

Ninth Grade: United States History and Geography

Unit 6: World War II

Big Picture Graphic

Overarching Question:

How does the American desire to maintain the four freedoms (from want, from fear, of speech and of worship) change the United States' role in the world?

Previous Unit:

The Crisis of Capitalism
and Responses

This Unit:

World War II

Next Unit:

The Cold War

Causes

- Failures of a post WWI world
- Nationalism
- Isolationism
- Militarism
- Territorial disputes

Role of the United States

- Neutrality to Pearl Harbor
- Course of the War
 - Home Front
 - Mobilization
 - Propaganda
 - Internment
- Atomic bomb

World War II

Challenges to Humanity

- Holocaust
- Nuclear Age

Aftermath of War

- Territorial divisions
- United Nations
- Political landscape at war's end

Questions To Focus Assessment and Instruction:

1. How did nationalism and isolationism influence the escalation of global conflict?
2. How did America's involvement in World War II affect the war abroad and life at home?
3. How did decisions at the end of World War II address concerns stemming from the aftermath of WWI, as well as events that transpired during the Second World War?

Types of Thinking	Public Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause and Effect • Research • Identifying Perspectives • Compare and Contrast • Description 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States and the World: Contemporary public policy issues related to the role of the United States in the world. • Liberty vs. Security: Contemporary public policy issues related to how the nation balances liberty interests with security interests. • Movement of People: Contemporary public policy issues related to the movement of people into and within the United States.

Unit Historical Overview

The Second World War and its aftermath transformed the United States and solidified its role as a global power. After World War I, nations in Europe and Asia experienced a rise in nationalist fervor as Germany, Italy, and Japan sought to expand their borders and control. The world community, with World War I still fresh in their minds, initially sought a peaceful alternative to armed conflict through appeasement. As totalitarian regimes expanded their grasp over the Eastern Hemisphere, the United States remained focused on the economic crisis at home. World War II saw the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of approximately six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators. As Nazi tyranny spread across Europe, millions of other people were persecuted and murdered as well, including between two and three million Soviet prisoners of war. Not until the United States was attacked at Pearl Harbor did the country enter the war and mobilize to defend democracy.

The experience of fighting World War II transformed the United States. Mobilization efforts helped the nation's economy recover from the Great Depression, yet Americans were encouraged to sacrifice material goods for the war effort. Public education and mass media promoted a feeling of nationalism and unity, and most Americans wholeheartedly supported the war effort. Women and many minority groups gained increased freedom through their involvement in the military and defense industry, and these improvements helped lay the groundwork for the social movements of later decades. Yet during the war, the American military remained segregated, and Japanese and Japanese-Americans were forcibly relocated to internment camps. The circumstances of the war experience thus expanded the freedom of some Americans and curtailed it for others.

The United States' role in the war, its subsequent victory, and the post-war negotiations established the nation's leadership role in the world and marked a triumph for democratic ideals. The country emerged stronger politically, economically, and militarily. Yet, the use of the atomic bomb transformed the nature of global conflict and became one of the defining features of the Cold War for the next forty years.

Unit Abstract:

In this unit, students examine primary and secondary resources, maps, timelines, and propaganda to understand the causes, character, and consequences of World War II. They begin the unit by analyzing the factors which contributed to the rise of fascism and Adolf Hitler in post World War I Germany. In exploring both primary and secondary sources, students consider how nationalism and isolationism can influence the escalation of global conflict. They then learn about the major countries involved in the conflict with respect to their forms of government and ideologies. Using an interactive timeline and maps, students examine and assess the chronology of events leading up to World War II, the expansion of the Axis nations, and the United States' neutrality in the face of the rise of belligerent powers. Next, students explore how and why the United States became involved in World War II with particular attention to the impact of Pearl Harbor. Through small group discussions and map analyses, students evaluate the role of the U.S. in fighting the war militarily, diplomatically, and technologically across the world. In doing so, they focus on the Germany First strategy, the Big Three Alliance, and the development of atomic weapons. In focusing on the home front, students use propaganda posters and political cartoons to examine how the nation mobilized for war. They assess the impact of the war at home, including the role of women, African Americans, and the internment of Japanese Americans. Students then investigate the development and enactment of Hitler's "final solution" policy, and the responses to genocide by the Allies, the U.S. government, international organizations, and individuals. After exploring the decision-making process involved in the development and eventual use of the atomic bomb, students consider the implications of the nuclear age. The unit concludes with an investigation of the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences as students consider potential implications for the future of the world. Throughout the unit students use their Freedom Tracking Notebook to reflect on how the desire to attain the four freedoms (from want, from fear, of speech, and of worship) influenced U.S. policy decisions during World War II and changed the United States' role in the world.

Focus Questions

1. How did nationalism and isolationism influence the escalation of global conflict?
2. How did America's involvement in World War II affect the war abroad and life at home?
3. How did decisions at the end of World War II address concerns stemming from the aftermath of WWI, as well as events that transpired during the Second World War?

Content Expectations

USHG F1.1: Identify the core ideals of American society as reflected in the documents below and analyze the ways that American society moved toward and/or away from its core ideals:

- Declaration of Independence
- the U.S. Constitution (including the Preamble)
- Bill of Rights
- the Gettysburg Address
- 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments.

USHG 7.2.1: Causes of WWII – Analyze the factors contributing to World War II in Europe and in the Pacific region, and America’s entry into war including:

- the political and economic disputes over territory (e.g., failure of Versailles Treaty, League of Nations, Munich Agreement)
- the differences in the civic and political values of the United States and those of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan
- United States neutrality
- the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

USHG 7.2.2: U.S. and the Course of WWII – Evaluate the role of the U.S. in fighting the war militarily, diplomatically, and technologically across the world (e.g., Germany First strategy, Big Three Alliance, and the development of atomic weapons).

USHG 7.2.3: Impact of WWII on American Life – Analyze the changes in American life brought about by U.S. participation in World War II including:

- mobilization of economic, military, and social resources
- role of women and minorities in the war effort
- role of the home front in supporting the war effort (e.g., rationing, work hours, taxes)
- internment of Japanese-Americans.

USHG 7.2.4: Responses to Genocide – Investigate development and enactment of Hitler’s “final solution” policy, and the responses to genocide by the Allies, the U.S. government, international organizations, and individuals (e.g., liberation of concentration camps, Nuremberg war crimes tribunals, establishment of state of Israel).

USHG 8.1.1: Origins and Beginnings of Cold War – Analyze the factors that contributed to the Cold War including:

- differences in the civic, ideological and political values, and the economic and governmental institutions of the U.S. and U.S.S.R.
- diplomatic decisions made at the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences (1945)
- actions by both countries in the last years of and years following World War II (e.g., the use of the atomic bomb, the Marshall Plan, the Truman Doctrine, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)¹, and Warsaw Pact).

C1.2.1: Identify, distinguish among, and provide examples of different forms of governmental structures including anarchy, monarchy, military junta, aristocracy, democracy, authoritarian, constitutional republic, fascist, communist, socialist, and theocratic states.

¹ While the expectation says “North American Treaty Alliance”, the correct name for NATO is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. This correction is reflected in the content expectation as written in this unit.

- C2.2.3: Use past and present policies to analyze conflicts that arise in society due to competing constitutional principles or fundamental values (e.g., liberty and authority, justice and equality, individual rights, and the common good).
- C3.4.4: Describe considerations and criteria that have been used to deny, limit, or extend protection of individual rights (e.g., clear and present danger, time, place and manner restrictions on speech, compelling government interest, security, libel or slander, public safety, and equal opportunity).
- C3.5.9: In making a decision on a public issue, analyze various forms of political communication (e.g., political cartoons, campaign advertisements, political speeches, and blogs) using criteria like logical validity, factual accuracy and/or omission, emotional appeal, distorted evidence, and appeals to bias or prejudice.
- C4.1.3: Evaluate the means used to implement U.S. foreign policy with respect to current or past international issues (e.g., diplomacy, economic, military and humanitarian aid, treaties, sanctions, military intervention, and covert action).
- C4.1.4: Using at least two historical examples, explain reasons for, and consequences of, conflicts that arise when international disputes cannot be resolved peacefully.
- C4.2.1: Describe how different political systems interact in world affairs with respect to international issues.
- C4.2.4: Identify the purposes and functions of governmental and non-governmental international organizations, and the role of the United States in each (e.g., the United Nations, NATO, World Court, Organization of American States, International Red Cross, Amnesty International).

Key Concepts

appeasement
civil liberties
communism
constitutional authority
expansionism
fascism
genocide/Holocaust
home front
internment
isolationism
militarism
mobilization
nationalism
nuclear age
propaganda

Duration

4 weeks

Lesson Sequence

Lesson 1: The Rise of Nazi Germany
Lesson 2: The Nations of World War II
Lesson 3: Exploring U.S. Neutrality
Lesson 4: Japanese Expansion and Pearl Harbor
Lesson 5: The Course of the War
Lesson 6: Propaganda Posters and the U.S. Home Front
Lesson 7: Internment and Analysis of Executive Order #9066
Lesson 8: The Holocaust
Lesson 9: Onset on the Nuclear Age
Lesson 10: In the Aftermath of War

Assessment

Performance Assessments

USHG 7.2.1 C1.2.1 C4.1.3 C4.1.4 C4.2.1	Take a position on the following assertion and support it with evidence learned in the unit: <i>World War II was a direct result of isolationism in the face of growing nationalism.</i>
USHG F1.1 USHG 7.2.3 C2.2.3 C3.4.4 C3.5.9	Write an essay that explains how the US participation in World War II resulted in American society moving toward and/or away from its core ideals found in the Declaration of Independence, US Constitution, and Bill of Rights. Use the documents provided, your knowledge of how the United States mobilized for the war effort, and the treatment of minorities during World War II.
USHG 7.2.2 USHG 7.2.4 USHG 8.1.1	Construct an outline for use in a debate that evaluates the consequences of World War II including the development of atomic bomb technology, the establishment of Israel, and the creation of the United Nations. Engage in a fishbowl debate about whether the war helped to ensure the Four Freedoms for Americans and others around the world.
USHG 7.2.2	Construct a propaganda poster that depicts the role of the U.S. in fighting the war militarily, diplomatically, and technologically across the world. Use the poster in an oral presentation that explains the poster and evaluates the US role in the war.

Resources

Equipment/Manipulative

Computer with internet access
Freedom Tracking Notebooks (Spiral Notebook)
Highlighters
Overhead projector or projector
Poster Paper and Markers

Student Resource

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