Liberation and Justice

Trace the U.S. military's roles at the camps and in the trials.

SS24.US2.7d "Describe the role of the United States military in helping end the Holocaust, including the liberation of concentration camps and participation in the Nuremberg Trials."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline actions U.S. troops took at liberated camps, and circle military actions connected to the Nuremberg trials. Use your marks to distinguish what each role accomplished.

From the Camps to the Courtroom

1. In April 1945, American soldiers entered Buchenwald, a Nazi concentration camp in Germany. They found thousands of prisoners, many gravely ill, and evidence that people had been murdered there. The soldiers had reached the camp as Allied armies pushed into Germany and the Nazi regime collapsed. U.S. forces also liberated other camps, including Dachau later that month. Liberation ended imprisonment for those still alive in these camps, but it did not undo the deaths or immediately restore survivors' health. Soviet and other Allied forces freed prisoners at other sites; Americans did not liberate every camp.

2. At Dachau, soldiers encountered crowded barracks, desperately sick survivors, and railroad cars holding the bodies of prisoners. The U.S. Army secured the site and helped arrange food and medical care, although disease and malnutrition continued to kill some survivors after liberation. Soldiers also recorded what they saw, collected documents, and took photographs that could support later investigations. Army units brought visitors to some liberated camps so the crimes could not easily be denied. These actions show two parts of the military's role: helping people survive when Nazi control ended and preserving proof of what had happened.

3. The fighting in Europe ended in May 1945, but legal accountability came later. At the international Nuremberg trial, which began that November, the United States joined Britain, France, and the Soviet Union in prosecuting major Nazi leaders. U.S. Army investigators helped gather evidence, and military personnel provided security and logistical support; the lead American prosecutor, Robert H. Jackson, was a civilian. U.S. military authorities also conducted later Nuremberg trials under American occupation, prosecuting other officials and professionals. These trials did not free prisoners or end wartime killing. They used evidence and testimony to establish responsibility for crimes, including the persecution and murder of Jews and other victims.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the U.S. military's advance and arrival at Buchenwald and Dachau help surviving prisoners, and what limit does the passage place on that role?

2. Why did the Army's work at Dachau continue after it secured the camp?

3. How could soldiers' actions at liberated camps support the later Nuremberg trials?

4. What did U.S. military personnel do in connection with the international and later Nuremberg trials, and how did their roles differ from Robert H. Jackson's?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 75 to 100 word museum caption for an exhibit pairing a soldier's camp report with a Nuremberg case file. Explain how U.S. military actions at liberation and in the later trials served different purposes, and include one limit on what those actions accomplished.

ANSWER KEY

Liberation and Justice

GRADE 11 · SS24.US2.7d

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline actions U.S. troops took at liberated camps, and circle military actions connected to the Nuremberg trials. Use your marks to distinguish what each role accomplished. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the U.S. military's advance and arrival at Buchenwald and Dachau help surviving prisoners, and what limit does the passage place on that role?	**The advance brought U.S. forces to the camps, where liberation ended imprisonment for survivors. Americans did not liberate every camp, and liberation could not undo deaths or immediately restore survivors' health.**
2	Why did the Army's work at Dachau continue after it secured the camp?	**Survivors still needed food and medical care, and soldiers preserved evidence of Nazi crimes for later investigations.**
3	How could soldiers' actions at liberated camps support the later Nuremberg trials?	**Their records, collected documents, and photographs could provide evidence for investigations and prosecutions.**
4	What did U.S. military personnel do in connection with the international and later Nuremberg trials, and how did their roles differ from Robert H. Jackson's?	**Army investigators gathered evidence, military personnel provided security and logistical support, and U.S. military authorities conducted later trials. Jackson was a civilian who served as the lead American prosecutor at the international trial.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A soldier's camp report could record what American troops found at Buchenwald in April 1945: survivors needed urgent help, and evidence of murder remained. Liberation ended captivity for those still alive, while Army aid addressed their immediate needs. A Nuremberg case file represents a different task. Military investigators gathered evidence for the international trial, and U.S. military authorities later conducted additional trials. Those proceedings sought accountability after the fighting ended. Neither liberation nor a verdict could restore the lives already lost.

Accept answers that distinguish immediate liberation and survivor aid from evidence gathering and later prosecution. Students should not imply that U.S. troops liberated every camp or that the trials ended the wartime killing.