Three Paths to Victory

Compare how U.S. leaders shaped the Allied war effort

SS24.US2.7b "Compare and contrast the roles and leadership of United States leaders in securing victory for the Allied powers during World War II."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one action by each leader, circle the Allied goal it served, and number two places where cooperation helped turn a plan into action.

Strategy, Preparation, and Command

1. In December 1941, after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt faced a hard choice: fight Japan first or put the main Allied effort against Germany. He backed the Allied plan to defeat Germany first while still fighting Japan. Roosevelt used presidential authority to direct American resources toward that strategy, and the Lend-Lease program supplied Britain and the Soviet Union with weapons and other materials. At meetings with Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin, he worked to keep those allies committed to a common war plan, including an invasion of German-occupied France. Roosevelt died in April 1945, before Germany surrendered.

2. General George C. Marshall, the Army chief of staff, had a different kind of authority. He oversaw the expansion of a small peacetime army into a force able to fight across oceans. He pushed for an invasion across the English Channel to open a western front against Germany and helped decide how troops and equipment would be used. Marshall also had to balance demands from commanders in Europe and the Pacific, so the Germany-first strategy could work without abandoning the war against Japan. His leadership took place mostly in Washington, where organizing people and supplies made battlefield operations possible.

3. General Dwight D. Eisenhower led Allied forces preparing to invade German-occupied France. Unlike Marshall, he had to turn broad plans into decisions for a particular campaign. As supreme commander, he worked with British and American commanders who did not always agree on tactics. He approved the June 6, 1944, Normandy landings after weighing uncertain weather reports and the risks to troops. The invasion opened a western front, helping the Allies liberate France and push into Germany. Eisenhower did not win the war alone: his campaign depended on Roosevelt's coalition building, Marshall's mobilization, and the soldiers and allies who carried out the plan.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Roosevelt and Marshall both supported a Germany-first strategy. How did their roles in carrying it out differ?

2. How did Marshall's work toward an invasion of France differ from Eisenhower's work?

3. Compare how Roosevelt and Eisenhower worked with other Allied leaders. What did each need that cooperation to accomplish?

4. A student says Eisenhower alone secured victory in Europe. How do Roosevelt's and Marshall's contributions challenge that claim?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Propose a title for a museum display, then write five sentences explaining how Roosevelt, Marshall, and Eisenhower played distinct but connected roles in victory in Europe. Include at least two specific details from the passage and explain why no one leader deserves sole credit.

ANSWER KEY

Three Paths to Victory

GRADE 11 · SS24.US2.7b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one action by each leader, circle the Allied goal it served, and number two places where cooperation helped turn a plan into action. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Roosevelt and Marshall both supported a Germany-first strategy. How did their roles in carrying it out differ?	**Roosevelt directed resources and worked to keep Allied leaders committed to the strategy. Marshall expanded and organized the Army while balancing demands from Europe and the Pacific.**
2	How did Marshall's work toward an invasion of France differ from Eisenhower's work?	**Marshall pushed for the invasion and helped allocate troops and equipment. Eisenhower commanded the campaign and decided to launch the Normandy landings despite uncertain weather.**
3	Compare how Roosevelt and Eisenhower worked with other Allied leaders. What did each need that cooperation to accomplish?	**Roosevelt worked with Churchill and Stalin to maintain a common war plan. Eisenhower worked with British and American commanders to carry out the invasion of France.**
4	A student says Eisenhower alone secured victory in Europe. How do Roosevelt's and Marshall's contributions challenge that claim?	**Roosevelt helped set the Allied strategy and sustain the coalition. Marshall built and supplied the Army and pushed for a western front, making Eisenhower's campaign possible.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Shared Strategy, Different Commands
Roosevelt helped set a Germany-first strategy and kept Britain and the Soviet Union working with the United States. Marshall turned that priority into an army that could fight overseas while balancing demands from the Pacific. He also pushed for an invasion across the English Channel. Eisenhower led the Allied campaign in France and approved the Normandy landings despite uncertain weather. Their decisions depended on one another, and the invasion also required troops and Allied partners, so none of these leaders deserves sole credit for victory in Europe.

Accept other passage-based comparisons that distinguish strategy, mobilization, and campaign command. For the museum label, look for a title, five sentences, at least two accurate details, and a clear explanation of shared credit.