

ALL OF OURS ★ TO FIGHT FOR ★

AMERICANS IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

ACTIVITIES

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

THE GREAT DEBATE ABOUT U.S. INTERVENTION IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Involvement in foreign affairs has been a matter of debate throughout American history. Isolationists insist that the United States should avoid involvement in the conflicts of other nations. On the other hand, Internationalists or Interventionists believe that the United States should play an active role in world affairs.

Read the two views on American foreign policy circa 1940.

In Support of Isolationism: George Bender, Congressional Representative from Ohio, 1940

[source: http://www.lancefuhrer.com/isolationism_and_internationalis.htm]



The dangers of American participation in another war must not be ignored. Every consideration, self-interest, wisdom, the need for a strong moral influence towards peace, makes it imperative that the United States keep out of this war. Precisely as we express our dislike of dictatorship everywhere without seeking to crush it through armed force, so must Americans view dictatorship in Germany. Are we to force a democracy on the German people? In far-off Asia, in Russia, in Siam, in India, human liberties are also denied. We do not rush in to liberate those who are oppressed. We do not brand their taskmasters as “aggressors.” We dislike what we see, but we refuse to rush in where angels fear to tread.

We Americans must not deceive ourselves into a mistaken belief that it is our role in world history to bring about peace and harmony through the use of the sword. Our task is to demonstrate by example that the program of democracy can work effectively.

Yet the demand is rising from those who refuse to learn. “Now is the time,” they tell us, “to intervene. Now we can walk into Europe to strike a decisive blow for human freedom. We must crush the Germanic monster to keep the world safe for democracy!” The words sound all too familiar. They were the slogan of the last war. Are we to be dragged into foreign lands again on the basis of 1917? Are we to shed the blood of our youth on foreign battlefields once more to restore to order a chaotic continent?

Our political history represents a determination to turn our back upon European entanglements. It is a complete repudiation of the European technique of government and the European approach to the solution of world problems. We believe in conference; Europe believes in conflict. We believe in settling disputes by discussion; Europe believes in armament.”

Questions to Consider

- ★ According to George Bender, what should the United States demonstrate by example in world affairs?
- ★ What argument does Bender make regarding a similarity between the rhetoric used in 1917 and the situation in 1940 in Europe?
- ★ How does Bender believe the United States’ solution of world problems differs from that of Europe?

THE GREAT DEBATE ABOUT U.S. INTERVENTION IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

In Support of Internationalism: Secretary of State Cordell Hull, 1938

[source: <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/interwar/hull34.htm>]



What is at stake today, throughout the world, is the future of the fundamental principles, which must be the foundation of international order. Those who contend that we can and should surrender these principles clearly show that they have little idea of the extent to which developments in any part of the world of today inevitably affect conditions in other parts of the world. The triumph of this isolationist viewpoint would carry the whole world back to the conditions of medieval chaos. Such is the fate to which extreme isolationists—all those who say that under no circumstances should we insist upon any rights beyond our own territorial waters—would commit this country and the world.

The momentous question is whether the doctrine of force shall become enthroned once more and bring in its wake international disorder and a return to barbarism. Or will this and other peaceful nations work unceasingly to promote and preserve law, order, morality, and justice as the unshakable bases of civilized international relations?

We might turn our backs on the whole problem and decline the responsibility and labor of contributing to its solution. But let us have no illusions as to what such a course of action would involve for us as a nation. It would mean a voluntary abandonment of some of the most important things that have made us a great nation.

It would mean a slavish retreat before those forces, which we have, throughout our whole national history, consistently opposed. It would mean that our security would be menaced as other nations came to believe that, either through fear or unwillingness we did not intend to protect our national interests abroad, but intended to abandon them at the first sign of danger. The sphere of our international relationships would shrink and shrivel, until we would stand practically alone among the nations, a hermit state. Thrown back upon our own resources, we would find it necessary to reorganize our entire social and economic structure. The process would mean less production and at higher costs; lower living standards; economic distress to wage earners and farmers; and the dole, on an ever-increasing scale.

All this we would be doing in pursuit of the notion that by so doing we would avoid war. But would these policies really give us any such assurance?

Reason and experience definitely point to the contrary. We may seek to withdraw from participation in world affairs, but we cannot thereby withdraw from the world itself. Isolationism is not a means to security; it is a fruitful source of insecurity.”

Questions to Consider

- ★ Name two ways that Hull believed a policy of isolationism would affect the United States.
- ★ Explain what Hull meant when he said, “Isolationism is not a means to security; it is a fruitful source of insecurity.”
- ★ Drawing from the two arguments you have just read, choose a viewpoint and write several paragraphs defending your choice.

THE GREAT DEBATE ABOUT U.S. INTERVENTION IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Dr. Seuss Takes on Charles Lindbergh

Charles A. Lindbergh, popular hero of American aviation, was a champion of isolationism and a prominent member of the America First Committee, organized in September 1940. In this 1941 speech, he urged his listeners to avoid entanglements with Europe.



We are assembled here tonight because we believe in an independent destiny for America. Such a destiny does not mean that we will build a wall around our country and isolate ourselves from contact with the rest of the world. But it does mean that the future of America will not be tied to these eternal wars in Europe. It means that American boys will not be sent across the ocean to die so that England or Germany or France or Spain may dominate the other nations.

An independent American destiny means, on the one hand, that our soldiers will not have to fight everybody in the world who prefers some other system of life to ours. On the other hand, it means that we will fight anybody and everybody who attempts to interfere with our hemisphere.” [source: Courtesy of the Michigan State University, G. Robert Vincent Voice Library]

Before he became a noted children’s author, Dr. Seuss (Theodor Geisel) was a political cartoonist who examined events and issues that concerned Americans during the Second World War. The cartoon, “The Isolationist,” was directed at Lindbergh and appeared July 16, 1941. [source: <http://orpheus.ucsd.edu/speccoll/dspolitic/Frame.htm>] You may refer to the Cartoon Analysis Worksheet, designed and developed by the education staff of the National Archives and Records Administration. [http://www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/lessons/analysis_worksheets/cartoon.html]

Questions to consider

- ★ Discuss Lindbergh’s ideas about the role the United States should play in the world.
- ★ How does Dr. Seuss craft an attack on Lindbergh’s position?
- ★ How does Dr. Seuss employ humor to make his point?

Extension Activity

During the 1960s the debate between isolationists and interventionists became particularly intense as the United States became more deeply involved in the war in Vietnam. Recently, similar debates have centered on the role the United States should play in regional conflicts in Central America, Africa, the former Yugoslavia, and the Middle East, especially Iraq.

Take a position that either defends the isolationist or the interventionist point of view on any of these more contemporary international situations.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

MILITARY SERVICE: Adversity and Opportunity

The Tuskegee Airmen were a unique and elite group of African American pilots who flew in the European theater, escorting bombers on their missions. They were segregated and lived in separate units, rarely coming into contact with the white pilots they escorted to safety. Read the following excerpts from the testimonies of pilots Victor Hancock and Roscoe Brown. Then write a few sentences about discrimination in the United States military and on the home front during the Second World War. What do you think motivated men like Roscoe and Victor to serve?



When Japan bombed us, many of us volunteered. Now the problem with that is that we were volunteering to save democracy abroad and, particularly some of our Jewish and Russian brothers and sisters who were being oppressed, and yet many of us were being oppressed in this country as badly or worse. Lynchings were taking place, nasty discrimination. You can't really behave this way in 2001, but in small towns they would make blacks walk off the sidewalk. Having said that, there were many white people in the South who recognized this was wrong, but again it was a status thing. Many of them had maids and people who worked for them and tried to help them.

It was really an irony that we were fighting for democracy in an army that was segregated, in a nation that in the southern part was segregated. It really was just a total paradox.” —Roscoe Brown



Transportation at that time in St. Louis was not segregated. You could ride anywhere on any bus or street; you didn't have to ride in the front or back; no segregation that way. Downtown you could not buy any food in most of the large department stores. My sister and my mother had gone shopping downtown and my sister was hungry and she said, “Mom I'm hungry, let's get something to eat.” And Mom would say, “Well, you know, let's wait 'til we get home.” So that's the way older people more or less erased, or avoided, a confrontation of any kind during segregation, even with their own kids.” —Victor Hancock

Using the website of the Black Wings: African American Pioneer Aviators

[<http://www.nasm.si.edu/interact/blackwings/hoverview/credit.html>] research one of the following individuals: Bessie Coleman, William J. Powell, Willa Brown, C. Alfred “Chief” Anderson, or Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. Present the turning points, rather than creating a biographical summary of the aviator's life, major decisions, or most significant events.

Independent Research

Who was Doris (“Dorie”) Miller, and what role did he play in the attack at Pearl Harbor? How do his experiences reflect discrimination in the armed forces?

After Pearl Harbor, of the 1,600 reporters who were permitted to wear the armband emblazoned with a “C” (for war correspondent), 127 were women. The Second World War opened many doors for American women. Some doors would close again; others remained barely ajar. But the “gal correspondents” paved the way and emerged from those muddy, bloody campaigns having proved that in war reporting, women were equal to men. One of the most determined was *Life* magazine's Margaret Bourke-White, a photojournalist. Research her life and examine her photographs. How do you think the fact that she was a woman influenced her work?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

MILITARY SERVICE: Adversity and Opportunity

The 442nd Regimental Combat Team/100th Artillery Battalion is the most highly decorated unit in U.S. military history, also known as the “Lost Battalion” for its large number of casualties. It was composed entirely of Japanese Americans, who fought valiantly in the European theater, even as many of their families remained in the detention camps stateside. They were one of the first units to liberate the Nazi camp at Dachau.

Research how the Nisei (second generation Japanese Americans) were able to enlist, as a means to leave relocation camps, and serve in the armed forces. Daniel K. Inouye, a Japanese American who served as part of the 442nd and was not relocated, was keenly aware of racist attitudes toward Japanese Americans. Here is a quote from an interview about his experience in the service: *“We knew we were expendable. We knew that we were so good that we were requested by other units to serve as shock troops or assault troops. That’s what we were. We were put from one area to another. And after the Lost Battalion we went down to the South to regroup ourselves and get replacements.”* What does this quote reveal about the 442nd? Research Daniel K. Inouye. How did he continue to serve the United States? Why is the 442nd referred to as the “Purple Heart Battalion”?

Read the online article “Semper Fidelis, Code Talkers” by Adam Jevic.

[http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/winter_2001_navajo_code_talkers.html]

What role did the Navajo Code Talkers play in the Second World War? How were the Navajo able to maintain total secrecy? Who was Philip Johnston, and what was his connection to the Navajo? Describe how the Navajo created a unique code. When was the code declassified, and when were the Navajo Code Talkers formally recognized? Major Howard Conner, a signal officer from the 5th Marine Division on Iwo Jima, remarked to Johnston after the war, “Were it not for the Navajo, the marines never would have taken Iwo Jima.” Conduct research on the Battle of Iwo Jima to determine the validity of this statement. The Code Talkers provided a vital service in the field, not behind the lines, but rather, on the front lines.



In 1945 (Feb 19) All I know is that we left Saipan at night, heading north. They put me in with a reconnaissance company. We went on ahead to Iwo Jima—west side beach—no obstacle. We went up ahead to blow up obstacles (but there was nothing there). Early in the morning we saw Mount Suribachi—looming and our ships behind us as far as you could see—steaming ahead. With this much we were sure we would secure the island in one day.

I was wrong—it took over a month to secure that island. There were so many marines on the beach—it was a chaotic affair—ships were beached. I found out that the Japanese let us land—when we went inland that’s when they opened fire—you don’t have to aim—point a gun and you could kill a marine.”—Navajo Code Talker Sam Tso

What does Sam Tso’s quote reveal about the battle for Iwo Jima?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

MILITARY SERVICE: In Their Own Voices

The following quotations have been selected from the *Ours to Fight For* exhibition, mostly from the “Other Voices” interactive component. The quotations represent six themes that illustrate the commonalities and differences between the experiences of the individuals. Each represents one of the ethnic minority groups that contributed to the war effort. General questions follow.

Prejudice

“

Well, one disappointment I had, is . . . I just got discharged and I wanted to go get a haircut there, and they said, “We don’t cut Japs’ hair.” And that was the worst feeling for me at that time.” —Rick S., Japanese American

“

We were volunteering to save democracy abroad and, particularly some of our Jewish and Russian brothers and sisters who were being oppressed, and yet many of us were being oppressed in this country.” —Roscoe Brown, African American

Why I Served

“

As a Jew, it was Hitler and me. That’s the way I pictured the war.” —Theodore Diamond, U.S. Army Air Force

“

I decided to join the armed forces and fight the Japanese to get even.” —Sam Smith, Navajo Code Talker

“

So when I came along and wanted to join the service, he said, “You’re not going to change anything.” And I kept saying, “Yes we will. We’ll beat Hitler and we’ll show them what was going on.” —Lee Archer, African American pilot

Discrimination in the Service

“

But it was really an irony that we were fighting for democracy in an army that was segregated.”

—Roscoe Brown, African American

“

I don’t know which was worse: being locked up in camp or going off to war.” —Masao Watanabe, Japanese American infantryman

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

MILITARY SERVICE: Camaraderie and Special Assignments



There was a camaraderie. We enjoyed each other's company; we tried to help each other. . . . It's my country. I'm Chinese but this is my motherland, my fatherland. —Jesse L. Yip, Chinese American WAC

War and Identity



Going into the army just opened up a whole different world for me. —Manuel Diaz, Puerto Rican American, U.S. Army Signal Corps



I'm proud to be Puerto Rican, but I'm proud to be an American too. —Carlos Antonio Rodriguez, Puerto Rican American, Merchant Marines

Questions to Consider

- ★ Why do you think that these five themes were selected by the Museum's curators?
- ★ What interesting similarities strike you when reading these quotes?

Follow-up Assignment

Pick one quote that you find particularly moving and write a paragraph explaining why this quote is powerful. Many different communities of Americans contributed to the war effort. Select a group not represented in this selection and research and write about that group's participation in the war effort.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

MILITARY SERVICE: V-Mail Activity

Loneliness and homesickness were felt by all American servicemen and women. Mail was the primary means of communication during the war. The government created “Victory Mail” or “V-Mail.” V-Mail letters were microfilmed versions of full-size paper sheets. This process helped reduce the size of overseas shipments and speed delivery time. All mail from military personnel was censored during the war. Officers could censor their own mail; enlisted men had to have their superior officers read their mail for any “sensitive” material—things that, if the letter were intercepted by the enemy, would give clues as to troop location, military strength, and upcoming military engagements.

Read the V-Mail reproduced in the following website.

[http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0800/stories/0801_0120_01.html]

Answer the Following Questions

- ★ What factual information is in the letter?
- ★ What is the purpose of the letter?
- ★ What information in the letter places it in a particular time period?
- ★ Does the letter provide details about the writer’s personal situation?
- ★ What inferences, generalizations, and conclusions might be drawn from the letter?
- ★ Does it change how you react to the letter to know that William Green died only a month after this letter was written?
- ★ What clues in the letter suggest that it has been censored? Self-censored?

Follow-up Assignment

Assume the identity of a man or woman serving in the armed forces during the Second World War and use the V-Mail template on the following website: [<http://www.rlc.dcccd.edu/enrich/cordstud/vmail.pdf>]. Write a letter home to your parents and/or girlfriend or boyfriend in which you share your experiences and your feelings about the war, etc. Keep in mind that any sensitive materials would be censored.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

THE HOME FRONT: ARSENAL OF DEMOCRACY

Life on the Home Front During the Second World War

“Four Freedoms” Posters

President Franklin D. Roosevelt was a gifted communicator. He was in favor of having the United States play an active role in the conflict in Europe. As a result of Hitler’s military aggression, one by one the Western European nations came under Nazi domination. In his State of the Union Address to Congress on January 6, 1941, FDR delivered his historic “Four Freedoms” speech in which he presented a vision for the American ideals of individual liberties to be extended throughout the world. In his speech he spoke to Congress and the American people of the necessity of war and expressed the ideological aims of the conflict. Eloquently, he appealed to quintessentially American beliefs about freedom.

Read and discuss the following excerpt from Roosevelt’s speech.



We look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms. The first is freedom of speech and expression—everywhere in the world. The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world. The third is freedom from want—everywhere in the world. The fourth is freedom from fear—anywhere in the world.”

Questions to Consider

- ★ What purpose does propaganda serve in times of war?
- ★ What effect might Roosevelt’s speech have had on Americans who listened to it in 1941?

Examine the “Four Freedoms” posters created by the artist Norman Rockwell. These can be accessed at [http://www.archives.gov/exhibit_hall/powers_of_persuasion/four_freedoms/four_freedoms.html].

Individually research, or as a class discuss the following:

- ★ Who was Norman Rockwell?
- ★ How does Rockwell convey the abstract concepts from Roosevelt’s speech in each of the four posters?

You may refer to the Poster Analysis Worksheet, designed and developed by the education staff of the National Archives and Records Administration.

[http://www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/lessons/analysis_worksheets/poster.html]

Define “propaganda” and explain its uses. Can you think of any other examples of propaganda? Do you think that Rockwell’s posters are examples of propaganda? Explain your answer.

Follow-up Activities

Using what you have learned about propaganda, work in groups to create a poster or write a song about a current social, political, or economic issue that might be considered propaganda.

- ★ If you were commissioned to design a “Freedom from Fear” poster today, what issues would you depict?
- ★ Select a contemporary example of propaganda and dissect its messages, use of text, and imagery.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

THE HOME FRONT: Document Analysis—Executive Order No. 9066

The following is an excerpt from Executive Order No. 9066, issued by Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942.



NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States, and Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy, I hereby authorize and direct the Secretary of War, and the Military Commanders whom he may from time to time designate, whenever he or any designated Commander deems such actions necessary or desirable, to prescribe military areas in such places and of such extent as he or the appropriate Military Commanders may determine, from which any or all persons may be excluded, and with such respect to which, the right of any person to enter, remain in, or leave shall be subject to whatever restrictions the Secretary of War or the appropriate Military Commander may impose in his discretion. The Secretary of War is hereby authorized to provide for residents of any such area who are excluded therefrom, such transportation, food, shelter, and other accommodations as may be necessary, in the judgment of the Secretary of War or the said Military Commander, and until other arrangements are made, to accomplish the purpose of this order.”

Questions to Consider

- ★ What does President Roosevelt claim is the basis for his authority to issue Executive Order No. 9066?
- ★ The right of any person to enter, remain in, or leave shall be subject to what?
- ★ What accommodations are to be provided to residents who are excluded from specific areas?
- ★ On whom did this document have the biggest impact and why?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

THE HOME FRONT: Japanese American Internment

Fred Korematsu was a Nisei who refused to report for evacuation. He believed that the evacuation orders violated his rights under the United States Constitution. As Korematsu's attorney, you must make a strong case for your client. Below are the constitutional amendments that you must analyze. Examine each one and then write down the amendment that you believe is violated by Executive Order No. 9066. Once you have identified that amendment, write a "brief" (summary of a legal argument), to be presented to the Supreme Court.

Amendment I



Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

What is the purpose of this amendment?

Amendment III



No soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law."

What is the purpose of this amendment?

Amendment XIV



Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

What is the purpose of this amendment?

Differing Viewpoints: Korematsu v. United States, 1944

The forced internment of Japanese Americans produced strong feelings on both sides of the issue. In the case of *Korematsu v. United States*, attorneys for the claimant argued that the President and Congress went beyond their powers by implementing exclusion and restricting the rights of Americans of Japanese descent. Read both the majority opinion by Justice Hugo Black [<http://www.tourolaw.edu/patch/Korematsu/>] and the dissenting opinion by Justice Frank Murphy [<http://www.tourolaw.edu/patch/Korematsu/MURPHY.html>] in *Korematsu v. United States*, 1944.

Follow-up Questions

- ★ How does each of these viewpoints address the issue of constitutional rights?
- ★ What different assumptions do the justices make about Japanese Americans on the West Coast?
- ★ According to Justice Black, how does the role of the government toward its citizens change during wartime?
- ★ How does Black defend the actions taken toward Japanese Americans against the charge of racism?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

THE HOME FRONT: Japanese American Internment

- ★ According to Justice Murphy, what deference should be shown to the judgment of military authorities?
- ★ Which constitutional rights does Murphy say were violated by the war relocation program?
- ★ What support does Murphy give for implicating racism as the reason behind the detentions?

Photograph and Poster Analysis

You may choose to refer to the Photograph Analysis Worksheet, designed and developed by the education staff of the National Archives and Records Administration.

[http://www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/lessons/analysis_worksheets/photo.html]

This activity is adapted from *Nothing to Fear but Fear Itself* by Gail Desler, Elk Grove Unified School District, Elk Grove, California, and appears in [<http://memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/99/fear/intro.html>].

Look at the photograph of the Japanese American child who is being evacuated with his parents to the Owens Valley Relocation Center. [<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/99/fear/intro.html>]

Questions to Consider

- ★ Is this photograph taken indoors or outdoors?
- ★ What objects and/or structures do you see?
- ★ How many people do you see? Men? Women? Children?
- ★ How are they dressed?
- ★ Are these people family members?
- ★ How do they seem to relate to each other?
- ★ What emotions do you see or sense? Anger? Fear? Confusion? Sadness? Joy?
- ★ What is the setting?
- ★ Who do you think took this photo?
- ★ Why do you think this photo was taken?
- ★ What title would you give this photo?

Map of Japanese Internment Camps

Examine the map of the assembly centers and Japanese relocation or internment camps.

[source: <http://www.owensvalleyhistory.com/manzanar3/page13.html>]

Follow-up Questions

- ★ From which coast were the people of Japanese descent relocated during the Second World War?
- ★ Which internment camps were farthest east? Why do you think the camps were located in these areas?
- ★ Which states had the most internment camps?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

THE HOME FRONT: Japanese American Internment

Research Activity

Select one of the ten Japanese American internment sites operated by the United States during the Second World War.

- ★ Gila River, Arizona
- ★ Granada, Colorado
- ★ Heart Mountain, Wyoming
- ★ Jerome, Arkansas
- ★ Rohwer, Arkansas
- ★ Manzanar, California
- ★ Poston, Arizona
- ★ Minidoka, California
- ★ Topaz, Utah
- ★ Tule Lake, California

Research where the camp was located and what the living conditions were like for those interned.

Poetry Analysis

The poem “That Damned Fence” was written anonymously and circulated at the Poston, Arizona camp.

[source: <http://www.library.arizona.edu/images/jpamer/poem.html>]

Read the excerpt from the poem and answer the questions that follow.

That Damned Fence

*With nowhere to go and nothing to do,
We feel terrible, lonesome, and blue:
That damned fence is driving us crazy,
Destroying our youth and making us lazy.
Imprisoned in here for a long, long time,
We know we're punished—though we've committed no crime,
Our thoughts are gloomy and enthusiasm damp,
To be locked up in a concentration camp.
Loyalty we know, and patriotism we feel,
To sacrifice our utmost was our ideal,
To fight for our country, and die, perhaps;
But we're here because we happen to be Japs.*

Please answer the following questions and cite the specific lines that support your statements.

- ★ What conclusions can be made regarding the conditions in the relocation camp?
- ★ What violations of civil liberties can be inferred?
- ★ How does the poet feel about the United States?
- ★ How does the poet feel about his internment?

Historical Fiction

Baseball Saved Us, written by Ken Mochizuki and illustrated by Dom Lee, is a story for young readers about a young Japanese American boy named Shorty who is forced to leave his home and move to a relocation camp for the duration of the Second World War.

After reading the story, discuss the meaning of the title. Write and illustrate a picture book of your own written for students in the second or third grade. Your story should reflect what you have learned about the internment experience. The story should depict the experience of internment or, alternatively, the experience of a young American boy or girl of another ethnic group during the Second World War.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

HOME FRONT: March on Washington Movement

Read the following excerpts from speeches made by A. Philip Randolph in 1942.

Reading A



We know that our fate is tied up with the fate of the democratic way of life. And so, out of the depths of our hearts, a cry goes out for the triumph of the United Nations [during the Second World War, the Allies were referred to as the United Nations]. But . . . unless this war sounds the death knell to the old Anglo-American empire systems, the hapless story of which is one of exploitation for the profit and power of a monopoly capitalist economy, it will have been fought in vain. Our aim then must not only be to defeat Nazism, fascism, and militarism on the battlefield, but to win the peace, for democracy, for freedom and the Brotherhood of Man without regard to his pigmentation, land of his birth or the God of his fathers. . . .

White citizens . . . should [not] be taken into the March on Washington Movement as members. The essential value of an all-Negro movement such as the March on Washington is that it helps to create faith by Negroes in Negroes. It develops a sense of self-reliance with Negroes depending on Negroes in vital matters. It helps to break down the slave psychology and inferiority complex in Negroes which comes and is nourished with Negroes relying on white people for direction and support.” [source: <http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/historyonline/us35.cfm>]

Reading B



The March on Washington Movement is essentially a movement of the people. It is all Negro and pro-Negro, but not for that reason anti-white or anti-Semitic, or anti-Catholic, or anti-foreign, or anti-labor. Its major weapon is the nonviolent demonstration of Negro mass power. Negro leadership has united back of its drive for jobs and justice. “Whether Negroes should march on Washington, and if so, when?” will be the focus of a forthcoming national conference. For the plan of a protest march has not been abandoned. Its purpose would be to demonstrate that American Negroes are in deadly earnest, and all out for their full rights. No power on earth can cause them today to abandon their fight to wipe out every vestige of second-class citizenship and the dual standards that plague them.

A community is democratic only when the humblest and weakest person can enjoy the highest civil, economic, and social rights that the biggest and most powerful possess. To trample on these rights of both Negroes and poor whites is so commonplace in the South that it takes readily to anti-social, anti-labor, anti-Semitic and anti-Catholic propaganda. It was because of laxness in enforcing the Weimar Constitution in republican Germany that Nazism made headway. Oppression of the Negroes in the United States, like suppression of the Jews in Germany, may open the way for a fascist dictatorship. By fighting for their rights now, American Negroes are helping to make America a moral and spiritual arsenal of democracy. Their fight against the poll tax, against lynch law, segregation, and Jim Crow, their fight for economic, political, and social equality, thus becomes part of the global war for freedom.” [source:

http://occawlonline.pearsoned.com/bookbind/pubbooks/divine5e/chapter27/medialib/primarysources1_27_2.html]

Questions to Consider

- ★ Who was A. Philip Randolph?
- ★ How does Randolph describe the status of African Americans during the war years?
- ★ What was the purpose of a march on Washington?
- ★ What were the reasons for limiting leadership? Do you agree with his proposal to limit leadership to blacks only?
- ★ Find out if a march on Washington actually took place during the Second World War.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

HOME FRONT: Mexican Braceros

In October 2002, the House of Representatives recognized and honored Mexican braceros by passing a resolution introduced by Congressman Doug Ose (R-Sacramento). The braceros were Mexican laborers who worked on farms and railways during the Second World War, a time of severe labor shortage. “Men and women worked tirelessly for this country during a challenging period for the United States and they deserve to be recognized,” said Ose. “This resolution calls attention to their contributions to our country. It was through their hard work that our agricultural economy was able to survive and our railroads were able to safely and effectively transport food, medicine, equipment, and soldiers for the war.” In August 1942, the United States and Mexico signed an historic treaty to recruit and hire thousands of Mexicans to work in this country, the first of whom arrived in September 1942. Although the farm labor bracero program lasted until the end of 1964, railroad braceros were forced to return to Mexico when the Second World War ended.

The New York State Archives developed an educational module, “Keeping the New York State Home Front Going: Mexican Braceros in the Second World War,” which challenges students to write an essay in which they describe the Second World War braceros program for railroads. The website includes eight documents with information about who the braceros were, what type of work they did on the railroads, their working conditions, and the position of the United States government with regard to their employment.

[source:http://www.archives.nysed.gov/projects/legacies/CapDistrict/CD_Latino/questions/MexBracerosinWWIIBQ.pdf]

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

HOME FRONT: Women in the Second World War

You may wish to refer to the Poster Analysis Worksheet, developed by the education staff of the National Archives and Records Administration. [http://www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/lessons/analysis_worksheets/poster.html]

In order to complete this exercise, you will need to view the following two posters:

Recruitment poster for the WAVES (Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service)

[source: <http://www.snapshotsofthepast.com/enlistinthewavesusnavywwiiwarposter.html>]

“Rosie the Riveter” poster

[source:http://www.archives.gov/exhibit_hall/powers_of_persuasion/its_a_womans_war_too/its_a_womans_war_too.html]

Answer these questions after carefully examining the two posters and doing a little research on the varied ways women served during the Second World War:

- ★ Who is the intended audience for each poster?
- ★ How are women portrayed in each poster?
- ★ What features of each poster might attract women during the war?
- ★ How do you think the pictures of these women differed from how women were depicted before the war?

Follow-up Activity

You are the managing editor of your local community newspaper in 1942. Write an editorial about mothers joining the workforce during the war. Give your opinion about this issue and discuss some of the benefits and hardships working mothers face.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

HOME FRONT: Popular Music of the War Era

The popular music of the 1940s, especially jazz and jazz-influenced songs, reflected the feeling of a nation at war. Patriotic Americans eagerly listened to their radios and phonographs to music that supported the war effort. Pro-war songs included “We Did It Before and We Can Do It Again” and “Kiss the Boys Goodbye.” “I’ll be Seeing You,” sung by Bing Crosby, and “Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy,” by the Andrews Sisters, were both very popular. This music helped lift the spirits of servicemen and brought popular Hollywood and musical celebrities together to perform for the troops.

- ★ Research the effect that the Second World War had on popular music and how popular music contributed to the war effort.
- ★ Prepare a song lyric analysis of a Second World War–era popular song. You can access lyrics to many popular songs at various websites on the Internet. One good source is the Belfer Audio Laboratory and Archive at Syracuse University: [<http://libwww.syr.edu/digital/images/b/Belfer78/>]. Try to find recordings of the songs you selected. A model analysis could include some of the following elements: ways in which women are portrayed, stereotypes that appear in the lyrics, the song’s political agenda, or words that reinforce or challenge the American values of the period.

For an example we selected “Angels of Mercy,” which was written after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. The song was dedicated to the American Red Cross nurses who went to help wounded victims overseas. The lyrics conjure up images of women marching into the billowing smoke to help those in need. These strong, fearless nurses are portrayed as angels of mercy. Here the “darkest night” refers to the night following the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

From Angels of Mercy (1941)

Composed by Irving Berlin

Performed by Glenn Miller and his orchestra

*Angels of mercy, there’s so much to do
The heavens are gray overhead*

*Angels of mercy, they’re calling to you
So march with your crosses of red*

*March where the darkness shuts out the light
March where there is no dawn*

*Angels of mercy, the world’s covered with night
But your mercy goes marching on
Angels of mercy thru darkest night
Your mercy goes marching on*

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

HOME FRONT: Buying War Bonds

The following set of questions relates to the poster “Don’t Let That Shadow Touch Them” by Lawrence B. Smith, 1942. [http://www.archives.gov/exhibit_hall/powers_of_persuasion/warning/warning.html] Refer to the Poster Analysis Worksheet developed by the education staff of the National Archives and Records Administration. [http://www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/lessons/analysis_worksheets/poster.html]

- ★ What are war bonds, and why did the United States government issue them?

Review the poster “Don’t Let That Shadow Touch Them”:

- ★ Identify and describe the symbols you see.
- ★ Explain the meaning of the slogan “Don’t Let That Shadow Touch Them.”
- ★ To what segments of American society was this poster designed to appeal?
- ★ What emotions do you think this poster is designed to evoke?
- ★ Why do you think that posters are an effective means of communicating a political message? What other forms of political outreach exist today?

Follow-up Activity

Imagine that you have been commissioned to design a poster to encourage Americans to buy war bonds during the Second World War. Design a poster and be prepared to explain your use of symbolism and text.

Rationing

In groups of four or five work together to make a list of items that were rationed, banned, or in short supply during the Second World War. Using this list draw pictures or gather these items for a classroom display. For each item, make an exhibition label that explains why it was rationed or banned. Lastly, create a wall panel that explains why the government introduced price controls and rationing during the war years.

Hint: Some of the items you could include are silk stockings, automobiles, fuel, rubber, bicycles, typewriters, sugar, shoes, etc.)

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

HOME FRONT: African Americans During the Second World War

Discussion about the segregation of the armed forces during the war aroused strong feelings on both sides. Below are examples of two opposite viewpoints. [source: resource materials accompanying Prentice Hall textbook, *America: Pathways to the Present*, 2002]

African American labor and civil rights leader, A. Philip Randolph, “Why Should We March?” (November 1942)



Though I have found no Negroes who want to see the United Nations lose this war, I have found many who, before the war ends, want to see the stuffing knocked out of white supremacy and of empire over subject peoples. American Negroes, involved as we are in the general issues of the conflict, are confronted not with a choice but with the challenge both to win democracy for ourselves at home and to help win the war for democracy the world over.

There is no escape from the horns of this dilemma. There ought not to be escape. For if the war for democracy is not won abroad, the fight for democracy cannot be won at home. If this war cannot be won for the white peoples, it will not be won for the darker races.

Conversely, if freedom and equality are not vouchsafed for the peoples of color, the war for democracy will not be won. Unless this double-barreled thesis is accepted and applied, the darker races will never wholeheartedly fight for the victory of the United Nations. That is why those familiar with the thinking of the American Negro have sensed his lack of enthusiasm, whether among the educated or uneducated, rich or poor, professional or nonprofessional, religious or secular, rural or urban, north, south, east or west.

That is why questions are being raised by Negroes in church, labor union and fraternal society; in poolroom, barbershop, schoolroom, hospital, hairdressing parlor; on college campus, railroad, and bus. One can hear such questions asked as these: What have Negroes to fight for? What's the difference between Hitler and that “cracker” [Governor Eugene Talmadge of Georgia]? Why has a man got to be Jim Crowed to die for democracy? If you haven't got democracy yourself, how can you carry it to somebody else?

What are the reasons for this state of mind? The answer is: discrimination, segregation, Jim Crow. Witness the navy, the army, the air corps, and also government services at Washington. In many parts of the South, Negroes in Uncle Sam's uniform are being put upon, mobbed, sometimes even shot down by civilian and military police, and on occasion lynched. Vested political interests in race prejudice are so deeply entrenched that to them winning the war against Hitler is secondary to preventing Negroes from winning democracy for themselves. This is worth many divisions to Hitler and Hirohito. While labor, business, and farm are subjected to ceilings and doors and not allowed to carry on as usual, these interests trade in the dangerous business of race hate as usual.”

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

HOME FRONT: African Americans During the Second World War

Texas Congressman W. R. Poage, 1941 Letter to the Secretary of the Navy



In this hour of national crisis, it is much more important that we have the full-hearted cooperation of the 30 million white southern Americans than we satisfy the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. I realize that you have never lived in the South. I have lived there all my life. You know that our people have volunteered for military service more readily than the people of any other section of our nation. If they are forced to serve with Negroes, they will cease to volunteer, and when drafted, they will not serve with that enthusiasm and high morale that has always characterized the soldiers and sailors of the southern states.

I do not mean to urge a complete seclusion of Negroes from military or naval service, but I do most earnestly plead with you that there is a complete segregation of the races. To assign a Negro doctor to treat some southern white boy would be a crushing insult and in my opinion, an outrage against the patriotism of our southern people.”

★ What arguments does each side use to support its viewpoint?

Follow-up Activities

After the end of the war, on July 26, 1948, President Harry Truman issued Executive Order 9981 establishing equality of treatment and opportunity in the armed forces. [<http://www.trumanlibrary.org/9981a.htm>] Research the background to this executive order and discuss the impact this action had on the composition of the military.

It is 1944 and you are the editor in chief of a newspaper. Write an editorial for your newspaper on the topic of integrating the armed forces. Be sure to give reasons to support the stand you have taken in your editorial.

You are the editor in chief of a newspaper today. Write an editorial representing your views on the controversial issue of gay men and women in the military. Be sure to give reasons to support the stand you have taken in your editorial.

Essay on Prejudice



We say glibly that in the United States of America all men are free and equal, but do we treat them as if they were? . . . There is religious and racial prejudice everywhere in the land, and if there is a greater obstacle anywhere to the attainment of the teamwork we must have, no one knows what it is.” —Arthur Upham Pope, Chairman of the Committee for National Morale, in America Organizes to Win the War

[source: http://www.archives.gov/exhibit_hall/powers_of_persuasion/united_we_win/united_we_win.html]

★ Using the statement above, discuss the religious and racial prejudice that existed in the armed forces during the Second World War. Examine in particular the segregation of African Americans and Japanese Americans and the existence of anti-Semitism experienced by many Jewish Americans in the armed forces.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

ENCOUNTERING THE HOLOCAUST

Read the excerpt from the testimony of Jewish American serviceman Paul Zell, who describes his experience confronting the horror of the Buchenwald concentration camp in Germany in 1945, and respond to the questions that follow.



I had a map and I knew of the existence of Buchenwald. We were near there, in a town called Weimar. So I said to my lieutenant commander, who knew that I was Jewish and a Holocaust survivor, “I might possibly have some relatives that might be in the concentration camp. We are so close. I want to borrow a jeep and drive there.” “Absolutely not,” he said. “The war is just about over. Everything is in a state of flux. You survived the war, you survived Hitler. You’re gonna get yourself killed.” He was really thinking of me. But I pleaded with him. I said, “Look I don’t care, I definitely want to go.” He knew I wouldn’t give up. So he finally consented. He said, “OK, take the jeep, but be extremely careful. Don’t get yourself killed.”

I went alone; it was early in the morning. I stopped about two miles from the camp and took out the binoculars that, as it happens, I had taken from a German officer I had captured. It looked like the gates were open, which would mean that the camp was liberated, that the German guards were not there anymore. I very slowly inched my way closer. I realized that the German guards must have left because I saw hundreds of inmates lying in front of the gate. So I slowly inched my jeep up; I had my rifle ready anyway. And I got out of my jeep and I started walking among these inmates. Many of them looked like they were old men. I had never seen people that decimated, I mean, they were skin and bones.

One of the inmates told me that the German guards had fled just three hours before, and since I didn’t see any other American soldiers, I believe that I was the first American soldier there. I started walking among them. They were too weak to even get up and speak in their striped uniforms. And I looked at their bony hands; I didn’t know who to go to first. But there was one, I almost tripped over him, who started pulling at my pant leg, and I remember kneeling down to try to speak to him. I realized he didn’t speak English, and I didn’t speak Polish. So I figured he must speak Yiddish and I started speaking German to him. Between my German and his Yiddish we were able to communicate a little bit. I remember propping him up. I had some water with me and some candy bars; I gave him something to eat and I propped him up and then he said to me: “Mr. American Soldier, I want to show you what the Germans have done to our people.” He couldn’t even get up, I had to lift him. I thought this man must be in his seventies; why would they take a seventy-year-old man and put him in a concentration camp? Later, I found out that he was only in his thirties.

I put him in my jeep and for the next six hours we traveled through Buchenwald. The first place he took me to was the dispensary, which was like an excuse for a hospital. It used to be a barn. It had a tin roof, dirt floors, and wooden cubicles on either side of the long walls, just big enough for a body to fit in, about three feet high and six feet long. Most of them were filled. I found out later that the inmates were forced to work ten to twelve hours a day on one meal ration of stale bread and soup made from potato peels. But if inmates needed an aspirin or had a headache they would put them in one of these cubicles, not give them any medication or food, and just leave them to die. I looked around and realized that half of them were dead; they weren’t moving. But then I looked closer and saw some of them were still alive. They were reaching out to me with their thin, bony fingers, and they were trying to reach me. For a minute, I got sick to my stomach. I had been in the war for a year; I had seen some of my own comrades killed and wounded, but this was too much for me. I just couldn’t stand it. I remember running out the back door and being confronted with this large pile of human skeletons, maybe 300 to 400 human bodies—just skeletons, just piled up.

Buchenwald was not an extermination camp like Auschwitz, but still, about 100,000 people perished there. They also had about six small ovens. I remember opening up one of the ovens and seeing human remains still smoldering.

I don’t remember the man’s name. I have a feeling that many [of the inmates] did not survive. We overfed them. We didn’t know how to treat people who had starved for that long, so, unfortunately, many of them died.”

ENCOUNTERING THE HOLOCAUST

Follow-up Questions

- ★ Why do you think the lieutenant commander was hesitant to lend Zell a jeep to visit Buchenwald?
- ★ How does Zell comment on the physical condition of the survivors?

“Mr. American Soldier, I want to show you what the Germans have done to our people.”

- ★ Why do you think this statement, made by the survivor, was particularly important to Zell?
- ★ What occurred in the dispensary at Buchenwald?

Follow-up Activity

- ★ Having read the transcript of Paul Zell’s testimony, select a brief portion that you found especially moving, and write a paragraph or two about the contents of your selection and why it made a strong impression on you.

ENCOUNTERING THE HOLOCAUST

Read the following brief biography of Sonia Schreiber Weitz and her poem “My Black Messiah” from the Facing History and Ourselves website. [<http://www.facing.org/facing/fhao2.nsf/survivors/>]

Sonia Schreiber Weitz, born in Krakow, Poland, in 1928, is a history teacher and a specialist in Jewish-Christian relations who survived five Nazi concentration camps. She and her sister lost the other eighty-four members of their family. Sonia immigrated to the United States in 1948. Her memoir, *I Promised I Would Tell*, about her experiences in the Holocaust, contains a poem about her liberation from Mauthausen, a camp in Austria.

My Black Messiah

*A black GI stood by the door
(I never saw a black before)
He'll set me free before I die,
I thought, he must be the Messiah.*

*A black Messiah came for me . . .
He stared with eyes that didn't see,
He never heard a single word
Which hung absurd upon my tongue.*

*And then he simply froze in place
The shock, the horror on his face,
He didn't weep, he didn't cry*

*But deep within his gentle eyes
. . . A flood of devastating pain,
his innocence forever slain.*

*For me, with yet another dawn
I found my black Messiah gone
and on we went our separate ways
For forty years without a trace.*

*But there's a special bond we share
Which has grown strong because we dare
To live, to hope, to smile . . . and yet
We vow not ever to forget.*

Questions to Consider

- ★ How did Sonia regard the African American soldier who freed her?
- ★ In what way was his skin color important to her?
- ★ What does she mean when she says in the last stanza that they share a bond because they both “dare to live”?

ENCOUNTERING THE HOLOCAUST

Like Sonia Schreiber Weitz, Stella Levi was also liberated by American soldiers in 1945. Born on the island of Rhodes, Greece, which was then an Italian possession, Stella was the youngest of seven children. The family spoke Ladino, the language of Sephardic Jews, as well as Italian, French, and some Greek and Turkish. By 1938, when Mussolini's racial laws were becoming more stringent, five of Stella's siblings had already emigrated, but Stella's father was too ill to travel, so Stella, her mother, and an older sister stayed behind in Rhodes.

Until September 1943, when German troops occupied the island, conditions remained bearable. Stella received some news of what was happening in Europe, but she thought only the German and Polish Jews were being sent to camps. "They are not going to do that to us," Stella remembers thinking. But in August 1944, the 1,600 Jewish citizens of Rhodes were rounded up, shipped to Greece, and then put on trains to Auschwitz. The trip took fourteen days, and with eighty people crowded into one car, Stella had to stand the whole way. The conditions were beyond inhuman. "I don't think animals could live that way," Stella said.

Arriving at Auschwitz, Stella and her sister were separated from their parents, who were soon killed. The sisters could not speak Yiddish or German, the language of most of the Jews in Eastern Europe, and as a result the other women in the barracks were hostile to them, thinking they were Christian. It wasn't until Stella and her sister said the Sabbath prayers in Hebrew that the others believed they were Jews. When the kapo (Nazi-appointed barracks leader) of the camp learned that they spoke French, she put them with the Belgian and French women; that was their salvation. They learned how to survive, to "organize." "Organizing" meant that if you needed a sweater, you saved your ration of bread and eventually you traded it for a sweater or whatever else you needed. She also sang Italian songs to the kapos in exchange for food.

Stella had no sense of the future or what would happen the next day. In October 1944, they were sent to Landsberg, and from there, to Turkheim, a sub-camp of Dachau. At the end of the war, Stella was put on a death march for three days and ended up in a satellite camp of Dachau, just outside Munich. The day after the Germans left, American troops passed by the camp, unaware that inmates were inside. The women started to scream, and the soldiers rushed in with their bayonets fixed, not knowing what to expect. When Stella was liberated she weighed just seventy-five pounds.

The Red Cross came next, bringing doctors and food. Because they could not go home, Stella and others asked to be sent to Italy, where at least they knew there were friends of their families. They traveled in an American truck, driven by a black soldier who, Stella remembers, sang throughout the entire trip. They were the first survivors of a German camp to arrive in Italy. It was May 1945. Two years later, Stella arrived in America. The transition was very difficult; survivors needed moral support and direction, but no one took responsibility for them.

"I never cried for my past," says Stella. "In the concentration camp, if you cried, you were dead. . . . It is still very difficult to cry. Very difficult."

Questions to Consider

- ★ What are some of the difficulties that Stella encountered in the concentration camps?
- ★ What is Ladino? Why was language such an important factor in Stella's experience in the camps?
- ★ What moved you most about Stella's story?
- ★ Why do you think Stella says, "It is still very difficult to cry. Very difficult"?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

ENCOUNTERING THE HOLOCAUST

Read the following statements made by liberators about the experience of encountering concentration camps and summarize the perspectives that each reflects.



There were about a dozen bodies in the dirty boxcar, men and women alike. They had gone without food for so long that their dead wrists were broomsticks tipped with claws. . . . Someone broke the silence with a curse, and then with a roar the men started for the camp on the double. . . . The men were plain fighting mad. They went down that road without any regard for cover or concealment. No one was afraid, not after those boxcars.—British officer Peter Coombs, in a letter to his wife
[source: <http://fcit.coedu.usf.edu/holocaust/people/liberato.htm>]



I saw Eisenhower go to the opposite end of the road and vomit. From a distance I saw Patton bend over, holding his head with one hand and his abdomen with the other. And I soon became ill. I suggested to General Eisenhower that cables be sent immediately to President Roosevelt, Churchill, de Gaulle, urging people to come and see for themselves. The general nodded.—Lewis H. Weinstein, lieutenant colonel and chief of the liaison section of General Eisenhower's staff, April 1945
[source: <http://fcit.coedu.usf.edu/holocaust/people/liberato.htm>]



I have never felt able to describe my emotional reaction when I first came face-to-face with indisputable evidence of Nazi brutality and ruthless disregard of every shred of decency. . . . I visited every nook and cranny of the camp because I felt it my duty to be in a position from then on to testify firsthand about these things in case there ever grew up at home the belief or assumption that the stories of Nazi brutality were just propaganda.—General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander, Allied Forces, Europe, in a letter to Chief of Staff George Marshall, April 12, 1945
[source: <http://fcit.coedu.usf.edu/holocaust/people/liberato.htm>]



As we entered the camp, the living skeletons still able to walk crowded around us and, though we wanted to drive farther into the place, the milling, pressing crowd would not let us. It is not an exaggeration to say that almost every inmate was insane with hunger. Just the sight of an American brought cheers, groans and shrieks. People crowded around to touch an American, to touch the jeep, to kiss our arms—perhaps just to make sure that it was true. The people who couldn't walk crawled out toward our jeep. Those who couldn't even crawl propped themselves up on an elbow, and somehow, through all their pain and suffering, revealed through their eyes the gratitude, the joy they felt at the arrival of Americans.—Captain J.D. Pletcher, 71st Division Headquarters
[source: <http://fcit.coedu.usf.edu/holocaust/people/liberato.htm>]



You can't imagine how really pathetic it was to see these people walking with shallow faces, their eyes sunk in. They were just beaten human beings—they were destroyed and no amount of food or anything like that was going to bring them out of it. It was going to take love and understanding to make them human beings again. But they looked so gruesome. People can't imagine what it was like to see people who were actually nothing but skin and bones. You can't imagine a human being starving other human beings so badly they would get in that condition.—anonymous Nisei soldier of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, liberation of Dachau
[source: <http://library.thinkquest.org/CR0210341/dechau/dachau.htm>]

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

ENCOUNTERING THE HOLOCAUST: Liberation and Aftermath



But here, on this day in April in 1945, I was going to have the shock of my life because, you see, I was going to go through the gates of Buchenwald and I was totally unprepared for that experience. I knew something had happened to me. I was not the same anymore. I had changed. I came into that camp thinking and feeling one way. I was an angry young black soldier. Angry at my country for what it was doing to me: making me fight and die, and then telling me at the same time that I'm not good enough. So, I was angry, yes! But after I came into Buchenwald and I saw what I saw, things changed. My blinders came off. My tunnel vision dissipated. I could see more clearly now. I recognized that human suffering is not just left to me and mine. Human suffering can touch all of us. And I also came to the realization that on this day in April [1945], I had seen the face of evil. I had come to know that racism is evil. When any group of people can get so powerful that they can control other people and dictate terms of life and death, that's evil. And the Nazis thought that they were super men; they were superior to others. They were the "Aryan race." And now I recognize racism and what happens when it is carried to the ultimate. And so I knew somehow that I had to fight it. —Leon Bass, nineteen-year-old African American soldier

[source: <http://www.facing.org/facing/fhao2.nsf/speakers/Leon+Bass?opendocument>]



For the greatest part of the liberated Jews of Bergen-Belsen, there was no ecstasy, no joy at our liberation. We had lost our families, our homes. We had no place to go, nobody to hug. Nobody was waiting for us anywhere. We had been liberated from death and the fear of death, but not from the fear of living.—Hadassah Rosensaft, survivor

[source: <http://www.ajc.org/InTheMedia/RelatedArticles.asp?did=795>]

Follow-up Questions

When the Allied forces entered the concentration camps, they encountered evidence of atrocities that were later termed “crimes against humanity.”

- ★ What were some of the disturbing things that these soldiers encountered?
- ★ Why did Hadassah Rosensaft say that there was “no joy at our liberation”?

Nuremberg War Crimes Trials

Research the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials. Read aloud and discuss the opening statement from the trial made by Robert Jackson, the chief American prosecutor. In pairs research the charges against the twenty-two defendants and then present your findings to the class.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

THE END OF THE WAR: Iwo Jima

Photograph Analysis

Photographs are a form of visual evidence that can provide valuable information about an event or an historical period. They capture frozen moments in time. Have you heard the expression “A picture is worth a thousand words”? It is important to remember that photographers, like all observers of events, have their own point of view. You must analyze photographs carefully. Many photographs become symbols of an event or a series of events. One such photograph is the Pulitzer Prize–winning photograph, taken by Joe Rosenthal, of Marines hoisting the American flag on the Pacific island of Iwo Jima in February 1945. [source: http://www.gallerym.com/pixs/photogs/pulitzer/pages/iwo_jima_joe_rosenthal.htm]

You may wish to refer to the Photo Analysis Worksheet designed and developed by the education staff of the National Archives and Records Administration.

[http://www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/lessons/analysis_worksheets/photo.html]

The following questions will help guide your photograph analysis.

Look at the photograph as a whole, and then study specific details.

- ★ What do you see in the picture?
- ★ What image does the photograph illustrate?
- ★ Do you think this photograph was taken before, during, or after a battle?

Analyze the reliability of the photograph as a source of information.

- ★ What mood is captured in the photograph?
- ★ What aspects of the photograph capture the mood?
- ★ Does it seem as if the soldiers posed for the photograph? The Rosenthal photograph appears to capture a spontaneous action, but some have claimed that it was posed. Investigate.
- ★ What could you learn about the war in the Pacific if this photograph were your only source of information?
- ★ What is the Pulitzer Prize? Why do you think this photograph won that award?

Use books available in your school or public library or the website [<http://www.iwojima.com>] to read about the Battle of Iwo Jima. Write down important facts about the island and the tactics of the enemy. As a class, brainstorm disadvantages that the American soldiers faced as they encountered the Japanese. Discuss why the Battle of Iwo Jima is considered one of the most important battles of the Second World War.

Answer the following questions based on your research.

- ★ Where is Iwo Jima and how large is it?
- ★ Why did the American military desire control of the island of Iwo Jima?
- ★ What does the “soft black sand” of Iwo Jima refer to?
- ★ What role did geography play in the battle?
- ★ Why did the Marines fight to control Suribachi before taking the rest of the island?
- ★ Why was the American air force interested in the battle?
- ★ How did the capture of Iwo Jima contribute to the defeat of Japan?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

THE END OF THE WAR: Iwo Jima

Follow-up Activity

Read the book *Flags of Our Fathers: Heroes of Iwo Jima* by James Bradley (son of John Bradley, one of the marine flag raisers) and discuss how the Battle of Iwo Jima changed the men who fought there. Compare and contrast how each of the six flag raisers was changed. Who died in the war and who survived? What role did the media play in making these Marines heroes? How did FDR and the nation make them into celebrities?

The photograph of the six flag raisers served as a model for the seventy-eight-foot bronze statue by Felix de Weldon in Arlington National Cemetery. De Weldon is the only name on the base of the sculpture. Write a persuasive letter to Congress requesting that the names of the six marines (Harlon Block, John Bradley, Rene Gagnon, Ira Hayes, Franklin Sousley, and Michael Strank) and the photographer, Joe Rosenthal, be placed on the sculpture, and explain why this acknowledgment is important.

The statue of the six flag raisers at Arlington National Cemetery reads: “Uncommon valor was a common virtue.” Reflect on this inscription and share your thoughts with the class.

Geography Activity—War in the Pacific

Refer to maps available at [<http://www.iwojima.com>]. Geography played an important role in combat during the Second World War. This exercise focuses on identifying geographic elements in the Pacific theater of operations. Using the outline map of the Pacific Rim, locate the following items.

Bodies of Water

Pacific Ocean
Sea of Japan
Coral Sea
Indian Ocean
South China Sea
Philippine Sea

Cities

Tokyo
Manila
Honolulu
Seoul

Countries

Japan
China
French Indochina
Australia
Philippines
New Guinea
Soviet Union

Islands/Archipelagos

Iwo Jima
Midway
Caroline Islands
Mariana Islands
Hawaiian Islands

Follow-up Activity

- ★ Highlight important military engagements on the map. What other important geographic locales have you not indicated? Locate them and highlight them in another color. Next, write a brief description of the events that occurred at each location.

THE END OF THE WAR: The Atomic Bomb

On August 6, 1945, while returning from the Potsdam Conference in Germany, President Harry S. Truman was handed a message from Secretary of State Henry Stimson informing him that the atomic bomb had been dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, at 8:15 a.m. on August 6 (JST).



Sixteen hours ago an American airplane dropped one bomb on Hiroshima, an important Japanese Army base. That bomb had more power than 20,000 tons of T.N.T. It had more than two thousand times the blast power of the British “Grand Slam” which is the largest bomb ever yet used in the history of warfare.

The Japanese began the war from the air at Pearl Harbor. They have been repaid many fold. And the end is not yet. With this bomb we have now added a new and revolutionary increase in destruction to supplement the growing power of our armed forces. In their present form these bombs are now in production and even more powerful forms are in development.

It is an atomic bomb. It is a harnessing of the basic power of the universe. The force from which the sun draws its power has been loosed against those who brought war to the Far East.”

Read the full text at [<http://www.trumanlibrary.org/calendar/viewpapers.php?pid=100>].

Answer the following questions after reading the complete press release at the website listed above.

- ★ Who wrote this document? When was it issued?
- ★ What is the purpose of this document?
- ★ Why is the name of the city left out?
- ★ Why does the atomic bomb’s power have to be explained?
- ★ What were Truman’s plans for ending the war? Did he accomplish those goals in dropping the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Why or why not?
- ★ Truman advocated the use of atomic power for world peace. How did he propose to fulfill this goal?
- ★ What reasons did President Truman use to justify dropping the bomb?

In his book *Prompt & Utter Destruction: Truman and the Use of Atomic Bombs Against Japan*, J. Samuel Walker states that Truman justified dropping the bomb with five reasons.

1. It would end the war successfully at the earliest possible moment.
2. It justified the effort and expense of building the atomic bombs.
3. It offered hope of achieving diplomatic gains in the growing rivalry with the Soviet Union.
4. There was a lack of incentives not to use the weapons.
5. Americans had a hatred for the Japanese and a desire for vengeance.

Do you agree with President Truman’s thinking? Why or why not? Be sure to use facts to support your answer.

CULMINATING ACTIVITIES

Collecting Oral History: Remembrances of the Second World War

In this assignment you are to interview either a Second World War veteran or another person who can recall the war years.

What Are Oral Histories?

An oral history is the recorded story of a person's life and often focuses on an important event in that person's life.

The goal is not just to gather stories about experiences of a specific time, but also to demonstrate how those experiences have influenced people's lives since then. According to Dr. Bret Eyon, author of *How to Do an Oral History About the Impact of the Vietnam Era*, oral histories convey a dramatic, firsthand view of history, with a storytelling approach and a sense of personal experience. Dr. Eyon notes that sometimes we assume that first-person testimony represents the absolute truth. He states it is more important to approach oral history as a form of memory—an individual's way of interpreting and narrating his experience of a particular event or period. Oral histories are important because they often capture specific details that have never been recorded. In addition, oral histories portray major events in history from the viewpoint of the ordinary person. Conducting an oral history can be a rewarding experience, but it is hard work! The entire oral history process is very complex and requires several stages of work. Here we have attempted to present the process in practical steps.

Questions that might be included in the interview

- ★ To what extent were you aware of what was happening in Japan, Italy, and Germany during the 1930s?
- ★ What was your reaction to the declaration of war in Europe in 1939?
- ★ Were your interests heightened once the United States entered the war in 1941?
- ★ What are your memories of the attack on Pearl Harbor? Where were you when it happened?
- ★ What were your feelings about American involvement in the war?
- ★ Did those feelings change during or after the war? Explain.
- ★ What was your reaction to the military draft?
- ★ Were you aware of the internment of Japanese Americans? If so, what was your reaction?
- ★ When did you first learn about what was happening to Jews in Europe?
- ★ What was your reaction to Truman's decision to drop the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki?
- ★ Do you feel that the government did enough to reward veterans for their service in the war? If not, what other benefits did they deserve?
- ★ At the end of the war, did you anticipate future wars, or did it seem to you that countries would find other means of settling conflicts?

CULMINATING ACTIVITIES

Questions for Second World War Veterans

- ★ Did you volunteer or were you drafted?
- ★ If you had not been drafted, would you have volunteered? Why?
- ★ What is your first memory of joining the service?
- ★ What special skills were you taught in the armed forces?
- ★ Did you witness conflict? Please describe.
- ★ What did you miss most about home?
- ★ How do you feel that you participated in history?
- ★ What impact did the United Service Organizations have on your military service? Did they succeed in keeping up your morale?
- ★ Did you maintain contact with any of the people you met while in the service?
- ★ When were you discharged?
- ★ What did you do immediately following your time in the service?

Questions for Noncombatants

- ★ How were your basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter affected by the war?
- ★ How were you employed during the war? Did your work have anything to do with the war effort directly?
- ★ How do you feel you contributed?
- ★ How informed were you about what was going on in Europe?
- ★ Did you receive letters from anyone at the front? Were any of these letters censored?
- ★ Did you lose anyone close to you as a result of the war? If so, how did that change your attitude toward the war or toward the enemy?
- ★ Did the war change your attitude toward religion? If so, how?
- ★ In what ways did you and fellow Americans attempt to support the war effort?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

CULMINATING ACTIVITIES

Home Front: Document-Based Questions

The following culminating activities are modeled after the Document-Based Questions that appear on the Intermediate-Level Test in Social Studies (Grade 8), the Regents Examinations in Global History & Geography (Grade 10), and the Regents Examinations in United States History & Government (Grade 11) in New York.

Each of the following documents is accompanied by questions designed to test your ability to analyze historical documents. Some of them have been edited. As you analyze the documents, take into account both the source of each document and any point of view that may be presented in the document.

Historical Context

In September 1939, the Second World War began with the German invasion of Poland. After the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the United States mobilized its armed forces and officially entered the conflict. Although the war was fought abroad, it had an enormous impact on the American home front. Women experienced changed roles in the workforce. Many people across the country felt a greater sense of nationalism, as well as a fear of foreigners.



One front and one battle where everyone in the United States—every man, woman, and child—is in action. That front is right here at home, in our daily lives.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt said these words in an address to the nation in April 1942. Discuss four ways the Second World War affected American life at home.

Task

Using the information from the documents and your knowledge of the history of the United States during the Second World War, answer the questions that follow each document in Part A. Your answers to the questions will help you write the essay in Part B.

Part A

Short-Answer Questions

Directions: Analyze the documents and respond to the short-answer questions that follow each document in the space provided.

Document 1

“Rosie the Riveter” poster

[http://www.archives.gov/about_us/calendar_of_events/images/rosie_the_riveter.gif]

- 1a. Whom does the figure in the poster represent?
- 1b. What does the woman mean when she says, “We Can Do It”?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

CULMINATING ACTIVITIES

Document 2

Images of rationing

[<http://www.umkc.edu/lib/spec-col/ww2/WarNews/rationing.htm>]

- 2a. What is wartime rationing?
- 2b. Name three items rationed during the Second World War.
- 2c. Why was wartime rationing necessary?

Document 3

One of the items affected by the war were women's stockings. With an embargo on Japanese silk, nylon was promptly drafted to make parachutes, and each chute required the equivalent of thirty-six pairs of stockings. At the time, women's hosiery had a dark seam up the back of the leg. With no stockings available some women applied makeup to their legs, in place of nylons, using an eyebrow pencil to draw a "seam."

http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0800/stories/0801_0128.html

3. Why were women's stockings needed for the war effort?

Document 4

"Grow Your Own, Can Your Own" poster

[<http://www.mpls.lib.mn.us/wpdb/index.asp?searchsubject=Food%20conservation>]

- 4a. What are the mother and daughter in the poster doing?
- 4b. Why was this activity encouraged during the Second World War?

Document 5

San Francisco, California. Exclusion Order posted at First and Front Streets directing removal of persons of Japanese ancestry from the first San Francisco section to be affected by the evacuation, April 11, 1942. Photo: Department of the Interior. War Relocation Authority. Source: National Archives.

[http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/japanese_internment/20-1477a.htm]

Lone Pine, California. Evacuees of Japanese ancestry waiting to board buses which will take them to the War Relocation Authority center at Manzanar, California, April 1, 1942. Photo: Department of the Interior. War Relocation Authority. Source: National Archives.

[http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/japanese_internment/20-1471a.htm]

Manzanar Relocation Center, Manzanar, California. Sixth-grade boys enjoy a game of softball at recess time. Note boys in rear who mistrust control of the "speed ball" pitcher, February 10, 1943. Photo: Department of the Interior. War Relocation Authority. Source: National Archives.

[http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/japanese_internment/20-2151a.htm]

- 5a. What was an internment camp?
- 5b. Why were Japanese Americans put into this type of camp?
- 5c. How was life for Japanese Americans affected by internment camps?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

CULMINATING ACTIVITIES

Document 6

Executive Order 8802

Reaffirming Policy Of Full Participation In The Defense Program By All Persons, Regardless Of Race, Creed, Color, Or National Origin, And Directing Certain Action In Furtherance Of Said Policy



WHEREAS it is the policy of the United States to encourage full participation in the national defense program by all citizens of the United States, regardless of race, creed, color, or national origin, in the firm belief that the democratic way of life within the Nation can be defended successfully only with the help and support of all groups within its borders; and WHEREAS there is evidence that available and needed workers have been barred from employment in industries engaged in defense production solely because of considerations of race, creed, color, or national origin, to the detriment of workers' morale and of national unity:

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the statutes, and as a prerequisite to the successful conduct of our national defense production effort, I do hereby reaffirm the policy of the United States that there shall be no discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or government because of race, creed, color, or national origin, and I do hereby declare that it is the duty of employers and of labor organizations, in furtherance of said policy and of this order, to provide for the full and equitable participation of all workers in defense industries, without discrimination because of race, creed, color, or national origin;

And it is hereby ordered as follows:

- 1. All departments and agencies of the Government of the United States concerned with vocational and training programs for defense production shall take special measures appropriate to assure that such programs are administered without discrimination because of race, creed, color, or national origin;*
- 2. All contracting agencies of the Government of the United States shall include in all defense contracts hereafter negotiated by them a provision obligating the contractor not to discriminate against any worker because of race, creed, color, or national origin;*
- 3. There is established in the Office of Production Management a Committee on Fair Employment Practice, which shall consist of a chairman and four other members to be appointed by the President. The Chairman and members of the Committee shall serve as such without compensation but shall be entitled to actual and necessary transportation, subsistence and other expenses incidental to performance of their duties. The Committee shall receive and investigate complaints of discrimination in violation of the provisions of this order and shall take appropriate steps to redress grievances which it finds to be valid. The Committee shall also recommend to the several departments and agencies of the Government of the United States and to the President all measures which may be deemed by it necessary or proper to effectuate the provisions of this order."*

Franklin D. Roosevelt
The White House,
June 25, 1941.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

CULMINATING ACTIVITIES

- 6a. What is an executive order?
- 6b. According to this order, what is the employment policy of the United States in defense industries or in the government?
- 6c. What was the purpose of the Committee on Fair Employment Practices?
- 6d. How did this order contribute to the migration of African Americans from the southern states to the north?

Document 7

The Wartime Work Effort—Production Produced New Challenges and New Participants

Labor Force Participation			Personal Savings	
	Male	Female	Year	Amount
1940	55%	28%	1940	\$ 4.2 billion
1944	62%	37%	1941	11.1
1947	57%	31%	1942	27.7
			1943	33.0
			1944	36.9
			1945	28.7
			1946	13.5
			1947	4.7
Average Earnings				
1940	\$1,300			
1944	\$2,108			
1947	\$2,589			

[<http://www.hfac.uh.edu/gl/us35.htm>]

- 7a. According to the charts, what impact did the Second World War have on earnings, labor force participation, and savings?
- 7b. What happened to women's participation in the labor force during and after the war?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR WRITING, RESEARCH, AND GROUP WORK

END OF WAR: Memorials and Monuments

One way people remember the past is by building monuments that honor heroes or commemorate national tragedies. In creating an appropriate memorial, the individuals involved must first ask themselves a variety of questions.

- ★ What is the purpose of the memorial?
- ★ Who is its audience—namely, who will visit it?
- ★ Who will be remembered and for what reasons?

A memorial helps people understand why an event or person was significant. The creation of a memorial often stimulates public debate, because individuals and groups have different views of the events, people, or ideas to be memorialized. Establishing an appropriate memorial is a complicated process. The opinions of many interested parties must be taken into consideration. The act of honoring those who died tragically has a direct impact on people's emotional responses. Not everyone will be pleased by the end result.

Consider the Vietnam War Memorial, designed by Maya Lin, in our nation's capital. Research this project and the controversy that surrounded it. Alternatively, you may wish to investigate the memorial for 9/11.

Working in groups of three, plan and create a memorial to a specific group affected by the events of the Second World War. Your memorial may be a large picture, a three-dimensional object, a poem, an inscription, or any medium of your choosing. It may include images (for example, a collage of magazine cutouts). Be creative, but have a focus. How would your memorial differ if it was designed to represent all the people who were affected by the Second World War?

Display your memorial to the class and give a brief oral presentation in which you discuss your conceptualization. Remember, an effective memorial makes people stop and think.

WE trust that this teacher’s guide enables you to make the most of your visit to the Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust. The recommended activities can complement your existing curriculum and can be adapted to your students’ skills and needs.

American accomplishments both on the home front and in the armed services during the Second World War are an impressive legacy to this day. We hope that *All of Ours to Fight For: Americans in the Second World War* inspires your students and helps them grapple with complex historical issues. Please encourage your students to explore the exhibition companion website. [<http://www.ourstofightfor.org>]

Please visit us again. We encourage you to contact us, to visit the Museum’s Educational Resource Center, to attend our professional development workshops, and our public and family programs. Our website [<http://www.mjhnyc.org>] is constantly being updated with new programs.

We look forward to welcoming you and your students.

For more information or to schedule a school visit, please contact:

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