

Name _____

Pearl Harbor

The United States managed to stay out of World War II for more than two years. Although the U.S. had sent aid to the Allies from the beginning, it was not actively involved in any fighting.

All this changed on the morning of December 7, 1941. At 7:55 a.m., the first wave of Japanese planes from six aircraft carriers in the Pacific attacked the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. At the same time, they bombed the nearby army installations at Hickam Field and Wheeler Field. In less than two hours, the Japanese sank or damaged all eight battleships in or near the harbor and destroyed almost two hundred planes. They killed nearly 2,400 American service personnel and wounded many more. President Franklin Roosevelt called December 7 "a date which will live in infamy," and he asked for and received from Congress an immediate declaration of war against Japan.

The sneak attack on Pearl Harbor stemmed from Japan's desire to build an empire in southeast Asia. The Japanese knew they would need to destroy the American Pacific fleet to achieve their goals.

The attack on Pearl Harbor changed many Americans' attitude toward involvement in the war. Roosevelt received great support on December 8, 1941, when the United States declared war on Japan. In response, Italy and Germany, who were Japan's allies, declared war on the United States three days later. Much more of the world had become involved in this deadly conflict.

1. Describe the United States' involvement in World War II before and after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

2. Before the attack on Pearl Harbor, most Americans felt that the United States should avoid military involvement in World War II. Some supported U.S. aid to the Allies, but others felt the U.S. should remain completely neutral. Support one of these positions.

3. President Roosevelt called December 7, 1941, "a date which will live in infamy." Look up the word *infamy* in the dictionary. Write its definition below, and explain why you think President Roosevelt used this word in relation to the attack on Pearl Harbor.

After the War

A fact is something that is known to be true and can be proven. An opinion is a view that is open to dispute or argument.

Below are ten statements about the aftermath of World War II. Some are facts, while others are opinions. Read each sentence carefully. On the blank line to the left, write *F* if the statement is a fact. Write *O* if the statement is an opinion.

1. _____ The United Nations has more authority to enforce its decisions than the League of Nations had.
2. _____ Those Eastern European nations that became Soviet satellites after World War II benefited from Russian domination.
3. _____ The Cold War grew out of the distrust the Russians had for the nations of the West.
4. _____ The winning and losing nations suffered economically because of World War II.
5. _____ The United States and the Soviet Union were the world's two great superpowers following World War II.
6. _____ The victorious Allied nations divided Germany into zones of occupation.
7. _____ The United States was wrong to use the atomic bomb against Japan.
8. _____ Japan was occupied by U.S. forces for seven years after World War II ended.
9. _____ The United States was too lenient in its treatment of Japan following the war.
10. _____ Great Britain, France, Germany, and Italy had less world power after World War II than they had when it started.

11. Write another fact about World War II.

12. Write another opinion about World War II.
