Civilian Lives at War

Compare daily life across three countries during World War II

SS24.WH.10c "Compare the experiences of civilians in different countries involved in conflict during World War II."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one challenge civilians faced in all three countries. Circle two details that show how government decisions made civilians' experiences different.

When War Reached Home

1 In Britain, bombs fell on London and other cities during the Blitz of 1940 and 1941. At night, families hurried to public shelters or crowded into subway stations when warning sirens sounded. Families and officials arranged for many children to live in rural homes, although some returned to their families. The government rationed foods such as sugar and meat to share limited supplies, and families carried ration books to shops. Bombing could destroy a street while leaving the next one standing. Even when homes survived, interrupted sleep and long food lines changed the rhythm of ordinary days.

2 In Germany, Allied air raids grew more destructive as the war continued. In Hamburg in 1943, fire spread rapidly after heavy bombing, killing thousands of civilians and leaving many without homes. German residents used cellars and public shelters, but Nazi rules often kept forced laborers from occupied countries out of those shelters. These workers had been brought to Germany against their will and faced the same bombs with fewer ways to seek safety. Food also became harder to obtain late in the war. Like British civilians, German civilians feared air raids, but wartime policies made the danger unequal even within one city.

3 In Japan, American aircraft attacked cities with incendiary bombs during 1945. A massive raid on Tokyo in March set crowded neighborhoods ablaze and left many people homeless. To reduce the danger to children, officials sent groups of city students to rural areas, where they lived away from their families. Food shortages worsened as attacks on shipping disrupted deliveries, and people struggled to find enough to eat. As in Britain and Germany, civilians faced bombing and uncertain meals. Yet the journeys of Japanese schoolchildren differed sharply from those of people forced to work in Germany: one policy moved children away from danger, while the other brought workers into it.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did shelter access differ for civilians in Britain and forced laborers in Germany, even though both faced air raids?

2. Both British and Japanese civilians faced limited food. How does the passage explain the food problem in each country?

3. Compare the effects of bombing on homes in Britain and Japan. What happened in both places, and how does the passage describe the damage differently?

4. How were the moves of children in Britain and Japan alike, and what was different about how they traveled or where they stayed?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 70 to 90 word museum label about what a suitcase might mean to a forced laborer brought to Germany and a Japanese student sent to the countryside. Compare why each person left home and explain how a government decision shaped each journey.

ANSWER KEY

Civilian Lives at War

GRADE 9 · SS24.WH.10c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one challenge civilians faced in all three countries. Circle two details that show how government decisions made civilians' experiences different. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did shelter access differ for civilians in Britain and forced laborers in Germany, even though both faced air raids?	**British families could use public shelters or subway stations. Nazi rules often kept forced laborers in Germany out of public shelters.**
2	Both British and Japanese civilians faced limited food. How does the passage explain the food problem in each country?	**Britain rationed limited supplies to share them. In Japan, attacks on shipping disrupted deliveries and worsened food shortages.**
3	Compare the effects of bombing on homes in Britain and Japan. What happened in both places, and how does the passage describe the damage differently?	**Bombing damaged or destroyed homes in both countries. The passage describes destruction on some British streets, while the Tokyo raid set crowded neighborhoods ablaze and left many people homeless.**
4	How were the moves of children in Britain and Japan alike, and what was different about how they traveled or where they stayed?	**Children in both countries left cities for rural areas. Many British children went to rural homes, while Japanese officials sent groups of city students to rural areas.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A suitcase could carry a forced laborer's few belongings into a German city where air raids threatened everyone. Nazi policies brought that worker from an occupied country against their will and often barred them from shelters. A Japanese student's suitcase marked a different journey: officials sent groups of children from cities to rural areas to lower their risk during bombing. Both people were separated from familiar places, but one was moved toward dangerous work, while the other was moved away from a city's attacks.

Accept comparisons that distinguish forced labor from evacuation and use accurate details from the passage. Students may describe other valid contrasts, but they should not suggest that the forced laborer chose to move.