



The National Archives

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The National Archives delivers World War 2 online to young historians

Groundbreaking website allows teachers to use archival material to inspire students' love of history

In its 10th year, Learning Curve, The National Archives award-winning education web-site has launched World War II, a stimulating, innovative source-based, interactive site for Key Stage 3 & 4 History students and anyone with an interest in World War 2.

World War 2's structure demands that students work pro-actively as "historians". They must sift through evidence and conduct an investigative inquiry - a total break away from conventional passive, directed textbook study.

Andrew Payne, Head of Education and Outreach at The National Archives said:

"World War II is an exciting new resource of which we are extremely proud. Embracing state of the art technology and creating an opportunity to take The National Archives Collection, one of the most important in the world, to ever wider audiences, World War II will allow teachers to use archival material and inspire students' love of history."

Supporting the National Curriculum's requirements that history students use archives and museums as well as technology in their studies, World War II features the six theatres of war and within each a number of investigations featuring a range of sources from the National Archives that only a few scholars will have seen. For example one Eastern Europe investigation, "How serious was the situation on the Eastern Front in 1942?" features a personal and confidential telegram from Stalin to Churchill, never previously published online.

Tom Horrie a Key stage 3 History student said: " The investigations I did were fun and made it much easier to get the 'big picture' of the Second World War. It's a totally new way of studying history at school.

"I really enjoyed "Where are the Allies going to invade? which reveals the incredible story of "Operation Mincemeat" – the top secret Allied mission which aimed to mislead the Nazi High Command over the plans for the Allied invasion of Southern Europe. Incredibly the Nazis actually fell for it and moved massive numbers of troops to Greece, making it easier for the real attack on Sicily"

Ends

Learning Curve: World War II: For further information on structure and content please follow this link: <http://www.learningcurve.gov.uk/worldwar2/teachers/index.htm>

Home page: <http://www.learningcurve.gov.uk/worldwar2/default.htm>

<http://www.myspace.com/uknationalarchives>

Notes to Editors

Facts and figures

- Documents line 170km of shelving at The National Archives, with approximately 2km added every year
- In total, its repositories hold just over 10 million documents
- The National Archives' digitisation programme has seen the number of online downloads per year go from zero to 85 million in seven years.

- For every paper document delivered to researchers in our reading rooms 150 are delivered online

About The National Archives

- The National Archives is a UK government department and executive agency of the Ministry of Justice
- As the official archives of the UK government, it preserves and protects one the most important collections in the world, holding public records dating back almost 1,000 years
- Preserving important historical documents forms only a part of its innovative and wide-ranging work. It holds information, but more than this, actively promotes and encourages public access to that information, both onsite and online
- It manages current, as well as historical information, publishes all UK legislation and official publications and promotes and regulates the re-use of public sector information
- The National Archives formulates and supports information policy implementation and best practice, improving government's capability when securely creating, using and storing information. It devises new technological solutions for keeping government records readable
- It supports and acts as leading advocate for the wider archive sector

