



75th Anniversary of VE Day Commemorated

What was the Second World War?

- The Second World War was a global conflict that lasted from 1939-1945.
- It was the largest war in history and cost the lives of between 40 to 60 million people.

The Royal Mint has created commemorative coins to mark VE Day this year. This is because today is the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe.

The special £2 coins have the word 'victory' above the heads of a celebrating crowd. Rays from searchlights spill out from behind the crowd. These represent "rays of hope on the evening of VE Day," according to the coin's designer, Dominique Evans.

The coins can be bought from the Royal Mint; prices for the coins range from £10 up to £1055. A donation from each sale will go to support the Imperial War Museum.

Stephen Walton, a senior curator at the museum, said that there were many challenges after VE Day in 1945. He went on to say people believed that "out of an unprecedented global catastrophe, a better human society should emerge".

At 11 a.m. this morning, there will be a two-minute silence to commemorate VE Day. At 9 p.m. this evening, The Queen will address the nation. This is the exact time that her father, George VI, gave a speech on VE Day, 75 years ago.

What is VE Day?

Although the Second World War continued elsewhere, the battles that took place in Europe



Photo: VE Day celebrations in 1945.

came to an end on 7th May 1945 when Germany surrendered.

The following day, at 3 p.m., the UK prime minister, Winston Churchill, made an announcement on the radio. He let people know that the war in Europe had ended.

Upon hearing the news, people held big parties to celebrate. Even Princess Elizabeth (who later became our Queen) secretly left Buckingham Palace to celebrate with people on the street.

However, it was also a day of great sadness as people remembered those who had died.

Glossary

searchlights A powerful outdoor electric light for spotting aeroplanes in the sky at night.

curator Someone who collects together and looks after items in a museum.

unprecedented Never done or known before.

commemorate Remember and show respect for something.

Photo sourced: [City of Toronto Archives Fonds 1266, Item 96241](#)

Questions

1. Who was the UK prime minister on 8th May 1945?

2. Why will the Queen's speech be at 9 p.m.?

3. 'This is because today is the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe.'

Which of the following definitions is closest in meaning to the word 'anniversary' in this sentence? Tick one.

- The date on which a couple was married.
- A date which is remembered because a special event happened on it.
- Happening every other year.
- A party or a celebration.

4. Use the numbers 1-4 to order these events in the order in which they happened. One has been done for you.

Winston Churchill makes an announcement on the radio letting people know that the war in Europe had ended.	
Germany surrenders.	1
King George VI addresses the nation.	
The Royal Mint produces a commemorative coin to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day.	

5. Tick which of the following statements are true and which are false.

	True	False
The cheapest commemorative coin costs £10.		
The most expensive commemorative coin costs £1550.		
As a princess, The Queen celebrated VE Day in 1945.		

6. Summarise the story in 15 words or fewer.

Answers

1. Who was the UK prime minister on 8th May 1945?

Winston Churchill

2. Why will the Queen's speech be at 9 p.m.?

Accept any reasonable answer which references it being the same time that her father spoke 75 years ago, e.g. This is the exact time that her father, George VI, gave a speech on VE Day, 75 years ago.

3. 'This is because today is the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe.'

Which of the following definitions is closest in meaning to the word 'anniversary' in this sentence? Tick one.

- The date on which a couple was married.
- A date which is remembered because a special event happened on it.**
- Happening every other year.
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4. Use the numbers 1-4 to order these events in the order in which they happened. One has been done for you.

Winston Churchill makes an announcement on the radio letting people know that the war in Europe had ended.	2
Germany surrenders.	1
King George VI addresses the nation.	3
The Royal Mint produces a commemorative coin to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day.	4

5. Tick which of the following statements are true and which are false.

	True	False
The cheapest commemorative coin costs £10.	✓	
The most expensive commemorative coin costs £1550.		✓
As a princess, The Queen celebrated VE Day in 1945.	✓	

6. Summarise the story in 15 words or fewer.

Accept any reasonable answer which references the production of a new coin to remember VE Day. e.g. £2 coins are being minted for the 75th anniversary of VE Day.