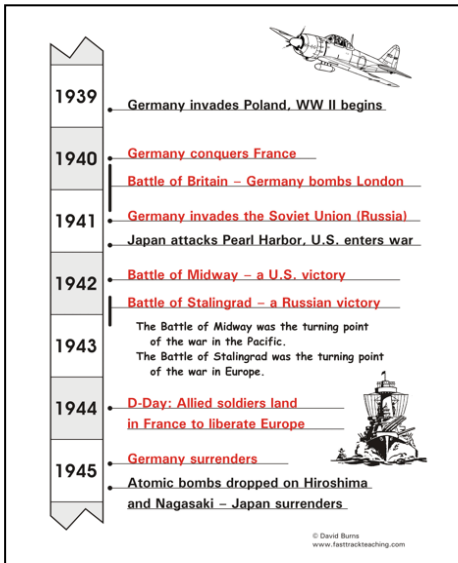


Aim #7: How was WWII fought & won?



1939 → Germany invades Poland. WW II begins.

1940 → Germany conquers France.
Battle of Britain – Germany bombs London.

1941 → Germany invades the Soviet Union (Russia).
Japan attacks Pearl Harbor. U.S. enters war.

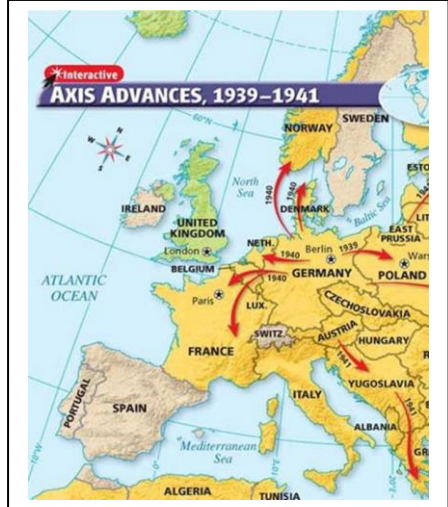
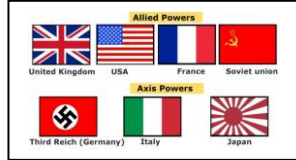
1942 → Battle of Midway – a U.S. victory.
Battle of Stalingrad – a Russian victory.

1943 → The Battle of Midway was the turning point of the war in the Pacific.
The Battle of Stalingrad was the turning point of the war in Europe.

1944 → D-Day: Allied soldiers land in France to liberate Europe.

1945 → Germany surrenders.
Atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki – Japan surrenders.

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Mini Lecture

- Germans forces poured into Poland, using **blitzkrieg**, “lightning warfare”- tactics based on speed & mobility. The German air force bombed, then tanks & troops pushed their way in. Poland was easily conquered in less than a month, largely because it does not have natural barriers.
- By June 1940, Germany had conquered Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Holland, and France. Britain stood alone. Germany prepared to invade. The German air force began a massive bombing campaign over British cities. The British, led by PM **Winston Churchill**, remained defiant and fought off the Germans. By June 1941, Britain seemed safe from invasion.
- Meanwhile, the Germans advanced and conquered much of North Africa and parts of the Balkans. At the same time, Japan was occupying lands in the Pacific.
- Hitler controlled most of Europe, but his power soon began to fail.
- In June 1941, Hitler broke the Nazi-Soviet Pact by invading the Soviet Union. Stalin was unprepared and the Soviet army suffered great losses. The Germans advanced almost to Moscow, but a Soviet counterattack and the harsh winter halted the German offensive.
- The U.S. entered the war following the Japanese bombing of **Pearl Harbor** on Dec. 7, 1941.
- In 1942, the Allies began to achieve some victories, the first came in N. Africa- which opened up a front in Italy.
- The turning point of the conflict in Europe was the **Battle Stalingrad**, where the Soviets forced the Germans to surrender. There were major casualties on both sides.
- Another turning point was the greatest seaborne invasion of modern times, Operation Overlord, was launched on June 6, 1944 (**D-Day**). Allied forces crossed the English Channel and landed in Normandy, France. From there, they steadily advanced, pushing German forces out of France, Belgium, & Holland.
- In March 1945, the Allies moved into Germany. As the Russians entered Berlin, Hitler committed suicide. On May 7, the new German leaders surrendered. The next day, the end of the war in Europe, **V-E Day** (Victory in Europe), was officially declared.
- Although Germany was defeated, the Allies still had to defeat Japan in the Pacific. By mid-1942, the U.S. had taken the offensive after winning key battles at the Coral Sea & Midway.
- In early 1945, bloody battles on Iwo Jima & Okinawa showed that the Japanese would fight to the death rather than surrender. Some became **kamikaze** pilots.
- While Allied military leader planned to invade Japan, scientists offered another way to end the war. They had conducted research, code-named the **Manhattan Project**, that led to the building of an atomic bomb.
- The advisers to U.S. President Harry Truman disagreed whether to deploy these bombs. Truman decided to use them rather than risk more American lives from an invasion of Japan.
- On Aug. 6, 1945, the U.S. dropped an atomic bomb on **Hiroshima**, instantly killing 80,000 people. When the Japanese did not surrender, another bomb was dropped on **Nagasaki** on Aug. 9, killing 40,000 people. The next day, Japan finally surrendered. The war was officially over on September 2, 1945, V-J Day (Victory in Japan).
- In the 20 years between the two world wars, all of the technological weapons became deadlier. These included better & more efficient machine guns, submarines, tanks, airplanes, and rockets. The biggest breakthrough was the development of the atomic bomb. Radars and encryption machines were critical as well. The world’s first computer was also made in WWII.

Review Questions:

1. Why were the Axis powers successful at the outset of WWII?
2. What were the turning points of WWII?
3. How was WWII won in the Pacific?

Enduring Issue: Technology

What was war like in WWII? How did it affect those involved?

Setting the Stage

Like World War I, World War II was a total war. A **total war** is a military conflict in which nations mobilize all available resources in order to destroy another nation's ability to engage in the war. When one side of a conflict participates in total war, they dedicate not only their military to victory, but the civilian population at home to working for victory as well. As a result, the country becomes very nationalistic. Feelings of pride are interwoven with sacrifice, and the nation's victory or loss becomes a part of the national identity.

In World War II, technology played a major role. Following World War I, many countries learned from their past mistakes and began to develop new technology during the interwar period of the 1920s and 1930s. New technology improved the speed and impact of existing weapons and improved intelligence collection. The new technology determined the victors of World War II and played an important role in future conflicts.

Aircraft

Aircraft technology was important in World War II. After World War I, countries were drawn to the concept of mass aerial bombing because they wanted an alternative to trench warfare. Throughout the war, improvements were made to increase speed and altitude limits for aircraft.

1. Why did countries begin to invest in aircraft technology after World War I?



Tanks

World War I created a demand for armored weapons which could navigate any kind of terrain, and this led to the development of the tank. By World War II, tank design advanced significantly. Due to the increased need for troop mobility in WWII, tanks became faster and were strapped with even more firepower.

Watch [The History Channel: World War II Tanks](#)

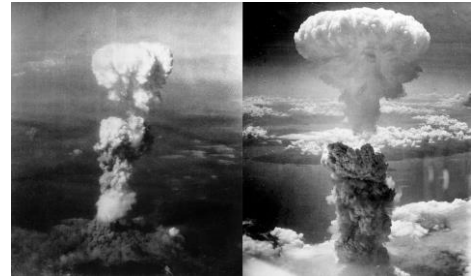
2. Why were tanks important on the battlefield?
3. Why did the United States increase its production of tanks after the German blitzkrieg?



The Atomic Bomb: Hiroshima and Nagasaki

On the morning of August 6, 1945, the United States Army Air Forces dropped the nuclear weapon "Little Boy" on the city of Hiroshima, Japan. The explosion immediately killed 80,000 people and leveled 90 percent of the city. Later, tens of thousands died of radiation exposure. Three days later, the "Fat Man" bomb was detonated over Nagasaki. "Fat Man" killed over 40,000 people.

4. Why did the United States drop atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945?
5. What were the impacts of the atomic bomb?



Electronics and Communication: The Enigma Machine

Equipment designed for communication and the interception of communication became essential during World War II. The Allied and Axis nations relied on different forms of communication technology to send encrypted messages and break into their enemy's messages.

Breaking the Code

Visit: <http://www.computerhistory.org/revolution/birth-of-the-computer/4/82>

6. How did Nazi troops use encoded communication during World War II?
7. How did Allied forces try to break these codes?

