Victory and Inequality

Trace how World War II changed work, rights, and daily life.

SS24.US2.8 "Analyze the domestic, economic, and civil rights impact of World War II on United States society. 8a Describe Alabama's participation in World War II, including the role of the Tuskegee Airmen, housing prisoner of war (POW) camps..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two wartime changes that increased production or military service, and circle two examples of denied rights. Number one underlined detail and one circled detail to show a contrast.

War Changes the Home Front

1. At Alabama's Tuskegee Army Air Field, Black pilots trained for combat while facing segregation at home. The Tuskegee Airmen later flew missions in Europe, including escorting bombers. Elsewhere in Alabama, Birmingham steel mills supplied war industries, and the Port of Mobile expanded as shipyards built vessels for the military. New or expanded bases trained service members, while camps held German prisoners of war. These changes brought jobs and newcomers, but access to opportunity remained unequal.

2. Wartime labor shortages opened factory doors, but discrimination kept many Black workers from skilled jobs. A. Philip Randolph organized a threatened march on Washington; President Roosevelt responded with an order banning racial discrimination in defense employment and creating a committee to investigate complaints. Black newspapers promoted the Double V Campaign: victory against fascism abroad and racism at home. The Bracero Program brought Mexican workers to U.S. farms by contract, yet workers faced low pay and discrimination.

3. After Pearl Harbor, the U.S. government forcibly removed and incarcerated Japanese Americans, mostly from the West Coast, without individual evidence of disloyalty. Many lost homes or businesses. Even so, Japanese American soldiers in the 100th Infantry Battalion and 442nd Regimental Combat Team fought in Europe. The war also accelerated mass-produced penicillin, radar research, and electronic computing; radio news and newsreels brought battle reports to large audiences. Wartime progress and service did not erase violations of civil rights.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did two developments in Alabama support the war effort?

2. How did Black Americans push for fairer wartime jobs, and what unequal treatment did Mexican braceros face?

3. What contrast does the passage show between Japanese Americans' treatment at home and their military service?

4. How did one medical advance and one change in mass media affect life during the war?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum caption explaining how wartime expansion could create both opportunity and injustice. Link one Alabama example to one national civil rights example, and end with a conclusion about the war's impact.

ANSWER KEY

Victory and Inequality

GRADE 11 · SS24.US2.8

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two wartime changes that increased production or military service, and circle two examples of denied rights. Number one underlined detail and one circled detail to show a contrast. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did two developments in Alabama support the war effort?	**Birmingham mills supplied steel for war industries, and Mobile shipyards built military vessels. Accept other supported examples from the passage.**
2	How did Black Americans push for fairer wartime jobs, and what unequal treatment did Mexican braceros face?	**Randolph's threatened march helped prompt an order banning discrimination in defense employment, while the Double V Campaign challenged racism. Mexican braceros faced low pay and discrimination.**
3	What contrast does the passage show between Japanese Americans' treatment at home and their military service?	**The government forcibly incarcerated Japanese Americans without individual evidence of disloyalty, while Japanese American soldiers fought for the United States in Europe.**
4	How did one medical advance and one change in mass media affect life during the war?	**Mass-produced penicillin increased the supply of a lifesaving medicine; radio news or newsreels brought battle reports to large audiences.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Birmingham steel production expanded as the United States mobilized for war. Those wartime jobs offered new opportunities, but discrimination still blocked many Black workers from skilled positions nationwide. A. Philip Randolph's threatened march helped win a federal ban on racial discrimination in defense employment, though the struggle did not end there. Together, Alabama's industrial growth and national organizing show that wartime economic gains did not automatically produce equal rights.

Accept other accurate Alabama and national examples from the passage. The caption should link economic change to a civil rights issue rather than merely list two facts.