



BELIEVE IN ME  
CIC



This activity pack is designed to focus on women in the Second World War. This particular pack focuses on the contribution of Noor Inayat Khan as a Special Operations Executive during the Second World War. This activity pack can be stand alone or used in conjunction with the activity pack available on the website. This pack is designed for younger people, aged 7-11.

The pack includes:

- A lesson
- Resource pack to support the lesson, including an information board and timeline.
- Design activity.

The session begins with an explanation of what the SOE was. There is an opportunity to ask questions to young people such as why was this role so important to the war effort? Why would a woman be good at this role?

Slide 4 introduces Noor Inayat Khan and gives a brief outline of her life. This could provide discussions about how Noor as an Indian-American would have lived, how she would have felt about the war and how her upbringing could have affected her decision to join the SOE.

Slide 5 focuses on the aspect that Noor was a children's author and allows young people to discuss their favourite stories and reflect on their importance.

Slide 6 provides the opportunity for young people to use the information board to complete a timeline on Noor's life and answer the questions, creating a debate.

Slide 7 asks the question why Noor is so important to remember? This can be completed as a discussion between young people or as a written task.

Slide 8 provides the opportunity for young people to complete two questions about why Noor is so important and why she should be remembered. There is the opportunity for young people to be creative and design a memorial to remember the work of SOEs and Noor Khan during Second World War.



**Noor Inayat Khan**  
**SOE Agent**

# What is the SOE?

- The Special Operations Executive was created in 1940 as a military secret organisation.
- Its purpose was to organise and carry out espionage, sabotage, and reconnaissance in occupied Europe – essentially it was a spying organisation that worked with local resistance groups to make things difficult for the Nazis.

FINISHING REPORT.

S.T.S. No: 36 Party No: W.X.12.  
School No: 27X.16.

NAME BY WHICH KNOWN. INAYAT KHAN.

GRADE: -

Particulars of Finishing Training given:  
REPORT: 10 days' W/X Course.

*we don't want them overburdened with brain*

Not over-burdened with brains but has worked hard and shown keenness, apart from some dislike of the security side of the course. She has an unstable and temperamental personality and it is very doubtful whether she is really suited to work in the field.

CODES. Was given revision in Innocent Letter conventions, writing of practice letters, practice in wording messages, revision of Double Transposition and envelope opening. More routine practice is required.

*Makes me cross*

Date: 21.5.43. *F.*

*A. H. R. R. R.*  
Major,  
for Commandant, B. Group S.T.S.

# Who is Noor?



- Noor Inayat Khan was born on New Year's Day 1914 in Moscow to an Indian father and an American mother.
- Khan's father was a musician and Sufi teacher, who had travelled widely and was well known.
- Noor's family moved first to London, where Noor attended school, before going to Paris.
- Noor was the eldest of four children and they all grew up speaking multiple languages, including being perfect in English and French.
- Noor was a writer of children's stories in France – she loved to help young minds develop and learn.
- The family were living in Paris when the Second World War started and decided to go to Britain in June 1940 as they knew they would not be safe living under the Nazis. The family settled in Bloomsbury, London.
- In November 1942, Noor was recruited to be an SOE.

**Noor was a children's author and loved to tell stories.**

**What is your favourite story? Why?**



# Activity - Timeline

**Task 1:** Using the story you have been given, complete the timeline on Noor's life.

**Task 2:** Did anything surprise you about her life? Why?

**Task 3:** Do you think you would be able to do this role? Why?

The image shows a worksheet titled "The story of Noor Khan" at the top. The main body of the worksheet is a large rectangle divided into two vertical columns by a single vertical line, intended for students to write a timeline of Noor's life.

**Why should we  
remember  
Noor?**

# Task: Complete the worksheet on Noor Khan and SOEs in the Second World War.

## Noor Inayat Khan and SOEs in Second World War

Why do you think Noor Inayat Khan is important? Explain your answer. You can use your research and the Internet for help.

Why should we remember Noor Inayat Khan and the work of the SOEs?

Design a memorial to remember the work of Noor Inayat Khan and the SOEs during Second World War. Think about where your memorial will be, what would be included and why you have included it. Label your memorial with additional information.



# The story of Noor Khan



# NOOR INAYAT KHAN

Noor Inayat Khan worked as a spy for Britain during Second World War, was sent to France as a secret agent and then was killed in the most horrific way possible. Noor had lived a life many could not imagine, broken engagement, a secret agent, children's author – here we explore her life and contribution.



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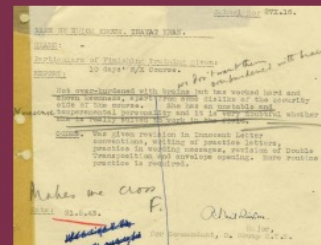
Noor Inayat Khan was born in Moscow on 1st January 1914 to an American mother, Ora Barker, and an Indian Muslim father, Inayat Khan. Noor's father was a Sufi teacher and a musician, also a descendant of Tipu Sultan who ruled the Kingdom of Mysore in south India. Noor and her siblings would often write poetry (Noor's mother was a poet) and play music. Noor had studied child psychology and becoming an established children's author, writing many children's stories both in French and English. Noor had a children's book published called 'Jataka Tales' and her stories were also broadcasted on Children's Hour of Paris. With outbreak the of the Second World War all that changed on 5th June 1940 when the family left France and settled in London.



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© Courtesy of Shriyani Rana



© The National Archives

Noor and her family were pacifists so her decision to join the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) was surprising. Whilst Noor joined the WAAF as a radio operator, her brother, Vilayat, joined the Royal Air Force. Noor was asked to attend an interview that would change her life as she was being asked to join the Special Operations Executive (SOE). The SOE was created in 1940 as a secret military organisation with the purpose to organise and carry out espionage, sabotage and reconnaissance in occupied Europe. It was also the first military organisation in the UK to actively recruit women. Noor was selected as she could speak fluent English and French.

Training was hard physically and mentally. Some of those training Noor seemed overly critical of her- one even stating that she was not very clever, despite speaking several languages. Noor was trained as a wireless operator and the first female to be flown into France on 16-17th June 1943 she was given the codename 'Madeleine'.

Noor became part of a resistance group and the only SOE operator in Paris. She was nearly caught a few times and when the mission became too dangerous and asked to return back to London. Noor refused the order and went on to send several messages. In October 1943 was arrested by the Nazi's, betrayed by an acquaintance, and on 13th September 1944 was executed at Dachau. Her last words were 'Liberte'.



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Design a memorial to remember the work of Noor Inayat Khan and the SOEs during Second World War. Think about where your memorial will be, what would be included and why you have included it. Label your memorial with additional information.