

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# World War II Vocabulary

*The following terms are important in the study of World War II. Use your textbook and other sources to match the terms to their definitions.*

- |                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1. _____ Allies           | a. a plane used to drop bombs                               |
| 2. _____ Axis             | b. someone wounded or killed in the war                     |
| 3. _____ troops           | c. Franklin Roosevelt, Joseph Stalin, and Winston Churchill |
| 4. _____ aircraft carrier | d. a member of the German National Socialist Party          |
| 5. _____ dictator         | e. several ships traveling together                         |
| 6. _____ casualty         | f. a detection system used to locate aircraft               |
| 7. _____ radar            | g. quick and unexpected warfare                             |
| 8. _____ sonar            | h. a Japanese suicide pilot                                 |
| 9. _____ convoy           | i. Germany, Italy, Japan                                    |
| 10. _____ Nazi            | j. Germany's extermination of Jews, Slavs, and others       |
| 11. _____ bomber          | k. American pilots who volunteered to fight for China       |
| 12. _____ Luftwaffe       | l. a ruler with absolute power                              |
| 13. _____ blitzkrieg      | m. special radar that works underwater                      |
| 14. _____ R.A.F.          | n. soldiers   |
| 15. _____ kamikaze        | o. a ship airplanes can land on and take off from           |
| 16. _____ The Big Three   | p. Great Britain, Soviet Union, United States               |
| 17. _____ Flying Tigers   | q. the German air force                                     |
| 18. _____ Holocaust       | r. Britain's Royal Air Force                                |

# The Background of World War II

In many ways World War II was an outgrowth of the peace settlement following World War I. Although World War II officially began on September 1, 1939, with Germany's attack on Poland, the seeds of the conflict were planted with the world's treatment of Germany at the conclusion of World War I.



In 1919, Germany was in a state of upheaval. Many Germans were angry that their government was forced to sign the Treaty of Versailles. They believed the treaty was too harsh. The treaty said Germany had to pay \$33 billion in war damages and give up much of its territory. Germany was not allowed to have an air force. The German navy was reduced in size and the army limited to 100,000 troops. There was also a provision that made Germany accept total responsibility for starting World War I. Critics of the treaty felt that other nations were equally to blame in bringing about the conflict.

Germany faced other problems as well. The unemployment rate was high, and people were hungry. Inflation, strikes, and riots kept the nation from recovering from the war. The people were desperate for a strong leader. Such conditions aided Adolf Hitler in his rise to power in 1933. Similar conditions had made it possible for Benito Mussolini to seize control of Italy in 1932 and for the Japanese army to establish a military dictatorship in Japan in 1931. Such dictatorships helped create the atmosphere of aggression that led to the second world war.

1. List some of the Treaty of Versailles provisions that angered the Germans.

---

---

---

---

2. Do you believe Germany's punishment following World War I was too harsh? Support your opinion. \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

3. What punishment, if any, do you think should be dealt to countries who start wars?

---

---

# The Rise of Fascist Dictatorships

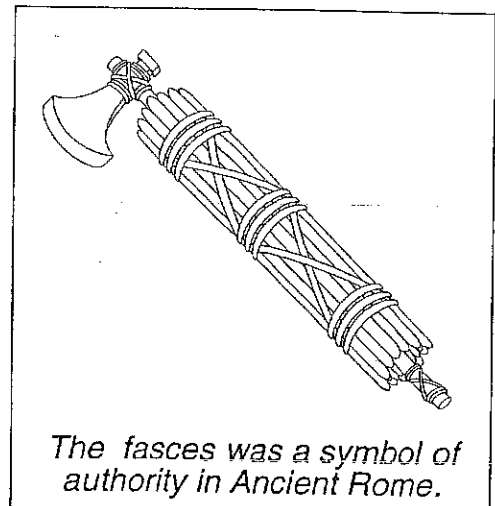
Between 1922 and 1933, fascist dictatorships took over the governments of Italy, Japan, and Germany. Fascism is a type of government in which power is in the hands of a military leader, and individuals' rights are subordinate to the authority of the state. The fasces was a symbol of authority in Ancient Rome. It consisted of an ax protruding from a bundle of rods or sticks tied together. Servants carrying these bundles in Ancient Rome would clear the way for government officials. The word *fascism* comes from this symbol.

Benito Mussolini was the first fascist dictator. He wanted to restore Italy to the glory days of the Roman Empire. Adolf Hitler, whose fascist party was called the National Socialist Party, or the Nazis, sought more territory in Europe for Germany. Japan's military leaders wanted to control all of Asia. The territorial ambitions of these dictators led directly to World War II.

*Fill in the blanks in the sentences below to complete the puzzle about Fascism.*

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ was a symbol of authority in Ancient Rome.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ was the first country to fall under a fascist dictator.
3. Benito \_\_\_\_\_ was the fascist dictator of Italy.
4. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a leader with complete power.
5. Adolf \_\_\_\_\_ was the leader of Nazi Germany.
6. Japan wanted to control \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Italy was once the center of the \_\_\_\_\_ Empire.

1.           **F** \_\_\_\_\_
2.       \_\_\_ **A** \_\_\_
3.       \_\_\_ **S** \_\_\_\_\_
4.       \_\_\_ **C** \_\_\_\_\_
5.       \_\_\_ **I** \_\_\_\_\_
6.       \_\_\_ **S** \_\_\_\_\_
7.       \_\_\_ **M** \_\_\_\_\_



## Lightning War

On August 23, 1939, Adolf Hitler of Germany and Joseph Stalin of the Soviet Union secretly agreed to attack Poland and divide it between them. They also agreed not to go to war against each other. At dawn on September 1, 1939, Nazi Germany unexpectedly attacked Poland, setting off World War II.

With the invasion, Adolf Hitler introduced a new kind of warfare. It was called *blitzkrieg*. *Blitzkrieg* is a German word that means "lightning war." These attacks are so quick they take the enemy by surprise. Swift German dive bombers called *stukas* led the way, weakening the outmanned Polish army for German tanks and troops to move in. At the same time these bombers destroyed the small Polish air force before it could even take to the air. The fight lasted only 17 days. Polish troops on horseback were no match for German tanks and planes. On the day the Germans were victorious in the west, the Soviet Union invaded Poland from the east.

*Match the words to the right with the phrases on the left.*

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| 1. _____ dictator of the Soviet Union                | A. Stalin     |
| 2. _____ German dive bomber                          | B. stuka      |
| 3. _____ country divided by Germany and the U.S.S.R. | C. Hitler     |
| 4. _____ lightning war                               | D. blitzkrieg |
| 5. _____ dictator of Nazi Germany                    | E. Poland     |
6. By making an agreement to give the eastern half of Poland to the Soviet Union, Hitler was able to attack Poland without fear that the Soviet Union would declare war on Germany. Suppose Joseph Stalin had refused to make an agreement with Adolf Hitler in 1939. Do you think Hitler would have invaded Poland anyway? Support your opinion.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## The Phony War

A few days after the German invasion of Poland, France and Britain declared war on Germany. Except for a few naval battles between British and German ships, however, there was no actual fighting in Europe throughout the fall and winter of 1939-40. Journalists nicknamed this period of inactivity the "Phony War."

While the Germans planned their next move, the British and French troops sat confidently behind the Maginot Line. The Maginot Line was a string of concrete and steel fortifications stretching for 125 miles along the France/Germany border, from Belgium to Switzerland. It was constructed after World War I to protect France's eastern border from German attacks. The French mistakenly thought it would keep the Germans out.

Deep below the forts of the Maginot Line lay an underground world of bunkers and storage compartments. Here the troops lived in reasonably comfortable quarters. There was a large movie theater and a gymnasium for the soldiers' use. There was also a hospital.

*Circle the letter of each correct answer.*

1. France built the Maginot Line to defend itself against an attack from
  - a. the Soviet Union
  - b. Belgium
  - c. Germany
2. The Maginot Line extended southward from Belgium to
  - a. Switzerland
  - b. Italy
  - c. Austria
3. The Phony War referred to
  - a. a war of words between France and Germany
  - b. an argument between Germany and the Soviet Union
  - c. a period of little or no fighting during the fall and winter of 1939-1940
4. Which of the following statements is true?
  - a. France built the Maginot line to protect itself during World War I.
  - b. The soldiers behind the Maginot Line had very uncomfortable quarters.
  - c. While French and British soldiers sat behind the Maginot Line, Germany was planning its next move.
5. One kilometer equals .62 miles. What was the length of the Maginot Line in kilometers?
  - a. 202 km
  - b. 102 km
  - c. 77.5 km

## The Miracle of Dunkerque

The Phony War ended abruptly in April of 1940. Needing ports from which to launch an attack against Great Britain and fearing that shipments of iron ore from Sweden to Germany through the port of Narvik in Norway would be cut off, the Germans invaded and easily conquered Norway and Denmark. Then Germany turned its attention to France. The French felt that the Maginot Line could withstand a German assault, but the Germans never attacked the huge fortification from the front. They simply went north around it through the forests of Belgium and Luxembourg and captured it from the rear. It fell in June of 1940. Soon Belgium surrendered, trapping more than 370,000 British, French, and Belgian troops at the small French port of Dunkerque.

What followed became known as the "Miracle of Dunkerque." From May 30 to June 4, 1940, the British government rescued about 338,000 soldiers from the Dunkerque beach. Every imaginable type of ship and boat was used to ferry men to safety across the 24-mile-wide English Channel. Destroyers, gunboats, yachts, fishing boats, motorboats, and even rowboats worked feverishly to save what was left of the Allied army. All the while the vessels were constantly badgered by German planes and artillery. While planning the evacuation, the British government had hoped the operation would save 45,000 troops. The fact that the vessels safely evacuated about 338,000 to Great Britain was truly a miracle.

*Eight European countries are referred to in the paragraphs above. Unscramble each and write its correct spelling on the line next to it. Then label the eight countries on the map below. Use your textbook or another book for reference if necessary.*

1. CRAFTEN \_\_\_\_\_

2. YONWAR \_\_\_\_\_

3. EGRTAITBNRI \_\_\_\_\_

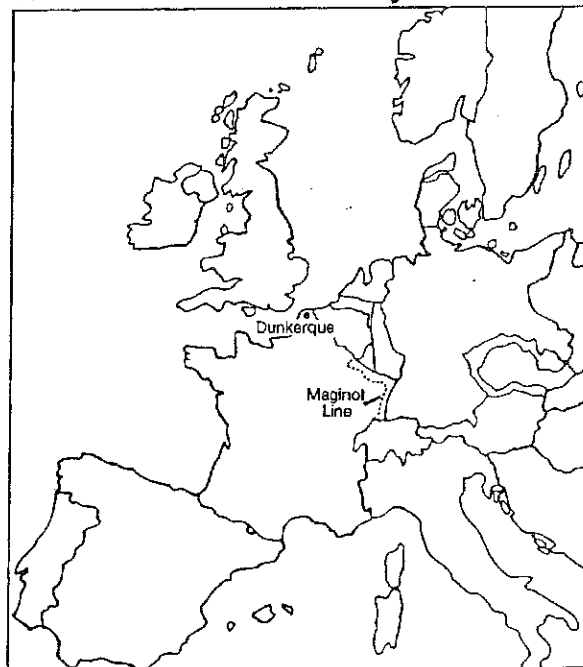
4. KREMAND \_\_\_\_\_

5. YARMGEN \_\_\_\_\_

6. MUGLIEB \_\_\_\_\_

7. GUBLERUMOX \_\_\_\_\_

8. DSEEWN \_\_\_\_\_



9. About 338,000 soldiers were rescued at Dunkerque. The operation lasted 6 days. What was the average number of soldiers rescued each day? \_\_\_\_\_

10. How many more soldiers were saved than originally expected? \_\_\_\_\_

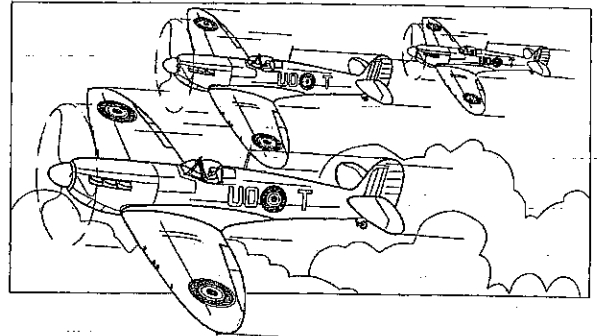
## The Battle of Britain

Three weeks after the evacuation at Dunkerque, France surrendered to the Germans. Great Britain stood alone against Hitler. With its army beaten and supplies and ammunition dangerously low, the island nation braced for an expected invasion.

Throughout the summer of 1940, the Germans assembled landing barges along the French coast. They intended to use these to ferry their troops across the English Channel into Great Britain. Beginning in August, the *Luftwaffe*, the German air force, began bombing airfields in Great Britain, hoping to destroy the Royal Air Force. They failed. England's radar stations warned the R.A.F. of approaching German planes, and British pilots inflicted such heavy losses on the *Luftwaffe* that the invasion of Great Britain was called off.

With their invasion plans ruined, the Nazis changed tactics. Hitler ordered the *Luftwaffe* to concentrate its efforts on bombing Great Britain's principal cities. These air raids were known as the "Blitz." Hitler believed that continuous attacks on the civilian population would force England to withdraw from the war. From September 7 through the end of October, 1940, the Germans bombed London and other cities relentlessly. Though occasional bombing still occurred until May of 1941, the Battle of Britain was considered over in October.

Estimates place the total number of civilians killed during the Battle of Britain at more than 30,000. But the British people never wavered in their determination to remain free. In spite of their suffering and hardships, they refused to give in to Hitler's demands. In the end, Royal Air Force pilots shot down so many German bombers that Hitler gave up on Great Britain and turned his attention to the Balkans.



*The Battle of Britain was the first battle fought to control the air.*

*Put the following events in chronological order by writing the numbers 1 to 6 in the blanks to the left.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_ The Germans switch to bombing British cities.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ The British win the Battle of Britain.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Hitler cancels his plan to invade Great Britain in the summer of 1940.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ France surrenders.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ The Germans assemble landing barges for their scheduled invasion of Great Britain.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Thousands of Allied soldiers are rescued at Dunkerque.

## The Battle of the Atlantic

At the same time that German planes were bombing British cities, German ships and submarines were sinking tons of Allied cargo in the Atlantic Ocean.

During the Battle of the Atlantic, the Germans blockaded Great Britain in an attempt to stop shipments of food and war materials being sent there from North America. Any ship that ventured into the area of the blockade risked being sunk by a Nazi submarine or surface raider.

German submarines were called undersea boats, or U-boats. They usually traveled in packs of fifteen to twenty, and over two hundred of them operated in the Atlantic. The surface raiders included the great battleship *Bismarck*, several smaller battleships, and a number of warships disguised as freighters. The latter could approach an Allied ship undetected and sink it without warning.

By far the greatest damage to cargo ships was caused by U-boats. They ruled the north Atlantic until the convoy system brought them under control. A convoy was a group of cargo ships escorted by warships for protection. Convoys, equipped with special underwater radar called sonar, were able to find and destroy large numbers of submarines.

Although not officially at war with Germany at this point, the United States was drawn into the Battle of the Atlantic. It helped escort cargo ships to Great Britain, and a number of its ships were fired on. One was even sunk, and over one hundred American lives were lost.

*Circle the word or words that make each of the statements below false. Then rewrite each sentence to make it true.*

1. The Battle of the Atlantic took place after the Battle of Britain.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. The purpose of the German blockade was to destroy the British navy.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. German U-boats usually traveled alone.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Allied ships used telescopes to locate and destroy German U-boats.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. A caravan is a group of ships traveling together for protection.

\_\_\_\_\_

6. No American lives were lost during the Battle of the Atlantic.

\_\_\_\_\_



## Operation Barbarossa

In April of 1941, the Germans overran Yugoslavia and Greece. Then Hitler made a huge mistake. He decided to attack the Soviet Union despite his nonaggression agreement with Stalin. On June 22, German soldiers crossed the Soviet border. The invasion was code-named Operation Barbarossa.

Catching the Soviets completely by surprise, the Germans at first met little resistance. By late November they were within sight of Moscow, the Soviet capital. Hitler confidently announced that the collapse of the Soviet Union could be expected at any time. But as they retreated, the Soviets burned everything that would be of use to the enemy, such as railroads and food supplies. Then the terrible Russian winter set in. German troops had neither the uniforms nor the equipment to fight in such weather. Many froze to death. Guns sometimes refused to fire and tanks would not move. The Soviets then counterattacked and began to push the Germans back. In the spring of 1942, the Germans lost the important Battle of Stalingrad. This halted Germany's advance to the east and proved to be a turning point of the war. From 1942 onward, the European Axis Powers were on the defensive.

1. If you were Joseph Stalin, would you have trusted Adolf Hitler enough to make a nonaggression agreement with Germany in 1939? Why or why not?

---

---

2. If you were Adolf Hitler, would you have trusted Joseph Stalin enough to make a nonaggression agreement with the Soviet Union? Why or why not?

---

---

3. Do you think it was a smart move for the Soviets to destroy their own equipment in the situation they were in? Why or why not?

---

---

---

4. What part did weather play in Germany's failure to conquer the Soviet Union?

---

---

---

## Pearl Harbor

The United States managed to stay out of World War II for more than two years. Although the U.S. had sent aid to the Allies from the beginning, it was not actively involved in any fighting.

All this changed on the morning of December 7, 1941. At 7:55 a.m., the first wave of Japanese planes from six aircraft carriers in the Pacific attacked the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. At the same time, they bombed the nearby army installations at Hickam Field and Wheeler Field. In less than two hours, the Japanese sank or damaged all eight battleships in or near the harbor and destroyed almost two hundred planes. They killed nearly 2,400 American service personnel and wounded many more. President Franklin Roosevelt called December 7 "a date which will live in infamy," and he asked for and received from Congress an immediate declaration of war against Japan.

The sneak attack on Pearl Harbor stemmed from Japan's desire to build an empire in southeast Asia. The Japanese knew they would need to destroy the American Pacific fleet to achieve their goals.

The attack on Pearl Harbor changed many Americans' attitude toward involvement in the war. Roosevelt received great support on December 8, 1941, when the United States declared war on Japan. In response, Italy and Germany, who were Japan's allies, declared war on the United States three days later. Much more of the world had become involved in this deadly conflict.

1. Describe the United States' involvement in World War II before and after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

---

---

---

2. Before the attack on Pearl Harbor, most Americans felt that the United States should avoid military involvement in World War II. Some supported U.S. aid to the Allies, but others felt the U.S. should remain completely neutral. Support one of these positions.

---

---

---

3. President Roosevelt called December 7, 1941, "a date which will live in infamy." Look up the word *infamy* in the dictionary. Write its definition below, and explain why you think President Roosevelt used this word in relation to the attack on Pearl Harbor.

---

---

---

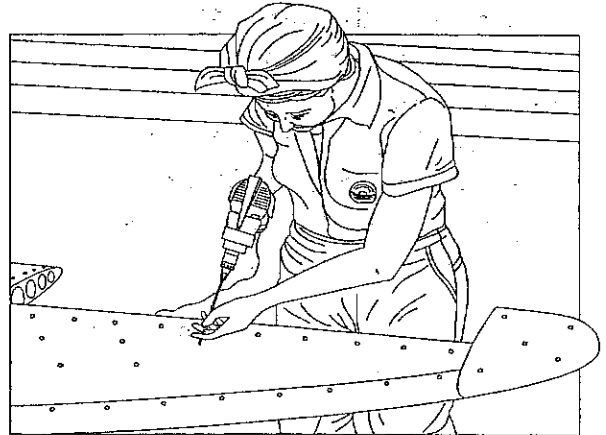
## The Home Front in America

Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, a sense of panic gripped Americans. Residents in almost every state feared an enemy attack at any moment. So great was the anxiety that over 100,000 Japanese Americans on the West Coast were rounded up and sent to relocation camps to wait out the war.

Once the fear died down, most Americans pitched in and contributed to the war effort. Children collected pots, pans, and other metal scraps for use in the production of ships, planes, tanks, and weapons. In order to conserve food, people started growing their own vegetables in what they called "victory gardens." Many Americans rode bicycles to work or started carpools to compensate for the shortage of gasoline. Citizens bought war bonds to help pay for the war.

Many products, including food items, were rationed. Each person in a family was issued a ration book. These books placed a limit on how much of any one item a shopper could purchase. Rationing was necessary to control inflation (high prices) and to ensure that the troops overseas received the supplies and materials they needed as they fought the war.

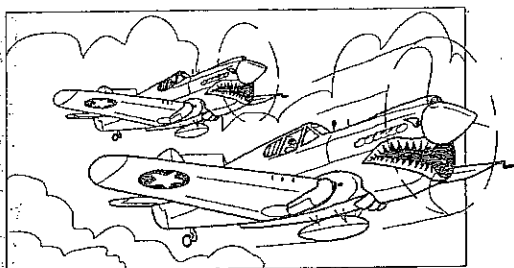
World War II gave American women the opportunity to show that they could do jobs previously reserved for men. Women worked in shipyards, steel mills, and meat-packing plants. They served as truck drivers, garbage collectors, and plumbers. Two-thirds of the employees in the aviation industry were women. It is estimated that three million women worked in war-related jobs. Thousands of other women proudly served in the armed forces.



*Decide if each of the statements below is a fact or an opinion. Write F or O in each blank.*

1. \_\_\_\_ Most Americans contributed to the war effort.
2. \_\_\_\_ The American government was justified in confining Japanese Americans after the attack on Pearl Harbor.
3. \_\_\_\_ Women should not have been allowed to serve in the armed forces.
4. \_\_\_\_ During World War II, many American women took over jobs previously performed by men.
5. \_\_\_\_ Rationing was an unfair way to make sure soldiers had the supplies they needed.
6. \_\_\_\_ Many children did their part in contributing to the war effort.

# The Flying Tigers



Several months before Pearl Harbor, a small group of American volunteers traveled to Rangoon, Burma. They made up what was called the American Volunteer Group, or A.V.G. Recruited from all branches of the armed services, they were eager pilots who signed contracts to fight for the Chinese Air Force against the Japanese.

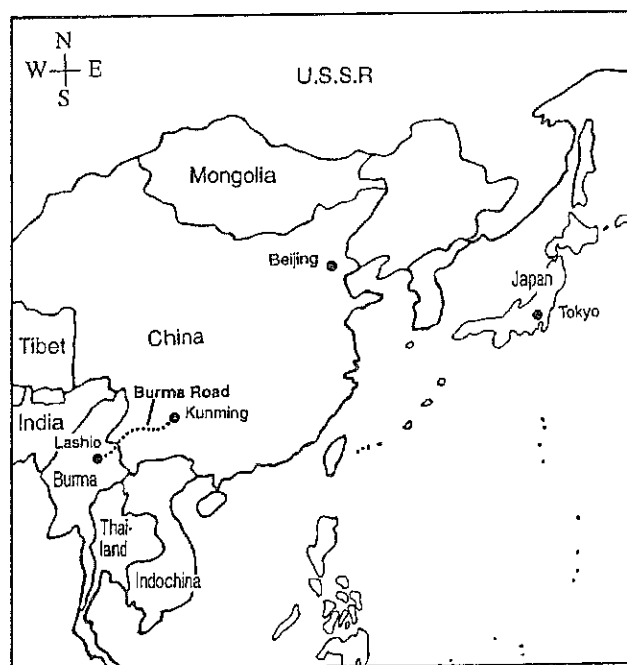
The A.V.G. was kept secret at first because the United States was still technically at peace. The group's mission was to protect the Burma Road, which was known as China's "lifeline." The Burma Road ran about seven hundred miles from Lashio, Burma, to Kunming, China. Along this vital route flowed supplies necessary for China to carry on its fight against Japan. From December of 1941 to July of 1942, the A.V.G. fought to keep this supply line open.

The members of the A.V.G. were known as the "Flying Tigers." This nickname came from the tiger shark teeth that were painted on the noses of the P-40 fighter planes flown by the group. The shark teeth on the planes were meant to make the planes look ferocious.

The Flying Tigers helped boost American morale after Pearl Harbor. In just seven months the group destroyed at least 286 Japanese planes. For the first time, the Japanese felt the sting of defeat. After July of 1942, the A.V.G. was made a part of the U.S. Army Air Corps.

*Look at the map of Asia to answer the questions below. The map shows part of Asia as it looked between 1941 and 1942. Circle each correct answer.*

1. The Burma Road ran (northeast, northwest, west) from Lashio, Burma, to Kunming, China.
2. Burma is (southeast, southwest, west) of China.
3. Mongolia is (southeast, northwest, northeast) of Tibet.
4. Burma is directly between Thailand and (Tibet, India, Indochina).
5. Besides China, Burma was bordered on the east by Indochina and (Thailand, Vietnam, Bangladesh).
6. Tokyo, Japan, is (northeast, southeast, southwest) of Beijing, China.



# The Bataan Death March

When the Japanese overran the Philippine Islands in December of 1941, some American and Philippine forces retreated to the Bataan Peninsula. There they continued to fight until they were forced to surrender on April 9, 1942. A few days later, about seventy thousand Filipinos and Americans were forced to walk sixty miles to prison camps. Starting on the Bataan Peninsula, the prisoners marched to the north. Thousands died along the way. Many collapsed from fatigue and were either shot or stabbed by Japanese soldiers. Sometimes prisoners were forced to bury alive their comrades who became weak and fell out of line. This grueling walk became known as the Bataan Death March.

Once the prisoners reached the camps, conditions were equally brutal. Inhumane treatment and inadequate food and medical supplies caused the deaths of thousands more. At least ten thousand prisoners died at the hands of the Japanese in the Philippines.

Not every Japanese soldier participated in the horrible crimes committed against prisoners-of-war. Some even risked their own lives by trying to ease the suffering of the prisoners in their charge. Many of those who did engage in acts of barbarism were brought to trial and punished after the war.

*“All is fair in love and war” is a popular saying. Do you think there ought to be rules governing what is “fair” during wartime? Why or why not? Answer this question in a short essay on the lines below. Be sure to support your answer with specific reasons.*

100

## The Doolittle Raid

The Doolittle Raid took Japan completely by surprise. The Japanese believed the United States was incapable of striking a blow to Tokyo, the heart of their homeland and the residence of their emperor. But on April 18, 1942, Lieutenant Colonel James H. Doolittle of the U.S. Army Air Corps proved that the Japanese were not invincible. Sixteen B-25 bombers took off from the aircraft carrier *Hornet* and bombed targets in Tokyo and four other Japanese cities.

The Doolittle Raid caused a relatively small amount of damage, but it boosted American morale, which was extremely low following the fall of the Philippines.

*Excellent piloting skills were necessary to launch a B-25 from the flight deck of an aircraft carrier. The planes were designed to take off and land on air strips rather than on aircraft carriers. Find out more about this daring mission by working the following problems. Show your work in the space provided.*

1. Lt. Col. Doolittle's plane was the first to take off from the *Hornet*. The others followed at intervals of 3.9 minutes. How much time was required to launch all 16 planes?  
\_\_\_\_\_ minutes
2. The plan for the Doolittle Raid called for the bombers to take off when the *Hornet* was 400 miles from the Japanese coast. But because it was feared the ship had been sighted, the planes were launched from 823 miles out in the Pacific. The last bomber took off shortly after 0900 hours (9:00 a.m.). If all planes were over their targets by noon, what was their average air speed in reaching their destinations?  
\_\_\_\_\_ mph (round your answer)
3. None of Lt. Col. Doolittle's planes reached safety in China where they were scheduled to land after the raid. Bad weather and insufficient fuel caused by the increased distance of the flight caused fifteen pilots to crash-land in the sea or along the Chinese coast. One pilot landed in Russian territory. Most crew members were rescued, but some were captured and executed by the Japanese. In light of the weather and the fuel situation, do you think the Doolittle Raid should have been cancelled? Why or why not? Write your opinion on the lines below.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## The Battle of Midway

Following the Doolittle Raid, two major sea battles ended Japan's unchallenged march through Asia and the Pacific. The first was the Battle of the Coral Sea. The second, and most important, was the Battle of Midway.

The Coral Sea is a part of the Pacific Ocean that touches the northeast coast of Australia. There, from May 6 to May 8, 1942, planes from American aircraft carriers prevented a likely Japanese invasion of Australia.

One month later, a fleet of eighty Japanese ships steamed toward the American base on Midway Island in the central Pacific. Their goal was to lure the American fleet away from Hawaii and into an open fight. Their plan failed. The U.S. navy had cracked the Japanese naval code and knew the enemy was coming. In a three-day battle, planes from American carriers sank or damaged twenty Japanese ships. Among those sunk were four aircraft carriers, two cruisers, and three destroyers. They also lost two hundred planes. The Japanese suffered a naval defeat from which they never recovered.

The Battle of Midway was a turning point of the war. Afterwards, the Allies went on the offensive in the South Pacific, and morale was lifted.

*Fill each of the following blanks with the correct answer.*

1. The Coral Sea is part of the \_\_\_\_\_ Ocean.
2. The United States' efforts in the Battle of the Coral Sea saved \_\_\_\_\_ from a probable Japanese invasion.
3. The goal of the Japanese at Midway was to draw the American Pacific fleet away from \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The Japanese did not succeed at Midway because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. The Battle of Midway lasted \_\_\_\_\_ days.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Japanese ships were sunk or damaged at the Battle of Midway.
7. Why was the Battle of Midway important? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Find Midway Island on a map of the South Pacific. What two important places is this island roughly midway between? \_\_\_\_\_

## The Afrika Korps

The war was not limited to Europe and the Pacific area in the early 1940s. Heavy fighting also took place in northern Africa. From their bases in Libya, the Italians launched an attack against the British in Egypt. Their goal was the all-important Suez Canal. Control of the canal meant control of the eastern Mediterranean Sea. The Italians failed, and the Germans were forced to come to their rescue.

In March of 1941, German General Erwin Rommel and his famous Afrika Korps arrived in Libya. The Afrika Korps consisted of two panzer (tank) divisions and a motorized infantry division. From the air, it was supported by stuka dive bombers. Due to Rommel's brilliant tactics, the Korps soon had the British in full retreat. Rommel's cleverness won him the nickname "Desert Fox."

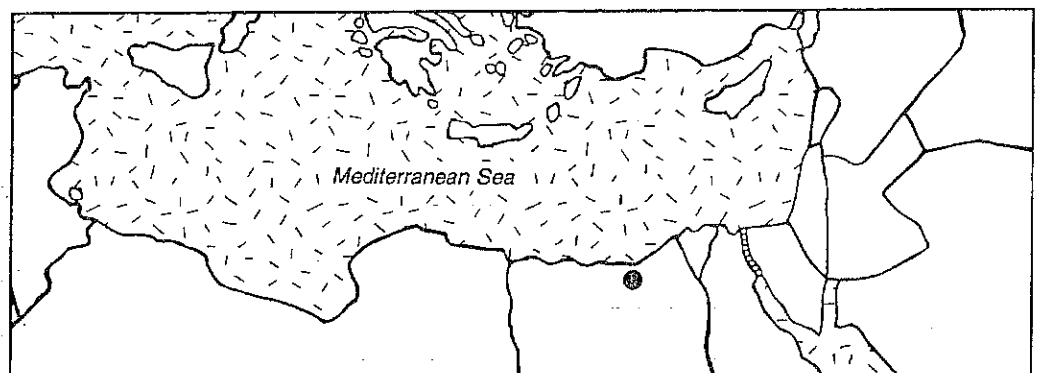
Afterwards, heated tank battles in the desert raged back and forth. First one side and then the other gained the upper hand. By July of 1942, the Afrika Korps was within 65 miles of the delta of the Nile River, but they were stopped at the city of El Alamein. Three months later the British, reinforced by American Sherman tanks, mounted a strong offensive that drove Rommel out of Egypt and saved the Suez Canal. The German defeat in northern Africa was another turning point in the war.

*Match the names below with the correct descriptions.*

- |                 |           |            |
|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| A. Afrika Korps | D. Libya  | G. Rommel  |
| B. Egypt        | E. Nile   | H. Sherman |
| C. El Alamein   | F. panzer | I. stuka   |

- |  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1. ____ site of Italian bases in northern Africa | 6. ____ American tank            |
| 2. ____ German tank                              | 7. ____ site of Rommel's defeat  |
| 3. ____ location of the Suez Canal               | 8. ____ German dive bomber       |
| 4. ____ "Desert Fox"                             | 9. ____ important river in Egypt |
| 5. ____ German group led by Rommel               |                                  |

10. Mark the following on the map to the right: Suez Canal, Libya, Nile River, El Alamein, Egypt. Use your textbook or another book for reference if necessary.





## The Invasion of Sicily and Italy

Rommel's defeat in Egypt was followed by an Allied invasion of northern Africa in November, 1942. Two months later, an important meeting took place in Morocco between U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Among the matters discussed were the terms of surrender to be presented to the Axis at the conclusion of the war. Both Roosevelt and Churchill agreed that only unconditional surrender on the part of Germany and Italy would be acceptable. The two leaders also decided that the Allies' next move should be an invasion of Sicily and Italy. Control of the Italian island of Sicily would give the Allies control of the western Mediterranean Sea.

On July 10, 1943, American, British, and Canadian troops went ashore in southeastern Sicily. They took the island from the Italians and Germans in 39 days. Benito Mussolini, the dictator of Italy, fell from power, and the Italians soon surrendered and demanded peace in their country. Not willing to give up, Germans quickly took over all strategic centers in Italy, including Rome. The Germans pulled troops from Russia and rushed them to Italy. What followed was one of the bloodiest campaigns of the war. Even though the Allies slowly pushed forward and liberated Rome from German control on June 4, 1944, the Nazis continued to fight in some parts of Italy until almost the end of the war.

*Put the following events in order by writing the numbers 1 to 7 in the blanks to the left.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Rommel is defeated in Egypt.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Rome is liberated from the Germans.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Roosevelt and Churchill meet in Morocco.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ The Allies invade Sicily.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ The Allies invade northern Africa.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Benito Mussolini falls from power in Italy.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Italy is taken over by the Germans.
8. Why did fighting continue in Italy even though the Italians wanted peace?

---

---

---

# The Teheran Conference

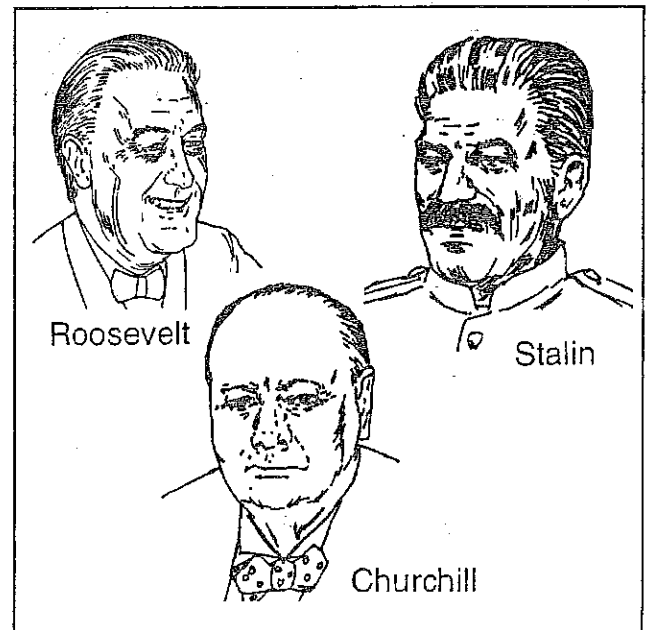
With Italy out of the war, the Allies began to make plans for their final defeat of Germany. On November 26, 1943, the "Big Three" met in Teheran, Iran. They were U.S. President Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Churchill, and Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin. Their meeting marked the first time the three Allied leaders had come together to discuss war strategy.

Among the agreements reached by the Big Three was the decision to start a second attack front in France. Such a move would force the Germans to divide their forces and would possibly hasten their defeat. A date was set for an invasion which would take place six months later along the coast of France at Normandy. The assault on Hitler's Europe was referred to as D-Day.

At the same time that the Big Three were meeting at Teheran, Allied troops were advancing in the Pacific. Japan was now fighting a defensive war. American forces had begun a successful "island hopping" campaign that would eventually give them airfields from which to bomb the Japanese homeland.

*Unscramble the following proper nouns that appear in the text above.*

1. TALINS \_\_\_\_\_
2. RHEETAN \_\_\_\_\_
3. CREFAN \_\_\_\_\_
4. TROSEVOLE \_\_\_\_\_
5. THILER \_\_\_\_\_
6. SALLIE \_\_\_\_\_
7. YATIL \_\_\_\_\_
8. LURCHCLIH \_\_\_\_\_
9. DRONYMAN \_\_\_\_\_



10. The Big Three decided to open a second attack front in \_\_\_\_\_, France.
11. The United States' "island hopping" strategy was aimed at bringing about the defeat of \_\_\_\_\_.
12. The leaders who made up the Big Three were \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
13. What two goals did the Big Three have in mind when they decided upon an invasion of France? \_\_\_\_\_

## D-Day

Two days after the liberation of Rome, the long-awaited invasion of German-occupied Europe began. In the early morning hours of June 6, 1944, three Allied airborne divisions parachuted behind enemy lines in northwestern France to cut vital communications and seize control of important roads, bridges, and airfields. Then, six hours later, a combined force of American, British, and Canadian troops under the command of General Dwight D. Eisenhower landed on the coast of France at Normandy.

The initial invasion force of 175,000 troops had been ferried across the English Channel overnight in more than 2,700 ships. Besides troops, the ships carried tons of supplies and thousands of vehicles. Several thousand planes also participated in the assault, either transporting paratroopers, towing gliders, or dropping bombs on enemy positions.

The Allied attack at Normandy was spread over five beaches, code-named Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword. Only light resistance was encountered at several beaches, but German fire at Omaha Beach was particularly heavy. Germans firing from cliffs high above the beach inflicted heavy casualties on American troops that landed there. Even so, 250,000 Allied soldiers succeeded in going ashore in the first twenty-four hours of the invasion.

From the beaches of Normandy, the Allies slowly fought their way inland. They liberated Paris on August 19, and by September they had cleared France of German troops. This was the beginning of the end for Nazi Germany.

*Solve the following word problems to learn more about the Normandy Invasion.*

1. The Allies landed 175,000 troops at Normandy the first night. About 10,700 were killed or wounded. What percent of these Allied soldiers were killed or wounded?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. The Allies had assembled nearly three million men in Great Britain for the invasion of Europe. By the middle of September, about 73% of these had gone ashore in France. How many soldiers had gone ashore? \_\_\_\_\_
3. During the first twenty-four hours of the invasion, 250,000 Allied troops went ashore in Normandy. What percent of the three million soldiers assembled in Great Britain went ashore in Normandy in the first twenty-four hours? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What factors do you think helped make the invasion at Normandy so successful?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## The Battle of the Bulge

One great battle remained to be fought in Europe before Nazi Germany was defeated. That was the Battle of the Bulge.

By the end of 1944, Allied armies had swept through France and Belgium and were at the borders of Germany. They were ready for the final drive they hoped would end the war in Europe. But Adolf Hitler had other ideas. Along an 80-mile front in the Ardennes Forest of Belgium, the Nazi leader had amassed an army of 250,000 men and tanks. This huge buildup of German power had gone undetected because intense fog and snow had kept Allied planes grounded.

On December 16, 1944, Hitler's troops attacked, taking American forces in the Ardennes completely by surprise. The Germans drove a 60-mile "bulge" through the American lines, advancing almost to the English Channel. If the Germans had reached the Channel, they might have cut the Allied forces in two and driven them from France. But the Americans held and closed the gap along the line. The Germans were driven back and once more put in full retreat. By the third week in January, 1945, the battle was over.

The Battle of the Bulge was a gamble on Hitler's part. When it failed, he no longer had an army strong enough to prevent the Allies from crossing the German border. American and British troops raced into Germany from the west while the Russians moved in from the east. What was left of Germany's fighting forces was slowly squeezed between them.

The Battle of the Bulge was a costly victory for the American army. It suffered almost 80,000 casualties. German casualties numbered more than 100,000.

*Answer each of the questions below about the Battle of the Bulge.*

1. Where was the Battle of the Bulge fought? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Why didn't the Allies notice the buildup of German troops in the Ardennes?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Why was the German defeat at the Battle of the Bulge so significant?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Why is this German offensive referred to as the Battle of the Bulge?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How might history have changed if the German forces in the Battle of the Bulge had been able to reach the English Channel?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Victory in Europe

As the Germans retreated after the Battle of the Bulge, they had orders to destroy every bridge that crossed the Rhine River into the heartland of Germany. If no bridges were left standing, the advancing Allied armies might be held up indefinitely.

But the Germans mistakenly left the bridge at the town of Remagen in western Germany intact. On March 7, 1945, American soldiers captured the bridge and began pouring across the Rhine. At the same time, nearly four million Russian troops continued their advance through eastern Germany.

The end for Nazi Germany was now less than a week away. Russian troops, who had reached Berlin on April 21, reduced the city to rubble in eleven days of bitter fighting. More than half a million people were killed, most of them civilians. Adolf Hitler also died in Berlin. On January 16 he moved his headquarters to an underground bunker where he planned to direct the defense of the city. But as Russian troops closed in on April 30, the Nazi dictator shot himself. Fighting continued until May 2, when the city surrendered. All opposition in Germany ceased on May 7, and the war in Europe was over. May 8 is now known as V-E Day, the day people celebrate the Allies' victory in Europe.

*Write the letter of the correct answer in the blank to the left of each question.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_ American troops crossed the Rhine River into Germany at  
a. Torgau                      b. Berlin                      c. Remagen
2. \_\_\_\_\_ The city of Berlin was attacked and taken by  
a. American troops  
b. Russian troops  
c. a joint force of American and Russian troops
3. \_\_\_\_\_ How many people died during fighting in Berlin?  
a. one million              b. more than 500,000              c. one and a half million
4. \_\_\_\_\_ When is V-E Day?  
a. April 30                      b. May 2                      c. May 8
5. President Franklin D. Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945, just before the Allies' victory in Europe. On October 1, 1935, four years before the start of World War II, Roosevelt had spoken these words: "Democracy is not a static thing. It is an everlasting march." How did the events of World War II add meaning to this statement?

---

---

---

---

---

## Concentration Camps

Estimates of the number of people killed in World War II stretch as high as 50 million. Of this number, one-fifth may have died in German concentration camps.

As the Allied armies liberated Poland and overran Germany, they came upon camps where millions of innocent victims had been tortured and killed. Some of these camps held prisoners-of-war. Others contained political prisoners who had posed a threat to Nazi rule. Most, however, held people of the Jewish faith from all across Europe.

After Adolf Hitler seized power in 1933, he pledged to rid Germany of Jews and other people he considered inferior. Consequently, when World War II began, Jews and members of other ethnic groups in Germany and in Nazi-occupied territories were rounded up and sent to concentration camps. There people were tortured and killed. Many were shot. Others were starved or beaten to death. Most died in gas chambers. Of the ten million Jews living in Europe in 1939, six million died at the hands of the Nazis.

After World War II, many high-ranking Nazis responsible for the deaths were tried and sentenced to death. Since that time, many lesser officials have been tracked down and brought to justice.

*Answer the questions below.*

1. How might Germany's struggle to recover from World War I have contributed to Hitler's ability to attain a strong following?

---

---

---

---

2. The systematic murder of the Jews of Europe is referred to as the *Holocaust*. The word *Holocaust* means "widespread destruction." Why is this an appropriate name?

---

---

---

3. Many Germans who participated in the murder of Jews claimed that they were only following orders. What is your reaction to this claim?

---

---

---

## The Japanese Warrior

The United States became involved in World War II after the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor. As this unexpected and devastating attack foreshadowed, the Japanese forces would prove to be a strong adversary.

Many Japanese soldiers followed the warrior's code of Bushido. This meant that they considered surrender a disgrace and viewed death on the battlefield as an honor. Such determination made battles against the Japanese extremely difficult for American troops.

In an attempt to turn the tide of war in their favor, the Japanese began suicide attacks on American ships in the fall of 1944. The volunteer pilots were called kamikazes. The pilots felt it was an honor to die for their emperor.

*Kamikaze* is a Japanese word that means "divine wind." It refers to a typhoon in the 13th century that destroyed a Mongol fleet off the coast of Japan, saving the island nation from invasion. The Japanese hoped their new divine wind would protect them from invasion again.

Most kamikaze pilots flew fighter planes called Zeroes. Each Zero was loaded with explosives and was purposely crashed into the deck or side of a ship. Kamikazes were first used in the Leyte Gulf off the Philippines in 1944. At the Battle of Okinawa six months later, 1,000 kamikaze pilots sank 34 ships and damaged 358 others. This willingness to die in battle suggested to American leaders that an attack on Japan would result in a huge number of casualties, a fact that influenced their decision to use the atomic bomb.

*Decide if each of the following statements is a fact or an opinion. Write F or O in each blank.*

1. \_\_\_\_ Many Japanese soldiers preferred death over dishonor.
2. \_\_\_\_ American soldiers were not as brave as their Japanese counterparts.
3. \_\_\_\_ Kamikaze pilots volunteered to die in battle.
4. \_\_\_\_ The attitude of the Japanese fighter was rooted in Japanese culture.
5. \_\_\_\_ Kamikaze pilots caused a great deal of damage in the Battle of Okinawa.
6. What is your own definition of *honor*? What qualities and acts do you believe make a person honorable? Support your opinion with examples.

---

---

---

---

---

---

# The Atomic Bomb

With Germany's surrender, the Allies turned their attention to defeating Japan. An invasion of the Japanese islands was planned for November of 1945. American military experts predicted the assault on Japan would cost half a million American lives. Such an estimate was based on the fierce resistance offered by Japanese troops on every Pacific island taken by U.S. forces up to that time. Military leaders also believed that Japanese civilians would join in the fight, adding to the number of American casualties. In addition, these same leaders thought that as many as two million Japanese would be killed defending their homeland.

U.S. military leaders searched for an alternative to such a costly assault on Japan. For months American scientists in the deserts of New Mexico had been working on perfecting the world's first atomic bomb. (Scientists in Germany and Japan were also doing research in hopes of developing a nuclear weapon.) The U.S. successfully tested the atomic bomb on July 16, 1945.

President Harry Truman, who had become president upon the death of Franklin Roosevelt in April, had a most difficult decision to make. He knew that using such a destructive weapon would kill thousands of innocent Japanese people. He also knew its use might prevent the deaths of hundreds of thousands of American troops and possibly shorten the war. After listening to arguments on both sides, the President made his decision. He would use the atomic bomb against Japan.

During the first week of August, 1945, American pilots dropped thousands of leaflets on Japanese cities. The leaflets warned Japan's leaders that a powerful new weapon would be used against them if they did not surrender. Japan's military government chose to ignore the warning and refused to surrender. On August 6, a B-29 bomber dropped history's first atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima. More than 80,000 people were killed. Still, the Japanese refused to surrender. Three days later, a second bomb was dropped on the city of Nagasaki. It killed 40,000 people. The destruction of a second major city convinced Japan's leaders to give up. They surrendered on August 14, 1945, and World War II was over.

*Do you think the United States was justified in using the atomic bomb against Japan? Why or why not?*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



## The Cost of the War

World War II officially ended on September 2, 1945. On that date General Douglas MacArthur accepted the official surrender of the Japanese aboard the battleship *Missouri* anchored in Tokyo Bay. Six long years of war had finally come to an end. September 2 is now celebrated as V-J Day, or the day of victory in Japan.

The cost of the war in human lives and money was staggering. Estimates place the number of people killed somewhere between 22 million and 50 million. There were about 17 million military deaths. Russia lost the highest number of military personnel with over seven million deaths. Germany lost more than three million service personnel, followed by Japan with about two million and China with one and a half million. The United States suffered 400,000 military deaths.

The number of civilian deaths in World War II may have exceeded military deaths. Millions of civilians died from bombings, disease, starvation, and deliberate extermination. As many as 13 million Chinese died at the hands of the Japanese. Many more people died later from war-related injuries, such as exposure to radiation from the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The war cost the participating nations over a trillion dollars. It cost the United States alone about \$250 million a day to carry on the fight.

*Fill in the blanks in the following sentences.*

1. What kinds of things must be considered when one tries to determine the "cost" of a war? Can you think of any "costs" not mentioned on this page?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Which country mentioned above suffered the fewest military deaths in World War II?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Which suffered the most deaths? \_\_\_\_\_
3. This page presents the high cost of war, both in human terms and in monetary terms. Do you think the United States should spend money developing more advanced weaponry and defense systems? How important is it for a country to have a strong military? Support your opinions.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## The Aftermath

Huge celebrations broke out when World War II finally ended. Germany, Italy, and Japan had been defeated, and people of the world looked forward to peace. They hoped that the United Nations, a peace-keeping organization which came into existence in 1945, could help prevent future wars.

The peace following the war was an uneasy one, however. Much of Europe and Asia lay in ruins, and many people were hungry. The nations of the world were in need of economic assistance to ward off a new threat to peace: international communism. No sooner had World War II ended than a period of hostility and conflict began between the western world and the Soviet Union. Although there was no actual fighting, this period was known as the Cold War. This "war" continued until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1992.

The victorious Allies divided Germany into four zones of occupation. France, Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union each were given control over a part of Germany. The Allied powers eventually pulled out of their areas, but the Soviet Union did not. The Soviet zone of occupation became known as East Germany. Russian-backed communist governments also seized control of the eastern European nations of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania.

Japan was not divided into zones as Germany was. Instead it was occupied and governed solely by the United States. On April 28, 1952, after seven years of occupation, the U.S. gave the Japanese control over their own affairs. As part of the agreement, the United States reserved the right to maintain military bases on Japanese soil.

*Decide if the statements below relating to the aftermath of World War II are true or false. Write T or F in each blank.*

1. \_\_\_\_ Germany was governed solely by the United States after the war.
2. \_\_\_\_ The part of Germany supervised by the Soviet Union eventually came to be called East Germany.
3. \_\_\_\_ The United States occupied and governed Japan from 1945 to 1952.
4. \_\_\_\_ The communists seized control of all of Europe.
5. \_\_\_\_ Hostility developed between the Soviet Union and the western world.
6. \_\_\_\_ Austria was one of the nations taken over by the communists.
7. \_\_\_\_ Both Poland and Hungary came under the control of communist governments.
8. \_\_\_\_ The United States pulled all of its troops out of Japan when its occupation of that country came to an end.
9. \_\_\_\_ Much of Europe and Asia lay in ruins in 1945.
10. \_\_\_\_ A "cold war" is a war fought in the arctic regions of the world.

## Important Leaders of World War II

Many world leaders were involved in World War II. Match each leader's name with his description by writing the appropriate letter in the blank.

- |                          |                               |                           |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. ____ Harry S. Truman  | 4. ____ Hideki Tojo           | 7. ____ Winston Churchill |
| 2. ____ Adolf Hitler     | 5. ____ Chiang Kai-shek       | 8. ____ Charles de Gaulle |
| 3. ____ Benito Mussolini | 6. ____ Franklin D. Roosevelt | 9. ____ Joseph Stalin     |

- A. This Soviet dictator was one of the three Allied leaders during World War II but soon lost the support of the two other leaders with the start of the Cold War.
- B. This general was premier of Japan during World War II. He gave his approval for the attack on Pearl Harbor and played a major role in Japan's military decisions until he resigned in 1944.
- C. Italy became involved in World War II while this man was dictator of the country. He joined forces with Adolph Hitler to fight the Allied powers. Eventually, he was deposed and executed by his own people.
- D. This German dictator set out to dominate Europe and exterminate those whom he viewed as inferior. He rose to power by leading a group called the National Socialist German Workers' Party, or the Nazis. He played a major role in starting World War II.
- E. This U.S. president held the office longer than any other president. He declared war on Japan after the bombing at Pearl Harbor, but unfortunately he did not live long enough to celebrate the Allies' victory in September of 1945.
- F. This general was head of China's Nationalist party, and he helped China defeat Japan in 1945. After the war, he was elected president of China.
- G. One of the "Big Three," this British prime minister led Great Britain to its "finest hour." He and President Roosevelt worked closely together to help the Allied forces defeat the Axis powers and restore peace. He was especially noted for his excellent speaking skills.
- H. Though he didn't become president of the United States until the final year of World War II, this man played a major role in the war's outcome. He made the decision to use the atomic bomb against Japan.
- I. This general led the French in their fight against Germany. After World War II, he became president of France.

# Check Your Understanding of WWII

1. Some historians maintain that World War II was a continuation of World War I. Explain this theory.

---

---

---

---

2. Briefly explain the significance of each of the following in relation to World War II:

a. fascism \_\_\_\_\_

---

b. blitzkrieg \_\_\_\_\_

---

c. Flying Tigers \_\_\_\_\_

---

d. Afrika Korps \_\_\_\_\_

---

e. D-Day \_\_\_\_\_

---

f. kamikaze \_\_\_\_\_

---

g. the Miracle of Dunkerque \_\_\_\_\_

---

h. the Battle of Britain \_\_\_\_\_

---

i. the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor \_\_\_\_\_

---

j. the Doolittle Raid \_\_\_\_\_

---

k. the Battle of Midway \_\_\_\_\_

---

l. the Battle of the Bulge \_\_\_\_\_

---

m. the atomic bomb \_\_\_\_\_

---