

Hello, fellow teacher!

Below is your reading passage; I hope it serves you well.

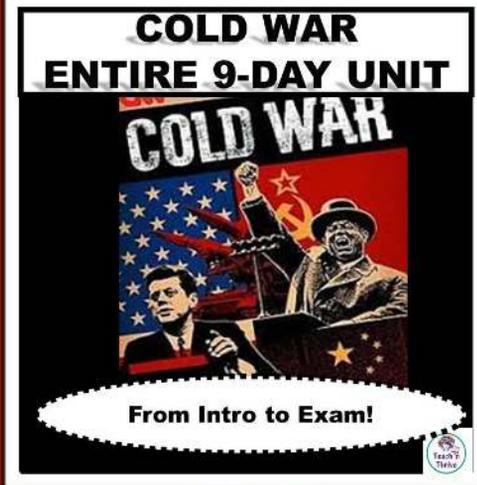
Print it out and it's ready to use. Or, if you want to differentiate for struggling students, use the highlight feature on the PDF to annotate what you want the kiddos to focus on.

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Don't forget to check back to the site regularly and see what has been added!

Warmest Wishes,
Joan

If you're interested in a done-for-you whole unit check out my Cold War Unit [here](#)



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World War II

World War I was called "the war to end all wars," but another (and more horrible) world war would arise in a generation. Many in the United States wanted to keep out of this world war after suffering the atrocities of World War 1, but that too was not to be. The U.S. would play a pivotal role in World War 2.

War Begins

Fascism is an ideology that is very nationalistic, militaristic and strongly suppressing the opposition. This form of government arose in Germany, Italy and Japan in the 1920s and 1930s. And, it led each to push to expand their control to other countries, which led to military conflict. This expanded into a full-fledged European war in 1939.

U.S. Moves Toward War

Many in the United States did not wish to go to war, but the dangers of Nazi Germany and Japan led President Franklin Delano Roosevelt [FDR] and others to decide that something had to be done. This was especially true once the Germans defeated France and Great Britain was basically the only European country left fighting the Nazis.

For instance, the United States allowed Allied nations to buy military supplies as long as they paid and delivered them ("cash and carry"). Also, weapons were traded for leases of military bases of other nations ("Lend-Lease"). Destroyers (military ships) were also traded for bases, helping out England. A military draft was passed. And, the United States ceased trade with Axis Powers. U.S. "neutrality" was therefore of a limited sort.

Pearl Harbor

Japan wished to control the Pacific and was particularly harmed by U.S. embargo (trade blockage) of war material. On December 7, 1941, Japan attacked the U.S. naval base on Hawaii (Pearl Harbor). This "day that will live in infamy" (FDR) led the United States to declare war on Japan as well as their allies (Germany and Italy).



The attack as well as existing anti-Japanese feelings (for example, Japanese immigrants were by law unable to become citizens) led to a great distrust of Japanese Americans who lived on the West Coast. Many thought they had dual loyalty and would help Japan attack the United States. There was little real evidence of this happening. This led to forcing Japanese on the West Coast, including American citizens, to leave their homes and to go into internment camps. The Supreme Court upheld this (*Korematsu*) though in 2018 the Court said they were wrong to do so.

Two Front War

The country went on a "war footing" with winning the war the prime focus. This also led to changing normal rules, such as the types of jobs women could do.

The war was a two front (location of battle) war -- Europe and the Pacific. Fighting went on in Italy and North Africa. But, the turning point in Europe was the big invasion of France (Normandy) on June 6, 1944. The United States fought Germany from the west, while the Russians came in from the east. This led Russia later on to have control of Eastern Europe. Germany was defeated in May 1945.

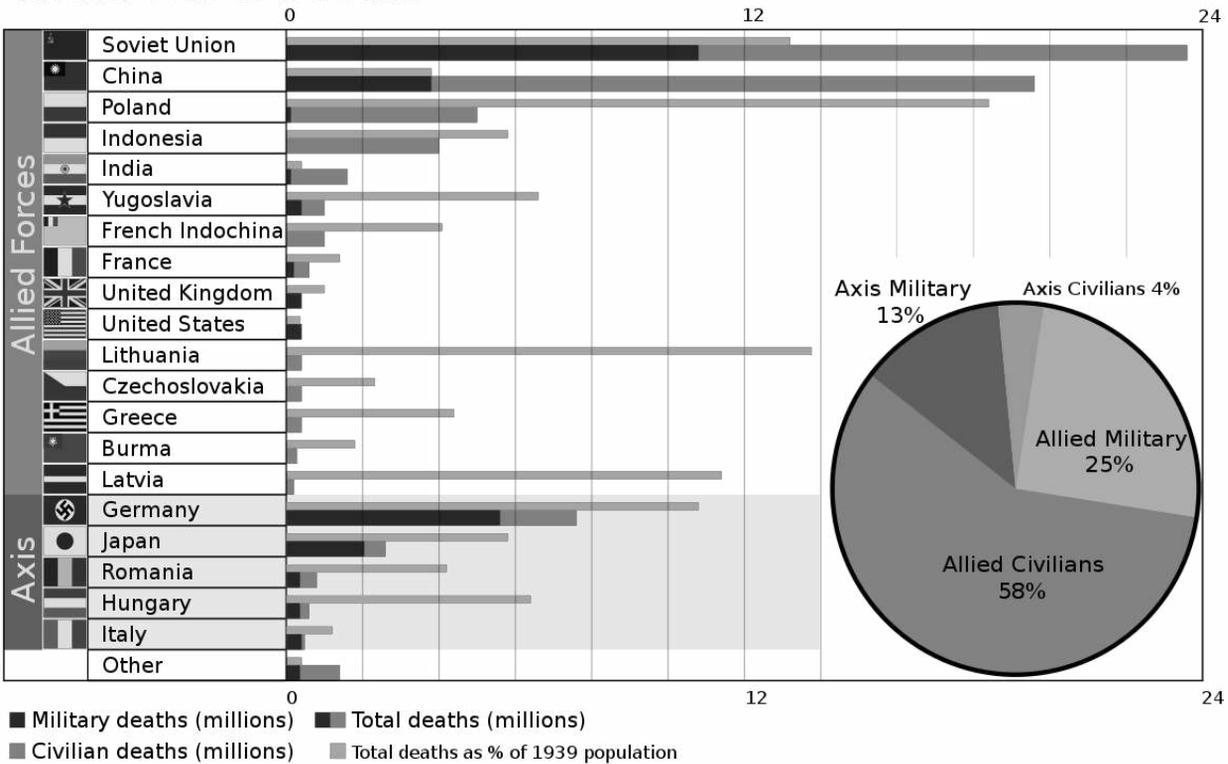
The war in the Pacific was basically a series of battles for islands, including Iwo Jima, moving toward Japan itself. While this was happening, a secret project (Manhattan Project) developed a nuclear weapon, using discoveries of atomic power. It was decided by President Harry Truman (FDR dying in office in 1945) that the weapon should be used against Japan. Given the horrors of the bomb, this remains very controversial, but at the time many cited the likely death toll of invasion of Japan.

Two bombs were dropped in August 1945 (Hiroshima and Nagasaki) and the war in Japan soon was over. The "nuclear age" had begun.

Aftermath

An international organization, the United Nations, was formed to provide a peaceful means to settle world disputes. Unlike after WWI, the United States joined. Also, special war crimes tribunals were formed in Germany (Nuremberg trials) and Japan. The aftermath of the war also started the path of ending many European colonial possessions including India. And, two great "superpowers" arose -- the United States and the Soviet Union -- with China becoming a fully communist nation.

World War II Deaths



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