

Discussion Questions

September 3, 1939: FDR gives a fireside chat

- 1) Why was it so important for FDR to emphasize to the American people that the United States would remain out of the war for as long as possible?
- 2) Why did Britain, led by Winston Churchill, join the war while America did not?
- 3) What other “fireside chats” did FDR give during his time as president? What topics did he address?

BONUS! Listen to FDR’s fireside chat on September 3, 1939, entitled “On the European War,” and read the transcript here: <http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3315>

September 2, 1940: Destroyers for Bases Agreement

- 1) Why was this agreement necessary?
- 2) The 1940 presidential election was approaching when FDR signed this agreement. Do you think this had any effect on his decision to go through with it? Why or why not?

November 5, 1940: FDR elected president

- 1) How long did FDR serve as president? How long did Winston Churchill serve as prime minister?
- 2) What is the maximum number of terms a US president can serve today? When was this limit set and why?
- 3) In the US, the president is elected to office by the people. What is the process of electing a prime minister in Britain?

March 11, 1941: Lend-Lease Bill

- 1) What were the terms and conditions of this bill? What was so controversial about it? Did the majority of Americans support this bill?
- 2) The signing of the Lend-Lease Bill and the issuing of the Atlantic Charter by Churchill and FDR occurred within months of each other. Do you think these were signs that the US would soon be joining the war?

February 19, 1942: Executive Order 9066

- 1) Americans of what other ancestries were affected by this order?
- 2) Do you think this was fair of the American government to do?
- 3) What led to the distrust of Japanese Americans? Was this distrust justified?

June 20, 1943: Detroit Race Riots

- 1) The population in Detroit grew very quickly once World War II began. Why were so many people, both blacks and whites, eager to move there?
- 2) What do you think Churchill meant when he said “We three must remain friends in order to ensure happy homes in all countries”? Do you agree?

June 22, 1944: G.I. Bill

- 1) What did FDR hope to achieve from signing the G.I. Bill?
- 2) Throughout the war FDR was concerned with the adjustment of American soldiers back to civilian life, but he signed the G.I. Bill when the war was nearly finished—after he, Churchill, and Stalin had planned and executed Operation Neptune. Do you think the timing was a coincidence?

June 26 and October 24, 1945: United Nations Charter

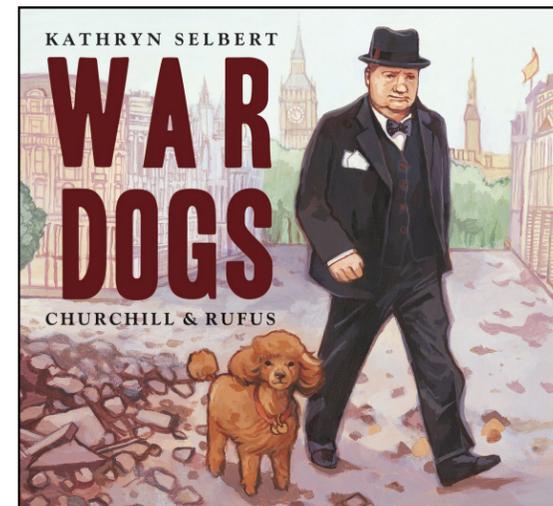
- 1) Why did the League of Nations fail? Why did America refuse to join?
- 2) What does the term “ratification” mean?
- 3) What are some of the main objectives of the United Nations?
- 4) How many members are there in the United Nations today?

WAR DOGS

CHURCHILL & RUFUS

A Timeline and Discussion Guide

Developed by Charlesbridge



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It’s 1940 and Great Britain is at war with Germany and the Axis powers. Prime Minister Winston Churchill must lead his country through the Second World War. By his side is his faithful miniature poodle, Rufus.

Readers follow Churchill and Rufus’s friendship through the bombings of London, the invasion of Normandy, and post-war reconstruction. Quotations from Churchill appear as secondary text and underscore the prime minister’s trademark eloquence and forceful personality.

Backmatter includes a timeline of World War II, an author’s note about Churchill’s pets, as well as a short biography, quote sources, and a list of recommended resources for further study.

War Dogs is a great introduction to World War II from the British perspective. But while the war was raging in Europe, what was happening in the United States? How was Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR), the US president at the time, governing his people?

After reading *War Dogs*, take a look at the timeline inside this guide. Then compare it to the timeline from the book. How did each event affect the events that came after? How much did the events in Europe affect what was going on in the US, even before the US joined the war?

For specific areas to study, take a look at the discussion questions on the back page of this guide. Many of the events featured on the timeline have questions to prompt further study.



Timeline of World War II

The events on the bottom half of this timeline are important events in United States history, leading up to, during, and after the war. The events on the top half occurred on a global level—some you may have seen in *War Dogs*.

