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World War II: War in the Pacific

World War II was the most destructive war in history. It killed more people and destroyed more property than any other war. Much of the fighting took place in the jungles of Southeast Asia and on the islands and seas of the Pacific Ocean. Millions of soldiers and civilians were killed in these battles. Let's learn about the Pacific theater of World War II and see why the war was so devastating in that part of the world.

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Find It!

Find the answers to the questions below by using the "Search" tool to search key words. Since this activity is about World War II, you can start by searching the key words "World War II."

Write the answers on the lines provided or below the question.

1. Japan launched a surprise attack upon the U.S. Pacific Fleet at _____

   on the date _____.

2. During which battle, fought from May 4 to 8, 1942, did American and Australian forces halt the Japanese assault on Australia's base at Port Moseby?

3. Which battle was the first clear Allied victory over Japan in World War II?

4. On August 7, 1942, U.S. marines invaded the island of _____ in the first stage of a campaign in the Solomon Islands.

***Users of the *Advanced* database can find extension activities at the end of this webquest.**

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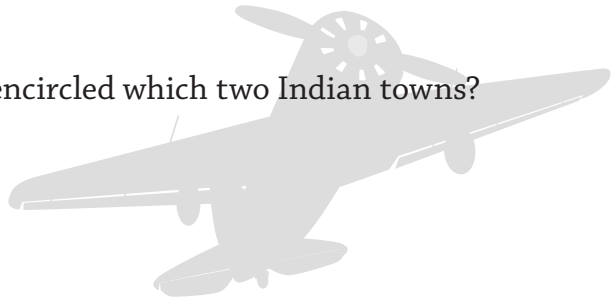

5. When Japan invaded India in early 1944 Japanese troops encircled which two Indian towns?

6. What was the largest naval battle in history?

7. On which island did the famous U.S. flag-raising occur on Mount Suribachi on February 23, 1945?

8. During the battle of Okinawa, as many as _____ Japanese and Okinawan military personnel and _____ Americans were killed.

9. V-J Day, the day Japan signed the official statement of surrender, happened on _____.

True or False

Write "True" if the statement about World War II is correct. If the statement is not correct, write "False" and correct the statement in the space below.

_____ 10. Douglas MacArthur famously promised, "I shall return" after being ordered to leave Singapore.

_____ 11. The Battle of Midway was the first clear Allied victory over Japan in World War II.

_____ 12. The Flying Tigers was the nickname of a group of American pilots who served in India.

_____ 13. The Battle of Iwo Jima was the bloodiest battle in U.S. Marine Corps history.

_____ 14. The United States dropped atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Tokyo.

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15. How did Japan's strict samurai military code make it dangerous for Allied soldiers to surrender to the Japanese during World War II?

16. Name three reasons fighting in the South Pacific jungle was treacherous.

17. How did *leapfrogging* save time and lives?

18. What were incendiary bombs?

19. Which Australian city was bombed by Japanese planes in February 1942?

Who is it?

In the line provided, write which person is being referred to.

_____ 20. American pilot who led an April 18, 1942 surprise attack on Tokyo and other Japanese cities.

_____ 21. Architect of the attack on Pearl Harbor who was shot down on April 18, 1943?

_____ 22. Commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

_____ 23. Japanese prime minister from 1941-1944.

_____ 24. U.K. admiral who became supreme Allied commander in Southeast Asia in August 1943.

25. What was the Bataan Death March? (Hint: For this question see the "Bataan Death March" article.)

26. What were kamikaze pilots? (Hint: For this question see the "Kamikaze" article.)

27. What was Japanese American internment? (Hint: For this question see the "Japanese American internment" article.)

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28. What was the *Enola Gay*? (Hint: For this question see the "Enola Gay" article.)

29. Who were the code talkers? (Hint: For this question see the "Code talkers" article.)

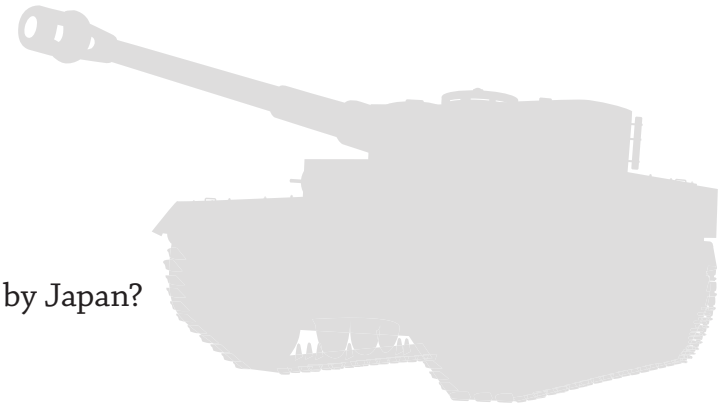
30. What was the USS *Arizona*? (Hint: For this question see the "Arizona" article [the article about the ship, not the one about the state].)

31. What was the Burma Road? (Hint: For this question see the "Burma Road" article.)

Map It!

Within the "World War II" article, you will find the map "World War II in the Pacific: 1943-1945." Study the map and answer the following questions.

32. What major battle was fought in October 1944?



33. What happened on August 9, 1945?

34. Which of the Aleutian Islands was once occupied by Japan?

Watch it!

Within the "World War II" article, you will find the video "Attack on Pearl Harbor." Watch the video and answer the following questions.

35. Where is Pearl Harbor located?

36. How did the United States respond to Japan's invasion of Southern Indo-China in July 1941?

37. American people used the rallying cry "_____ Pearl Harbor."

38. How often does an oil bubble from the USS Arizona come to the surface of the water - even today?

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Timeline

Imagine that you are a war correspondent who wrote about all of the following events. Put the events in the order in which you wrote about them.

_____Allied troops began landing in the Philippines

_____Battle of the Coral Sea fought

_____Battle of Midway fought

_____Doolittle raid bombed the Japanese homeland

_____Japan attacked the U.S. fleet at Pearl Harbor

_____Japan surrendered

_____Soviet Union declared war on Japan

_____U.S. dropped atomic bomb on Hiroshima

_____U.S. marines invaded Guadalcanal

_____U.S. marines invaded Iwo Jima

_____U.S. marines invaded Tarawa

Extension Activity 1

Write a 1-2 page paper theorizing how history would have been different if Japan had not attacked Pearl Harbor. Topics to consider, but are not limited to, include:

- Would Germany have drawn the U.S. into the war? If so, would the U.S. have just fought in Europe?
- Would Japan have won the Pacific war if the U.S. had not gotten involved?
- What would the map of Asia look like now if Japan had not lost?
- Would the U.S. have eventually gone to war with Japan?
- How would the war have turned out if the U.S. did not get involved or if they entered the war later?
- How would the U.S. resolve to fight have been different if they did not have Pearl Harbor to galvanize the nation?

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Extension Activity 2

Write a 1-2 page letter from the perspective of a Japanese citizen who lived through World War II, telling a friend (a student of the future!) how the war impacted you. Topics to consider, but are not limited to, include:

- How did you feel when you heard that Japan attacked the United States and the British-ruled areas?
- How did you feel when Japan won battles early in the war?
- At what point did you know that Japan would lose to the Allies?
- Do you think Japan should have surrendered earlier or later?
- What were your thoughts about a possible U.S. invasion of Japan?
- What did you think when you first heard about the atomic bombs?
- How did you feel when Japan surrendered and the war ended?

Extension Activity 3

Write a 1-2 page letter from the perspective of an American citizen who lived through World War II, telling a friend (a student of the future!) how the war impacted you. Topics to consider, but are not limited to, include:

- How did you feel when you first heard about Pearl Harbor?
- How did you feel when Japan was won battles early in the war?
- Were you afraid that Japan might attack the lower 48 states?
- What were your thoughts about the Japanese American internment camps?
- At what point did you know that the U.S. would defeat Japan?
- What did you think when you first heard about the atomic bombs?
- How did you feel when Japan surrendered and the war ended?

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