Name _____

Alan Turing, Code Breaker

In 1939, Britain was at war against Germany. The German army was using a machine called the Enigma. The Enigma put messages into secret code. The German army could then send secret messages. They could plan secret attacks.

The British knew about the secret messages. They even knew how to listen to some of these messages. But they couldn't understand what the messages said.

The British had to crack the code.

This was Alan Turing's job. Alan Turing studied math. He was born in London in 1912. By 1939, he'd worked on many important projects. He studied how to make machines smarter. He helped invent an early computer.

But cracking the Enigma code would be very hard, even for him. The German army changed their code every day. If you figured out the code one day, you had to start over the next.

Alan Turing and his team invented a machine. Their machine worked like the Enigma. Every day, it helped find the key to the code. With that key, the British could read the secret messages. By 1943, the British could read thousands of secret messages each month.

And Alan Turing and his team didn't stop there. For the rest of the war, he kept working on cracking codes. His work saved lives, and helped end the war.