War Turning Points

Read how major World War II events changed lives and the course of the war.

SS24.5.9c "Explain the significance of major events in the war, including Pearl Harbor, internment of Japanese-Americans, D-Day, the Holocaust, Victory in Europe (VE) Day, the development and use of the atomic bomb, and Victory over Japan (VJ) Day."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each of the seven major events or actions in the passage. Circle a nearby detail that shows why each one mattered.

Events That Changed the War

1. On December 7, 1941, Japanese planes attacked the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The attack killed more than 2,400 Americans and led the United States to enter World War II. Fear and prejudice then shaped life at home. In 1942, the U.S. government forced about 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry from their homes into camps. Most were U.S. citizens. This internment took their freedom though they had committed no crime.

2. Across Europe, Nazi Germany and its helpers carried out the Holocaust, murdering six million Jewish people and millions of other victims. This shows how hatred and government power can lead to terrible crimes. On June 6, 1944, Allied troops landed in France on D-Day. The landing helped them push Nazi forces back from western Europe. Germany surrendered in May 1945, and Victory in Europe (VE) Day marked the end of the war in Europe.

3. The war continued in the Pacific. The United States developed atomic bombs and dropped them on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. The blasts killed many civilians, and radiation caused more deaths later. Japan announced it would surrender soon afterward. On September 2, Japan signed surrender papers, and Victory over Japan (VJ) Day marked the war's end. The bombs helped end the war but raised lasting questions about their human cost.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Pearl Harbor change the United States' role in the war, and how did internment change life for people of Japanese ancestry?

2. What does the Holocaust show about the danger of hatred backed by government power? Use a fact from the passage.

3. How did D-Day help lead to VE Day, and what did VE Day mark?

4. Why are both the atomic bombs and VJ Day important to the war's end in the Pacific?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum label comparing two events from different paragraphs. Explain one theme they share and one important difference, using facts from the passage.

ANSWER KEY

War Turning Points

GRADE 5 · SS24.5.9c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each of the seven major events or actions in the passage. Circle a nearby detail that shows why each one mattered. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Pearl Harbor change the United States' role in the war, and how did internment change life for people of Japanese ancestry?	**The attack on Pearl Harbor led the United States to enter the war. Internment forced about 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry from their homes into camps and took their freedom.**
2	What does the Holocaust show about the danger of hatred backed by government power? Use a fact from the passage.	**It shows that hatred backed by government power can lead to terrible crimes. Nazi Germany and its helpers murdered six million Jewish people and millions of other victims.**
3	How did D-Day help lead to VE Day, and what did VE Day mark?	**The D-Day landing helped Allied troops push Nazi forces back from western Europe. VE Day marked the end of the war in Europe after Germany surrendered.**
4	Why are both the atomic bombs and VJ Day important to the war's end in the Pacific?	**The atomic bombs helped bring Japan's surrender, but they killed many civilians and caused lasting harm. VJ Day marked the end of the war after Japan signed surrender papers.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Holocaust and Japanese American internment show how governments can harm people because of their identity. Nazi Germany and its helpers murdered six million Jewish people and millions of others. The U.S. government forced about 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry into camps, taking their freedom. The Holocaust was mass murder, while internment was forced imprisonment.

Accept other pairs of events from different paragraphs if the response uses accurate passage facts to explain a shared theme and a meaningful difference. Do not accept a comparison that treats internment and the Holocaust as the same event or claims they had the same outcome.