

Victory in Europe

2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe. May 8, 1945 came to be known as V-E Day (Victory in Europe) and it was celebrated widely in Canada and remembered by Canadian war veterans. At home, there were dramatic celebrations in the streets (including riots in Halifax), parties, and dances as Canadians were ecstatic that the war with Germany was over.

Note: You may want students to use headphones if they are doing these activities independently. Alternatively, simply play the brief clips from war veterans through a pair of speakers.



Learning Outcomes:

1. To learn about the experiences of soldiers during the war and their remembrances of V-E Day
2. To use critical thinking skills in discussing V-E Day

Say Something: A Learning Activity

With a partner, students can listen to a story of a war veteran from the Stories of the Second World War. Suggested stories include the following:

[Norman Wigglesworth](#)

[Louis Curran](#)

[Rex Fendick](#)

[Robert Lundmark](#)

Students can also use the search function to find other stories.



How the activity works

Students listen to a veteran's story in three segments (students can decide with each other when to pause). After each pause, they share with their partner a reaction to what they have listened to. This may be a simple summary of what they heard or a comment or reaction to the story.

After they've listened to the entire clip, students share the story highlights with the rest of the class.

Questions

Ask students to answer the following questions after listening to the veterans' clips. Questions can be answered as part of group discussion activity or written individually by students.

1. How was V-E Day remembered by Canadian war veterans? Give some examples of the types of things the veterans saw or heard about.
2. What do you think of Louis Curran's comments, when he says: "I often think, well, is there no other way to solve these disputes? Is this the only way I can make a dollar fifty a day? Don't get me wrong. I think you have to defend the things that are right and just in society and they have to be done, but is there no other way to do it?"
3. What experiences of the veterans did you find the most interesting or moving?
4. To what extent do you think the Second World War changed Canada?

Further Resources

Conduct research from the resources below to find out more about V-E Day. What was the atmosphere like in cities across Canada and in Europe?

[V-E Day](#) (the Canadian Encyclopedia)

[The Canadian War Museum](#)

[CBC News](#)