



World War II

U.S. History Unit Companion

Directions

- Complete the Prepare section before you begin a unit.
- Complete the Lesson Summaries and Guided Notes section as you work through each lesson.
- Complete the Unit Review sections before you take the cumulative assessment.

NOTE: Your teacher may require that you complete and submit this unit companion.

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Prepare

Throughout the World War II unit, you will explore the following Essential Questions.



Unit Essential Questions

- What was the impact of totalitarianism in Europe and Asia after World War I?
- What events led to the United States' full involvement in World War II?
- How did World War II affect the economy and daily life on the home front?
- How did the Allies achieve victory in Europe?
- What key events characterized the World War II Pacific Theater?

You will learn about the following topics in the World War II unit:

- the rise of totalitarianism and fascism after World War I
- the early events of World War II
- the sequence of events that led to America's participation in World War II
- the impact of World War II on the U.S. economy
- the effects of the war on the home front, including for women and minorities
- the Allied invasion of Europe
- the path to Allied victory in Europe
- the key events of the war in Asia
- the decision to use atomic weapons

You will take a cumulative quiz and test over the content in this unit.



Lesson Summaries and Guided Notes

Each lesson is summarized on the following pages. Read the summary before a lesson to preview the most important information, including people, places, and events. Read the summary after a lesson to review the lesson content without rereading every word. As you complete each lesson, record information in the Guided Notes section. Some questions have been provided for you. You may also take notes on other important lesson information.

Aggression and Appeasement Summary

Many European countries had been financially devastated by World War I and the Great Depression. People's unrest led them to turn radical leaders who promised to restore their nations' economies, namely Benito Mussolini in Italy and Adolph Hitler in Germany. In the 1920s and 1930s, both men became totalitarian dictators in their countries. Hitler's political party became known as the Nazis.

Germany hoped to expand its empire by invading additional countries. Britain, France, and the Soviet Union tried to appease Germany through diplomatic relations, but Germany continued its military efforts in Eastern Europe. Hitler and the Nazis also passed the Nuremberg Laws, which stripped German Jews of their citizenship.

In Asia, Japan wanted to build its empire. They attempted to take over China, resulting in a war between the two countries. Japan worried that communism would take hold in China as it had in the Soviet Union. The Germans also feared the rise of communism, so in 1936 Germany and Japan formed an alliance to defend one another against communist nations. Italy joined the pact the next year, forming the alliance known as the Axis powers.

Aggression and Appeasement Guided Notes	
What events led to the rise in power of Benito Mussolini? (slide 1)	Many European countries, including Italy, struggled financially after World War I and throughout the Great Depression. Postwar inflation and recession hurt the economies of many European countries. A drop in agricultural prices also hit farmers hard. People in Italy blamed their problems on the Treaty of Versailles. As is often the case in times of hardship, people turn to new leaders with radical ideologies. In Italy, that leader was Benito Mussolini.
What is fascism? (slide 1)	
Why did Hitler and the Nazi party gain power in Germany? (slide 2)	
What were the Nuremberg Laws? (slide 3)	

Aggression and Appeasement Guided Notes

How did Hitler justify his military actions between 1936 and 1938? (slide 3)	
What mistaken assumption did the leaders of Great Britain and France make when they signed the Munich Pact? (slide 4)	
What was the result of the German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact of 1939? (slide 4)	
What concerns about the Soviet Union and China did Japan have that led to its military alliance with Germany? (slide 5)	
What countries formed the Axis powers? (slide 5)	
What events led to a war between Japan and China? (slide 6)	
What was the Nanjing Massacre and how did people in the United States react to it? (slide 6)	

Neutrality and Engagement Summary

On September 1, 1939, Hitler’s army invaded Poland in a blitzkrieg, or lightning war. Realizing Hitler would continue to invade other countries if left unchecked, Britain and France declared war on Germany following the Polish invasion. This was the official beginning of World War II in Europe. Germany quickly won a series of battles that allowed them to take over many European countries.

Still, most people in the United States hoped to stay out of the European conflicts, passing neutrality legislation that would continue American isolationism. As the conflicts in Europe grew worse and Great Britain became threatened, the neutrality legislation was amended to allow the United States to sell, and eventually lend, weapons and military equipment to Britain and France.

Meanwhile, the United States and Japan were locked in conflict over two major issues: a U.S. embargo on essential supplies to Japan and a dispute over Japan’s efforts to take over the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia). Attempts to resolve these conflicts through diplomatic efforts broke down when the United States refused to negotiate unless Japan withdrew troops from China. Japan decided the only option was to engage the United States in war. Japanese forces attacked the American base of Pearl Harbor in Hawaii on December 7, 1941. The United States responded by declaring war on Japan and officially entered World War II.

Neutrality and Engagement Guided Notes	
What event led to the official start of World War II in Europe? (slide 1)	Hitler invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, and quickly defeated Polish forces. Britain and France realized that Hitler would continue to invade new territory if he wasn’t stopped, so they officially declared war on Germany on September 3, 1939.
What was the Maginot Line and how did the Germans circumvent it? (slide 1)	
How did most Americans feel about the United States getting involved in European affairs? (slide 2)	

Neutrality and Engagement Guided Notes

In what ways did the United States get involved with the war effort in Europe, despite maintaining a policy of neutrality? (slide 3)	
What four freedoms did Roosevelt believe needed to be protected in his “Four Freedoms” speech? (slide 4)	
What was the purpose of the Lend-Lease Act? (slide 4)	
Who drafted the Atlantic Charter and what did they hope it would accomplish? (slide 4)	
Why did the United States block the shipment of materials to Japan? (slide 6)	
What event finally led to the United States’ entry into the war? (slide 6)	

Fighting on the Home Front Summary

As Americans fought overseas, life at home changed a great deal as well. The United States had to increase production of weapons. The government offered companies incentives to switch their factories to wartime production. As a result, businesses boomed.

Women's lives changed dramatically as many men went off to war. Women took over men's factory jobs or worked in offices. Many women joined the military, serving in a variety of roles.

African Americans served in the military as well. They hoped their service to the country would ensure them equal rights at home, but government measures were not sufficient to guarantee good jobs for African Americans. In addition, racial tensions at home led to rioting.

Mexican Americans also faced discrimination at home. Some of them had been brought over from Mexico to fill agricultural jobs. There was tension between these Mexican Americans and white people.

With the U.S. at war with Japan, the government became suspicious of Japanese Americans colluding with the enemy. The government forced Japanese Americans against their will into internment camps.

Everyone at home sacrificed to ensure supplies were readily available for troops. Food, gasoline, and other supplies were rationed. People recycled items to be turned into weapons. The government convinced people to band together using propaganda campaigns.

Fighting on the Home Front Guided Notes	
What incentives did the U.S. government give businesses to encourage them to convert their factories to wartime production? (slide 1)	The government agreed to assume all of a businesses' costs of development and production. It also guaranteed a profit on the sale of what was produced.
How did job opportunities for women change during the war? (slide 2)	

Fighting on the Home Front Guided Notes

How did the government provide accommodations for working mothers? (slide 3)	
What roles did women play in the military during World War II? (slide 3)	
What were victory gardens and how did they help ensure troops abroad would be fed? (slide 4)	
What products did American citizens ration during World War II? (slide 4)	
What roles did African Americans play in the military? (slide 5)	
What were the goals of the Double V Campaign? (slide 5)	
Who were <i>braceros</i> ? (slide 6)	
What happened in the “zoot-suit riots”? (slide 6)	
What reason did the government give for the need to move Japanese Americans inland? (slide 7)	

Fighting on the Home Front Guided Notes

What hardships did interned Japanese Americans face? (slide 7)	
In what ways did Americans sacrifice to make sure there were enough food and supplies for troops? (slide 7)	
What were the goals of propaganda campaigns? (slide 8)	
Who was Rosie the Riveter? (slide 8)	

Invasion of Europe Summary

President Roosevelt believed that the United States should concentrate on defeating Germany before focusing on defeating Japan. The Allies achieved victory in several major European battles in 1942 and 1943. After gaining an advantage in Europe and stopping Axis territorial expansion, it was time to advance on Germany.

An important turning point in the fight against Germany was the Allied invasion of France on June 6, 1944, known as D-Day. During this invasion, Allied troops invaded German-occupied France by sea and successfully put Germany on the defensive. Germany, already fighting a war against the Soviet Union, now had to fight on the western front as well. Unable to keep up the fight on two fronts, the Germans were eventually defeated by the Allies in Europe.

The United States and Soviet soldiers were also able to stop Germany efforts to kill Jews and other minority groups. During the Holocaust, 6 million Jews were killed and a total of 11 million people died in Nazi death camps. The Nazis were convicted of war crimes during trials after the war.

In February 1945, the Yalta Conference took place between the leaders of the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain. During this meeting, held in Yalta in the Soviet Union, the leaders demanded Germany's surrender from the war and divided it into four zones of occupation, but many decisions were tabled for a later meeting.

Invasion of Europe Guided Notes	
What was meant by the "Europe First" strategy? (slide 1)	The "Europe First" strategy was Franklin Roosevelt's belief that Germany was a greater threat to freedom than Japan, and that the U.S. should concentrate its efforts on defeating Germany before defeating Japan.
Identify and list the major accomplishments of each of the following Allied military leaders: George Patton, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and Bernard Montgomery. (slide 1)	
Why was Hitler motivated to invade and conquer the Soviet Union? (slide 2)	

Invasion of Europe Guided Notes

How did Stalin's and Churchill's views about Italy differ? (slide 2)	
What happened on D-Day, the Allied invasion in France? (slide 3)	
How did the D-Day invasion create problems for Germany that eventually helped the Allies defeat Germany? (slide 3)	
How did the Battle of the Bulge help to ensure the defeat of Nazi Germany? (slide 4)	
What was the Holocaust and the "final solution"? (slide 5)	
How did the Allies respond to Nazi war crimes? (slide 5)	
What were the outcomes of the Yalta conference? (slide 6)	
Which countries controlled the four zones of occupation in Germany? (slide 6)	

War in the Pacific Summary

The World War II battles against Japan are collectively known as the Pacific Theater. The guiding philosophy behind defeating Japan was “island hopping”—a strategy in which the United States and its allies defeated the Japanese on many of the weaker-held islands. Island hopping was a means of getting closer to important targets in Japan.

The United States had developed nuclear bombs in the secret effort known as the Manhattan Project. In 1945, President Truman made the decision to drop these bombs on two Japanese cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Truman argued that the Japanese had been offered a chance to end the war civilly and rejected it, so it was time to release nuclear weapons. The weapons were incredibly destructive to the Japanese cities and eventually led to Japanese surrender.

World War II had a lasting legacy in terms of some of the inventions that came out of the war. The necessities of war led to the invention of new weaponry, technology, medical innovations, and everyday objects.

War in the Pacific Guided Notes	
What does the term “Pacific theater” refer to? (slide 1)	
What was the Bataan Death March and how did it strengthen anti-Japanese sentiments in the United States? (slide 1)	
Explain the United States’ strategy of “island hopping” as a means to defeat Japan. (slide 2)	“Island hopping” was a strategy in which American forces engaged in offensive battles across the Pacific. The strategy involved bypassing the strongest-held islands and instead focusing on defeating the enemy’s weakest-held islands. The Americans were able to use this strategy to help them get closer to the important targets of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.
What was the Manhattan Project? (slide 3)	

War in the Pacific Guided Notes

What were President Truman's reasons for dropping the bomb? (slide 3)	
What were some of the effects of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki? (slide 4)	
What were three inventions that were developed during World War II? (slide 6)	



Unit Review – Key Words

Describe the following key words from the World War II unit. Your descriptions should be as detailed as possible. Include names, dates, and relevant facts related to each key word. Be sure to explain why each person or term is important.

Remember to download and save this PDF before writing.

Aggression and Appeasement

Key Word	Description
Adolph Hitler	Adolph Hitler was chancellor and führer (leader) of Germany from 1933 to 1945.
appeasement	
Axis	
Benito Mussolini	
Emperor Hirohito	
German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact	
Joseph Stalin	
League of Nations	
militarization	
Munich Pact	
Nanjing Massacre	

Key Word	Description
rearmament	
totalitarian	
Treaty of Versailles	

Neutrality and Engagement

Key Word	Description
Allies	The Allies—also known as the Allied Powers—were Great Britain, France, the Soviet Union, the United States, and other countries that allied with one another to oppose the Axis in World War II.
Atlantic Charter	
Battle of Britain	
blitzkrieg	
Winston Churchill	
Evacuation of Dunkirk	
Four Freedoms Speech	
intervention	
invasion of Poland	
isolationism	

Key Word	Description
lend-lease program	
Maginot line	
Neutrality Acts	
Pearl Harbor	
Tōjō Hideki	

Fighting on the Home Front

Key Word	Description
Double V Campaign	The Double V Campaign was an effort aimed at achieving victory in the war overseas, as well as in the war against racism and inequality for African Americans.
Eleanor Roosevelt	
Executive Order 9066	
internment camp	
propaganda	
rationing	
Rosie the Riveter	

Invasion of Europe

Key Word	Description
101st Airborne	The 101st Airborne was an American infantry division important for its actions on D-Day and in the Battle of the Bulge.
amphibious landings	
Battle of the Bulge	
Bernard Montgomery	
D-Day	
Dwight D. Eisenhower	
Erwin Rommel	
“Europe First” strategy	
“final solution”	
George S. Patton	
Holocaust	
Normandy	

War in the Pacific

Key Word	Description
Bataan Death March	The Bataan Death March was a forced march of American and Filipino prisoners of war by the Japanese in World War II. During the march, as many as 650 American and 10,000 Filipino prisoners of war died, which intensified anti-Japanese feelings among Americans.
island hopping	
Manhattan Project	
Pacific Theater	



Unit Review – Key Questions

Before the unit assessment, answer the following key questions. Each question contains a tip to help you locate the material in the course. You may want to add your own note in the first column about the location of the information. Write the answers in your own words, and test your memory of each answer by covering the answer column while quizzing yourself. Remember that some content may be presented in a multimedia presentation, graphic, or other resource. Refer to the transcripts or text versions for written versions of that content.

Key Question / Location	Answer in your own words
What aggressive actions were taken by the nations who eventually formed the Axis powers? (Aggression and Appeasement)	German dictator Adolph Hitler wanted to expand Germany by aggressively invading other countries. Meanwhile, Japan also sought to expand its empire through military action in China. Germany disliked Communist forces from the Soviet Union that might get in their way. Japan disliked Communist forces that were seeking control of China. Due to their mutual hatred of Communism, Japan and Germany formed an alliance in 1936. When Italy joined this alliance in 1937, the three countries officially became the Axis Powers.
What were two failed efforts to appease Hitler in the 1930s? (Aggression and Appeasement)	
How did the United States try to remain neutral while still providing aid to allies fighting the war in Europe? (Neutrality and Engagement)	
What event was the tipping point for the United States' entry into World War II? (Neutrality and Engagement)	

Key Question / Location	Answer in your own words
<p>How did the war change the U.S. economy? (Fighting on the Home Front)</p>	
<p>What racial tensions existed in the United States during World War II? (Fighting on the Home Front)</p>	
<p>Describe the events of D-Day and the consequences the invasion had for Germany. (Invasion of Europe)</p>	
<p>What was Hitler’s “final solution” and the Allies’ responses to the Holocaust and Nazi war crimes? (Invasion of Europe)</p>	
<p>What was the Yalta Conference and who were the Big Three? (Invasion of Europe)</p>	
<p>How did the strategy of “island hopping” help the Allies defeat Japan? (War in the Pacific)</p>	
<p>Why did the United States decide to drop nuclear bombs on Japan? (War in the Pacific)</p>	