

Upper 4 study complex factors and the outcomes of conflict



Upper 4 have progressed with their study of the Second World War and are now looking into specific battles and operations that influenced the outcome of the war. Thus far, they have studied the evacuation from Dunkirk, the Battle of Britain and have just begun to investigate the fighting for the city of Stalingrad in 1942-43. For each example, pupils have looked into the complex factors that led to victory or defeat for the Allies or Nazi Germany. They have shown their ability to identify causes that led to particular outcomes and to evaluate the relative significance of each factor. Upper 4 have shown great enthusiasm for the extraordinary accounts of these momentous events and many have expanded their historical vocabulary as a consequence.

Upper 4 are undertaking these studies for several reasons; firstly, it will enable them to explain and understand why the Allies achieved victory in Europe in 1945, despite the early defeats and setbacks. Secondly, the emphasis on causation and the ability to evaluate the impact of numerous causes will give pupils a 'head start' when they embark on their GCSE history course next year, as several GCSE exam questions are based on causation. Hopefully, these studies will familiarise the pupils with GCSE language and ease the transition into more complex history.

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