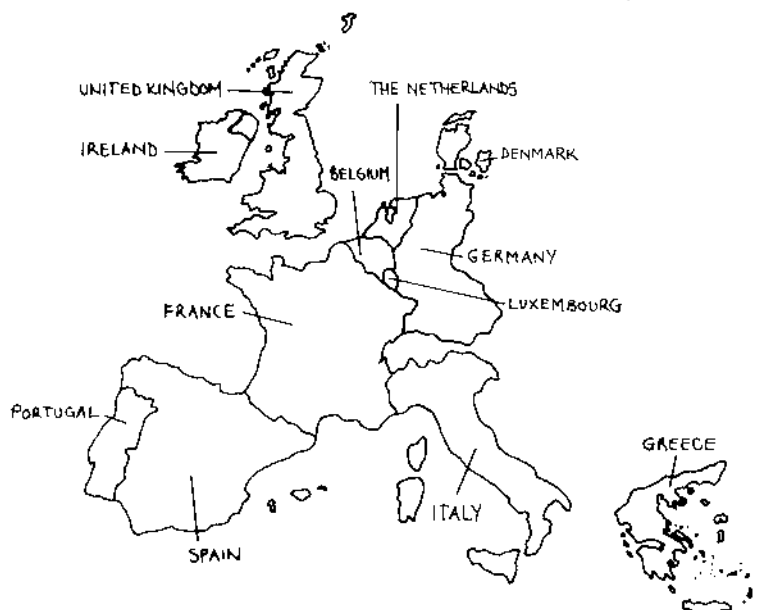
The European Community

The European Community (EC) was set up after the Second World War to help the countries of Europe live at peace and trade with each other. At first Britain did not join the Community.

Finally, on 1 January 1973 Britain became a member of the EC. The prime minister at the time was a Conservative, Edward Heath. Since then the Community has become more and more important for British people. Most British trade is with the Community.

Europeans

Membership of the EC is one of the biggest changes to happen to Britain since 1930. Before the Second World War British people thought more of their worldwide empire than of Europe. Now the empire has gone and the British are fully European. The links between the countries of the EC get closer each year.



The countries of the European Community

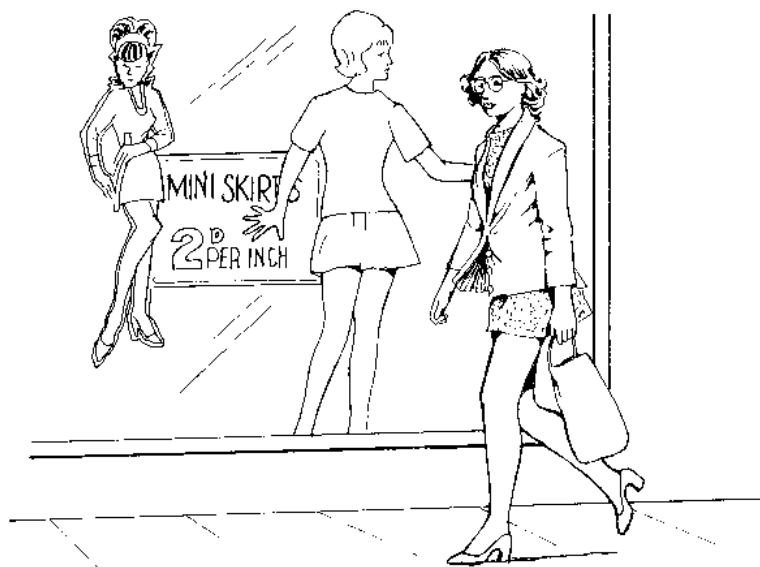
1960s



In the 1960s fashion changed wildly. All sorts of ideas and designs appeared, some of which had not been seen for centuries: mini-skirts, very long hair for men, very short hair for women, brilliant colours, boots, bare feet – in fact anything!

Something to do

- 1 Colour and label the last three pictures.
- 2 Research the clothes of the 1970s and 1980s. On a separate piece of paper, draw and label a man and a woman from the last two decades (ten years) wearing the fashions of that time.
- 3 Look at the picture below and answer the questions beneath it.

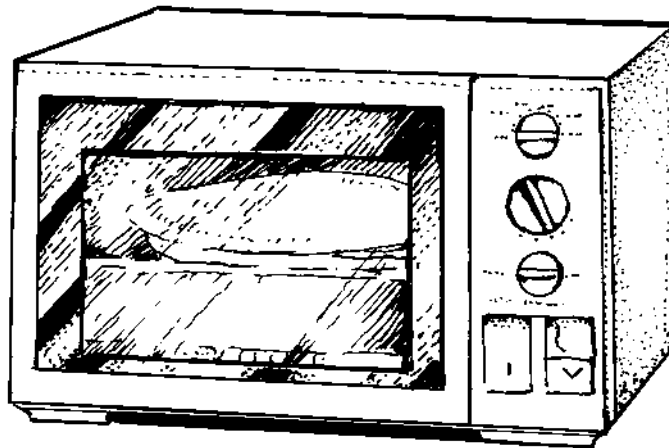


- a Which decade do you think this picture represents? _____
- b Why did you give that answer? _____

TV culture

The spread of TV had all sorts of effects on British society (the people and their way of life):

- As people got their news from the television, newspapers became more like magazines.
- Eating habits changed. People wanted meals they could prepare quickly and eat in front of the TV.
- News stars appeared – news readers, show presenters and even the men and women who announced the weather!
- In the 1960s and 1970s many cinemas closed down.
- The TV screen brought reports of world-wide violence and crime right into the living room of every home in the country.



The microwave cooker, which became popular in the 1980s as a way of preparing meals quickly and easily

What can you remember?

- 1 What was held in 1951 to cheer up the nation after years of gloom?

- 2 Name two famous pop groups of the 1960s:

- 3 When did TV broadcasting begin in Britain? _____

- 4 What TV station began in 1955? _____

- 5 What was a *gramophone*? _____

- 6 Where did teenage culture begin? _____