Major events & Turning Points of World War II

⇒ Germany invaded Poland setting off war in Europe. The Soviet Union also invaded Poland and the Baltic nations.
⇒ Germany invaded France capturing Paris
⇒ Germany bombed London and the Battle of Britain began
⇒ The United States gave Britain war supplies and old naval warships in return for military bases in Bermuda and the Caribbean
⇒ Japan bombed Pearl Harbor
⇒ After Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, Germany declared war on the United States.
⇒ The United States declare war on both Japan and Germany
⇒ Battle of Midway – The United States was victorious over Japan in the Battle of Midway. This victory was the turning point of the war in the Pacific
⇒ Battle of Stalingrad (1942) – Germany invaded the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union defeated Germany at Stalingrad marking the turning point of the war in Eastern Europe
⇒ American and Allied troops landed in Normandy, France on D-Day to begin the liberation of Western Europe
⇒ The United States dropped two atomic bombs on Japan (Hiroshima and Nagasaki) in 1945, forcing Japan to surrender and ending World War II
Major Events and Turning Points of World War II

On September 1, 1939, **Germany invaded Poland**. With a combined force of 2,700 tanks, 1,300 planes, and 1.8 million soldiers, they successfully occupied the country and destroyed major roads and cities. This powerful and swift combination of air and ground forces was called a *Blitzkrieg* or lightning war.

What did Germany do on September 1, 1939?

The Soviet Union, still an ally of Germany at the time, followed soon after. **It invaded eastern Poland and the Baltic nations** of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Great Britain and France reacted quickly. Having signed a pact with Poland to come to its defense, the two nations declared war on Germany. **World War II had officially begun.**

What did the Soviet Union do soon after Germany invaded Poland?  
Which war had officially begun?

German military leaders soon came up with a plan to defeat the French Army. Moving through the dense forests, rolling hills, and rapid rivers of the Ardennes, an area that the French thought could not be traveled by tanks, the **German army invaded France and captured Paris**. It was a sudden and humiliating defeat that left Great Britain standing alone to face Hitler and his allies.

What country did Germany invade next?  
What French city did Germany capture?

In the summer of 1940, **Germany turned its sights on Great Britain and bombed the city of London**. The **Battle of Britain** was an attempt by Germany to gain control of British airspace and destroy the Royal Air Force. They also hoped to destroy aircraft production and intimidate the nation into surrender or neutrality.

What did Germany do in the summer of 1940?  
Which battle began when Germany bombed the city of London?

The Battle of Britain was the first major battle to be fought entirely in the air and the largest and longest bombing campaign ever attempted. Bold daylight bombing raids over the city of London resulted in the deaths of thousands of civilians. In the long run, the Royal Air Force maintained its strength over the German Luftwaffe, and the resulting **British victory** marked the first failure of Germany’s war machine.

Which country won the Battle of Britain?

As the fighting in Europe continued, President Roosevelt began to prepare for the possibility that the U.S. would be drawn into the conflict. He doubled the size of the U.S. Navy, pushed for the first peacetime military draft in U.S. history, got authorization for the Lend-Lease Act, and gave Great Britain war supplies and old naval warships in return for military bases in Bermuda and the Caribbean.

As the U.S. prepared for the possibility of entering the war, what did it give Great Britain?
On December 7, 1941, the Japanese naval and naval air forces launched a surprise attack on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The next day, President Roosevelt addressed Congress to ask for a declaration of war against Japan. Within a few days, Germany declared war on the United States. Congress then responded by declaring war on Germany.

What event pushed the U.S. into the war?
Why did President Roosevelt address Congress?
What was Germany’s reaction?

Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Japan continued its assaults in the Pacific. The Japanese military attacked U.S. air bases in the Philippines and went on to conquer the island nation along with Guam, Burma, Hong Kong, and Singapore. U.S. military leaders realized that they had to stop the Japanese advance in the Pacific. One plan of attack, island-hopping, called for Allied forces to retake the islands one by one until they reached Tokyo. This strategy turned out to be costly. Thousands of American and Japanese troops lost their lives as the U.S. advanced toward Tokyo under this plan.

Another tactic focused on stopping the Japanese offensive. In the summer of 1942 a fierce battle took place near Midway Island in the North Pacific. Japan’s navy hoped to draw out and destroy the U.S. Pacific Fleet’s aircraft carrier strike forces. These forces tried to protect the U.S. airbase at Midway from Japanese attack. Japan wanted to establish an air base at Midway after defeating the American forces.

Where did a fierce battle take place?

During the fight, the United States was able to sink four Japanese aircraft carriers. This American victory over Japan in the Battle of Midway was the turning point of the war in the Pacific. It marked the beginning of the end of Japan’s control of the Pacific Ocean.

Who won the Battle of Midway?
What was the importance of this battle?

On Europe’s Eastern Front, Germany and its Axis allies invaded the Soviet Union in an attempt to gain control of the land and its oil reserves. The capture of the Soviet industrial city of Stalingrad was of particular interest to Hitler. The battle that followed has been called the largest single battle in human history. It raged for 199 days and resulted in approximately 2 million civilian and military casualties. The Axis powers lost about a quarter of their total manpower and never fully recovered from the defeat. The Battle of Stalingrad halted the German advance in World War II and marked the turning point of the war in Eastern Europe.

Why did Germany and the Axis allies invade the Soviet Union?
Who won the Battle of Stalingrad?
What was the importance of this battle?
As the fighting in Europe raged on, the Allies planned a decisive invasion of the European continent. Six hundred warships, 4,000 landing craft, and 176,000 American and Allied soldiers crossed the English Channel and landed on the beaches of Normandy, France on June 6, 1944. General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, led the D-Day invasion to begin the liberation of Western Europe. In a letter to his troops on the day of the invasion he stated, "The tide has turned! The free men of the world are marching together to Victory!"

- What were the Allies planning in June of 1944?
- Where did U.S. and Allied soldiers go?
- Who led the D-Day invasion?
- What was the purpose of the D-Day invasion?

In May of 1945, American and Russian troops met along the Elbe River in Germany. As they advanced on the capital city of Berlin, word came that Hitler was dead. Because Germany was in ruins and defeat was inevitable, the Nazi dictator had taken his own life. Berlin fell to Allied Forces, and on May 8, 1945, Germany surrendered.

- What happened as a result of Hitler’s death?

Unfortunately, "V-E" or "Victory in Europe" Day did not mark the end of World War II. Japan was still a threat to the Allies. On July 26, 1945, the Allies presented a surrender ultimatum to Japan. It was rejected. As a result, on August 6, 1945, a U.S. bomber, the Enola Gay, dropped an atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima. More than 75,000 people were killed and another 100,000 were injured.

- Who was still a threat to the Allies?
- What did the Allies do when Japan refused to surrender?

Though stunned by the horrific destruction and loss of life, Japan still did not surrender. Three days later, the United States dropped another atomic bomb on the city of Nagasaki. Japan surrendered on August 10, 1945.

- What happened when Japan still refused to surrender?
- What happened after the United States dropped another atomic bomb on Nagasaki?

Even though the Axis Powers were successful in both Europe and the Pacific, the Allies persisted and defeated Germany and Japan. World War II, the bloodiest and most destructive war in human history, was finally over.

- Who won World War II?
Sequencing - World War II Events – USII 6b

Put each of the following events in the order they occurred by placing a 1 by the first, a 2 by the second, and so on to number 10.

A. ________ Battle of Britain

B. ________ invasion of France

C. ________ invasion of Poland

D. ________ attack on Pearl Harbor

E. ________ Battle of Midway

F. ________ Normandy or D-Day Invasion

G. ________ Battle of Stalingrad

H. ________ Nagasaki

I. ________ Lend Lease

J. ________ Hiroshima
Sequencing - World War II Events – USII 6b

Put the following events in the order they occurred by placing their letter in the arrows in the order they occurred.

A. Battle of Britain
B. invasion of France
C. invasion of Poland
D. attack on Pearl Harbor
E. Battle of Midway
F. Normandy /D-Day Invasion
G. Battle of Stalingrad
H. Nagasaki
I. Lend Lease
J. Hiroshima
World War II Events – USII 6b

Match each of the following events to its description.

1. ______ Battle of Britain
2. ______ France
3. ______ Poland
4. ______ Pearl Harbor
5. ______ Battle of Midway
6. ______ Normandy
7. ______ Battle of Stalingrad
8. ______ Nagasaki
9. ______ Lend Lease
10. ______ Hiroshima
11. ______ Germany
12.. ______ Japan

A. country invaded by Germany to begin the war
B. city that was the target for the first atomic bomb
C. where the Allies began the liberation of Europe by invading
D. U.S. naval victory over Japan that was the turning point of the war in the Pacific
E. Germany’s bombing of Great Britain, especially the capital city of London
F. American effort to help the Allies by giving them war supplies and old ships in exchange for the use of military bases in the Caribbean Sea
G. Main Axis Power in Europe
H. Main Axis Power in the Pacific
I. country occupied by the Germans; gave them control of Paris
J. where the Japanese attacked the United States to bring it into the war
K. Soviet victory over Germany that was the turning point of the war in Europe
L. city that was the target of the second atomic bomb
1. The Germans sent their “Blitzkrieg” of tanks into this country on September 1, 1939. This invasion began World War II. What country was it?

____________________________

2. The American Navy was able to sink several ships and defeat the Japanese Navy in this 1942 sea battle. It was the turning point of the war in the Pacific. What battle was it?

____________________________________

3. The Japanese surprise attack on this U.S. naval base in Hawaii on December 7, 1941 brought the United States into World War II. What base was it?

________________________________

4. On D-Day, June 6, 1944, the Allies invaded France and began the fight to take Europe back from the Germans. Where was the invasion?

__________________________________

5. During the early years of the war the Germans attempted to batter Great Britain into submission by nightly bombing raids on the British cities. What was this called?

___________________________________
6. The war in the Pacific ended when the United States dropped the first atomic bombs on Japan. On what 2 cities were the bombs dropped?
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________

7. Hitler believed in the supremacy of the German people and the inferiority of the Jews. Therefore he began a systematic program to wipe out all the Jews in Europe. They were rounded up and placed in concentration camps where the able bodied were put to work and the rest were killed. What was this murdering of millions of Jews and other minorities called?
________________________________________________________

8. Hitler’s greatest victory came in 1940 when he overran this country and was able to take control of the great city of Paris. He held control of it until the final Allied push in 1944-1945. What country was it?
________________________________________________________

9. The turning point of the war in Europe came in 1943 when the Soviets were able to defeat the Germans and drive them out of this Soviet city. What battle was it?
________________________________________________________
Timeline of events at the beginning of WWII

On the top half of the timeline place the events from the box in chronological order. Then on the bottom half place the events from the box in chronological order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Depression in Germany</th>
<th>2. Germany invades France</th>
<th>3. Germany invades Poland</th>
<th>4. Hitler rises to power</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Axis Powers are formed</td>
<td>6. Germany bombs Great Britain</td>
<td>7. Germany invades the Soviet Union</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Germany

United States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Great Depression begins</th>
<th>2. US gives Great Britain aid (lend lease act)</th>
<th>3. US isolationist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. FDR’s New Deal</td>
<td>5. Germany invades Poland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Playing Doctor Fix It

6b. Describing the major turning points of the war in Europe

Below is a list of 10 sick statements. Each statement has one and maybe two boo boos. Please use what you know to correct each statement by crossing out the word or words and writing in the correct ones. There maybe more than one correct answer.

France invaded Poland in 1939 and started World War I.

Germany, Italy, and Great Britain were three allies in World War II.

France and the United States declared war on Germany in December of 1540.

Japan bombs the army base in California and brings France into World War II.

Joseph Stalin was the leader of Great Britain and FDR (Franklin Roosevelt) was the leader of Russia during World War II.

France invaded Russia (Soviet Union) and broke a pact with between Churchill and Stalin.

Axis forces invade Normandy France in 1944; this event was called Pearl Harbor.

Stalingrad was a battle between the United States and Germany.

After Stalingrad, Russian forces pushed Great Britain back to Africa.

Great Britain’s leader during World War II is Adolf Hitler.
The United States Joins the Allies
- Was the war going well for the Allies when the US joined?
- What new inventions helped the allies?
- The Soviet army saved what city?
- What important battles did the US win?

The Axis Powers are Defeated
- The Allied Troops were led by who at D-Day?
- Who did we defeat?
- How did Hitler die?
- What is V-E Day?
- What was the weapon the US was building to use in the Pacific?
- Where did the US use those weapons?
- What did the radioactivity do to people?
- What else did it contaminate?

WWII Aircraft – Write the name and country of the plane with the description.
- model of efficiency and used for suicide missions
- elegant and could fire many rounds per minute
- first jet plane to engage in battle
- carried 8 (1600 pounds) tons of bombs
- could drop 1,100 bombs accurately
- 1st 4 engine plane, used by the Army

The Manhattan Project
- Who warned FDR that the Germans were trying to make a nuclear bomb?
- What was the secret mission to make an atomic bomb called?
- Where was the bomb tested at?
- The 5 kilograms were equal to ____________ tons (3700000 pounds) of dynamite.
- What two cities were the atomic bombs dropped on?

The Battle of Britain
- At the time of the battle did Britain have anyone helping them?
- Germany did not invade, how did they fight instead?
- How long was England bombed?
- Who was the British Prime Minister?

Europe in Flames
- What is blitzkrieg?
How long did it take to conquer Denmark?
Which countries are listed as being defeated by the Axis powers?
Why did the Soviet Union decide to join the Allies?

Conflicts Rapidly Expand into War
Who formed the Axis Powers?
Who did Hitler sign a pact with to not invade?
What did Hitler do on September 1, 1939 that caused war?

Germany Invades Poland and Stalingrad
Who did Hitler invade that started war?
Where did he turn to next to invade?
Who was the only country that held against Hitler?
How many troops came into Russia?
How many Russians had been injured or killed (casualties)?
Why was winter a blessing for the Soviets?
How long was the battle around Stalingrad? How many more years till the war was over?

Battle of Midway/D-Day/Hiroshima and Nagasaki
What was the turning point of the war in the Pacific?
Where did the war end first, Europe or Asia?
Where did Eisenhower’s troops land on D-Day?
The D-Day troops pushed the Germans through __________________ and __________________ back into Germany while the __________________ troops pushed the Germans back from the east.
Why did Truman decide to use the atomic bomb?
How many people died at Hiroshima?
How many were injured at Hiroshima?
How many people died at Nagasaki?

No Title on Top/The Unites States Enters the War
Who invaded the Soviet Union despite a promise not to?
Why could we not stay out of the war?
Where is Pearl Harbor?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldiers/sailors killed</th>
<th>Soldiers/sailors wounded</th>
<th>Airplanes destroyed</th>
<th>Ships destroyed</th>
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