

## World War II in Europe



**SS.912.A.6.1** Examine causes, course, and consequences of World War II on the United States and the world.

**Vocabulary Builder:** **Impose** (im POHZ) *v.* to establish or put in place

The effects of the Great Depression soon spread beyond the United States. Germany was especially hard hit. Burdened by reparations, Germany had struggled economically since the end of World War I. The economic problems allowed the National Socialist Germany Workers' (Nazi) party to gain influence in Germany. Adolf Hitler led the Nazi Party. He promised to raise Germany out of the economic depression and return it to its former glory. Hitler was made chancellor of Germany in 1933 and soon became a dictator.

### German Aggression and the Start of World War II

Hitler rebuilt the Germany military and turned his sights on other countries. In 1938, Hitler claimed Austria and forced it to become part of his empire. Later that year, he also claimed part of Czechoslovakia and soon took over the rest of that country. In August 1939, he signed an agreement with the Soviet Union that the two countries would not attack each other. Instead, both set their sights on Poland. On September 1, 1939, Hitler invaded Poland. Two days later, France and Britain declared war on Germany. World War II had begun.

On September 17, the Soviets also invaded Poland. The Soviets then invaded the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and also Finland. In April and May 1940, Hitler attacked Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg, and then moved into France. On June 22, France surrendered. Hitler then made plans to invade Britain. In July 1940, the German air force began bombing Britain from the air. During the "blitz," as the bombing attacks were called, much of London was destroyed. The British Royal Air Force fought back, however, and the Battle of Britain convinced Hitler to postpone his invasion. Instead, he broke his pact with Stalin and invaded the Soviet Union.

### Japanese Aggression and U.S. Response

The Great Depression also hit Japan's economy hard. During the 1930s, military leaders in Japan argued that Japan could solve its economic problems by expanding into other parts of Asia. In 1931, the Japanese military conquered Manchuria, a province in northern China, and took control of its natural resources. When the League of Nations protested, Japan withdrew from the League. Then in 1937, Japan struck again. It bombed Chinese cities and marched into the Chinese capital city of Nanjing.

Roosevelt spoke out against the "reign of terror and international lawlessness," and the United States refused to recognize the Japanese conquests. But Japan continued to advance into parts of Southeast Asia. To try to stop the Japanese expansion, Roosevelt imposed an embargo, or ban, on exports of oil, steel, and other supplies to Japan. The relationship between the two nations was tense, but both countries negotiated to avoid war. However, Japan was set on expansion.

1. **Check for Understanding** How did Depression lead both Germany & Japan to aggression? Address them separately in your answer.

## Allied Strategy



**SS.912.A.6.1** Examine causes, course, and consequences of World War II on the United States and the world.

**Vocabulary Builder:** **ultimate** (UHL tuh miht) *adj.* final or most advanced; **strategy** (STRAT i jee) *n.* plan of action

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### Strategy in Europe

America's allies in World War II were Britain, France, the Soviet Union, and China. They were called the Allied Powers, or Allies. The Allies' ultimate goal was to win the war in both Europe and Asia. However, they all agreed that Germany was the greatest threat. As a result, the Allies decided that Europe must take priority. Their strategy was "Defeat Hitler First." To that end, the United States at first sent the majority of its troops and supplies to Europe.

Stalin, the Soviet leader, wanted the United States and Britain to open a second front against Germany in France. However, Roosevelt and Churchill, the British prime minister, argued that they did not yet have enough resources. But they did agree to an Allied campaign in North Africa. The British had been fighting the Germans and Italians there since 1940. They also began a bombing campaign against Germany. At night, British planes dropped bombs on German cities. During the day, American planes bombed Germany's key industrial centers.

### Pearl Harbor

In the end, the diplomatic efforts with Japan failed. While still negotiating with the United States, on the morning of December 7, 1941 the Japanese carried out a surprise air attack on the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The attack was devastating to the American Pacific fleet. Eight battleships, as well as numerous other ships and aircraft, were destroyed or damaged. Over 2,000 people were killed.

On December 8, President Roosevelt asked Congress to declare war on Japan. In turn, Germany and Italy honored a pact they had made with Japan and declared war on the United States. World War II was now truly a world war, and the United States was now a participant.

### Strategy in the Pacific

Even with their "Defeat Hitler First" strategy, the United States and its allies could not ignore Japan. The Japanese continued to attack American, British, and Dutch colonies in the Pacific and gained control of many islands. At first, American actions in the Pacific were defensive, or designed to protect areas that had not yet fallen to the Japanese. However, after the American victory at the Battle of Midway, the United States went on the offensive. In 1942, U.S. Marines were able to drive the Japanese off Guadalcanal, an island in the Pacific.

The Battle of Guadalcanal was the first part of a strategy to approach Japan from both the south-west and central Pacific, using the combined forces of the U.S. navy, army, and marines. This strategy was designed to force the Japanese to fight a two-front war. American forces moved slowly toward Japan by "island hopping," or working their way from one island to another. They took back many Japanese-held islands and established bases for their air attacks on Japan. As they moved forward, American submarines also targeted Japanese shipping, thereby cutting off Japanese supplies.

2. **Check for Understanding** Why did the United States consider the war in the Pacific to be of secondary importance, even though it had been attacked by Japan?

## Major Battles and Turning Points of World War II

**FL SS.912.A.6.1** Examine causes, course, and consequences of World War II on the United States and the world.

**Vocabulary Builder:** **concentrate** (KON suhn treyt) *v.* to focus or bring together; **liberate** (LIB uh rey) *v.* to free; **intercept** (in ter SEPT) *v.* to see or overhear a message

Because World War II was truly a world war, important battles were fought in many different parts of the world. Battles that were turning points in the war are described in the table below. These turning points changed the war in the Allies' favor.

TURNING POINTS OF THE WAR	
REGION	BATTLES
North Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Battle of El Alamein:</i> In October 1942, Germany threatened to seize Egypt and the Suez Canal. On October 23, British troops in El Alamein, a northern Egyptian town, took the offensive against the German forces. The British pushed the Germans out of Egypt and across Libya. This set the stage for a full defeat of the Axis Powers in North Africa in May 1943. The British victory kept Hitler from gaining access to the rich Middle Eastern oil supplies. The victory also kept Germany from attacking the Soviet Union from the south.</li> </ul>
Europe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Stalingrad:</i> In 1942, Hitler decided to <u>concentrate</u> his armies in southern Russia in order to take control of the Caucasus oil fields. To do this, he needed to capture the city of Stalingrad. The German attack on the city began in September. Despite heavy losses, Hitler refused to allow his forces to withdraw. At the end of January 1943, however, the exhausted Germans surrendered. By then, they had suffered nearly 300,000 casualties. Not only was Germany unable to seize the oil fields, but the Soviets went on the offensive and drove the Germans out of the Soviet Union. The tide had turned against Germany in the east.</li> <li><i>Invasion of Normandy (D-Day):</i> By 1944, the Allies were ready to open a second front in France. Overseen by General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Supreme Commander of Allied Forces, the invasion began on June 6, 1944, or D-Day. The night before, Allied planes dropped paratroopers behind enemy lines. Then early in the morning, the largest fleet ever assembled began landing Allied troops on five beaches in Normandy, a region of France. The fighting was brutal. Allied troops who made it to the beach faced landmines and machine-gun fire from Germans on the cliffs above the beaches. Allied casualties were high, but fresh troops continued to arrive. Within a month, over one million Allied troops had poured into Normandy. The Allied forces were able to break through the German defenses and advance across France. In August, they <u>liberated</u> Paris.</li> </ul>

**Major Battles and Turning Points of World War II (continued)**

TURNING POINTS OF THE WAR	
The Pacific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Battle of Midway:</i> On June 4, 1942, the Japanese attacked Midway Island, where the United States had a naval base. They did not realize that the Americans already knew about the attack. Navy code breakers had <u>intercepted</u> Japanese messages, which gave the U.S. navy time to concentrate its forces near Midway. During the "Miracle of Midway," the Americans defeated a much larger Japanese force. They sank four Japanese aircraft carriers and the 250 aircraft they were carrying. A Japanese victory at Midway would have allowed Japan to invade Hawaii and would have forced American forces back to California. With Hawaii safe, American forces were free to carry on their island-hopping campaign, winning victories as they moved closer and closer to Japan.</li><li>• <i>Iwo Jima and Okinawa:</i> Two of the bloodiest battles in the island-hopping campaign took place in early 1945. The island of Iwo Jima was within 650 miles of Tokyo. The island of Okinawa was only 340 miles from Japan and had an air base that the Americans needed for their invasion of Japan. U.S. Marines landed on Iwo Jima in February 1945. The fighting was fierce. The Marines suffered more than 23,000 casualties, but they finally took the island in March. The battle for Okinawa began in April 1945 and was even bloodier. U.S. forces eventually took the island, but only after they had suffered roughly 50,000 casualties. In both battles, the Japanese fought the Americans over every square inch of the islands.</li></ul>

3. **Check for Understanding** *Focusing just on Midway & D-Day, summarize what made them turning point battles in their respective theaters of war (European, Pacific).*

## From Isolationism to the Brink of War

**FL SS.912.A.6.2** Describe the United States response in the early years of World War II (Neutrality Acts, Cash and Carry, Lend Lease Act).

**Vocabulary Builder:** prohibit (proh HIB it) v. to forbid or ban

### Isolationism

At first, most Americans favored isolationism, or remaining apart from the affairs of other countries. World War I was still fresh in their minds, and they did not want to become involved in another war in Europe. A congressional committee led by Senator Gerald P. Nye of North Dakota had held hearings from 1934 to 1936 and concluded that the United States was drawn into World War I by munitions makers and Wall Street bankers destined to make a profit from the war. As a result, many Americans wanted the United States to follow a policy of neutrality, or not supporting either side in a war.

### Neutrality Acts, Cash and Carry

In 1935, 1936, and 1937, Congress passed Neutrality Acts that prohibited Americans from sailing on ships owned by warring nations or from making loans or selling arms to these nations. In addition, sale of materials to warring nations was only allowed on a cash and carry basis: warring nations were allowed to buy goods and arms in the United States only if they paid cash and carried away the goods on their own ships. After the war began in Europe, this helped the British, whose navy controlled the seas.

### America Takes Steps Towards War

Even though Americans had favored isolationism, opinions would begin to shift as Germany made its way further into Europe. Reports by Edward R. Murrow, a CBS reporter stationed in London during the blitz, brought the war into American living room. Through his live radio reports, Americans were given a firsthand account of the horror of Germany's invasion of Britain. After Germany, Italy, and Japan signed the Tripartite Pact, President Roosevelt increased his support of Britain. At first, President Roosevelt gave war supplies and World War I-era battleships to Britain in return for naval bases in Bermuda and the Caribbean. Then, in 1941, Congress passed the Lend-Lease Act. This act gave Roosevelt the authority to sell or lend equipment to other countries that needed to defend themselves. Roosevelt compared this to "lending a garden hose to a next-door neighbor whose house is on fire."

### U.S. Navy Battles German U-Boats

Hitler was not blind to America's actions in support of the allies. In 1941, Hitler ordered his German U-Boats, or submarines, to attack American ships that had begun to escort arms to Iceland where the British picked them up. The U-Boats shot at the USS *Greer*, hit the USS *Kearney*, and sunk the USS *Reuben James*, killing more than 100 soldiers. The attacks shocked and angered most Americans, moving them closer to declaring war on Germany.

4. **Check for Understanding** Why did most Americans favor isolationism, even in the face of Hitler's aggression?

## The Holocaust



**SS.912.A.6.3** Analyze the impact of the Holocaust during World War II on Jews as well as other groups.

**Vocabulary Builder:** **foster** (FAW ster) *v.* to encourage or promote; **implement** (IM pluh ment) *v.* to carry out; **atrocious** (uh TROS i tee) *n.* an extremely wicked or cruel act

The *Holocaust* refers to the Nazis' effort to kill Jewish people and other groups during World War II. The Holocaust is the best-known example of genocide—the systematic and purposeful destruction of a racial, political, religious, or cultural group.

Nazi abuse of Jews began in the 1930s. Hitler and the Nazis viewed light-skinned Europeans as the “master race.” They fostered hatred for Jews, whom they blamed for Germany’s problems. Then, in 1941, Adolf Hitler began implementing his “Final Solution”—the organized murder of Jews in death camps. About 6 million Jews were killed in the Holocaust.

### The Holocaust's Victims

Although Jews were his primary target, Hitler also considered other groups “undesirables.” These included:

- Poles
- Slavs
- gypsies
- homosexuals
- the mentally ill
- political dissidents

Hitler viewed these groups as threats to Germany and his dream of a perfect master race. Members of these groups were sent to concentration camps, where most were gassed, worked to death, or subjected to cruel experiments.



6. **Check for Understanding** Why did Hitler view certain groups of people as “undesirable”?

## Minorities in World War II



**SS.912.A.6.4** Examine efforts to expand or contract rights for various populations during World War II.

**Vocabulary Builder:** **integrated** (IN ti grey tid) *adj.* combined, not segregated; **segregated** (SEG ri grey tid) *adj.* separated or divided, especially along racial lines; **escort** (i SKAWRT) *v.* to accompany for protection

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During World War II, Americans from many different ethnic and racial backgrounds wanted to serve. Roughly 300,000 Mexican Americans and 25,000 Native Americans joined the military and were allowed to serve in integrated units. African Americans and Asian Americans also wanted to serve, but they were placed in segregated units and, at first, were assigned non-combat roles. Eventually, however, some African and Asian American units were allowed to take part in active combat. These units often suffered high casualties and were highly decorated for their courage. Some of the most famous minority units are described below.

### The Tuskegee Airmen

Named for their home base in Tuskegee, Alabama, the members of this African American unit were trained as fighter pilots. When the Allies carried out their bombing campaign against Germany, the Tuskegee pilots escorted the bomber pilots on their missions and protected them from enemy fighters. They escorted over 1,500 missions and never lost a bomber. Throughout the war, the Tuskegee Airmen served in other areas, such as Italy and North Africa. They shot down 111 German bombers and destroyed hundreds of planes and other vehicles on the ground. For their service, Tuskegee units received over 900 medals.

### The Nisei Regiments

The Nisei, or “second generation,” were the children of Japanese immigrants. Even though they were native-born American citizens, they faced discrimination after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. Other Americans were afraid that the Nisei would side with the enemy. At first, they were not accepted into the armed forces. In 1943, however, the government allowed them to enlist. They played an important role in military intelligence, because they were able to interpret captured enemy documents and question Japanese prisoners. They also served in Europe and helped free prisoners from concentration camps. Some Nisei, like the 100th Infantry Battalion, did see heavy combat. Many served with distinction and received numerous honors. One of the all-Nisei units, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, became the most decorated unit in U.S. military history.

### The Navajo Code Talkers

A major problem for the military was how to create a communication code that could not be broken by the enemy. During World War II, the military found such a code in the complex language of the Navajo. This was an unwritten language spoken only on Navajo lands in the American Southwest. The “code talkers,” as the Navajo were called, were much faster than machines, and the language proved to be impossible for the Japanese to translate. The importance of Navajo radio operators was immeasurable. It has been said that without the code talkers, the Marines might not have been able to take the island of Iwo Jima.

6. **Check for Understanding** For each group, identify how the war may have impacted them. Cite specifics. Combine this page and the next in answering this question.

## Minorities on the Home Front During World War II

**FL SS.912.A.6.4** Examine efforts to expand or contract rights for various populations during World War II.

**Vocabulary Builder:** **auxiliary** (awg zil yuh ree) *adj.* providing additional help or support; **evacuate** (i vak yoo eyt) *v.* to remove from a place

### Women on the Home Front

As more and more workers were needed for war industries, the government began encouraging women to work outside the home. By the end of the war, women made up a third of the work-force. Women soon found themselves doing jobs that had traditionally been considered men's work. They were symbolized by "Rosie the Riveter," a fictitious woman who appeared in posters and magazines. Muscular and with her hair under a kerchief, Rosie portrayed women as strong and determined.

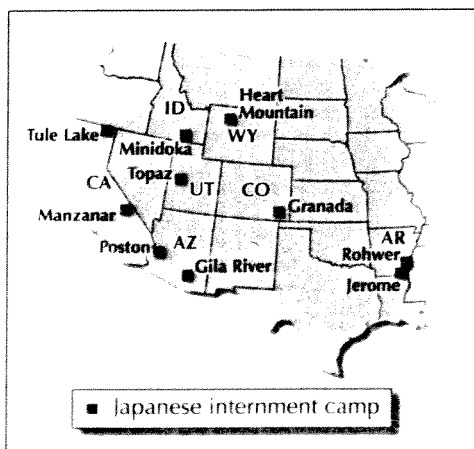
### African Americans on the Home Front

At the start of the war, many African Americans hoped they would be able to find jobs in military industries. Many moved from rural areas to cities to look for work. At first, however, few African Americans found work in the war industries. They continued to face discrimination in hiring, as well as segregation in the military.

African Americans began fighting a "Double V" campaign: victory in the war abroad and victory against discrimination at home. They demanded that Roosevelt end discriminatory practices in government-funded training, employment, and the military. They achieved a partial victory when Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802. This order guaranteed fair hiring practices in any job funded by the government. Although the military remained officially segregated, some African Americans eventually served in white combat units.

### Internment of Japanese Americans

As you have read, Japanese Americans faced discrimination after the attack on Pearl Harbor, especially on the West Coast. Many Americans falsely believed that Japanese Americans were helping the enemy, and the government considered them a security risk. In February 1942, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066. This order designated certain areas on the West Coast as war zones from which anyone might be evacuated for any reason. Later that year, the War Department adopted a policy of internment, or temporary imprisonment of members of a specific group. The government forced more than 100,000 Japanese Americans to leave their homes on the West Coast. Most were forced to sell their property at a loss. They were placed in camps in isolated parts of the United States. With armed guards and barbed-wire fencing, the camps resembled prisons. Most Japanese Americans remained in the camps for the rest of the war.



**7. Check for Understanding** Why were Japanese Americans relocated to camps during World War II?



## U.S. Resources During World War II

**FL SS.912.A.6.5** Explain the impact of World War II on domestic government policy.

**Vocabulary Builder:** **commit** (kuh MIT) *v.* to pledge or dedicate; **boost** (boost) *v.* to improve or increase

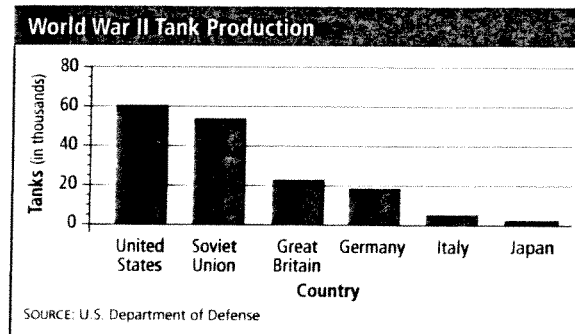
To win the war, the United States committed itself to total war. In a total war, nations devote all of their resources to the war effort.

### Economic Resources

The U.S. government worked closely with private industry to ensure that the nation's resources were used effectively. The government ordered factories to stop making consumer goods, like cars, and to start producing war materials, like tanks and airplanes.

Roosevelt had promised that the United States would become an "arsenal of democracy," and Americans worked hard to make this happen.

Each year, the United States produced more and more military materials. By 1944, American production levels were double those of the Axis nations combined.



To ensure that enough raw materials were available for the war effort, the government used rationing, or limiting the amount of certain goods that Americans could buy. For example, tires were rationed because rubber was needed for war production.

To help pay for the war, Congress imposed a 5 percent income tax. The government also encouraged Americans to buy war bonds. Through the bonds, Americans lent money to the government that would be paid back later with interest. The media helped educate the public about the importance of war bonds, rationing, and other government programs.

### Military Resources

Even before the United States entered the war, Congress had passed a Selective Service Act, a peacetime draft, to recruit personnel for the military. After the Pearl Harbor attack, many people enlisted in the military voluntarily, although the draft continued to provide additional personnel. More than 16 million Americans eventually served in the military during World War II.

### Human Resources

As men joined the military, new groups of people needed to replace them in war industry jobs. This created new opportunities for women and minorities. Even people who did not work in factories helped the war effort in other ways. They collected paper, scrap metal, and fat, and planted vegetable gardens, called "victory gardens," to grow extra food. Many people also volunteered for organizations like the Red Cross and the United Service Organizations (USO). The USO worked to boost the morale of the military by providing entertainment and recreational activities.

8. **Check for Understanding** How did the government and industry work together during World War II?

## Media During World War II

**FL** **SS.912.A.6.5** Explain the impact of World War II on domestic government policy.

**Vocabulary Builder:** **initiate** (ih NIHS ee ayt) *v.* to begin or originate; **propaganda** (prop uh GAN duh) *n.* information, ideas, or rumors that are deliberately spread to help or harm others; **stereotypical** (ster ee uh TIP i kuhl) *adj.* represented as a stereotype, or an oversimplified image of a person

### Government and the Media

The U.S. government took an active role in the media coverage of war. For national security reasons, and to keep up public support for the war, news reports from battlefronts were strictly censored. The federal Office of War Information (OWI) also worked to boost morale and encourage Americans to devote all of their available resources to the war effort. The OWI initiated advertising campaigns that downplayed domestic problems and focused on war needs. Everything that Americans did for the war effort—from victory gardens to rationing to war bonds—was praised and encouraged through advertising.

### Hollywood and the War

The entertainment industry helped the government in these efforts by producing movies, plays, and other shows that boosted morale and patriotism. Hollywood turned out both documentaries and fiction films that were propaganda for war. The titles of the movies, such as “So Proudly We Hail!” and “Salute to the Marines,” often reflected the movies’ patriotic themes. Many of the movies highlighted specific battles or campaigns, such as “Back to Bataan” and “Rookies in Burma.” The movies portrayed both sides in the war in stereotypical ways. They told tales of brave and honorable Americans fighting “evil” Germans and Japanese. The movies stirred hatred of the enemy but also prejudice against Japanese and German Americans.

9. What was the main job of the media & Hollywood during WW2?

## The Atomic Bomb

**FL** **SS.912.A.6.6** Analyze the use of atomic weapons during World War II and the aftermath of the bombings.

### The Japanese and POWs

When the Japanese captured prisoners of war, they often treated them poorly. One of the most infamous examples of Japanese treatment of POWs was the journey that came to be known as the Bataan Death March. In 1942, 75,000 Allied troops surrendered to the Japanese in the Philippines. The Japanese forced the POWs to march 55 miles up the Bataan Peninsula to a railway station, and then another 8 miles to a prison camp. Many of the prisoners were already sick or malnourished, and thousands died along the way. As they marched, the prisoners were often kicked or beaten, and they risked being killed if they fell or stopped to drink water. More than 7,000 American and Filipino troops died during the grueling journey.

### The Atomic Bomb

The fierce fighting of Japanese soldiers concerned American officials. Japan showed no signs of giving up. Some U.S. officials predicted that an invasion of Japan could cost as many as one million American lives, as well as countless Japanese casualties. While military leaders planned for an invasion, scientists offered President Harry Truman another way to end the war. They had learned how to split the atom and could create a bomb more destructive than anything the world had seen before. To save American lives, Truman made the decision to use the atomic bomb against Japan. On August 6, 1945, a bomb was dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. On August 9, a second bomb was dropped on the city of Nagasaki. Tens of thousands of Japanese people were killed. Japan officially surrendered on September 2, 1945. The war was over.

### Aftermath of the Bombings

As people began to assess the power of the atomic bombs, many began to question their use. There was a debate over the morality of the use of such destructive weapons. The bombs killed more than 100,000 people in Hiroshima and more than 70,000 people in Nagasaki. Even though Hiroshima and Nagasaki were chosen because the cities were devoted exclusively to war production, many innocent lives were still lost.

Beyond the debate over morality, the use of atomic weapons changed the way nations viewed war and national security. As the dust settled over Japan, everyone realized that the United States possessed weapons available to no other nation. This was the beginning of the nuclear arms race which accompanied the Cold War.

10. **Check for Understanding** Why were American officials worried about the human cost of invading Japan?

## The Nuremberg Trials and Their Aftermath

**FL** **SS.912.A.6.7** Describe the attempts to promote international justice through the Nuremberg Trials.

**Vocabulary Builder:** **atrocities** (uh TROS i tee) *n.* an extremely wicked or cruel act

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### The Nuremberg Trials

The Allies did not comprehend the full horror of the Holocaust until they began to liberate the concentration camps. The atrocities they saw could not go unpunished. Nazis were tried for war crimes in Nuremberg, Germany from 1945–1949. The four major Allied powers worked together to try key Nazi leaders.

During the trials, most of the Nazis blamed Hitler. They claimed they were just following orders and were not personally responsible for the crimes. The Allied judges rejected this defense. They emphasized that individuals bear responsibility for their own actions, regardless of orders. The indictments brought against members of the Nazi party were: participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of a crime against peace, planning, initiating and waging wars of aggression and other crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. Some Nazi leaders went to prison, and many were sentenced to death for their crimes.

The Nuremberg Trials produced a huge body of testimony. This material has been preserved for future generations in written form. These numerous volumes provide clear evidence regarding the horror of the Holocaust and the concentration camps. The Holocaust and the Nuremberg Trials increased the demand for a Jewish homeland. In 1948, a Jewish homeland became a reality when the State of Israel was created in the British Mandate of Palestine.

### Human Rights

During the war, Germany, Italy, and Japan repeatedly violated the Geneva Convention, an international agreement governing the humane treatment of wounded soldiers and prisoners of war. The allies tried Japanese citizens for committing atrocities in China, Korea, and Southeast Asia and brutally mistreating prisoners of war. Many were condemned to death, including Japanese Prime Minister Hideki Tojo. In an effort to create a better world after the war, the United Nations issued the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. This document condemns slavery and torture, upholds freedom of speech and religion, and affirms that “everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family.”

11. **Check for Understanding** Why did the judges at the Nuremberg Trials reject the argument that most Nazis were just following orders?