Alabama at Work

Industry and everyday life on the home front

SS24.AS.12b "Describe the mobilization of Alabama industries and people on the home front during World War I and World War II."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one industry action from each war, circle one civilian action from each war, and put a star beside a sentence about an obstacle to wartime work. Use your marks to compare how Alabamians helped during the two wars.

Two Wars, Many Kinds of Work

1. In 1917, the United States entered World War I, and Alabama's factories and workers shifted toward wartime needs. Birmingham's iron and steel mills supplied metal for equipment and transportation. In Mobile, shipyard crews built vessels needed to move wartime supplies. The demand for labor changed lives beyond the factory gates: some Alabamians took industrial jobs, while others left the state for wartime work elsewhere. Families bought Liberty Bonds, lending money to the federal government, and volunteers made supplies for the Red Cross. These efforts linked Alabama's workplaces and households to a war fought overseas.

2. After the United States entered World War II in 1941, Alabama's industrial mobilization expanded. At Mobile shipyards, workers built and repaired ships for the military and for carrying cargo. Birmingham mills produced steel for wartime manufacturing. Women entered jobs in shipyards and other plants that had often been closed to them. Black workers also sought better-paying defense jobs, but discrimination limited access to some positions. Near Tuskegee, Black pilots and support crews trained for military service in a segregated program. Their work showed that mobilization depended on skilled people, even as unequal treatment shaped their opportunities.

3. Production was only part of Alabama's home-front story. During World War II, families used ration books to limit purchases of scarce goods such as gasoline and sugar. Many planted victory gardens to add food for their households. People also bought war bonds to help pay for the fighting. These choices differed from welding a ship, but they supported the same national effort by managing supplies and raising money. Across both wars, Alabama mobilized through industry, paid labor, and civilian action. World War II drew more women into defense work, while racial barriers remained a serious obstacle for Black Alabamians.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Mobile shipyards support the war effort in both world wars? What additional shipyard job does the passage name for World War II?

2. Describe one way civilians helped pay for World War I and one way they conserved scarce goods during World War II.

3. How did Birmingham's mills support wartime needs during World War I and World War II?

4. How did defense work open opportunities for some Alabamians during World War II while barriers remained for others?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 70 to 95 word radio message that could have been heard in Alabama in 1943. Explain how one workplace and one household could support the war effort, and acknowledge one barrier to defense work. Use at least three accurate details from the passage in your own words.

ANSWER KEY

Alabama at Work

HIGH SCHOOL · SS24.AS.12b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one industry action from each war, circle one civilian action from each war, and put a star beside a sentence about an obstacle to wartime work. Use your marks to compare how Alabamians helped during the two wars. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Mobile shipyards support the war effort in both world wars? What additional shipyard job does the passage name for World War II?	**Mobile crews built ships during both wars. During World War II, they also repaired ships.**
2	Describe one way civilians helped pay for World War I and one way they conserved scarce goods during World War II.	**During World War I, families bought Liberty Bonds to lend the government money. During World War II, families used ration books to limit purchases of scarce goods.**
3	How did Birmingham's mills support wartime needs during World War I and World War II?	**In World War I, its iron and steel mills supplied metal for equipment and transportation. In World War II, its mills produced steel for wartime manufacturing.**
4	How did defense work open opportunities for some Alabamians during World War II while barriers remained for others?	**Women entered shipyard and plant jobs that had often been closed to them. Discrimination limited Black workers' access to some defense jobs.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Good evening, Alabama. At Mobile's shipyards, crews are building and repairing ships that carry wartime cargo. Our neighbors can help from home, too. When we use ration books for sugar and gasoline, we limit our use of scarce goods. A victory garden can add food to a family's table. Still, we cannot claim everyone has the same chance to serve. Black workers face discrimination when seeking some defense jobs. As our state works for the war effort, we must recognize both the work being done and the barriers that remain.

Accept other passage-supported examples of industrial production, civilian action, and barriers. The radio message should fit 1943, use at least three accurate details, and explain a workplace contribution, a household contribution, and a barrier.