What was the outcome of World War II?

On “D-Day,” June 6, 1944, the Allied army launched the massive invasion in France to retake Europe from the Axis powers.

Looking at Key Terms
- Axis powers
- Allied powers
- Pearl Harbor
- D-Day
- Holocaust

Looking at Key Words
- isolationism: a policy of staying out of world affairs
- fascism: a system of government ruled by a dictator who uses the military and racism to stay in power
- anti-Semitism: hatred of the Jewish people
- neutral: not taking sides in a dispute
- draft: to require a person to enter the military
During the 1930s, most Americans were not interested in foreign affairs. Americans were more concerned with ending the Great Depression. In 1941, all that changed. The United States entered World War II. It took four years of fighting before the world was again at peace.

The United States Joins the Fight

Why did the United States join the Allies?

A feeling of isolationism grew in the United States during the 1930s. Isolationism is the belief that a country should stay out of world affairs. However, events in Europe and Asia would soon change the way Americans felt.

The rise of Adolph Hitler

Like much of the rest of the world, Germany was hit by a depression during the 1930s. Many people in Germany became desperate. They began to trust leaders who promised to lift Germany out of the depression at any price.

Adolph Hitler was just such a leader. He and the Nazi party came to power in 1933. The Nazis believed in fascism. Fascism is a system of government ruled by a dictator. Fascists use nationalism, or excessive patriotism, to gain power. They also use racism.

Hitler was a racist. He believed the Germans were a superior, or better, group of people. Everybody else was inferior. Most of all, Hitler hated the Jewish people. Hatred of Jews is called anti-Semitism. Hitler blamed the Jews for all of Germany's problems.

Hitler's government issued laws that discriminated against Jews. The Nazis arrested many Jews and put them in prisons called concentration camps.

Many Jews fled Germany. The United States allowed about 63,000 Jewish refugees to enter between 1938 and 1939. Other countries also allowed some Jews to enter. However, most of the Jews fleeing Nazi persecution had no place to go. Anti-Semitism prevented many Jews from coming to the United States.

The Axis powers

By the mid-1930s, Hitler was carrying out his plan of expansion. He sent soldiers into the western part of Germany called the Rhineland. This went against the treaty that had ended World War I. But Europe's democratic countries did nothing to stop Hitler.

In 1936, Germany signed a treaty with Italy. Italy also had a fascist government. Together Germany and Italy called themselves the Axis powers. A short while later, Japan joined them.

In 1938, Germany turned against two of its neighbors. First, it took over Austria. Then, Hitler demanded the western part of Czechoslovakia (chek-eh-sloh-VAH-key-ah). Czechoslovakia needed help from Britain and France to defend itself. But Britain and France simply gave in to Hitler.

While Germany upset peace in Europe, Japan did the same in Asia. Japan's goal was to conquer territory and become the most powerful country in Asia. In 1937, Japan invaded China. No country helped China.

The beginning of war

The failure to stop German and Japanese invasions finally led to war. In September 1939, Germany invaded Poland. Britain and France finally declared war on Germany. World War II had begun.

Britain and France were called the Allied powers. The United States was officially neutral, or not on any side, at the start of the war. However, President Roosevelt supplied the Allies with war material. He believed a German victory would threaten the United States.

Despite U.S. help, Germany defeated
1937  Japan invades China.

1938  Germany invades Austria and part of Czechoslovakia.

1939  WWII begins in Europe and Asia.

1941  Japan bombs Pearl Harbor. The U.S. enters the war.

1944  D-Day is launched.


Reading A Timeline  Compare this timeline and the one in Chapter 14. While Japan and Germany were acting aggressively, what was happening in the U.S.?

France in 1940. Britain now stood alone against Germany.

The German army seemed unstoppable. It had conquered most of Western Europe by June 1940. (See the map on page 129.) In June 1941, Hitler’s army turned east and invaded the Soviet Union. Soon Germany controlled a large part of that country.

U.S. entry into the war  In Asia, Japan controlled a large part of China as well as other territory. In 1941, the United States demanded that Japan withdraw from China. Tension between the United States and Japan increased.

Early in December, Japanese ships secretly sailed near Hawaii. On December 7, airplanes from those ships attacked Pearl Harbor. Pearl Harbor was the main U.S. navy base in the Pacific. In just two hours, the Japanese destroyed most of the base and its ships. Over 2,400 Americans died.

The following day, the U.S. Congress declared war on Japan. Three days later, Germany declared war on the United States. The United States had entered World War II.

1. How did the United States help the Allies before it entered the war?
2. What event drew the United States into the war?

2 The Allies Defeat the Axis.

How did the Allies defeat the Axis?

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France in 1940. Britain now stood alone against Germany.

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2 The Allies Defeat the Axis.

*How did the Allies defeat the Axis?*

The people of London sat quietly in underground air-raid shelters. Suddenly
a loud explosion was heard. Then, the ground shook. In September 1940, the Germans began bombing raids the British called the "London Blitz." The raids continued until June 1941. The city of London was badly damaged, but not destroyed. Most important, the Nazis had not crushed the British spirit to win the war.

**New weapons** The will to win was important. However, modern science also played a great role in winning the war. Both the Allies and the Axis used science to build new weapons. They built fast and powerful airplanes to bomb cities. Many people were killed in these attacks.

U.S. and British scientists developed radar to track airplanes. They came up with sonar to find submarines. Late in the war, Germany developed the world's first jet planes and large rockets. But, in 1945, the United States created the most powerful weapon ever. It was the atomic bomb.

**Axis victories** The Axis powers were winning the war in 1941. They continued to win most battles during

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**Reading a Map.** Name the main Axis powers. Name the main Allied powers. When it was at its greatest size, the Axis powers controlled territory on what continents? Where did the major Allied invasion of Europe take place?
1942. The Germans advanced both in
the Soviet Union and in North Africa.

The Japanese also advanced. They
invaded the Philippines and conquered
parts of Southeast Asia. They also took
over many islands in the Pacific Ocean.

Allied victories By the end of
1942, the tide of battle turned against
Germany. In October, the British and
Americans stopped the German army in
North Africa. The Soviet army stopped
the Germans at the city of Stalingrad.

Nobody could stop the Japanese dur-
ing 1942. However, in the spring the
U.S. Navy defeated them twice in the
Pacific. In early 1943, the United States
began driving the Japanese back.

D-Day By 1943, Allied forces in
Europe had the advantage. Then on June
6, 1944, Allied troops launched a bold
plan. They crossed the English Channel
and landed in France. The Allies called
June 6, D-Day. D-Day was the largest

Reading a Map. How far east did the maximum area of Japanese control extend in
1942? Give your answers both in terms of longitude and in terms of the islands
Japan did or did not control in 1942.
naval invasion in history. It involved over three million soldiers.

After D-Day, Allied soldiers pushed through France and eastward into Germany. Meanwhile, from deep inside their country the Soviets fought their way westward.

In 1945, the Allies closed in on Germany from the east and west. However, President Roosevelt did not live to see Germany's final defeat. He died on April 12. Vice President Harry S Truman became the new President. Germany surrendered on May 7, 1945.

The Holocaust  The end of the war in Europe brought with it horrible news. During the war, the Allies had heard reports of Nazi death camps. But no one was prepared for what Allied soldiers found when they liberated the concentration camps. The Nazis had murdered six million Jews in concentration camps. The Nazis also killed millions of other innocent civilians. This terrible crime is called the Holocaust.

News of the Holocaust shocked people all over the world. Today, it is important to remember what happened in the Holocaust so it will not happen again.

Japanese surrender  The war against Japan lasted four months after Germany surrendered. One by one the United States retook the islands the Japanese had conquered in the Pacific.

The United States finally ended the war by dropping two atomic bombs on Japan. The first bomb was dropped on the city of Hiroshima (hir-eh-SHEE-mah) on August 6, 1945. The second one was dropped on Nagasaki (nah-geh-SAH-kee) on August 9. The atomic bombs caused great loss of life and terrible destruction in Japan. Japan surrendered on September 2, 1945. World War II was over.

1. What new weapons were developed during World War II?
2. What is the Holocaust?

3. All Americans Participate in the War.

How did Americans participate in World War II?

The United States needed a huge military force to fight the Axis. It had to draft millions of soldiers. When a person is drafted, he or she is required to serve
in the military. More than 15 million Americans served in the U.S. military.

**African Americans in the military**
More than one million African Americans served in the military during World War II. More than 6,000 became officers. However, the military remained segregated. More than 20 African American combat units fought in Europe. A unit of African American pilots flew fighter planes that protected U.S. bombers. It shot down 400 enemy airplanes during the war.

One of this country’s first heroes was an African American named Dorie Miller. He was at Pearl Harbor working in the kitchen of a battleship. When the Japanese attack began, he ran on deck and dragged his wounded captain to safety. Then, Miller grabbed a machine gun and shot down four planes. He was awarded the Navy Cross for his bravery.

**Other groups in World War II**
More than 500,000 Latinos served in the armed forces. They served in every branch of the military and on every battle front. Unlike African Americans, Latinos were not put in segregated units. Seventeen Mexican Americans won the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Native Americans also served in the armed forces. Among them were a group from the Navajo who served as “code talkers.” Using the Navajo language, they developed a secret code the Japanese could not break. It helped send information over the radio to U.S. soldiers on many battlefields.

Thousands of Japanese Americans fought for the United States. You will read more about the discrimination Japanese Americans faced in Chapter 16.

Women also served in the military. More than 300,000 women served as nurses and in special women’s units in non-combat jobs. The army called its unit the Women’s Army Corps (WACs).

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1. Who was Dorie Miller?
2. How did the Navajo code talkers help the U.S. military?

**Chapter 15**
**KEY IDEAS**

- World War II began in 1939. The Allied powers of Britain and France fought the Axis powers of Germany, Italy, and Japan.
- The Soviet Union joined the Allies in 1941. The United States joined the Allies after the attack on Pearl Harbor.
- Until 1943, the Axis were winning in Europe, Africa, and Asia. In that year, the Allies began pushing the Axis back. The Axis finally surrendered in 1945.
- Americans from all groups participated in the war effort. African Americans, Latinos, Japanese Americans, Native Americans, and women found new opportunities in the armed forces.
How did World War II affect life in the United States?

One way for people on the home front to help the war effort was to collect aluminum. These New Yorkers had a party to give pots and pans.

**Looking at Key Terms**
- victory garden
- Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC)
- zoot suit riots

**Looking at Key Words**
- civilian: a person who is not in the military
- price control: the setting of prices on certain goods and services by the government
- ration: to portion or limit
- bracero: a contract laborer from Mexico
- internment camp: a prison camp

such resources as food, clothing, or fuel
As U.S. soldiers fought overseas during World War II, they often thought of family and friends they left behind. The people left at home also missed the soldiers. However, there was important work to do on the home front. In fact, work on the home front was very important to soldiers on the battlefield.

Price controls and rationing  So few goods were available that prices rose. They rose so quickly that in 1942, the government set price controls. This meant that sellers could not raise their prices any more.

The government also introduced rationing. Rationing is when people are limited in how much of an item they can buy. The goal was to make sure that each person got their fair share. Gasoline, meat, butter, shoes, sugar, canned goods, and other products all were rationed.

Families during the war  Families had to accept other hardships during the war. Many families moved to new cities or towns to get factory jobs. Cities like Los Angeles, Detroit, and Seattle grew rapidly.

Often in these and other cities, there was a shortage of housing. Schools became overcrowded. Many had to go on double session. There were blackouts of electricity. People had to practice civil defense drills in case enemy planes bombed their cities.

These problems did not stop families from working together to help the war effort. People grew their own food on small plots of land called victory gardens. Even people in big cities like New York grew victory gardens. Children gathered tin cans and tinfoil so the metal in them could be used to make weapons. These activities cheered people up because they felt they were helping to win the war.

The war and the economy  The U.S. government spent $320 billion to fight World War II. It purchased ships, airplanes, tanks, and other war supplies. These supplies were produced by U.S. factories. The factories in turn provided jobs for millions of workers.

War spending lifted the United States out of the Depression. Unemployment dropped from ten million to almost nothing. Wages went up. The income of most workers doubled.

For the first time in over a decade, people had money to spend. However, there often was nothing for them to buy. Factories were producing weapons and other war materials for the government.

There were shortages of things civilians, or those not in the military, wanted to buy. Toasters, hair curlers, nylon stockings, and dishes were in short supply. After 1942, there were no new cars and trucks at all! The government needed car and truck factories to produce tanks and airplanes.
2 The War Effort Enlists Women.

*What role did women play in the war effort at home?*

"Rosie the Riveter" dressed in coveralls and carried a wrench in her hand. She became an American hero during World War II. Rosie was not a real woman, however. She was a symbol. Rosie stood for the millions of women who worked in war industries. Many of these women had never worked outside the home before. The working world was a new challenge. Women met it with great energy.

**Women at work**  World War II created a labor shortage. Fifteen million men were in the military. As a result millions of jobs opened up. Women filled many of those jobs and played a crucial role in the war effort.

About 6.5 million women joined the work force between 1941 and 1945. Many of the new women workers took jobs in factories. They also worked for the government. By 1945, women made up more than one third of the U.S. work force.

Often women worked in jobs traditionally held by men. Some worked as welders and in electronics. Others built planes and tanks. Still others drove trucks and repaired machinery.

Working women also supported their families. A soldier's pay was not enough for a family. Working women whose husbands were not in the military gave their families a second paycheck. This helped many families to live better.

Among those who gained the most were African American women. Before
World War II, they often worked on farms or as servants. After 1941, over 300,000 found jobs in factories where they earned higher wages.

**Child care** However, not everything was rosy for Rosie the Riveter. Working women during the war faced many problems. There were few day care centers for their children. Usually family members cared for children. But sometimes help from family members was not enough.

Working women also had problems at home. After a full day in a factory or office, they had to do housework. If they were mothers, they also had to take care of children. This meant that many women had to do two jobs.

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1. Why did women join the workforce in great numbers after 1941?
2. What problems did working mothers face?

### 3 African Americans and Latinos Contribute to the War Effort.

**How did African Americans and Latinos help the United States win World War II?**

The labor shortage created by World War II opened new opportunities for African Americans and Latinos. Millions moved from farms and small towns to cities in the North, West, and Midwest. Many made good money working in war industries. However, they still faced discrimination.

**Fighting for a Double V** African Americans were angry about segregation in the military (see page 132) and job discrimination. The United States was fighting for freedom abroad. But it still denied some of its citizens equal rights. African American leaders said they wanted a Double V. It meant victory over enemies abroad and over racism at home.

The man who led the struggle for equality during the war was A. Philip Randolph. Randolph was the head of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. It was the most powerful African American labor organization in the country. Randolph demanded equality in jobs and in the military.
In 1941, Randolph began to organize a march on Washington to end discrimination. He promised “ten, twenty, fifty thousand [African Americans] on the White House lawn.” Under this pressure, President Roosevelt took action. In June 1941, the President banned discrimination in war industries. He also set up the Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC) to combat discrimination.

The FEPC had some success in stopping discrimination. African Americans got better jobs in defense plants. They also were able to join labor unions.

Riots  However, many problems remained. African Americans who moved to northern cities often met anger from whites. There were tensions over jobs and over housing. This tension erupted into race riots in several cities. The worst riot occurred in Detroit in 1943. It began as a fist fight between an African American and a white man. Within hours a riot swept across the city. It resulted in the deaths of 25 blacks and 9 whites.

Many people rushed to fill factory jobs during the war. However, there was also a labor shortage on the farms. Workers were needed to tend and harvest crops. To meet this shortage, the U.S. and Mexican governments set up the bracero program. Braceros were laborers from Mexico who worked on farms in the United States. Beginning in 1942, braceros came to the United States to harvest crops. When the harvest was over, the braceros returned to Mexico.

Discrimination against Mexican Americans remained, however. The so-called zoot suit riots were one example. A zoot suit was a style of dressing. It featured an oversized jacket and baggy pants. The style was popular with many young Latino men in the 1940s.

One summer night in Los Angeles in 1943, some white sailors complained that “zoot suiters” had attacked them. The following night hundreds of sailors roamed Los Angeles. They beat up Mexican Americans wearing zoot suits. Local police did little to stop the attacks. Finally, the military police were called in to end the riot.

1. What was the Double V?
2. What were the zoot suit riots?

4. Japanese Americans Are Interned.

Why were Japanese Americans placed in internment camps?

They... built barbed-wire fences around the camp with a tower on each corner with military personnel and machine guns, rifles, and searchlights. It was terrifying because we didn’t know what was going to happen to us.

This was how Ben Yorita described the camp he and his family were taken to during World War II. Yorita was not a prisoner of war captured in Europe or Asia. He was a U.S. citizen sent by the U.S. government to a prison camp. His only “crime” was that he happened to be a Japanese American.

Discrimination  The worst single example of discrimination during World War II affected Japanese Americans. About 110,000 Japanese Americans lived along the U.S. West Coast. They had long been the targets of discrimination. Many businesses refused to serve Japanese Americans. Japanese
American children often were left out of school events by their classmates.

After Japan bombed Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the pressure on Japanese Americans increased. People questioned their loyalty. Mobs attacked Japanese Americans and destroyed their property.

In February 1942, President Roosevelt gave an order that all people of Japanese ancestry must leave the West Coast. They had to leave their homes whether they were American citizens or not. They were forced to live in camps in other states.

**Internment** Once the U.S. government gave the orders, Japanese Americans were given little time to prepare. They had to sell their property quickly because they could take only what they could carry. Often, they had to sell everything at a very low price and lose a lot of money.

Japanese Americans were taken to one of ten internment camps. An

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**Reading a Map.** From what coast were people of Japanese descent evicted during World War II? Which War Relocation Authority (WRA) camps were farthest east? In what state did most of the assembly centers lie? What states had the most WRA camps?
internment camp is a prison camp. Most of the camps were located in far-off areas in the West. Barbed wire and soldiers surrounded the camps. Each family was given one room in a long building. Medical treatment was limited.

Despite this treatment, thousands of young men from these camps fought in the U.S. Army. They served bravely in many battles. Japanese Americans of the 442nd Regiment earned over 18,000 medals for their bravery.

In late 1945, the government closed the camps. Japanese Americans were finally allowed to go home. In 1988, the U.S. government admitted it had wronged these citizens. Each surviving person received a $20,000 payment. However, it was a small amount compared to the injustice that was done.

1. What were the internment camps?
2. When did the government admit that internment was unjust?

CHAPTER 16
KEY IDEAS

- Americans on the home front produced important war material and supplies for soldiers abroad. Americans from all groups contributed to the effort.
- Women entered the work force in great numbers during World War II. Many worked in factories and government offices.
- African Americans and Latinos found new opportunities during the war. However, they still had to combat discrimination on the home front and in the military.
- Japanese Americans were sent to internment camps during the war. Many spent years in the camps until they were closed in 1945.