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## The Blitz

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### ❶ George Orwell's diary, 10 September 1940.

Can't write much of the insanities of the last few days. It is not so much that the bombing is worrying in itself as that the disorganization of traffic, frequent difficulty of telephoning, shutting of shops whenever there is a raid on etc. etc., combined with the necessity of getting on with one's ordinary work, wear one out and turn life into a constant scramble to catch up lost time [...]

The delayed-action bombs are a great nuisance, but they appear to be successful in locating most of them and getting all the neighbouring people out until the bomb shall have exploded. All over South London, little groups of disconsolate-looking people wandering about with suitcases and bundles, either people who have been rendered homeless or, in more cases, who have been turned out by the authorities because of an unexploded bomb. [...]

Most of last night in the public shelter, having been driven there by recurrent whistle and crash of bombs not very far away at intervals of about a quarter of an hour. Frightful discomfort owing to over-crowding, though the place was well-appointed, with electric light and fans. People, mostly elderly working class, grouching bitterly about the hardness of the seats and the longness of the night, but no defeatist talk.

### ❷ Refreshments in an air raid shelter. Volunteers prepare to distribute tea to people taking shelter in North London (1940). Photo: IWM.



> Using the documents and your knowledge, describe the living conditions of the Britons during the Blitz.