Allied Character Profiles

JOHN CURTIN
Prime Minister of Australia

- Born in 1885 in Creswick, Victoria
- Journalist by occupation
- Leader of the Australian Labor Party since 1935; welded the party into a strong Opposition
- Had warned of the danger from Japan in the 1930s and that Singapore could not adequately protect Australia
- Two Independents held the balance of power in the Lower House in 1941. In October they decided to vote with the Opposition and so John Curtin became a minority Labor Prime Minister
- Regarded the protection of Australia from invasion as Australia’s number one priority in World War II
- Supported the British Empire but not at Australia’s expense. Called on the United States to come to our aid when he knew that Britain could not protect us from the Japanese
- Strongly advanced the need for an Australian air force
- Was the first Prime Minister to have his own press secretary
- Died in office in 1945, six weeks before the end of the war in the Pacific

GENERAL DOUGLAS MACARTHUR
Supreme Commander South West Pacific Zone

- Born in 1880 in Little Rock, Arkansas in the United States
- Career soldier, graduate of Military Academy at West Point
- Served in World War I; promoted to Brigadier-General
- Spent most of interwar years in the Philippines
- Left the United States army in 1937 to command the army of the Philippines; promoted to Field Marshal
- Rejoined the army at outbreak of war in 1939 and returned to the Philippines in July 1941 as commander of the United States forces there
- Designed Rainbow 5, the defence plan for the Philippines, but failed to put it into operation after the bombing of Pearl Harbour
- Nine hours after the attack on Pearl Harbour the Philippines was successfully attacked by Japan and eventually surrendered
- Before the Philippines surrendered the American Government evacuated MacArthur from the Philippines and transferred him to Australia to command the forces in the southwest Pacific area
- Made very effective use of the media to promote his own image. Wore a Hollywood-style uniform unlike the uniform of any other general. Famous for saying ‘I will return’ as he departed the Philippines
- Led the island-hopping program that eventually recaptured the Philippines
- Accepted the Japanese surrender
- Acted as Supreme Commander of the Occupation Forces in Japan after World War II
- Died in 1964
FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT
President of the United States
• Born in 1882 in Hyde Park, New York State in the United States
• A lawyer by occupation
• Became a paraplegic after contracting poliomyelitis in the 1920s
• Was Governor of New York before running for the presidency
• Became President in 1932 at the height of the Great Depression
• Inaugural speech included the famous phrases, ‘We have nothing to fear but fear itself’ and ‘The American people ask for action and action now’
• Fireside chats over the radio were a feature of his government
• Carried out important social and economic reforms during the Depression
• Agreed with Churchill in 1941 to defeat Germany first and then deal with Japan’s threat in the Pacific
• Held office for three terms, the only President in United States history to do so
• Died in office in 1945 before the end of World War II

WINSTON CHURCHILL
Prime Minister of Britain
• Born in 1874 in Blenheim Palace, Woodstock, Oxfordshire, England
• Graduate of British Military Academy at Sandhurst; experienced soldier with strong background as a war strategist
• First Lord of the Admiralty in World War I; his rash decisions led to disasters like Gallipoli
• He warned about the danger of Hitler in the 1930s but nobody paid attention to his warning
• Made Lord of the Admiralty again in 1939 when war broke out
• Became Prime Minister in 1940 after Chamberlain resigned
• An inspiration to the British people during the Blitz; a great orator
• Pressured Roosevelt to involve America in World War II, persuading him to support a strategy of defeating Germany before dealing with Japan
• Died in 1965

Activities
1. Which character would you turn to if you wanted legal advice? ________________________________
2. Which character could advise you how to write a catchy title for a news article? ________________________________
3. Which character would you turn to for information about military strategy to do with the Japanese? ________________________________
4. Which character would you turn to for information about military strategy in Europe? ________________________________
5. Which character would you leave out if you were organising a running race? ________________________________
6. Which two characters lived the longest? ________________________________
7. Match the following quotes to a character:
   • ‘I will return’ ________________________________
   • ‘We have nothing to fear but fear itself’ ________________________________
**Axis Character Profiles**

**HIDEKI TOJO**

**Fascist leader of Japan 1941–1944**

- Born in Tokyo, Japan in 1884
- A career soldier
- Promoted to general in 1933
- Extreme right wing political views, a supporter of Nazi Germany
- Appointed Minister for War in July 1941
- Advocated an aggressive foreign policy (invasion of other countries such as China)
- Became Prime Minister on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1941 (9 days after Curtin became Prime Minister)
- Ordered the attack on Pearl Harbour on 7<sup>th</sup> December 1941, which brought the Americans into World War II
- The Japanese war machine was extremely successful until the Battles of the Coral Sea and Midway Island turned the tide of war in the Allies’ favour
- Resigned in July 1944 when it was clear that Japan could not win the war
- Arrested in 1945 by the United States military
- Tried as a war criminal and executed in 1948

**BENITO MUSSOLINI (Il Duce, ‘the leader’)**

**Fascist leader of Italy 1922–1943**

- Born in Predappio, Italy in 1883
- Spent time in exile in Switzerland and Austria for his socialist views
- Served in World War I
- Gained power and notoriety as a revolutionary nationalist
- Formed the Fascist Party in 1922; took power in Italy that year; dissolved the parliament and set up a fascist dictatorship
- Easily identified by his short physique, bald head and military uniform
- Chose an aggressive foreign policy (invasion of other countries such as Abyssinia)
- In 1939 made the Pact of Steel with Nazi Germany
- Italy’s failures in the war led to his removal from office in 1943
- Captured by the Americans but escaped
- Recaptured and executed in 1945 by Italian partisans

http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/2WWtojo.htm

http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/2WWmussolini.htm
ADOLF HITLER (*Der Führer*, ‘the leader’)
Fascist leader of Germany 1933–1945

- Born in Braunau am Inn, Austria in 1889
- Served in the German Army in World War I; decorated with the Iron Cross
- Joined the German Workers’ Party in 1919, later renaming it the NAZI Party
- Made an unsuccessful attempt in 1923 to overthrow one of Germany’s provincial governments
- Spent time in prison where he wrote a book called *Mein Kampf* (‘My Struggle’), his blueprint for what he would do when he came to power
- Came to power legally in 1933 and then gradually created a fascist dictatorship
- The *Heil Hitler* (‘Hail Hitler’) salute replaced hand shaking as a greeting while Hitler was in power
- Re-armed Germany (which was forbidden after World War I) and began an aggressive foreign policy, invading other countries such as Poland, which caused World War II
- The German war machine had remarkable success until 1942, when the tide of war began to turn against Germany
- His government was responsible for the death of 6 million Jews during World War II
- Committed suicide just before the Allies captured Berlin in May 1945

http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/GERhitler.htm

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Activities

1. What word(s) is used to describe the type of government that existed in Germany, Italy and Japan during World War II?

2. Which character do you think would probably have the most knowledge of military strategy?

3. What was *Mein Kampf*?

4. If I said that *Der Führer* and *Il Duce* were coming to visit, who would I be talking about?

5. Which character had a very distinctive moustache?

6. Which character wore glasses like John Curtin?

7. If you met a friend in the street in Germany during the war, how would you greet him/her?

8. Which leader was tried as a war criminal after World War II?

9. Which leader was responsible for the deaths of millions of European Jews?

10. Which leader was executed by his own countrymen?