

Churchill Teacher's Notes **B1**

In this unit your students will learn about World War II from the British point of view, focusing on the prominent figure of Winston Churchill at the beginning of his career as Prime Minister. You may of course choose to work on this text in relation to the film *Darkest Hour* at the time of its release in France, but you can also choose to work with the history teacher when 3^{ème} are studying World War II later in the school year. Your choice of period and class will determine whether or not the pre-reading activities are necessary or clearly redundant.

In any case, working on the film trailer is a good follow up activity :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFFj2gS9UWs>,

as well as listening to parts of Churchill's speeches:

“Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat”

<https://www.winstonchurchill.org/resources/speeches/1940-the-finest-hour/blood-toil-tears-sweat>

“We Shall Fight on the Beaches”

<https://www.winstonchurchill.org/resources/speeches/1940-the-finest-hour/we-shall-never-surrender>.

■ The theme of this unit can be related to either ‘*Rencontres avec d'autres cultures: repères historiques*’ and ‘*Langages*’ in Cycle 4 or ‘*L'art du vivre ensemble: mémoire, héritage et rupture*’ in Seconde.

■ The level of this worksheet is B1, which implies that your students are learning to ‘extrapolate the meaning of occasional unknown words from the context’ and ‘paraphrase short written passages in a simple fashion’ (CEFRL). Therefore, the activities are meant to expand their vocabulary as well as to develop their general understanding.

Vocabulary and structures

- war-related vocabulary
- *whatever, however*
- superlative
- passive

Reading and speaking

■ We suggest starting with the odd-man-out activity **in groups** in order to get students to gradually engage in finding information by discussing the possibilities with their partners. After completing the pre-reading activities, move on to **Activity B**, unless you have decided to skip **Activity A** and start with this short introduction to Churchill's main function.

■ In **Activities C** and **D**, students will read about the historical background in order to be able to complete **Activity E**, which summarises what they have learnt so far.

■ As the text clearly emphasises the influence of Churchill's speeches on the British population, students practise oral presentations. In **Activity E**, they start by writing their presentation before reading it, whereas in **Activity H**, although they also

start by writing their dialogues, they finally speak from notes.

■ **Activities F and G** focus on Churchill's famous speeches at this period, and on emotions.

■ The aim of **Activity I** is to have students deliver a short speech extract in a convincing way, although the speech is not originally theirs. This will familiarise them with an important text in British culture and allow them to really focus on pronunciation and delivery, thereby showing their understanding of the text. As suggested above, listening to Churchill himself is recommended.

<https://www.winstonchurchill.org/resources/speeches/1940-the-finest-hour/we-shall-never-surrender> (from 11:10)

■ Finally, we suggest a 'learning your lesson' activity to help students choose what should be remembered and to check how much they know and what they should learn more carefully.

Answers.

A.1. a. Jack London **b.** Elvis Presley **c.** John Lennon **d.** Beyoncé

2.a. American presidents **b.** British actors **c.** British Prime Ministers **d.** American actors,

3. c

4.a. "Winston Churchill died in 1965".

b. simple past. **c.** Winston Churchill was a British Prime Minister.

B.1. Because he helped Britain and its Allies win World War Two.

2. He is standing outside Number 10 Downing Street. He is standing there because it is the Prime Minister's Residence and he is the Prime Minister.

C.

Date / period	Function	Action(s)
1895-1900	Military officer	?
1915-1917	First Lord of the Admiralty	Ordered the disastrous Gallipoli campaign. Left government. Served as an officer in France. Became Minister for Munitions.
10 May, 1940	Prime Minister	Accepts to lead the government
13 May, 1940	PM	Speech to Parliament
19 May, 1940	PM	BBC radio speech to the nation
After the Dunkirk evacuation	PM	Speech to Parliament

D.1. In 1939.

2. negotiate; terrible / desperate; stronger; killed; captured; invaded.

3.a. Britain couldn't be defended by its military.

b. Britain couldn't continue the war.

c. Churchill didn't have a military solution.

d. So Churchill decided to make every British person enthusiastic about the outcome of the war.

E. An example of what pupils could write:

Neville Chamberlain was Prime Minister. He wanted to negotiate with Hitler. He was replaced by Churchill who didn't want to negotiate. But the British Army was in a desperate state and Churchill had no military solution. He didn't want Britain to be invaded by the Germans. So he decided to motivate every British person in the war effort.

F.1.a. victory.

b. blood, toil, tears, sweat, at all costs, terror, long and hard, agony.

c. "Without victory there is no survival."

2. I think the second photo best carries Churchill's message, because he is making the V for Victory sign.

G.1.a. enthusiastic; doubtful

b. Because everyone thought victory was impossible.

c. "the ship is sinking"

2. He looks doubtful / unsure and she looks convinced / encouraging.

H. Examples.

Prime Minister: Minister for Munitions before, no negotiation with Hitler, after Chamberlain.

Dunkirk: Western Front, Northern France, desperate situation, German Army stronger than Allies, inevitable invasion.

Doubts: not sure he could change the situation, knew why he was PM, knew he had no military solution.

Courage: honest, delivered enthusiastic speeches, wanted to encourage the British people and the military.

Fighting: never surrender even if a lot of people die

-Your husband is now PM. Do you think he will help Britain?

-Well, my husband is very courageous, and

he has experience. He was Minister for Munitions before.

-Yes, but the situation is desperate, isn't it? On the Western Front in Dunkirk the German Army is stronger than the Allies.

-You're right, and Britain could be invaded. Winston knows he has no military solution. But he doesn't want to negotiate with Hitler. Even if he has doubts and fears, he wants to encourage the British population and the military by delivering enthusiastic speeches. He thinks we should never surrender and I'm convinced we will finally win.

I.1.a. "Whatever the cost may be."

b. fight.

c. shall.

d. Conviction. Enthusiasm.

2. /ɪ/: hills, beaches

/ə ɪ/: fight, island

/i:/: beach, fields, streets.

Remember What You Learned

1. **People:** the military, the civilians, the Allies, an officer, soldiers.

Actions: fight, serve (as), negotiate, surrender, win, defend, invade, evacuate, kill, capture.

Events: campaign, battle, victory, evacuation, negotiation, invasion.

2.a. is remembered b. was offered c. were being pushed back d. were evacuated.

3. energetic, honest, courageous, enthusiastic, doubtful, realistic, encouraging, inspiring.