

# Living during World War II

## ASSESSMENT #MSSS47

### Benchmark Grades

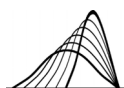
6–8

### Summary

Students look at primary source documents as a basis for this assessment. The students will research the feeling of isolationism common before World War II. An interview will be conducted with someone who had heard President Roosevelt's speech. In the last two tasks, the students will evaluate the way the war affected teenagers' lives.

### Keywords

Isolation  
Primary source documents  
Reading skills  
Research skills  
U.S. history  
World War II  
Writing skills



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### Information for the Teacher

#### Task Description

Students look at primary source documents. In Task 1, students research the feeling of isolationism that was common before World War II and create a political cartoon. In Task 2, an interview is conducted with someone who heard President Roosevelt's speech. In the last two tasks, the students evaluate the way that the war affected teenagers' lives.

#### Required Materials

Samples of political cartoons that show the attitude of isolation should be available as resources

For enrichment tasks, or access to other primary source documents, see *Teaching with Documents, Volumes 1 and 2*, available from the National Archives. (ISBN 1-0911333-79-7, Volume 1 and ISBN 1-880875-18-7, Volume 2)

#### Scoring key for the teacher

##### Task 1:

Some reasons for wanting to stay out of World War II: American casualties in World War I, unpaid World War I debts, economic collapse, and disillusionment

Answers will vary.

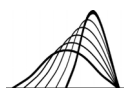


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Assessment Introduction: Here is what you will do ...

War has such a profound effect on people. In this assessment, you will look at the hesitation of the United States to enter World War II. Our country finally entered the war after a very tragic event.

Imagine living during this time in history. You will read one teenager's writing on how he or she was affected by the war. After that, you will research to see how other teenagers were affected.



# Living during World War II

## Franklin D. Roosevelt's War Address

President Franklin D. Roosevelt and a member of his staff were interrupted the afternoon of December 7, 1941. The interruption was a telephone call from the Secretary of War telling them that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor. President Roosevelt went on to draft a speech and presented it to the American people and Congress the next day. Here are excerpts from the speech.

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

The United States was at the moment at peace with that nation and was still in conversation with its government and its Emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific....

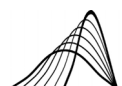
It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks ago. During the intervening time, the Japanese Government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued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

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

I speak the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will see to it that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again. Hostilities exist. There is no mincing the fact that our people, our territory and our interests are in grave danger.

I, therefore, 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.

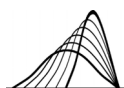


# Living during World War II

## Task 1: Before the Attack

It took a monumental event like the bombing of Pearl Harbor to get the United States involved in World War II. The attitude of isolationism was widespread among politicians and the common people in the 1930s. Why was this feeling so popular?

Design a political cartoon that pictures isolationism and the reasons behind the feelings of isolationism.



# Living during World War II

## Task 1: Scoring Guide

### 4 Exemplary

- ❑ Criteria for the “Proficient” category have been successfully completed.
- ❑ Advanced work is included. For example, at least five reasons for wanting to stay out of World War II are identified or the cartoon contains exceptionally informative material. Other examples of advanced work include:

### 3 Proficient

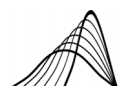
- ❑ The cartoon is original.
- ❑ Isolationism is depicted in the cartoon.
- ❑ At least four reasons for wanting to stay out of World War II are identified.

### 2 Progressing

- ❑ Two of the criteria in the “Proficient” category have been met.
- ❑ More work is needed.

### 1 Not meeting the standard(s)

- ❑ Fewer than two of the criteria in the “Proficient” category have been met.
- ❑ The task should be repeated.



# Living during World War II

## Task 2: Interview

President Roosevelt called December 7, 1941, “a date which will live in infamy.”

The speech had a remarkable effect on any person listening to it. A person that listened to the speech would not have any trouble remembering the situation surrounding the event.

- Think of at least five questions that you would like to ask someone who heard the speech live back in 1941.
- After you have thought of the questions, interview a person who heard the speech. Take notes as the person answers your questions.
- After the interview, write a paragraph evaluating the impact of the event in the lives of Americans.



# Living during World War II

## Task 2: Scoring Guide

### 4 Exemplary

- ❑ Criteria for the “Proficient” category have been successfully completed.
- ❑ Advanced work is included. For example, the student interviews more than one person and compares their reactions. Other examples of advanced work include:

### 3 Proficient

- ❑ Five appropriate questions are written for the interview.
- ❑ A person that heard President Roosevelt’s speech is interviewed.
- ❑ Notes are taken on the answers of the one interviewed.
- ❑ A paragraph evaluates the impact of the event on the lives of Americans.

### 2 Progressing

- ❑ Three of the criteria in the “Proficient” category have been met.
- ❑ More work is needed.

### 1 Not meeting the standard(s)

- ❑ Fewer than three of the criteria in the “Proficient” category have been met.
- ❑ The task should be repeated.



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## Task 3: The War's Effects

As a result of the speech, the United States officially entered World War II. The war brought a change to everyone's life—adults, teenagers, and children were affected in many ways.

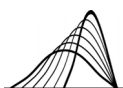
One group of people that were greatly affected was Japanese-Americans. Less than three months after President Roosevelt made his speech, he issued an executive order requiring Japanese-Americans to report to assembly centers behind barbed wire fences.

The excerpt on the following page is taken from an English assignment that a Japanese-American teenager wrote after being forced to leave his home in Oregon.

Read the document on the following page.

After you read the document, produce a feature magazine article for *Time for Kids* describing what life was like living in Section D of Block 57 of the confinement camp. To make your article as factual as possible, use and document other sources on this topic.

Follow your rules for writing as learned in class, including correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.



# Living during World War II

Chieko Hirata  
Period II, English I

## My Last Day At Home

The month of May when I was attending school, all the residents of Hood River county, as well as the people of the whole western coast was surprised to receive such an unexpected order of evacuation.

Promptly after hearing about the order I with my folks went to register and then for a brief physical examination. Then I helped my folks pack and prepared to leave my dear home on May 13, 1942.

On May 8, 1942 I withdrew from Parkdale Grade School, where all my friends and teachers bid me farewell with sorrowful face and tears. Our packing never seem to cease, we kept on packing then finally we were finished. Then came May 13<sup>th</sup>, my most dreaded day which I shall never forget the rest of my life. On the afternoon of the 13<sup>th</sup>, I board the train headed for Pinedale, California.

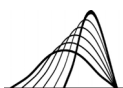
On the night of the 15<sup>th</sup> we arrived. The weather was pretty hot. In Pinedale I lived in the D-section which had forty barracks, which had five apartments to a barrack.

I stayed at the Pinedale Assembly Center about two months. Then around July 15, 1942 we received our order to evacuate for Tule Lake. Then on July 18<sup>th</sup> we evacuated for Tule Lake and spent a night on the train. I arrived in Tule Lake. At present I am living in Block 58. The residents of this block is most Tacoma folks which I am not very much acquainted with as yet. Being that my cousin lives in Block 57 I am always visiting them.

I am always hoping that this war will end, so that I will be able to go back to Parkdale, my home town and see all my old friends, and live to my dying days in my old home in Parkdale, Oregon.

Herbert Yoshikawa

(This document was quoted exactly. No attempt to has been made to correct grammar mistakes.)



# Living during World War II

## Task 3: Scoring Guide

### 4 Exemplary

- ❑ Criteria for the “Proficient” category have been successfully completed.
- ❑ Advanced work is included. For example, the information is written appropriately for the audience, and illustrations are included in the magazine article. The information in the article is exceptionally informative and detailed. Other examples of advanced work include:

### 3 Proficient

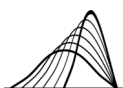
- ❑ The magazine article is appropriate for *Time for Kids*.
- ❑ Detailed information is provided about situations faced in the confinement camp.
- ❑ All sources are correctly documented.
- ❑ The article is free of spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.

### 2 Progressing

- ❑ Three of the criteria in the “Proficient” category have been met.
- ❑ Additional research is required.

### 1 Not meeting the standard(s)

- ❑ Fewer than three of the criteria in the “Proficient” category have been met.
- ❑ The task should be repeated.



# Living during World War II

## Task 4: More Effects

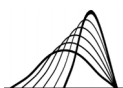
In the last task, you saw the effects of the war on a Japanese-American teenager.

Anne Frank is probably the most famous teenager who wrote about the effects of the war on her short life. Her diary gives fascinating insights into the boredom, terror, and loss during the war.

In this task, you will choose to take on the role of a teenager from any nation and ethnic group. You may choose to write as a French teenager in the Resistance, a London teenager living through bombings, or a Polish teenager living in the Warsaw ghetto.

After you have chosen the role, research the facts so that you write as factually as possible. Document your sources.

You will write at least **five diary accounts** as this teenager, recording how and why the events of the war affected your life.



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## Task 4: Scoring Guide

### 4 Exemplary

- ❑ Criteria for the “Proficient” category have been successfully completed.
- ❑ Advanced work is included. For example, there are more than five diary accounts. The diary uses insightful detail illustrating how and why the war affects the student. Other examples of advanced work include:

### 3 Proficient

- ❑ An appropriate role is chosen.
- ❑ Facts are included which make the diary accounts believable.
- ❑ Sources are documented.
- ❑ At least five diary accounts are written.
- ❑ The accounts record how and why the events of the war affected the teenager’s life.

### 2 Progressing

- ❑ Four of the criteria in the “Proficient” category have been met.
- ❑ More work is needed.

### 1 Not meeting the standard(s)

- ❑ Fewer than four of the criteria in the “Proficient” category have been met.
- ❑ The task should be repeated.

