

Island Turning Points

Trace key Pacific battles by place, order, and impact.

USII.6.d “locating and describing the major events and turning points of the war in the Pacific including, but not limited to the Battle of Iwo Jima, the Battle of Midway, and the Battle of Okinawa;”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the name of each battle, circle the words that tell where it happened, and write 1, 2, and 3 beside the battles in the order they occurred so you can trace turning points across the Pacific.

Three Battles in the Pacific

- ① After Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941, the United States fought Japan across the Pacific Ocean. A major turning point came at the Battle of Midway, fought northwest of Hawaii in June 1942. United States forces had learned important Japanese plans and prepared an ambush near Midway Atoll. American planes sank four Japanese aircraft carriers. Japan lost skilled pilots and carriers it could not quickly replace. After Midway, Japan had more trouble expanding its empire, while the United States began moving west across Pacific islands.
- ② In February 1945, U.S. Marines landed on Iwo Jima, a small volcanic island about 750 miles south of Tokyo. Japanese soldiers defended tunnels and strong positions, so the battle was long and costly. U.S. forces captured Iwo Jima in March. The island's airfields could then help damaged American bombers land safely and allow fighter planes to escort bombers heading toward Japan. The battle showed how strongly Japan would defend islands close to its home territory. It also gave the United States a base nearer Japan for later air attacks.
- ③ From April to June 1945, U.S. forces fought the Battle of Okinawa on a Japanese island about 350 miles south of Kyushu, Japan's southern main island. Japanese troops used caves and defended the island fiercely. Many American and Japanese soldiers, along with Okinawan civilians, died. U.S. forces won Okinawa, gaining airfields and an anchorage close to Japan. The heavy losses warned U.S. leaders that an invasion of Japan might be extremely costly. Soon afterward, Japan surrendered in August 1945, ending World War II.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Where was the Battle of Midway located, and what did American planes sink there?

2 Why was the Battle of Midway a turning point in the Pacific war?

3 Describe where Iwo Jima was located and one way its capture helped the United States.

4 What did the heavy losses at Okinawa cause U.S. leaders to think about an invasion of Japan?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a three-sentence Pacific War briefing in chronological order. Include Midway, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa, a location clue for each battle, and one way each battle changed the war.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the name of each battle, circle the words that tell where it happened, and write 1, 2, and 3 beside the battles in the order they occurred so you can trace turning points across the Pacific. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Where was the Battle of Midway located, and what did American planes sink there?	It was northwest of Hawaii. American planes sank four Japanese aircraft carriers.
2	Why was the Battle of Midway a turning point in the Pacific war?	Japan lost skilled pilots and aircraft carriers that it could not quickly replace, making it harder for Japan to expand its empire.
3	Describe where Iwo Jima was located and one way its capture helped the United States.	Iwo Jima was a small volcanic island about 750 miles south of Tokyo. Its airfields helped damaged American bombers land and let fighter planes escort bombers toward Japan.
4	What did the heavy losses at Okinawa cause U.S. leaders to think about an invasion of Japan?	They believed that an invasion of Japan might be extremely costly.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At Midway, northwest of Hawaii, U.S. planes sank four Japanese aircraft carriers, weakening Japan's ability to expand. At Iwo Jima, a volcanic island south of Tokyo, U.S. forces captured airfields that helped American bombers and fighter planes attack Japan. At Okinawa, south of Kyushu, heavy losses showed that invading Japan could be extremely costly.

Accept equivalent location descriptions that match the passage, such as south of Tokyo for Iwo Jima or south of Kyushu for Okinawa. For the briefing, check for correct chronological order, all three battles, a location clue, and an accurate impact for each battle.