

SSWH19: Demonstrate an Understanding of the global political, economic, and social impact of WWII.



Element A: Describe the major conflicts and outcomes, include; North African, Pacific, and European Theaters.

WWII: Conflicts of the European Theater

- In August of 1939, Hitler and Joseph Stalin signed a nonaggression pact in which they agreed not to go to war and to divide Poland.
- In September of '39 Germany's army advanced quickly into Poland utilizing a strategy that would, by 1941, facilitate the German conquest of most of Europe - the blitzkrieg.
 - In the blitzkrieg Germany airplanes and tanks advanced quickly surprising the enemy before they could mount an effective defense. A massive infantry force followed and secured German control of the territory.
 - Britain and France declared war on Germany after the invasion of Poland but little happened until April of 1940 when Germany invaded Denmark and Norway.
 - With this invasion, full scale war erupted in Europe.
- German forces moved quickly, by 1941 all of continental Europe with the exception of the neutral countries of Sweden, Switzerland and Spain were under Axis control.
- Axis armies also controlled most of North Africa.
- While Britain remained free, the Nazi air force began a devastating bombing campaign of British infrastructure and cities.
 - While the Battle of Britain was terrible for British civilians it was unsuccessful in forcing a British surrender.
- In May of 1941, Hitler called off the attacks deciding instead to focus on Eastern Europe.
 - In June of 1941, Germany violated the non-aggression pact and invaded the Soviet Union.



WWII: Conflicts of the Pacific Theater

- In the Pacific, the Japanese navy advanced quickly through the islands of the South Pacific.
- While the United States was officially neutral, it was aiding the Allies in Europe with war material through the Lend-Lease Act and attempting to slow the Japanese advance in the Pacific with an oil embargo.
- On December 7, 1941 the Japanese attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor, bring the US into the war.
 - The Japanese followed this attack with invasions that brought virtually all of Southeast Asia under their control.

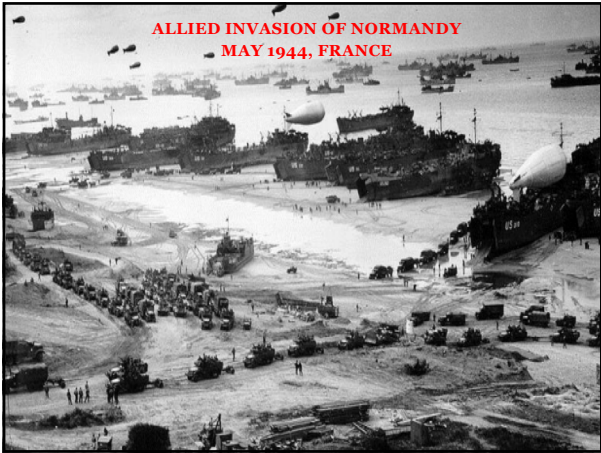
TOTAL LEND-LEASE AID \$11.1 BILLION TO APR. 30, 1943



Outcomes of European Theater & Outcomes of North African Theaters

- ❑ The Allies focused on the defeat of the Axis powers in Europe first.
 - Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union proved to be the first step in his defeat.
 - The vastness of territory, massive manpower, and extreme cold gave the Soviets an advantage that allowed them to stop the German advance along a front that ran from Leningrad to Moscow to Stalingrad.
- ❑ By fall of 1942 the Axis powers of Europe faced defeats in North Africa and by the winter of '43 the Soviets began to push Axis armies back in the Battle of Stalingrad.
 - North Africa was liberated from Axis control in May and an Allied invasion of Italy began in July of 1943.
- ❑ In May of 1944, a massive force made up of British, American, Canadian and French troops landed on the coast of Normandy in France.
 - This D-Day invasion surprised the Germans who expected the invasion to come 300 km to the northeast near the French port of Calais.
 - From Normandy the Allies moved south and liberated Paris then turned east moving toward Germany.
 - Meanwhile Soviet troops moved into Poland and Romania.
- ❑ The Allied advance from the west was slowed briefly by a German offensive in the Ardennes Forest leading to the Battle of the Bulge.
 - But, by early spring of 1945 the Allies entered Germany from both the east and west and on May 7, 1945 Germany surrendered unconditionally.
 - In the midst of this defeat, Hitler committed suicide in his





**ALLIED INVASION OF NORMANDY
MAY 1944, FRANCE**

Outcomes of Pacific Theater

- ❑ Allied success in the Pacific came in May of 1942 at the Battle of Coral Sea where they stopped the Japanese advance to the south.
- ❑ In June the Allies stopped the Japanese advance east at the Battle of Midway.
- ❑ After Midway the Allies began an offensive against the Japanese using a strategy called island-hopping.
 - The allies would bypass islands on which the Japanese had established extensive defenses and focus instead on poorly defended islands close to the Japanese mainland.
 - While this strategy worked it was slow and brutal leading to many casualties on both sides.
- ❑ By the fall of 1944 the Japanese navy was severely weakened leaving Japan's defense to the army.
 - In desperation the Japanese deployed kamikaze pilots who flew suicide missions to crash bomb laden planes into American ships.
- ❑ American forces continued their advance toward the Japanese homeland, taking Iwo Jima in March 1945 and Okinawa in June.
- ❑ America advisors told President Truman that a land invasion of Japan would lead to massive casualties.
 - Truman decided instead to use the recently developed atomic bomb.
 - On July 26, 1945 President Truman issued the Potsdam Declaration in which he told Japan to surrender or face "prompt and utter destruction."
- ❑ Japan refused and on August 6, 1945 the United States dropped an atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima, killing more than 70,000 people.
- ❑ On August 9 the US dropped a second bomb on Nagasaki, killing 70,000 more.

