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TEMA

57

The United Kingdom in the Interwar Period and during the Second World War. Representative Literary Authors

El Reino Unido en el periodo de entreguerras y durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial. Autores literarios representativos.

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Material de elaboración propia a partir de las fuentes oficiales que se citan al final del tema. No es un temario oficial ni sustituye a la normativa publicada.

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1. INTRODUCTION

On 20 August 1940, with the Battle of Britain still undecided, Winston Churchill told the House of Commons: "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few." The sentence is a good way into this topic for two reasons. It shows how a nation under pressure turned to words as well as to weapons, and it reminds us that in the years between 1918 and 1945 politics and literature were never far apart. The United Kingdom lived through economic collapse, social conflict, a constitutional crisis and a war for survival, and its writers answered each of those events with new forms.

This topic covers the interwar period and the Second World War, so selection is essential. I will first examine the political, social and economic history of the United Kingdom in the 1920s and the 1930s, including the General Strike, the Depression and the Abdication. Secondly, I will turn to the road to war, from appeasement to the declaration of war in 1939. Thirdly, I will study the Second World War on the British home front and the planning of the post-war settlement. Fourthly, I will offer an overview of the representative literary authors of the period, from the modernists of the 1920s to the committed writers of the 1930s and the writers of the war years. Finally, I will consider the pedagogical and didactic implications of this content in the Secondary classroom.

Before moving on, I would like to mention the sources consulted. For history I have used A. J. P. Taylor's English History 1914–1945, in the Oxford History of England, and Peter Clarke's Hope and Glory: Britain 1900–2000. For literature I have relied on Andrew Sanders's The Short Oxford History of English Literature, Ronald Carter and John McRae's The Routledge History of Literature in English: Britain and Ireland and Alexandra Harris's Romantic Moderns. I have also checked dates and facts in institutional sources such as the UK Parliament, the National Archives, the Imperial War Museums and the Poetry Foundation. As for the legal framework, I will refer to the Ley Orgánica 3/2020 (LOMLOE), the Real Decreto 217/2022 for ESO, the Real Decreto 243/2022 for Bachillerato and the corresponding Extremaduran decrees.