



## **VE Day - Fact Cards**

Victory in Europe Day, also known as VE Day, was first held on 8th May 1945.

Adolf Hitler was Germany's wartime leader and leader of the Nazi political party.

Karl Dönitz, a German naval officer, took over as Germany's leader at the beginning of May 1945.

In London, crowds of people formed outside Buckingham Palace, where King George VI, Queen Elizabeth and Prime Minister Winston Churchill appeared on the palace's balcony.

The first surrender documents were signed in Reims, France by German General Alfred Jodl and came into effect the next day.

Small groups of the German army still tried to carry on fighting even after the surrender was declared.

One of the final battles of the war in Europe was the Battle of Berlin. This took place between 20th April and 2nd May 1945. Eventually, German General Helmuth Weidling surrendered to the armed forces of the Soviet Union.

In the United States, President Harry Truman dedicated the war to the memory of his predecessor, Franklin D. Roosevelt. Roosevelt had been the president throughout most of the war.

Russia celebrates their version of VE Day (called Victory Day) on 9th May.

Soviet leader Joseph Stalin wanted his own surrender ceremony. German Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel signed an additional surrender document for Stalin in Berlin on 8th May 1945.

After the war had ended, food rationing went on in the UK until 1954 and clothes rationing until 1949.

In 1939, the British Army had just over one million soldiers. By the time the war was finished, over 3.5 million people had served.

The end of the war was bittersweet for those who had lost family members and friends in battle.

Even though the war had ended in Europe on VE Day, the war was not over for troops fighting in Southeast Asia and around the Pacific Ocean. Japan did not surrender until September 1945.