Lesson 5: Mobilizing for War

Getting Started

The United States stayed out of World War II until December 7, 1941, when Japanese forces attacked U.S. forces in the Pacific. In this lesson, you'll learn more about the initial response to that attack and about the ways in which Americans mobilized for war.

Stuff You Need

- "A Date Which Will Live in Infamy (Page 1)"
- "A Date Which Will Live in Infamy (Page 2)"
- "Posters of WWII"
- "Planning Your Poster"
- "Rationing Activity (Option 1 - Page 1)"
- "Rationing Activity (Option 1 - Page 2)"
- "Rationing Activity (Option 2)"
- A History of US: War, Peace, and All That Jazz 1918-1945 by Joy Hakim
- 1 large sheet of posterboard
- colored pencils, crayons, markers, glue and other art supplies
- highlighter
- scissors
- seed packets or catalogues* (optional)

Ideas to Think About

- When is it necessary to use military force to resolve a conflict and what are the costs, both for individuals and for societies, when military force is used?
- How do leaders use their power to persuade and inspire others in different ways?

Things to Know

- On December 7, 1941, Japanese forces attacked U.S. forces in the Pacific, leading the United States to declare war on Japan. The other Axis powers — Germany and Italy — declared war on the United States soon after.
- In addition to joining the armed forces, Americans could support the war effort in a variety of ways on the homefront.
Reading and Questions

Read *A History of US: War, Peace, and All That Jazz 1918-1945* by Joy Hakim, pages 129-138 (Chapter 30-31). As you read, add to your activity page about world leaders from the previous lesson.

1. What was blitzkrieg?

2. How quickly after the attack on Pearl Harbor did the United States declare war on Japan? How soon after that declaration was the United States at war with Germany and Italy as well?

3. Describe which countries were on each side, Axis or Allies, in World War II.

4. How many Russian people died in World War II?
Activity 1: A Date Which Will Live in Infamy

The day after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt issued this famous speech to Congress, which was broadcast on the radio and heard by millions of Americans. As you read this speech, underline or highlight words or phrases that you think are particularly powerful or important.
A Date Which Will Live in Infamy

Yesterday, December 7, 1941 — a date which will live in infamy — the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by the naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.

The United States was at peace with that nation and, at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with its Government and its Emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific. Indeed, one hour after Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in Oahu, the Japanese Ambassador to the United States and his colleague delivered to the Secretary of State a formal reply to a recent American message. While this reply stated that it seemed useless to continue the existing diplomatic negotiations it contained no threat or hint of war or armed attack.

It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks ago. During the intervening time the Japanese Government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.

The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. Very many American lives have been lost. In addition, American ships have been reported torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu.

Yesterday the Japanese Government also launched an attack against Malaya.

Last night Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong.

Last night Japanese forces attacked Guam.

Last night Japanese forces attacked the Philippine Islands.

Last night the Japanese attacked Wake Island.

This morning the Japanese attacked Midway Island.

Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday speak for themselves. The people of the United States have already formed their opinions and well understand the implications to the very life and safety of our nation.

As Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense.

Always will be remembered the character of the onslaught against us.

No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory.

I believe I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will make very certain that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again.

Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory and our interests are in grave danger.

With confidence in our armed forces — with the unbounding determination of our people — we will gain the inevitable triumph — so help us God.

I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday,
December seventh, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire.

The White House
December 8, 1941

Source: National Archives and Records Service American Originals:
http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/american_originals/fdr.html

Roosevelt's Response to Pearl Harbor
www.movingbeyonddethepage.com/link/526

You can also see the original documents of the text and listen to a recorded excerpt of Roosevelt's speech from the National Archives.

http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/american_originals/fdr.html

After reading Roosevelt's message to Congress, complete the pages, "A Date Which Will Live in Infamy."

Activity 2: Posters of World War II
As the United States mobilized for war, the government very much needed the support and cooperation of the American people. The war effort needed people to participate in preparations for national defense, collect scrap metal for military use, conserve resources through rationing and other means, buy Victory Bonds to fund the war, plant victory gardens, protect troops overseas by keeping information about the military effort secret, and more. Posters produced by government offices reminded people of the things they could do to support the war, and one such poster is printed on page 158 of the book you are using for this unit.

Use the World War II era poster printed on page 158 and any others that you may see online or in other resources to complete the "Posters of WWII" page.

Once you are done, you will use the "Planning Your Poster" activity page to plan your own wartime poster.
More Posters

www.movingbeyondthepage.com/link/527

If you are interested in learning more about posters from the war, ask a parent to help you visit the "Powers of Persuasion: Poster Art from World War II" website. This site from the National Archives includes art from dozens of World War II-era posters focused on different topics.


Day 2

☐ Activity 3: Creating Your Poster

Based on your notes from yesterday's "Planning Your Poster" activity page, create your poster using posterboard and art materials of your choice (colored pencils, crayons, markers, paints, collage supplies, etc.).

☐ Activity 4: Rationing

During World War II, Americans were encouraged to conserve resources that could be used in military industries or by the armed forces as a way to support the war effort. To make sure that the necessary items would be available, the government enforced rationing by issuing stickers, ration books, coupons, and points that could be used to buy limited quantities of rationed items. In this activity, you'll see what kind of an impact rationing might have on your own family's life.

Rationing During World War II

www.movingbeyondthepage.com/link/529

This presentation provides a detailed overview of rationing during World War II. Go through the presentation before continuing.

http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/ww2-rationing

There are two options for this activity. Ask a parent whether you should complete Option 1 or 2.

Option 1

During World War II, cars were issued stickers that would allow the owners to buy a certain number of gallons of gasoline each week. Drivers in the lowest level of allowed gasoline consumption received an "A" sticker that would allow them to buy three to five gallons of gasoline per week. Drivers were encouraged to ride
together, and generally only those drivers whose cars were used to go to and from work or to support the war effort were allowed to have larger rations of gasoline.

Use the "Rationing Activity" (Option 1) pages to track your family's gasoline use for a week and see how quickly you might use up four gallons of gasoline.

Option 2
Many food items were rationed during World War II. The amount of an item that people could obtain with coupons, ration books, or points changed regularly to reflect supply and demand. Use the "Rationing Activity" (Option 2) page to determine how rationing of some common items might have an impact on your diet.

Wrapping Up
After the attack on Pearl Harbor, millions of Americans volunteered and sacrificed to support the war effort from the homefront. In the next few lessons, you'll learn more about the experiences of U.S. military personnel fighting in the war overseas.

Life Application
During World War II, many families planted victory gardens to help supply fruits and vegetables and reduce the demand on rationed items that were needed for the war effort. If you were going to plant your own victory garden to supply your family with some of the foods that you eat, what might you plant? Sketch a diagram of your planned garden or create a collage using images from seed catalogs or magazines showing what your victory garden might look like. Talk to a parent about whether you might be able to plant a food garden in your own yard or create a container garden on a sunny porch this spring and summer to experience growing some of your own food, just as families did during World War II.
A Date Which Will Live in Infamy

What do you think President Roosevelt meant when he called December 7, 1941 “a date which will live in infamy?”

Why do you think President Roosevelt explained the diplomatic situation with Japan prior to the attack on U.S. forces?

What did he want the American people to understand about relations between Japan and the U.S. before this attack?
A Date Which Will Live in Infamy

What kinds of adjectives did President Roosevelt use to describe the actions of the Japanese Empire on December 7, 1941?

Does President Roosevelt seem certain that the correct course of action is to go to war? Does he seem certain about the outcome of the war?

If you heard this speech on the radio, what might you be thinking and feeling?
Activity 2 - Page 1

World Wars I and II - Mobilizing for War

Posters of WWII

Directions: Choose two World War II-era posters to analyze using this chart. Use the next page to plan your own.

POSTERS OF WWII

Comparison Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poster 1</th>
<th>Poster 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Artist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colors</td>
<td>Colors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Images</td>
<td>Images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words on the poster</td>
<td>Words on the poster</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

What makes this poster effective?

What emotions does this poster invoke?

Which part of this poster stands out the most?

Colors used:

Images used:

Whether the artist want you to do after seeing the poster?
PLANNING YOUR POSTER

**Directions:** Imagine that you have been charged with creating a poster to convince people on the homefront to contribute to the war effort during World War II. Answer the following questions to help you plan your poster.

1. What is the audience for your poster?
   - [ ] men
   - [ ] women
   - [ ] kids
   - [ ] any American
   - [ ] other__________________

2. What do you want people to do after seeing your poster?
   - [ ] Join the military
   - [ ] Take a wartime defense job
   - [ ] Conserve resources
   - [ ] Buy war bonds
   - [ ] Plant a victory garden
   - [ ] Keep secrets safe
   - [ ] Be more committed to the war effort in general
   - [ ] Other_________________________________

3. Which emotions or ideals should you appeal to when creating your poster?

   _________________________________________

   _________________________________________

   _________________________________________

4. What colors and images could help you convey your message?

   _________________________________________

   _________________________________________

   _________________________________________

5. What are some powerful words or slogans that you could use to get your message across? *Remember: people will only see a poster briefly, so make every word count. A short, powerful message will be more effective than a long one.*

   _________________________________________

   _________________________________________

   _________________________________________

On the back of this sheet, spend a few minutes jotting down ideas or sketching images that might help you create an effective poster to convey your message.
Imagine that your family has been issued an A sticker and can buy only four gallons of gasoline each week. Let’s figure out how far you can go on those four gallons of gas and how your family might have to change their activities to accommodate the limits on driving.

1. **How many miles can you drive your car on a gallon of gasoline?** Tip: A parent may be able to tell you roughly what the gas mileage for the car is, or the average may be printed in the owner’s manual.

2. **Multiply the car’s gas mileage by 4 to figure out how far it will go on four gallons of gas.** Example: If the car gets 25 miles per gallon, it will travel **100 miles on 4 gallons of gas**

Figure out how far your car travels in a typical week. Fill in the data each time you take a trip that is not work-related; to determine the miles traveled, subtract the starting odometer reading from the ending odometer reading. Keep a running total of the miles traveled by adding each new trip.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Starting Odometer</th>
<th>Ending Odometer</th>
<th>Miles Traveled</th>
<th>Total Miles This Week</th>
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<tr>
<td>DESTINATION</td>
<td>STARTING ODOMETER</td>
<td>ENDING ODOMETER</td>
<td>MILES TRAVELED</td>
<td>TOTAL MILES THIS WEEK</td>
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3. **Would you be able to complete all of your week’s trips on four gallons of gas? How could you have modified your car travel to stay within the rationed amount of gasoline?**

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Keep in mind that modern cars are often more fuel efficient than their 1940s counterparts. Depending on what kind of car your family drives, your four gallons of gas may allow you to drive a lot more today than it would have during World War II!
Rationing Activity  

The chart below lists a few commonly rationed items during World War II. For a whole week, place a tally mark each time you use one of these rationed items. If you run out of space, you can extend the chart with a separate piece of paper. If you do not participate in preparing foods in your house, you may need to ask a parent to confirm whether your meals and snacks contained any rationed items. Don’t forget to count the sugars and fats that are in many baked goods!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rationed Items</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butter, Margarine, or Oil</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canned Vegetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canned Fruit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Which items did you use most often?**  
2. **Which items did you use least?**  
3. **Do you think it would be hard to consume less of these items?**  
4. **What substitutions could you make for the items on this list?**
Parent Overview
Lesson 5: Mobilizing for War

Getting Started

Big Ideas

✓ When is it necessary to use military force to resolve a conflict and what are the costs, both for individuals and for societies, when military force is used?
✓ How do leaders use their power to persuade and inspire others in different ways?

Facts and Definitions

✓ On December 7, 1941, Japanese forces attacked U.S. forces in the Pacific, leading the United States to declare war on Japan. The other Axis powers — Germany and Italy — declared war on the United States soon after.
✓ In addition to joining the armed forces, Americans could support the war effort in a variety of ways on the homefront.

Skills

✓ Analyze the political, economic, and social impact of major wars, including World War I and World War II. (SS)
✓ Describe the impact of World War II on United States citizens. (SS)
✓ Describe the significance of major events and military engagements associated with World War II. (SS)
✓ Assess the impact of World War II on the economic, political, social, and military roles of different groups, including women and minorities. (SS)

Introducing the Lesson

Let your child know that, in this lesson, he will be learning about the entry of the United States into World War II and the ways in which Americans mobilized for war on the homefront.

Reading and Questions (Answers)

1. What was blitzkrieg?
   - Blitzkrieg means "lightning war" and it was a German tactic of moving troops, tanks and artillery into an area quickly and with a devastating impact.

2. How quickly after the attack on Pearl Harbor did the United States declare war on Japan? How soon after that declaration was the United States at war with Germany and Italy as well?
   - The U.S. declared war on Japan the next day and, within three days, was also at war with Germany and Italy.

3. Describe which countries were on each side, Axis or Allies, in World War II.
   - The Axis powers were Germany, Italy, and Japan and the Allied leaders were the United States, Great Britain, and the U.S.S.R.

4. How many Russian people died in World War II?
   - Some people say that 15 million or more Russian people may have died in the war.

Outline of Activities and Answer Keys

Activity 1: A Date Which Will Live in Infamy

In this activity, your child will read the speech that Franklin Roosevelt gave to Congress and the nation on December 8, 1941, asking Congress to declare war on Japan. Your child may also visit a National Archives and Records Administration website to listen to a recording of an excerpt of Roosevelt's famous speech. Your child will also analyze the speech using the activity pages.
Possible answers for the questions on the activity pages are listed below:

✓ What do you think President Roosevelt meant when he called December 7, 1941 "a date which will live in infamy?" (The date of the bombing of Pearl Harbor will be long remembered as terrible and important date in our nation's history.)

✓ Why do you think President Roosevelt explained the diplomatic situation with Japan prior to the attack on U.S. forces? (Answers will vary.)

✓ What did he want the American people to understand about relations between Japan and the U.S. before this attack? (Your child may mention that the U.S. had been at peace with Japan, that Roosevelt may have wanted Americans to understand that every effort at diplomacy had been made by the U.S. and that Roosevelt may have wanted to emphasize that the Japanese government had made false statements intended to deceive U.S. officials.)

✓ What kinds of adjectives did President Roosevelt use to describe the actions of the Japanese Empire on December 7, 1941? (Roosevelt used words like surprise, unprovoked, and dastardly.)

✓ Does President Roosevelt seem certain that the correct course of action is to go to war? Does he seem certain about the outcome of the war? (Roosevelt leaves no doubt that this is the right course of action and that he firmly believes that the U.S. will be victorious.)

✓ If you heard this speech on the radio, what might you be thinking and feeling? (Answers will vary.)

Optional Extension:

www.movingbeyondthepage.com/link/528

The Library of Congress has put together a remarkable resource called "After the Day of Infamy: 'Man on the Street' Interviews Following the Attack on Pearl Harbor," available at the above website.

(You can also find this resource by searching for "Library of Congress" and "After the Day of Infamy" in a search engine or by visiting http://memory.loc.gov/, selecting "War, Military" from the subject headings, and then scrolling down to "Pearl Harbor and Public Reactions" from the list that will appear.)

These interviews were recorded by field workers the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor, and they capture a broad range of responses to the attack and the U.S. involvement in the war.

If you decide to use these interviews, please preview the ones that you plan to share. Some of the interviewees use terms that are considered objectionable today, and you may want to talk about or explain some of the statements people made.

http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/afcphhtml/afcphres.html

Activity 2: Posters of World War II

In this activity, your child will analyze posters from the World War II era reprinted in the reading and available in online sources. If you like, you and your child could visit "Powers of Persuasion: Poster Art from World War II," an online exhibit from the National Archives.

Your child will select two posters to analyze and then plan a poster of his own. In a Day 2 activity, he will create a poster based on that plan.

Day 2

Activity 3: Creating Your Poster

In this activity, your child will draw inspiration from the poster art of World War II, using his own plan from yesterday's activities to create a persuasive and powerful poster.

Activity 4: Rationing
In this activity, your child will learn more about the rationing of foodstuffs and gasoline during World War II and will track your own family’s use of these rationed items in order to determine how rationing might have an impact on family life.

There are two options for this activity. Read over the two options listed below and decide which one will be most appropriate for your child. If your child is particularly interested in rationing, he could complete both options.

**Option 1**
Option 1 addresses the rationing of gasoline. Option 1 will require some math as your child figures out how a limit of 4 gallons of gasoline per week might have an impact on weekly driving habits.

**Option 2**
Option 2 will require that your child keep track of more items throughout the week, but it will not require calculations.

### Wrapping Up

#### Questions to Discuss

- ✓ Why did the United States enter World War II? (The U.S. entered the war following the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor.)
- ✓ How did artists use words and images on posters to encourage people to support the war effort? (Answers will vary, but your child should understand that posters from the World War II era encouraged people to support the war effort, using a variety of slogans, powerful messages, and eye-catching images.)
- ✓ Why did the U.S. government ration items during World War II? Do you think it would have been difficult to live with rationing for the duration of the war? (The U.S. government rationed items that would be needed in the war effort. Answers will vary about students' own reactions to rationing.)

#### Things to Review

Review your child’s analysis of Roosevelt's December 8, 1941 speech and talk to him about his responses.

Read your child’s analysis of World War II posters and ask him to tell you about his own poster. How are the posters from World War II and his own poster similar and different?

Discuss the rationing activity with your child. Would it be difficult to get by without much sugar or meat? With just a few gallons of gasoline per week? What kinds of substitutions or lifestyle changes could people make? (Planning more meatless meals or riding a bike to run errands, for example.)