

Plan a VE Day Party





Learning Objective

- To plan a VE day party using the rationed items available to people in Britain in May 1945.

Success Criteria

- To analyse the significance of VE day for Britain.
- To explain why there was a need for rationing in wartime Britain.
- To produce a street party using only the rationed items and home grown food that were available for people in wartime Britain.

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Imagine you have a plan a party tomorrow.

- What decorations would you have?
- What music would you play?
- What food would you serve?
- Would you have a cake?



What Was VE Day?

The Second World War ended on **8th May, 1945** in Europe when the German Army signed the **armistice**, surrendering to the allies. Britain had fought for **six** long years and **suffered** tremendously due to enemy bombing, rationing, loss of soldiers and the effects of the second total war.



When the war was over, the people of Britain were **overjoyed**. They gathered at Buckingham Palace to see the King and listened to his speech around the wireless in their homes.



Street parties were held, as were all-night **celebrations**. Even Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret went out into town to party! Even though the war continued in the East against Japan, it was certain to be over soon.

What Things Were Rationed and Why?

Before the war broke out in 1939, Britain imported over 55 million tonnes of food, but this was all legal and the Germans were surprised at how easy it was to do. The British navy tried to sink German merchant ships steaming into Britain carrying food, resources and weapons as possible.

People were encouraged to grow their own food in whatever land they could. There was 'free' food to feed British families so that no one would starve as the country couldn't produce enough food to feed the army and the armed forces. Food had to be rationed.



Everyone received a ration card for food or clothing. Even if you had money, you were still given rations to make sure everyone got the food they needed.

Design a VE Day Party

You need to **plan a VE Day party** for your street.

Remember that most items are **rationed** and so you will be able to produce more if you pool your ration books together. Remember that, although you really want to celebrate the end of the war, you also have to **eat for the rest of the week** – don't use up all your rations on your menu!

- Go through the rationed and non-rationed food.
- Plan your menu using rationed food and other available items.
- Plan your decorations using what you can spare at home (e.g. bedsheets, paper, flowers, ribbons and paints).
- Decide if you will do any special preparations to dress up for the party or invite any special guests.

A Typical Week's Rations

Food (per person per week)

4oz bacon or ham
 8oz sugar
 2oz tea
 1s2d meat (about 6p today)
 2oz cheese
 1lb jam
 2oz butter
 4oz margarine
 2oz lard
 1 egg
 3 pints milk
 1 can tinned fruit
 1 box dried egg per 8 weeks



Clothes (48 points a year)

Coat= 18
 Suit= 26-29
 Men's shoes= 9
 Women's shoes= 7
 Dress= 11
 Skirt= 7
 Pyjamas= 8
 Socks= 1
 Gloves= 2
 Scarf= 2
 Trousers= 8
 Shorts= 5

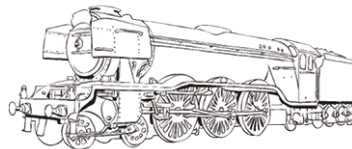
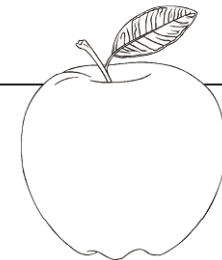
Toiletries

1 bar of soap
 Very limited paper
 1 box of washing powder
 a month
 5 inches of bath water a week
 1 gas ring to cook dinner
 1 toilet roll per family,
 per week
 Gravy to paint on tights



Available and non-rationed food

Apples
 Home grown fruit and
 vegetables
 Potatoes
 Fish (expensive)
 Snoek (South African fish)
 Whale meat
 Brown bread
 Pigeon
 Rabbit
 Spam



Petrol

Only war business.
 Only essential journeys encouraged by train.

What Makes a Good VE Day Party?

Based on the information you have discovered about rationing, work with your partner to think of 3 success criteria for your party planning activity.

For example:

- You must have enough food left after your party for 8 meals for one person.

What else should you consider? Be ready to discuss with the class.

8th May, 1945 VE Day



Special Guests

Food

Special Preparations

Decorations

Use your VE Day party planning sheet to create your party plan.



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Why Was VE Day So Significant to People in 1945?

Put yourself in the shoes of someone living in Britain in 1945:

- Why did VE Day mean so much to people?
- Why did they celebrate so much?
- Would it have been a day of mixed emotions for people who had lost someone in the war?
- What if they knew someone who was still fighting in the Far East?

Either

Think of an answer to some of these questions and be prepared to share.

Or

Write the first 2-3 sentences of a diary entry from the perspective of someone in Britain on VE Day 1945.



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