

World War II

We shall not flag nor fail. We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France and on the seas and oceans; we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air. We shall defend our island whatever the cost may be; we shall fight on beaches, landing grounds, in fields, in streets and on the hills. We shall never surrender . . .

—Winston Churchill, June 4, 1940

As discussed in Chapter 26, the Great Depression created a great deal of instability worldwide in the 1930s. Many governments seemed incompetent in the face of the economic pressures, and citizens of those nations were drawn to any individuals and groups that claimed to have answers to the problems. These economic conditions contributed to the rise of fascism in Germany and Italy, the rise of militarism in Japan, and the popularity of communism.

Some historians downplay the role of broad economic trends and blame World War II primarily on one man: Adolf Hitler. His extreme views on the superiority of the Aryan race and his vision of a great German civilization led him to persecute Jews and other minorities and to systematically seize land.

The Path to War

The terms of the Treaty of Versailles severely limited the German military after World War I. Yet Hitler knew that he needed a stronger military if he was to acquire additional land. This meant breaking the treaty. In March of 1935, he announced the creation of a German air force and a policy of conscription to enlarge the size of the army. In 1936, he ordered German troops into the demilitarized area of the Rhineland.

Although France had the right to respond militarily to the German troop movement, it did not do so, partly because Britain would not support them. Some British believed that Hitler was the strong, anti-Communist leader that central Europe needed to keep order. Others were simply reluctant to return to war. So, Britain followed a policy of *appeasement*, giving in to the demands of another country in hopes of keeping the peace.

The Axis Powers Hitler then sought new allies to help him acquire *Lebensraum* (living space) for the new German empire. He first formed a military pact with Fascist Italy, the *Rome-Berlin Axis*. In addition to their need for military support, the two countries shared a political ideology and

economic interests. Germany then created a military alliance with Japan based on mutual distrust of communism, known as the *Anti-Comintern Pact*. The alliances among these three nations created the *Axis Powers*.

Spanish Civil War Hitler supported the Fascist Spanish nationalist government during the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939). In 1937, German and Italian planes bombed Guernica, a city in Basque region of Spain held by Republican forces. The bombing is considered to be the first such attack on a civilian population by a modern air force. Military records show that the attack on Guernica was a testing ground for the German air force and preparation for the war to come.

German-Austrian Unification With a military in tow and alliances in hand, Hitler felt confident about taking his next step in the creation of the German empire, or *Third Reich*. His plan was to bring Austria, where he was born, under German rule. Hitler used the threat of invasion to pressure the Austrian chancellor into giving more power to the Austrian Nazi Party. As Hitler had planned, the Austrian Nazis then opened the door for German troops to occupy Austria with no resistance. Austria officially became part of the Third Reich in March 1938.

Czechoslovakia The annexation of Austria was only the first step for Hitler. He wanted more. In September 1938, he issued a demand to Czechoslovakia for the border territory of the *Sudetenland*. Most of the people who lived in this region spoke German; Hitler argued that the area was a natural extension of his Aryan empire. The German leader met with the leaders of Britain, France, and Italy in Munich to discuss his demands. *Neville Chamberlain*, the British prime minister, again argued that a policy of appeasement would keep the peace and put an end to Hitler's demands for more land. This was a fateful miscalculation. Hitler saw that the British were not willing to stand up to his illegal land grabs, emboldening him to seize control of all of Czechoslovakia with an armed invasion in 1939.

The Conflict over Poland Of course, Hitler was not satisfied. He next set his sights on the Polish port of *Danzig*. Although Germany did have some historical claims to the port, in reality, Hitler was merely looking for an excuse to invade Poland. Britain, in the meantime, had reached the end of its policy of appeasement and agreed to protect Poland from a German attack. Britain and France also reached out to the Soviet Union to form a stronger alliance against Germany.

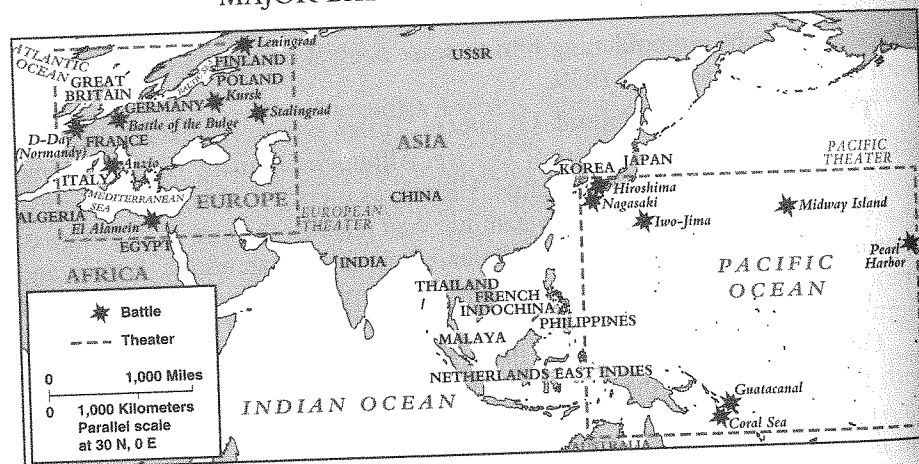
Germany was one step ahead of them, however; it was already in negotiations with the Soviets. With the signing of the *German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact* on August 23, 1939, the two nations pledged not to attack one another. During the negotiations for the pact, Hitler secretly offered Stalin control of eastern Poland and the Baltic States if Stalin would stand by during a German invasion of western Poland. With this assurance in hand, Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, claiming that Poland had attacked first. Britain and France honored their agreement to protect Poland and declared war on Germany. These actions marked the official start of World War II in Europe.

Japan and Imperialist Policies

With the military in control of the government, Japan harbored imperialist ambitions that would lead to a world war in the Pacific. Seeking access to natural resources on the Asian mainland, Japan began with an invasion of Manchuria in northern China in September 1931. The Japanese claimed that Chinese forces had attacked a railway near Mukden owned by Japan. The attack, called the *Mukden Incident*, is controversial. It was carried out either by Chinese dissidents or agents of the Japanese military. When the League of Nations condemned Japan's actions, Japan gave up its membership in the League and proceeded to acquire additional land in Manchuria. In 1932, the Japanese set up a puppet state called *Manchukuo* with the last Chinese emperor on its throne. (Test Prep: Create a timeline showing the steps Japan took as it moved from isolation to Imperialism. See page 457–458.)

In the 1930s, Chinese Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek was in a power struggle with the Chinese Communists for control of China. The last thing he wanted was a war with Japan. In 1935, however, Chiang Kai-shek recognized the need to ally with the Chinese Communists in a *united front* against Japan. Although technically united, the two groups were not very effective together. In July 1937, the united Nationalist and Communist forces met Japanese forces in battle south of Beijing. After months of fighting, Japan took control of Nanjing, the Chinese Nationalist capital since 1928, and gained quite a bit of Chinese territory along the coast. (See the map below.) Japanese soldiers killed or raped so many Chinese in the city of Nanjing that the six-week-long incident is called the *Nanjing Massacre* or Rape of Nanjing.

MAJOR BATTLES OF WORLD WAR II



New Order in East Asia The occupation of China was but one step in Japan's overall strategy, which was to create a "New Order in East Asia." The Japanese had looked to expand into Soviet Siberia, but when Germany and the Soviets signed the Nonaggression Pact of 1939, Japan had to look elsewhere

for new territory. Nearby Southeast Asia, which had been under the control of imperial powers in Western Europe and the United States, was the most obvious target. However, Japan faced obstacles. Their occupation of China led to economic sanctions by the United States. Because Japan's economy relied on oil and scrap iron from the United States, sanctions threatened to strangle its economy and undercut its military expansion. Therefore, Japan began a plan to retaliate against the United States with such surprising force that the Western powers would have to submit to Japan's imperial ambitions.

Germany's Early Victories and Challenges

Once war broke out in Europe, Hitler moved swiftly to acquire territory. He embarked on a strategy called *Blitzkrieg*, or lightning war, to quickly subdue Poland. Germany used rapidly moving tank divisions supported by the air force in its four-week campaign. At the end of September 1939, Germany and the Soviets divided the country as they had planned when they signed the Nonaggression Pact.

Germany's rapid success in Poland encouraged Hitler to attack and conquer Denmark and Norway in April 1940, and the Netherlands, Belgium, and France in the following month. Germany then proceeded to bring the government and resources of the conquered nations under its control. In France the Nazis set up the *Vichy government* under the leadership of Marshall Henri Petain to run the southern half of the country on Germany's behalf. (Test Prep: Create a table the conquests of Hitler and Alexander the Great. See pages 61–62.)

British-American Relations Fearing that it would be the next victim in Germany's relentless and rapid campaign, Britain asked the United States for support. However, the United States had a long history of isolationism, and a desire to avoid involvement in Europe's troubles. This attitude had been solidified with the passage of several neutrality acts in the previous decade.

Yet President Roosevelt was not an isolationist. He believed the United States should help the British. In 1940, the two powers signed the *Destroyers-for-Bases Agreement*, in which the United States promised delivery of 50 destroyers in exchange for eight British air and naval bases in the Western Hemisphere. In the 1941 *Lend-Lease Act*, the United States gave up all pretensions of neutrality by lending war materials to Britain. Also in 1941, Britain and the United States forged a policy statement known as the *Atlantic Charter*, which set down basic goals for the post-war world. The charter included such provisions as the restoration of self-government to those deprived of it, the abandonment of the use of force, and the disarmament of aggressor nations. The charter was later adopted by the United Nations.

The Battle of Britain In Europe, Britain was the last major holdout against Nazi power. In July 1940, Hitler ordered a large campaign against the small island nation by the *Luftwaffe*, the German air force. He believed that bombardment from the air would sufficiently weaken the country so that German sea and land forces could mount a successful invasion. Initially

targeting military bases in this *Battle of Britain*, the Germans turned to bombing British cities after the British Royal Air Force conducted a raid on Berlin. *Winston Churchill* termed this Britain's "finest hour" as the civilian population in London and other cities withstood months of relentless bombing. The university city of Oxford was the one city that was off limits to the German Luftwaffe in the bombing of Great Britain. Hitler had such respect for the tradition and learning at the various colleges of Oxford University that he did not want to see it destroyed. The targeting of cities did provide one advantage for Britain: the British military was able to rebuild after the earlier raids on its bases. Ultimately, Britain's superior planes and radar system allowed it to destroy German planes faster than they could be replaced. By May of 1941, Hitler was forced to postpone indefinitely any attempted invasion of Britain.

War on the Soviet Union After failing to invade Britain, Hitler turned east. He attacked the Soviet Union to eliminate Bolshevism and to create "Lebensraum" for the German people. Turning the focus to the east took pressure off Britain. After first attacking Greece and Yugoslavia, where its ally Italy had been unsuccessful, Germany began its invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. Initially the Nazis experienced rapid success as they had in Western Europe, capturing large amounts of territory and two million Soviet troops. However, the German forces soon found themselves at the mercy of the same force that had defeated Napoleon in 1812, the harsh Russian winter. Even a modern mechanized army could not function properly in such extreme cold. The German army was also spreading itself too thin over the vast areas of the western and southern Soviet Union. In addition, the German army's supply routes were getting too long. The Soviets defended the city of Leningrad in the *Battle of Leningrad*, a siege that lasted three years and led to the deaths of a million Soviet men, women, and children.

Japan Overreaches

Japan experienced rapid victories in the Pacific. It first launched a surprise air attack on the U.S. naval base at *Pearl Harbor* in Hawaii on December 7, 1941. Much of the U.S. Pacific fleet was in the harbor, and losses were extensive. Japan then responded to the U.S. declaration of war against it by seizing the Philippines (under partial U.S. control at the time), the Dutch East Indies, British Malaya, Burma, and numerous Pacific islands. Japan termed these territories the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere." Although Japan claimed to be liberating people from Western imperialism, people in the region experienced Japan as a conqueror.

Japan believed that the surprise attack and the damage to the U.S. Pacific Fleet would prompt the United States to negotiate a settlement favorable to Japan immediately. Instead, U.S. isolationism vanished overnight; public opinion demanded retaliation against Japan. Great Britain and China joined the United States in the fight against Japanese aggression. The war truly became global when Hitler answered the U.S. declaration of war against Japan with his own declaration of war against the United States within days.

Colonial Armies As the Axis powers expanded into new territory, Western colonial powers began to join the Allies in the war effort. For example, the Indian Army, which had started the war with only 200,000 men, ended the war as the largest volunteer army in history with more than 2.5 million men. Although the Indian Army did send troops to North Africa, the bulk of its troops fought against the Japanese in Southeast Asia.

Home Fronts As had been the case in World War I, World War II was a total war. Most countries mobilized all their resources, including the civilian population, to achieve victory. The United States mobilized civilians exceptionally well. It started with the strongest industrial sector of any country in the world and it added stringent government planning to provide factors what they needed. In addition, unlike anywhere in Europe, U.S. industry operated without fear of military attack. The United States ramped up production of the resources required for war, including ships, tanks, planes, landing craft, radar equipment, guns, and ammunition. With American entry into the war and the enlistment of large numbers of men in the armed forces, women found opportunities to work in factories and offices at an unprecedented rate.

Germany was less successful than the United States. Instead of mobilizing all available Germans in the war effort, leaders relied on forced labor. At its peak, 20 percent of the wartime workforce was forced labor, with 600,000 French citizens working in German war plants and 1.5 million French soldiers working in prisoner-of-war (POW) camps. The solution was counterproductive, however. The workers were treated so poorly that productivity was low.

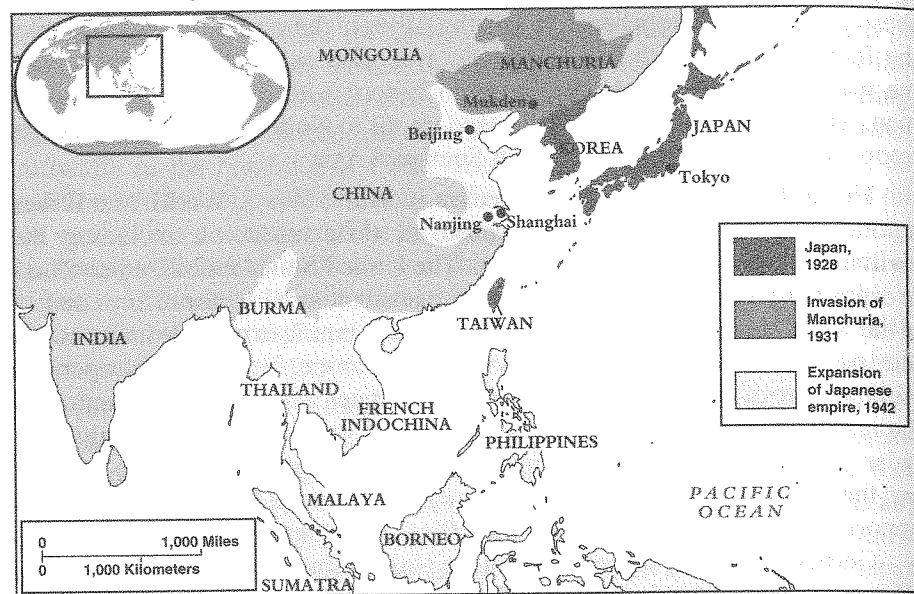
In Japan, efforts on the home front were confused. The government presented an optimistic view of the war instead of trying to mobilize resources. The government took pride in not utilizing women in the war effort, claiming that the enemy is "drafting women but in Japan, out of consideration for the family system, we will not." The government was able to systematically remove children from cities to the countryside when bombing of cities started late in the war. It was also successful in rationing food throughout the war.

The Tide Turns in Europe

With its entry into the war in December 1941, the United States joined the other Allied powers, Great Britain and the Soviet Union. In spite of political differences, the three nations were united in their determination to achieve a military victory and agreed that Axis surrender must be unconditional.

In early 1942, the Allies were struggling in Europe and North Africa. General *Erwin Rommel*, the "Desert Fox," led German troops in Egypt and threatened to take the northern city of Alexandria. Germany had also succeeded in gaining control of the Soviet Crimea. But in the second half of 1942, the tide turned. The British defeated Rommel at the *Battle of El Alamein*. And after months of fighting, a Soviet counteroffensive successfully defeated the cream of Hitler's military, the German Sixth Army, in the *Battle of Stalingrad*. Although the Germans remained in control of most of Western Europe, the momentum of the war in Europe had turned against the Nazis.

JAPANESE CONQUESTS IN WORLD WAR II



The Tide Turns in the Pacific Theater

The year 1942 was also crucial in the war against Japan. The first Allied victory occurred in May in the *Battle of the Coral Sea*, when the U.S. Navy stopped a Japanese fleet set to invade Australia. The following month, with the destruction of four Japanese aircraft carriers at the *Battle of Midway Island*, Allied naval forces demonstrated their superiority in the Pacific. These battles stopped the advance of the Japanese. The first major Allied offensive was on the island of Guadalcanal, which ended in early 1943 with an Allied victory.

The Allied forces in the Pacific under U.S. General *Douglas MacArthur* used a strategy called *island-hopping*. The Allies attacked islands where Japan was weak and skipped those where Japan was strong. The Allies slowly, and at great human cost, moved through the Philippines, getting closer to Japan itself.

Technology was critical to the success in the Pacific. For example, the development of fleets of *aircraft carriers*, ships that allowed planes to take off and land from their decks at sea, provided air support for battleships and increased the range and flexibility of naval forces. Aircraft were used for raids on enemy ships and bases and for intelligence gathering. In addition, submarines were extremely important to Allied success. They sank about 55 percent of the Japanese merchant fleet, severely damaging Japan's naval supply lines.

The Last Years of the War

The successes of 1942 put the Axis powers on the defensive in 1943. The Allies identified Italy as the weakest point under Axis control in Europe. In spite of German forces sent to aid Italy, the Allies gained control of the island of Sicily in July 1943, leading to the fall of Mussolini. After the Allies invaded southern

Italy in September 1943, Italy turned against its former ally. After months of slow and costly progress, the Allies finally recaptured Rome on June 4, 1944.

June 6, 1944, has become known as *D-Day*, when Allied forces numbering about 150,000 launched an amphibious invasion from England and landed on the beaches of Normandy in northern France. Even with air support, Allied casualties were high. Eventually, however, the Allies established a base to begin the march toward Paris, which was finally liberated in August. With control of Western Europe slipping away, Germany's defeat was drawing closer.

The Germans made one final push against the Allies during the winter of 1944. The *Battle of the Bulge* was fought in the Ardennes Forest across parts of France, Belgium, and Luxembourg. An Allied victory left Germany with no realistic expectation of winning the war, yet Hitler refused to give up. Allied air raids began to systematically destroy Germany's infrastructure and Allied troops crossed the Rhine River into Germany in March 1945. One month later they were close to Germany's capital city of Berlin.

On the Eastern Front, Soviet troops were also moving rapidly toward Germany. In July 1943, the largest tank battle of the war, the *Battle of Kursk*, was fought about 300 miles south of Moscow. The Soviets successfully challenged this instance of German *Blitzkrieg* by successfully holding their defensive position and then counterattacking. The Soviets then made rapid progress through the Ukraine and the Baltic States in 1944. After taking control of Warsaw, Poland, in January 1945, the Soviets moved on to Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria. In April 1945, they then advanced on Berlin, hoping to reach the German capital before the other Allies.

Victory in Europe Hitler spent the final days of the war hiding in a fortified underground shelter in Berlin. Although the country was falling apart all around him, he continued to live under the delusion that somehow Germany would triumph. The end came on April 30, 1945, when Hitler committed suicide. His ally Mussolini had been killed by members of the Italian resistance two days before. After Hitler's death, members of Germany's High Command acknowledged that continuing the war would be futile. In the first days of May, Germany surrendered to the Allies. May 8, 1945, marked the official end of the war in Europe and was designated as Victory in Europe Day or *V-E Day*.

Victory over Japan Although the island-hopping campaign had weakened Japan's hold on the Pacific, the emperor was not ready to surrender. The United States was beginning to consider the costs of invading the Japanese homeland, which it feared might lead to enormous Allied casualties. President Truman's advisors were split on whether to use atomic (nuclear) weapons. He decided to go ahead. On August 6, 1945, the U.S. Air Force dropped the first atomic bomb, on the Japanese city of *Hiroshima*, leading to the deaths of more than 100,000 civilians. Three days later, a second bomb was dropped on *Nagasaki*, resulting in another 40,000 or so immediate civilian deaths. The months of Allied victories combined with these devastating nuclear attacks caused Japan to unconditionally surrender on August 14. Truman designated September 2, the day of the formal surrender ceremonies, as Victory over Japan Day or *V-J Day*.

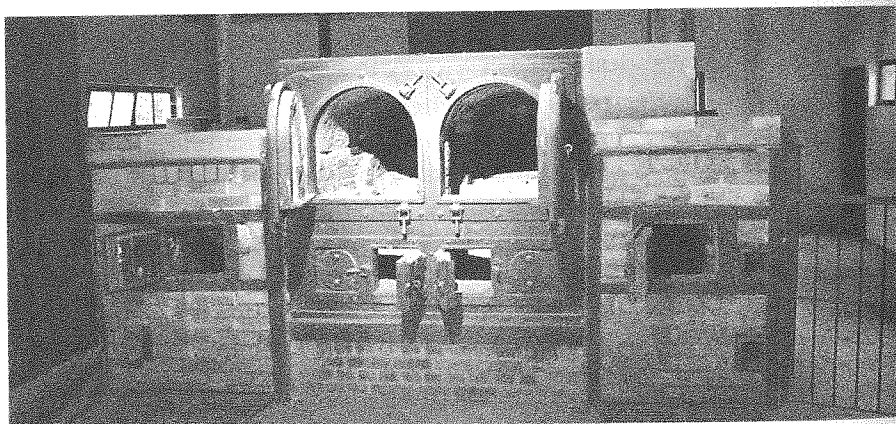
Casualties of War

World War II was the bloodiest war in history. It resulted in tremendous suffering and death for both military personnel and civilians.

The Nazis News about Nazi brutality slowly became known to the world during the war. In its pursuit of territory, Germany forcefully removed many Slavic peoples, including one million Poles, and Roma, also known as Gypsies, from their homes. *Heinrich Himmler*, the leader of the Nazi special police, the SS, oversaw these policies. In addition, more than seven million residents of conquered territory were forced to work in labor camps or in jobs that would support the German war effort. Political opponents, people with disabilities, and gay people were also sent to camps.

The single largest group targeted by the Nazis was the Jewish population of Europe. The campaign to eliminate them has become known as the *Holocaust*. Hitler had declared his extreme anti-Semitic views in his major work *Mein Kampf*, written in 1925–1926. When he became chancellor, he instituted many policies that reflected these views, such as the *Nuremberg Laws* of 1935 that banned Jews from certain professions and certain schools. During *Kristallnacht* in 1938, Jews throughout Germany and Austria were beaten and more than 90 were killed; their homes, shops, and synagogues were looted and smashed. Later, Jews were forced to live in special sections of cities—Jewish *ghettos*.

In 1942, Nazi leaders decided to not just persecute Jews, but to attempt to completely eliminate them. They began a campaign to kill all Jews in Europe. This genocide, under the direction of the SS, was termed the “final solution.” Initially, Nazi killing units moved from place to place, shooting large numbers of Jews in conquered areas and burying them in mass graves. Later the SS began rounding up Jews and shipping them to death camps where they were gassed. By the end of the war, the Nazis had killed about six million Jews, and approximately that number of people of other persecuted groups that had been sent to labor camps, as well as Soviet prisoners of war.



Source: Thinkstock

One shocking aspect of the Holocaust was how the Nazis used technology—trains, poisonous gas, and ovens for cremation (above)—to make their attempt at genocide more efficient and more deadly.

The Japanese Although the Japanese did not carry out a dedicated policy of genocide that paralleled the Holocaust, million of people died as a result of their policies. Under the program “Asia for Asiatics,” Japan forced people they had conquered into a variety of labor programs. Among these were service in the military, on public works projects, and in agricultural settings where crops and livestock were produced to reduce the food shortage in Japan. As a result of these harsh programs, more than one million civilians died in Vietnam alone. Perhaps an equal number of Allied prisoners of war and local workers perished while doing forced labor for Japan.

The Allies Air warfare carried out by the United States and the other Allies brought a new type of deadly combat to civilians. The Allies’s *firebombing* of German cities, particularly Hamburg in 1943 and *Dresden* in 1945 caused large casualties. The number of deaths in Hamburg was about 50,000. Dresden had fewer casualties, maybe 25,000 deaths, as 15 square miles of its historic city-center were destroyed. The United States also used firebombing in *Tokyo*. There, incendiary bombs resulted in the destruction of some 16 square miles of that city and the deaths of about 100,000 Japanese people.

The final two air attacks in the war, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, produced not only high casualties, but tremendous fear about the destructiveness of a future war fought with nuclear weapons. These weapons had been developed by an international group of scientists working in the United States. The scientific achievement was impressive, but it also required developments in other areas to have military use. For example, to deliver the nuclear weapons required improvements in airplane design to allow long flights carrying heavy loads. There is a great difference between the planes used in World War II and those used in World War I. In addition, the widespread use of the aircraft carrier by several powers extended the airplanes’ reach. Utilizing these developments in planes and ships, countries could carry out air attacks anywhere in the world.

Total Casualties Because of the widespread fighting, advances in the technology of destruction, and its impact on the economies and civilian life of so many nations, the effects of World War II were unprecedented. Although exact casualty figures have been impossible to determine, total deaths likely exceeded 40 million. Maybe half of those were citizens of the Soviet Union, and millions of others were from Germany, Poland, China, and Japan. Losses among U.S. troops were fewer, but still considerable: about 290,000 soldiers killed and more than 600,000 wounded. Civilian casualties from attacks on land, air, and sea; from government executions based on political rationales, including genocide; and from disease and starvation caused by the war likely exceeded military casualties.

The Big Three and a New World Order

The main Allied nations in World War II—Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union—were known collectively as the *Big Three*. Beginning in 1943, they met in a series of conferences to discuss strategy for winning the war and for shaping the world after the war ended. During the *Tehran Conference*

in November 1943, the Allies were generally in agreement. The Soviet Union would focus on freeing Eastern Europe, while Britain and the United States concentrated on Western Europe. In addition, Britain and the United States agreed to a Soviet demand to shift some Polish territory to the Soviet Union, to be made up by Poland gaining territory elsewhere, mostly from Germany.

The Yalta Conference By February 1945, at the *Yalta Conference*, the Soviet leader Joseph Stalin revealed his distrust of his allies. The Allies could see that Germany was near defeat, but they had different ideas of what should happen after Germany's surrender. Stalin wanted to impose his will on the countries of Eastern Europe so that the region would serve as a buffer between the U.S.S.R. and Western Europe. President Franklin Roosevelt wanted these countries to be able to rule themselves through free, democratic elections. He also wanted Soviet support in the war against Japan. Stalin asked for numerous concessions in return for his commitment to fight Japan, including possession of Japanese territory in the southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands, as well as two Chinese ports and an ownership interest in a Manchurian railroad. Roosevelt hoped that agreeing to Stalin's demands would lead to self-determination for Eastern Europe. The conference ended with only vague assurances on this issue. On the other hand, Stalin and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill did agree to support Roosevelt's vision of a new organization, the United Nations, to help solve future international disputes peacefully.

The Potsdam Conference The final meeting between the Big Three, the *Potsdam Conference*, was held in Germany in July 1945. The new U.S. president, Harry Truman, sworn in after Roosevelt's death on April 12, added a new dynamic to the group. He had a disdain for Stalin and Churchill and was adamant about the requirement for free elections in Eastern Europe. Stalin occupied the region with Soviet troops, however, and was equally adamant in refusing Truman's demand. The two nations continued to express their lack of trust in one another in aggressive rhetoric that would develop into the Cold War. (Test Prep: Write a paragraph connecting the tensions at the end of World War II to the Cold War. See pages 551–555.)

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: WHY DID THE ALLIES WIN?

Disagreements about why the Allies won began even before the war was over. Adolf Hitler blamed Germany's defeat on the poor performance of its air force. Not surprisingly, many German military leaders disagreed: they blamed Hitler's meddling in military decisions. More surprisingly, many Americans also disagreed with Hitler about the importance of air power. Economist John Kenneth Galbraith noted that despite the intensive Allied bombing of Germany, German production continued to increase during the war. He concluded that bombing was not that significant.

After the war, historians in Great Britain, France, and the United States focused on the contributions made by the Western members of the Allies. This might simply have reflected national pride or a reluctance to credit a communist country with a positive role. However, the focus of Western historians might also have been shaped by the sources they had available. They could study Western documents but the Soviet Union was not receptive to outsiders studying in its archives.

As the Cold War thawed, Western historians began to give more credit to the Soviets for helping win the war. For example, a 2013 article in the prestigious journal *Foreign Policy* by Ward Wilson of the Monterey Institute of International Studies was headed, "The Bomb Didn't Beat Japan . . . Stalin Did."

Historians commonly disagree on how to weight different factors. For example, British economist Mark Harrison emphasized the economic advantages of the Allies, while British military historian Richard Overy argued that knowledge was more important than economics. In a 1996 book *Why the Allies Won*, Overy argued that the Allies had advantages in logistics and intelligence, so they used their supplies and troops more efficiently, leading to victory.

KEY TERMS BY THEME

STATE-BUILDING	Battle of Britain	Dresden
Winston Churchill	Battle of Leningrad	Big Three
appeasement	Pearl Harbor	Tehran Conference
Rome-Berlin Axis	Erwin Rommel	Yalta Conference
Anti-Comintern Pact	Battle of El Alamein	Potsdam Conference
Axis powers	Battle of Stalingrad	ENVIRONMENT
Third Reich	Battle of the Coral Sea	Sudetenland
Neville Chamberlain	Battle of Midway Island	firebombing
Danzig	island-hopping	CULTURE
German-Soviet	Douglas MacArthur	Oxford University
Nonaggression Pact	aircraft carriers	Holocaust
Mukden Incident	D-Day	<i>Mein Kampf</i>
united front	Battle of the Bulge	SOCIAL STRUCTURE
Nanjing Massacre	Battle of Kursk	Rosie the Riveter
Blitzkrieg	V-E Day	Nuremberg Laws
Vichy government	Hiroshima	Kristallnacht
Destroyers-for-Bases	Nagasaki	ghettos
Agreement	V-J Day	
Lend-Lease Act	Heinrich Himmler	
Luftwaffe	Tokyo	

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. What did the British hope to achieve with their policy of appeasement in the 1930s?
 - (A) To prevent the outbreak of another war
 - (B) To support countries resisting Hitler's aggression
 - (C) To prevent the spread of communism
 - (D) To maintain the supremacy of the British Empire
2. What event caused World War II to begin in Europe?
 - (A) Germany's annexation of Austria
 - (B) The German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact
 - (C) Germany's refusal to withdraw from Poland
 - (D) Italy's invasion of Greece
3. Japan's atrocities in Nanjing in 1937 reflected its
 - (A) response to an attack on Japan by Chinese communists
 - (B) desperation after the strategy of island hopping was begun
 - (C) fear of an invasion by the Soviet Union
 - (D) imperialist designs on mainland China
4. Why did Japan plan an attack on the United States in 1941?
 - (A) To retaliate against U.S. economic sanctions against Japan
 - (B) To gain more territory in the eastern Pacific
 - (C) To prevent the United States from fighting in Europe
 - (D) To fulfill a secret agreement between Japan and the U.S.S.R.
5. The success of the German Blitzkrieg was due to
 - (A) concentration of attacks on a single front
 - (B) lack of resistance from small European countries
 - (C) coordinated ground and air attacks
 - (D) a strategy of focusing on civilian targets

Question 6 refers to the cartoon below.



Source: Willard Wetmore Combes / Library of Congress

6. In the cartoon the bear represents the U.S.S.R. What aspect of World War II does the cartoon most strongly represent?
 - (A) The alliance between the Nazis and the Soviets
 - (B) The surprise Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union
 - (C) The successful Soviet defense of Stalingrad
 - (D) The superiority of the Nazi military over the Soviet military
7. What did firebombing cities and using atomic bombs both accomplish?
 - (A) They ended the German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact.
 - (B) They strengthened the U.S. Air Force.
 - (C) They led to Germany's surrender to the Allies.
 - (D) They increased civilian casualties.
8. Creating the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" allowed Japan to
 - (A) defeat the united front in China
 - (B) establish alliances with its neighbors
 - (C) gain resources from conquered territories
 - (D) capture U.S. territories in the Pacific

Question 9 refers to the excerpt below.

Perception of danger, danger to our institutions, may come slowly or it may come with a rush and a shock as it has to the people of the United States in the past few months. This perception of danger, danger in a world-wide area—it has come to us clearly and overwhelmingly—we perceive the peril in a world-wide arena, an arena that may become so narrowed that only the Americas will retain the ancient faiths. Some indeed still hold to the now somewhat obvious delusion that we of the United States can safely permit the United States to become a lone island, a lone island in a world dominated by the philosophy of force.

—Franklin D. Roosevelt, Address delivered at
Charlottesville, Virginia, June 10, 1940

9. What position is best supported by the information in the excerpt?
- (A) The United States agrees that appeasement was effective against Hitler.
 - (B) The United States should avoid war with Hitler at all costs.
 - (C) The United States should join the fight against Hitler.
 - (D) The United States alone can stop Hitler.
10. The significance of the Battle of the Bulge in 1944 was that it
- (A) resulted in more Allied casualties than D-Day
 - (B) ended Germany's last push to defeat the Allies
 - (C) marked the height of German power on the Eastern Front
 - (D) caused disagreement among the Allies about invading Berlin

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE-OVER-TIME ESSAY QUESTIONS

Directions: You are to answer the following question. You should spend 5 minutes organizing or outlining your essay. Write an essay that:

- Has a relevant thesis and supports that thesis with appropriate historical evidence.
 - Addresses all parts of the question.
 - Uses world historical context to show continuities and changes over time.
 - Analyzes the process of continuity and change over time.
1. Analyze continuities and changes in the relationship between Russia and the United States from 1900 to 1945.

Questions for Additional Practice

2. Analyze continuities and change in ONE of these aspects of warfare during World War I and World War II:
 - Military technology and tactics
 - Role of European colonies and former colonies
3. Analyze continuities and changes in the nature of anti-Semitism in Europe from the Middle Ages through World War II.

COMPARATIVE ESSAY QUESTIONS

Directions: You are to answer the following question. You should spend 5 minutes organizing or outlining your essay. Write an essay that:

- Has a relevant thesis and supports that thesis with appropriate historical evidence.
 - Addresses all parts of the question.
 - Makes direct, relevant comparisons.
 - Analyzes relevant reasons for similarities and differences.
1. Analyze similarities and differences in the way countries fought World War II in TWO of these areas:
- Western Front in Europe
 - Eastern Front in Europe
 - Pacific Theater

Questions for Additional Practice

2. Analyze similarities and differences in TWO of the following examples of genocide in the twentieth century:
 - Turks against Armenians
 - the Holocaust
 - Rwanda
3. Analyze the similarities and differences in the foreign policies of Neville Chamberlain and Winston Churchill.

THINK AS A HISTORIAN: USE CAUSATION IN A PARAGRAPH

Even simple historical events have multiple causes. Hence, any causal statement is a judgment about which facts are worth mentioning. *In each outline for an paragraph, which statement is LEAST useful?*

1. What caused World War II?
 - A. Adolf Hitler desired to expand the size of Germany.
 - B. The Great Depression of the 1930s was global.
 - C. Franklin Roosevelt was president of the United States.
2. What caused the United States to enter World War II?
 - A. Roosevelt believed the United States should aid Britain.
 - B. Germany was planning the Holocaust.
 - C. Japan attacked Pearl Harbor.

WRITE AS A HISTORIAN: CHOOSE PRECISE WORDS

Using precise words in place of vague ones will help you make your points clearly. For example, “The Nazis planned to carry out genocide” is clearer than “The Nazis considered killing many people.” *Which sentence in each pair uses more precise language?*

- 1A. Germany, Japan, and Italy made a military agreement because of similar interests, and they became the Axis Powers.
- 1B. Germany, Japan, and Italy created military pacts based on shared financial and political goals, which resulted in the formation of the Axis Powers.
- 2A. In 1942, the Allied Powers defeated the Axis Powers in the Pacific Theater, North Africa, and Stalingrad, marking this year as a turning point of the war.
- 2B. In 1942, the Axis Powers were beaten by the Allies in several battlefields, which made this year an important one.
- 3A. The Yalta Conference amalgamated the three leaders of Russia, England, and the United States, but relationships became precarious due to Stalin’s suspicions of injustices.
- 3B. The Yalta Conference brought together Russia, England, and the United States, but they did not get along as well because some were distrustful with others.

The Cold War Era

Let us not be deceived—we are today in the midst of a cold war.

—Bernard Baruch, 1947

The United States and the Soviet Union emerged from World War II as the globe’s two superpowers, locked in an ideological battle over the direction the world should take. The Soviets feared capitalism, while the Americans feared Communism. The former allies began to move farther apart as the war ended in 1945. The Soviets were determined to continue their occupation of Eastern Europe in order to create a buffer between the U.S.S.R. and Western Europe. Therefore, they remained in the region, supporting national Communists in their efforts to gain control of one country after another. The United States opposed the occupation since it hindered the ability of these nations to hold elections that would allow them to determine freely their form of government. This state of hostility between the two rivals became known as the *Cold War*, because the tensions never resulted in direct fighting between the United States and the Soviet Union. Instead, proxy states did the fighting. In the Vietnam War (1964–1975), for example, the United States supported South Vietnam in its fight against North Vietnam, which was supplied with support and armaments by the Soviet Union. And in the newly independent *Angola* in southwest Africa, a civil war broke out between the Soviet-backed government and U.S.-backed rebels (1975–1991).

The United Nations: A Structure for Peace

In spite of their ideological differences, the Allies came out of World War II with a shared commitment to preventing conflicts between nations from escalating into war. Many people had concluded that the League of Nations had not worked well but that there was still a need for a world organization dedicated to peace—one that would be more effective and possibly more powerful. This time around, all the major powers would have to belong for the organization to have any chance of success. In 1943, leaders of the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and China discussed the idea of the *United Nations* (UN). The UN was born on October 24, 1945, a day still honored as United Nations Day. (Test Prep: Write a paragraph comparing the United Nations with the League of Nations. See pages 499–500.)

The United Nations was carefully designed with several parts, each of which has its own duties. The *General Assembly*, with one vote for each member nation, discusses and votes on issues. The *Security Council* acts on