Turning the Tide

World War II leaders and the events that shaped the war

USH.5.2 "Identify key leaders and events from World War II, and explain the significance of each."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each leader linked to a wartime event, and circle the named battles, attacks, and invasions. Give each leader and linked event the same number to track who was involved and why the event mattered.

Decisions and Turning Points

1. In 1940, German aircraft bombed British cities during the Battle of Britain. Prime Minister Winston Churchill urged Britain to resist rather than seek peace with Germany. Britain's survival kept a major opponent of Germany in the fight and gave the United States a future ally in Europe. Across the Atlantic, President Franklin D. Roosevelt supported countries fighting Germany with supplies before the United States entered the war. After Japan attacked the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Roosevelt asked Congress for a declaration of war against Japan. The attack brought the United States into World War II.

2. In the Pacific, Admiral Chester Nimitz led the U.S. Pacific Fleet as it challenged Japan at the Battle of Midway in June 1942. American forces sank four Japanese aircraft carriers, weakening Japan's ability to launch large naval attacks. In Europe, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin directed his country's war effort against Germany. Soviet forces won the Battle of Stalingrad in February 1943, stopping a major German drive into Soviet territory and opening the way for Soviet advances westward. These victories did not end the war. They changed its direction by weakening Axis forces on two distant fronts.

3. On June 6, 1944, General Dwight D. Eisenhower commanded the Allied invasion of Normandy, known as D-Day. Troops landed on German-occupied French beaches, beginning a major campaign to free Western Europe. Germany surrendered in May 1945, but fighting continued against Japan. President Harry S. Truman authorized atomic bombs against Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. Japan announced its surrender soon afterward, ending the war, although historians debate how much the bombs, Soviet entry into the war against Japan, and other pressures each contributed. The bombings killed many civilians and left survivors with lasting injuries, making Truman's decision a subject of continuing debate.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Roosevelt respond to the attack on Pearl Harbor, and why was the attack a turning point for the United States?

2. What did Churchill urge Britain to do during the Battle of Britain, and why did Britain's survival matter?

3. What was Eisenhower's role on D-Day, and why did the invasion matter?

4. What decision did Truman make in August 1945, and why is its significance still debated?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum label comparing the Battle of Midway and the Battle of Stalingrad. Name a leader linked to each battle, explain why each mattered, and state one way their effects were alike.

Turning the Tide

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each leader linked to a wartime event, and circle the named battles, attacks, and invasions. Give each leader and linked event the same number to track who was involved and why the event mattered. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Roosevelt respond to the attack on Pearl Harbor, and why was the attack a turning point for the United States?	**Roosevelt asked Congress to declare war on Japan. The attack brought the United States into World War II.**
2	What did Churchill urge Britain to do during the Battle of Britain, and why did Britain's survival matter?	**Churchill urged Britain to resist Germany. Britain's survival kept a major opponent of Germany in the war.**
3	What was Eisenhower's role on D-Day, and why did the invasion matter?	**Eisenhower commanded the Allied invasion of Normandy. It began a major campaign to free Western Europe.**
4	What decision did Truman make in August 1945, and why is its significance still debated?	**Truman authorized atomic bombs against Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japan surrendered soon afterward, but historians debate how much the bombs and other pressures contributed. The bombings also killed many civilians and left lasting injuries.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Admiral Chester Nimitz led the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Midway, where American forces sank four Japanese carriers. This victory weakened Japan's ability to launch large naval attacks. Soviet leader Joseph Stalin directed his country's war effort, and the Soviet victory at Stalingrad stopped a major German advance. Both battles weakened Axis forces and helped shift the war toward the Allies.

Accept answers that accurately connect each leader to the event and explain its effect. For the museum label, students should not claim that Stalin personally commanded Soviet troops at Stalingrad.