

I. Hitler's Lightning War

A. Germany Sparks a New War in Europe

1. Germany invaded Poland on 9/1/39. France and GB declared war on Germany on 9/3/39. Poland soon fell as Germans used blitzkrieg ("lightning war") warfare.
2. The Soviets took the eastern part of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. Finland resisted, and after many casualties on both sides, Finland fell to the USSR in March 1940.
3. French and GB troops were stationed along the Maginot Line bordering France and Germany. It was a "sitting war" until Hitler launched an invasion of Denmark and Norway in April 1940.

B. The Fall of France

1. In May 1940, Hitler sent troops past the Maginot Line. German troops surrounded the Allies along the French coast. GB sent a rescue team to Dunkirk and was able to save ~338,000 soldiers.

2. By late June 1940, North France fell to Germany. A puppet gov't was set up under Petain in Vichy France. French General Charles de Gaulle was determined to reconquer France.

C. The Battle of Britain

1. GB under PM Winston Churchill stood alone against the Nazis. The Luftwaffe, Germany's air force, began bombing GB in the summer of 1940. The Royal Air Force (RAF) tried to hit back.
2. The use of radar and a code-making machine called Enigma helped GB launch attacks on the enemy. The Battle of Britain continued until May 1941 when Hitler called off his attacks.

D. The Mediterranean and the Eastern Front

1. Italy declared war on France and GB. In Sept. 1940, Mussolini went into N. Africa and GB-controlled Egypt.
2. From 1941-1942, GB fought back in N. Africa. The Allies ultimately lost to Italy, who was backed by the German Afrika Korps led by Gen. Erwin Rommel, the “Desert fox.”
3. In the Balkans, Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary joined the Axis powers. Germany successfully invaded Yugoslavia and Greece.

D. The Mediterranean and the Eastern Front

4. In June 1941, Hitler began Operation Barbarossa, an invasion of the USSR.

4a. Soviet troops used a scorched-earth strategy as the Germans moved in. Hitler tried starving out people in Leningrad. Even though 1 million died, the city wouldn't fall.

4b. Hitler sent unprepared troops to Moscow in Oct. 1941, not allowing them to retreat in a harsh winter. Germany gained nothing and lost many lives.

E. The United States Aids Its Allies

- 1. After passing a series Neutrality Acts from 1935-1937, the US passed the Lend-Lease Act in 1941, which allowed the US to send arms and supplies to the Allies.**
- 2. FDR and Churchill issued a joint declaration called the Atlantic Charter in Aug. 1941.**

II. Japan's Pacific Campaign

A. Surprise Attack on Pearl Harbor

- 1. The US cut off oil shipments to Japan in July 1941. Japanese Admiral Yamamoto called for an attack on the US fleet in Hawaii.**
- 2. On 12/7/41, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, killing 2,300 and injuring 1,100 Americans.**
- 3. FDR declared it was "a date which will live in infamy." Congress accepted FDR's request to declare war on Japan the next day, 12/8/41.**

B. Japanese Victories

1. US General Douglas MacArthur led troops in the Philippines. Japan took over the Philippines, the Dutch East Indies, Burma, etc. by 1942.

2. In the Bataan Death March, the Japanese forced American and Filipino POWs to march up the Bataan Peninsula. Only 54,000 out of the 70,000 prisoners survived.

C. The Allies Strike Back

1. In April 1942, the US bombed several Japanese cities in the Doolittle Raid. In May, The Battle of Coral Sea was a strategic victory for the US.

2. The Battle of Midway

2a. Admiral Chester Nimitz, commander of the US Navy in the Pacific, defeated the Japanese at Midway in June 1942.

2b. The Battle of Midway was the most important naval battle of WWII and was the turning point of the war in the Pacific.

D. An Allied Offensive

1. Gen. MacArthur, commander of the Allied land forces in the Pacific, began an island-hopping strategy to take islands closer to Japan.
2. Americans launched their first Pacific offensive in Aug. 1942 at the Battle of Guadalcanal. The Japanese suffered heavy losses and left the island.

III. The Holocaust

A. The Holocaust Begins

1. The Nuremberg Laws were passed in 1935, depriving German Jews of their rights. In 1938, Nazis attacked Jewish homes, businesses, and synagogues in Kristallnacht (“Night of Broken Glass”).
2. By 1939, many German Jews fled to other countries as refugees. However, some of the Allies had restrictions on immigration.
3. The Nazis sent Jews into overcrowded ghettos, or segregated Jewish areas.

B. The “Final Solution”

1. Hitler’s “Final Solution” called for the genocide of groups or races he deemed “inferior” and a threat to making a “pure” Aryan race.
2. SS death squads known as Einsatzgruppen hunted down and killed Jews. Other Jews were sent to concentration camps where they were underfed, abused, and forced to work as slaves.
3. After the Wannsee Conference, the “Final Solution” began in 1942 with the use of extermination camps with gas chambers meant to kill thousands daily. The “weak” were often killed first. Auschwitz was the largest camp.
4. About 6 million European Jews died in death camps and in Nazi Massacres. Less than 4 million survived.

IV. The Allied Victory

A. The Tide Turns on Two Fronts

1. By May 1943, Rommel's Afrika Korps were defeated by GB Gen. Bernard Montgomery's troops in the Battle of El Alamein in Egypt and US Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower's troops in Operation Torch in Morocco and Algeria.

2. The Battle of Stalingrad

2a. In Aug. 1942, the Luftwaffe began bombing Stalingrad. By Nov., Germans controlled most of the ruined city. Hitler refused to retreat as winter approached.

2b. In Feb. 1943, 90,000 frostbitten, half-starved German troops surrendered to the Soviets. 1 million Soviet soldiers and ~240,000 Germans died.

3. The Allies invaded Italy in July 1943. Italy surrendered in Sept. 1943, but the Nazis kept fighting. Fighting in Italy continued until May 1945.

B. The Allied Home Fronts

1a. WWII was a total war. Factories converted to wartime production. Countries relied on rationing of scarce resources.

1b. Allied gov'ts relied heavily on propaganda campaigns to support the war effort.

2a. After Pearl Harbor, propaganda portrayed the Japanese as the enemy. In Feb. 1942, FDR ordered the internment of Japanese Americans.

2b. Most of those interned were American citizens whose parents were Japanese. Some Japanese Americans still fought for the US in the war.

C. Victory in Europe

1. Under Gen. Eisenhower, the Allies planned to invade Normandy under Operation Overlord. D-Day, 6/6/44, marked the 1st day of the invasion. The Allies were successful, but both sides suffered heavy casualties.
2. In the Battle of the Bulge from Dec. 1944 - Jan. 1945, Germans hoped to split US and GB forces and break supply lines. The Allies forced the Germans to retreat.
3. 1945: FDR died of a stroke on 4/12. Mussolini was killed on 4/27. Hitler committed suicide on 4/30. The Nazis surrendered on May 7, marking the end of the war in Europe.

D. Victory in Pacific

1. Japanese kamikaze pilots crashed their planes into Allied ships.

1a. In Feb-March 1945, Iwo Jima was a fierce battle near Tokyo, leaving many casualties. US Marines took the island and planted the American flag there.

1b. From April-June 1945, US forces took Okinawa, suffering 50,000 casualties. From Okinawa and other Pacific islands, the US could bomb Japan.

2a. The US developed the atomic bomb in the Manhattan Project led by Leslie Groves and J. Robert Oppenheimer. New US President Harry Truman decided to use it on Japan.

2b. 1945: The US dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima on 8/6 and Nagasaki on 8/9. The Japanese surrendered on 9/2, ending the war.

V. Europe and Japan in Ruins

A. Devastation in Europe

1. Many European cities were left in ruins. Some lacked basic necessities. Holocaust survivors, POWs, and refugees struggled to find their families and places to live.
2. European agriculture suffered. Thousands died from famine and disease in bombed-out cities.

B. Postwar Governments and Politics

- 1. After the German defeat, prewar gov'ts returned quickly. France and Italy temporarily turned to anticommunist parties.**
- 2. 22 Nazi war criminals were accused of waging a war of aggression and/or committing crimes against humanity at the Nuremberg Trials from 1945-1946.**

C. Postwar Japan

1. Japanese war criminals were put on trial. Premier/Gen. Hideki Tojo and six others were sentenced to death.
2. Gen. MacArthur led the occupation of Japan after the war, focusing on demilitarization and democratization. Japan became a constitutional monarchy by 1947.

D. Occupation Brings Deep Changes

1. The Japanese constitution granted voting rights, created a Parliament, and stated that Japan couldn't make war. Occupation ended in 1951, but the US provided military protection, making the US and Japan allies.
2. Although the US and USSR were WWII allies, the two emerged from the war as superpowers with very different postwar goals.