Chapter 30

World War II and Its Aftermath (1931–1949)
From Joseph Goebbels’s 1943 speech

“The broad working masses of our people are not unhappy because the government is too ruthless. If anything, they are unhappy because it is too considerate. Ask anyone in Germany, and he will say: The most radical is just radical enough, and the most total is just total enough to gain victory.”

- Do you think that this statement portrays the German people accurately, or might it be evidence of the exact opposite—that the “broad working masses” are in fact unhappy about the government and its ruthlessness? Explain your answer.

- Given the people Goebbels is addressing, why do you think they would want to believe him at this point in 1943?
January 1933: Hitler became Chancellor of Germany
Hitler soon ordered a programme of rearming Germany.

Hitler visits a factory and is enthusiastically greeted. Many Germans were grateful for jobs after the misery of the depression years.
How Did Dictators Challenge World Peace?

Throughout the 1930s, dictators took aggressive action but met only verbal protests and pleas for peace from the democracies.

Mussolini and Hitler viewed that desire for peace as weakness and responded with new acts of aggression.

In 1935, Mussolini invaded Ethiopia. The League of Nations voted sanctions, or penalties, but had no power to enforce the sanctions.

Hitler built up the German military in defiance of the Versailles treaty. Then, in 1936, he sent troops into the demilitarized Rhineland bordering France — another treaty violation.
The Spanish Civil War

Although the Spanish Civil War was a local struggle, it drew other European powers into the fighting.

- Hitler and Mussolini sent arms and forces to help the Fascists Franco and his Nationalist coup.
- Volunteers from Germany, Italy, the Soviet Union, and the western democracies joined the International Brigade and fought alongside the Loyalists against fascism.

By 1939, Franco had triumphed. Once in power, he created a fascist dictatorship like those of Hitler and Mussolini.
German Aggression

- In 1938, Hitler used force to unite Austria and Germany in the **Anschluss**. The western democracies took no action.
- Hitler annexed the Sudetenland, a region in western Czechoslovakia.
- At the Munich Conference, British and French leaders again chose appeasement.
- In 1939, Hitler claimed the rest of Czechoslovakia.
- The democracies realized that appeasement had failed. They promised to protect Poland, most likely Hitler’s next target.
- Hitler formed a **Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact** with Stalin.
- German forces invaded Poland.
- Britain and France immediately declared war on Germany.
The non-aggression pact was surprising. Hitler and Stalin were seen as natural enemies.

When Hitler talked of taking over new land for Germany, many thought that he meant Russia.

Hitler also hated Communism, the form of government in Russia.
Aggression in Europe to 1939

- Under German control: September 1, 1939
- Under Italian control: September 1, 1939
- Maginot Line
- German concentration camps, 1939

Map showing territorial changes and concentration camps in Europe from 1936 to 1939.
Why War Came

- Historians see the war as an effort to revise the 1919 peace settlement. The Versailles treaty had divided the world into two camps.

- The western democracies might have been able to stop Hitler. Unwilling to risk war, however, they adopted a policy of appeasement, giving in to the demands of an aggressor in hope of keeping the peace.
Research and Report

In pairs, students will research one of the following topics and report to the class. Explain what happened, why, how it was resolved.

- What were the blitzkrieg, the “Phoney War” and the Miracle of Dunkirk? – pp 775-776
- What happened in Africa and the Balkans and what were the changes to warfare brought by modern technology? – p 776
- What was the Battle of Britain? – pp 776-777
- What was Operation Barbarosa? – pp 778-779
- How did Japan respond to growing American involvement? – pp 779-780
The German Blitzkrieg
The Technology of Modern Warfare
Early Axis Gains

By 1941, the Axis powers or their allies controlled most of Western Europe.

- Germany and Russia conquered and divided Poland.
- Stalin’s armies pushed into Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.
- Soviet forces seized Finland.
- Hitler conquered Norway and Denmark.
- Hitler took the Netherlands and Belgium.
- France surrendered to Hitler.
- Axis armies pushed into North Africa and the Balkans.
- Axis armies defeated Greece and Yugoslavia.
- Bulgaria and Hungary joined the Axis alliance.
### The Battle of Britain and Operation Barbarossa

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<tr>
<th>THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN</th>
<th>OPERATION BARBAROSSA</th>
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<td>In 1940, Hitler ordered Operation Sea Lion, the invasion of Britain. The Germans first bombed military targets, then changed tactics to the blitz, or bombing, of London and other cities. London did not break under the blitz. The bombing only strengthened British resolve to turn back the enemy. Operation Sea Lion was a failure.</td>
<td>In 1941, Hitler embarked on Operation Barbarossa, the conquest of the Soviet Union. The Nazis smashed deep into Russia, but were stalled before they could take Moscow and Leningrad. Thousands of German soldiers froze to death in Russia’s winter. Russians also suffered appalling hardships. Stalin urged Britain to open a second front in Western Europe.</td>
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The Battle of Britain was the first major campaign to be fought entirely by air forces, and was also the largest and most sustained aerial bombing campaign to that date.
Operation Barbarossa was the code name for Nazi Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union during World War II that began on 22 June 1941. Over 4.5 million troops of the Axis powers invaded the USSR along a 1,800 mile front. It was the largest military offensive in history.
“And so, at the beginning of 1930, they began to liquidate the kulak families. The height of the fever was in February and March. They expelled them from their home districts so that when it was time for sowing there would be no kulaks left, so that a new life could begin. That is what we all said it would be: ‘the first collective farm spring.’”

- Why do you think Stalin was so opposed to allowing those he called “kulaks” even to stay on the lands at all?

- What do you think made it possible for people to regard this action against the kulaks positively, as the start of “the first collective farm spring”? 
Growing American Involvement

- When the war began in 1939, the United States declared its neutrality.
- Congress passed the **Lend-Lease Act**, which allowed the President to supply arms to those who were fighting for democracy.
- Roosevelt and Churchill issued the **Atlantic Charter**, which called for the “final destruction of the Nazi tyranny.”
- Japan advanced into French Indochina and the Dutch East Indies.
- To stop Japanese aggression, the United States banned the sale of war materials to Japan.
- Japan attacked Pearl Harbor.
- The United States declared war on Japan.
- Germany and Italy, as Japan’s allies, declared war on the United States.
Occupied Lands

While the Germans rampaged across Europe, the Japanese conquered an empire in Asia and the Pacific. Each set out to build a “new order” in the occupied lands.

- Hitler set up puppet governments in countries that were peopled by “Aryans.”
- Eastern Europeans were considered an inferior “race,” and were thus shoved aside to provide “living space” for Germans.
- To the Nazis, occupied lands were an economic resource to be looted and plundered.
- German leaders worked to accomplish the “final solution of the Jewish problem” — the genocide, or deliberate murder, of all European Jews.
- Japan’s self-proclaimed mission was to help Asians escape imperial rule. In fact, its real goal was a Japanese empire in Asia.
- The Japanese treated conquered people with great brutality.
Turning Points

During 1942 and 1943, the Allies won several victories that would turn the tide of battle and push back the Axis powers.

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<th>EL ALAMEIN</th>
<th>INVASION OF ITALY</th>
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<td>The British stopped Rommel’s advance and drove the Axis forces back across Libya into Tunisia. (late 1942)</td>
<td>From North Africa, the Allies invaded Italy. The invasion weakened Hitler by forcing him to fight on another front. (mid-1943)</td>
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<th>STALINGRAD</th>
<th>INVASION OF FRANCE</th>
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<td>The Red Army took the offensive &amp; drove the Germans out of the Soviet Union entirely. Hitler’s forces suffered irreplaceable losses of troops and equipment. (late 1942)</td>
<td>The Allies opened a second front in Europe with the invasion of Paris. They freed France and were then able to focus on defeating Germany and Japan. (mid-1944)</td>
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World War II in Europe and North Africa
The Siege of Leningrad, also known as the Leningrad Blockade was a prolonged military operation by the German Army Group North and the Finnish Defense Forces to capture Leningrad in the Eastern Front theatre. It started on 8 September 1941, when the last land connection to the city was severed. Although the Soviets managed to open a narrow land corridor to the city on 18 January 1943, the total lifting took place on 27 January 1944, 872 days after it began. It was one of the longest and most destructive sieges in history and the most costly in terms of casualties.
Ongoing Attacks on Soviet Cities
The Beaches of Normandy

U.S. Army troops wade ashore on Omaha Beach during the landings, 6 June 1944
Defeat in the Philippines

The combined American-Filipino army was defeated by April 1942, but guerrilla resistance against the Japanese continued the duration of the war.
Bataan Death March

- The 60-mile (97 km) march occurred after the three-month Battle of Bataan.

- The march involved the forcible transfer of 75,000 American and Filipino prisoners of war captured by the Japanese in the Philippines from the Bataan peninsula to prison camps.

- It was characterized by wide-ranging physical abuse and murder, and resulted in very high fatalities inflicted upon the prisoners and civilians along the route by the armed forces of the Empire of Japan.
Strategies in the Pacific

- At first, the Japanese won an uninterrupted series of victories.
- Soon, however, the tide of the Pacific war began to turn with the victories at the Coral Sea and **Midway Island**.
- The United States began an “**island-hopping**” campaign.
  - The goal of the campaign was to recapture some Japanese-held islands while bypassing others.
  - The captured islands served as steppingstones to the next objective.
- In this way, American forces gradually moved north to Japan itself.
- At Iwo Jima and Okinawa the Japanese refused to surrender, costing thousands of lives.
The Battle of Iwo Jima

The Japanese positions on the island were heavily fortified, with vast bunkers, hidden artillery, and 11 mi of underground tunnels. The battle was the first American attack on the Japanese Home Islands. Of 18,000 Japanese soldiers present at the beginning of the battle, only 216 were taken prisoner. The rest were killed or were missing and assumed dead.

The U.S. invasion was charged with the mission of capturing the two airfields on Iwo Jima. The battle produced some of the fiercest fighting in the Pacific Campaign of WWII.
World War II in the Pacific
Defeating Nazi Germany

- To win the assault on Germany, the Allies had to use devastating force.
- As Allied armies advanced into Belgium in 1944, Germany launched a massive counterattack.
- Both sides suffered terrible losses at the Battle of the Bulge.
- Hitler’s support in Germany was declining.
- Germany faced round-the-clock bombing.
- The Allies crossed the Rhine into western Germany.
- Soviet troops closed in on Berlin.
- Hitler committed suicide, and Germany surrendered.
The Battle of the Bulge

The Ardennes Offensive (16 December 1944 – 25 January 1945) was a major German offensive launched towards the end of World War II through the densely forested Ardennes Mountains region of Belgium.
Germany's planned goal for these operations was to split the British and American Allied line in half, capturing Antwerp, Belgium, and then proceed to encircle and destroy four Allied armies, forcing the Western Allies to negotiate a peace treaty in the Axis Powers' favor. The Americans won, though it was the bloodiest battle they fought in WWII.
The Atomic Bomb

Dropping the atomic bomb brought a quick end to the war. It also unleashed terrifying destruction.

Why did President Truman use the bomb?

- Truman was convinced that Japan would not surrender without an invasion that would result in enormous losses of both American and Japanese lives.
- Truman also may have hoped that the bomb would impress the Soviet Union with American power.
Aftermath of War

- The appalling costs of the war began to emerge.
- The world learned the full extent of the horrors of the Holocaust.
- War crimes trials were held in Germany (Nuremberg Trials), Italy, and Japan.
- People faced disturbing questions: What made the Nazi horrors possible? Why had ordinary people collaborated with Hitler’s “final solution”?
- The Allies worked to strengthen democracy in occupied Germany and Japan.

Nuremberg Trials. Defendants in the dock. The main target of the prosecution was Hermann Göring (at the left edge on the first row of benches), considered to be the most important surviving official in the Third Reich after Hitler’s death.
The Cold War

As the United States and the Soviet Union became superpowers, they also became tense rivals in an increasingly divided world.

The Cold War was a state of tension and hostility among nations, without armed conflict between the major rivals.

At first, the focus of the Cold War was Eastern Europe, where Stalin and the western powers had very different goals.
The United Nations

World War II Allies set up an international organization to ensure peace.

Under the UN Charter, each of the member nations had one vote in the General Assembly.

- A smaller body, the Security Council, was given greater power.
- Its five permanent members were the United States, the Soviet Union (today Russia), Britain, France, and China.

The UN’s work would go far beyond peacekeeping. The organization would take on many world problems.
The Truman Doctrine

“At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life. The choice is too often not a free one. One way of life is based upon the will of the majority and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression.

“The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio, fixed elections, and the suppression of personal freedoms.”
## Casualties of World War II

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Military Dead</th>
<th>Military Wounded</th>
<th>Civilian Dead</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Allies</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>389,000</td>
<td>475,000</td>
<td>65,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>211,000</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>108,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soviet Union</td>
<td>7,500,000</td>
<td>14,102,000</td>
<td>15,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>292,000</td>
<td>671,000</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Axis Powers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>2,850,000</td>
<td>7,250,000</td>
<td>5,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>77,500</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>1,576,000</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>300,000</td>
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** Very small number of civilian dead.

Source: Henri Michel, *The Second World War*
Time Line of Events Leading to the Cold War

Create a time line of events related to the Cold War.

Events to include:

- Installation of pro-Soviet governments in Eastern Europe
- Churchill’s warning about the “iron curtain”
- Conflicts in Greece and Turkey
- Announcement of Truman Doctrine
- The Marshall Plan
- The Berlin Airlift
- Formation of NATO
- Start of the arms race
- The start of a propaganda war