

# peace pledge union

## VE (Victory in Europe) Day Information for Primary Schools

The announcement of the end of the war in Europe in May 1945 was a huge relief for people who had endured six years of war. Many people in Britain held parties and joined VE Day celebrations. Others did not. Did you know:

- Fighting continued in parts of Europe and in the Pacific.
- Many people were still mourning the loss of family and friends who had died during the war and chose not to join street parties.
- Throughout Europe between 35-50 million civilians died during WW2.
- People were living in very difficult conditions. Clothes and food continued to be rationed in Britain until 1954. In the Netherlands people had to eat tulip bulbs as there was a shortage of food.
- Lots of military forces were still in combat, or were prisoners of war. For the families of these people it was difficult to join celebrations when their loved ones were still at risk and away from home.
- Many children that had been evacuated from cities were still away from their families.
- There were also Conscientious Objectors and war resisters throughout the world who remained in prison or were away from their homes and families doing 'non-combatant' work.
- Large parts of northern France and Germany had been bombed by Allied forces. As a result, millions of people were homeless and had to rebuild their cities and towns.
- Soldiers were posted to the Pacific and Far East after VE Day, so the war was still not over for them and their families.

The Second World War did not officially end until August 1945, three months after VE Day, when atomic bombs were dropped on the cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima in Japan.