

From Neutrality to War

Trace how World War II changed the United States abroad and at home.

8.6b "From 1939 to 1941, the United States government tried to maintain neutrality while providing aid to Britain but was drawn into the war by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The United States fought a war on multiple fronts. At home..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline and sequence these four developments: Lend-Lease, Pearl Harbor, the U.S. declaration against Japan, and German and Italian declarations against the United States. Circle one home-front change.

A Nation Drawn In

- ① Before December 1941, many Americans wanted to avoid another overseas war. The United States had not formally entered World War II, but President Franklin D. Roosevelt increasingly supported Britain against Germany. Lend-Lease, enacted in March 1941, provided weapons and supplies. U.S. naval escorts also became involved in Atlantic clashes before the formal declaration of war. Aid to Britain showed that official neutrality did not mean complete noninvolvement.
- ② Japan's expansion in Asia increased the danger. On December 7, 1941, Japanese aircraft attacked the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The attack killed more than 2,400 Americans and damaged or destroyed many ships and aircraft. The next day, Congress declared war on Japan. Germany and Italy then declared war on the United States. The nation was now fighting on multiple fronts: against Japan in the Pacific and against Germany and Italy in Europe and North Africa.
- ③ War changed daily life far from the battlefields. Factories that had made cars or household goods shifted to producing tanks, airplanes, weapons, and ammunition. The federal government directed this conversion because the armed forces needed enormous amounts of equipment. Many essential goods were rationed, including gasoline, tires, sugar, meat, and coffee. Families used ration books and stamps to buy limited amounts. Rationing reduced civilian use so that scarce materials and supplies could be available for military forces during the war.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did the United States support Britain while still claiming neutrality?

2 What event directly led Congress to declare war on Japan?

3 What were the two main fronts where the United States fought after entering the war?

4 Why did the government convert factories and ration essential goods?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a four-sentence cause-and-effect explanation of how the United States moved from neutrality into World War II and how the war changed life at home. Include aid to Britain, Pearl Harbor, fighting on more than one front, and either factory conversion or rationing.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline and sequence these four developments: Lend-Lease, Pearl Harbor, the U.S. declaration against Japan, and German and Italian declarations against the United States. Circle one home-front change. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the United States support Britain while still claiming neutrality?	Lend-Lease provided weapons and supplies to Britain before the United States formally entered the war.
2	What event directly led Congress to declare war on Japan?	Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.
3	What were the two main fronts where the United States fought after entering the war?	The United States fought Japan in the Pacific and fought Germany and Italy in Europe and North Africa.
4	Why did the government convert factories and ration essential goods?	The armed forces needed huge amounts of equipment, materials, and supplies. Conversion and rationing saved resources for military use.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Although the United States stayed officially neutral from 1939 to 1941, it aided Britain through Lend-Lease. After Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, Congress declared war on Japan, and Germany and Italy declared war on the United States. The United States then fought Japan in the Pacific and fought Germany and Italy in Europe and North Africa. At home, factories made military equipment, while rationing saved scarce goods for the armed forces.

Accept equivalent descriptions of Lend-Lease, Pearl Harbor, the Pacific and European or North African fronts, and the purpose of production conversion or rationing. For the open response, look for an accurate sequence and all four required ideas.