

Decisions at War

Evaluate how leaders' choices shaped World War II.

USII.6.e "explaining and evaluating the role of key political and military leaders of the Allies and Axis powers including, but not limited to the United States, Germany, Japan, the Soviet Union, Italy, and Great Britain;"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each leader's name, circle each decision or action connected to that leader, and write a + or - beside actions that helped or harmed that leader's side.

Leaders and Their Choices

- ① Allied leaders guided both government decisions and war plans. In the United States, President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked Congress to declare war after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor and worked with other Allies on overall strategy. Britain's Prime Minister Winston Churchill kept Britain fighting after Germany's attacks and argued for defeating Germany before Japan. Soviet leader Joseph Stalin directed a government under attack when Germany invaded the Soviet Union in 1941. He demanded supplies and a second front from his Allies. These choices shaped Allied cooperation.
- ② Axis leaders used power to begin and direct aggressive wars. Germany's Adolf Hitler, a dictator, ordered the invasion of Poland in 1939, starting war in Europe. He also made major military decisions, including invading the Soviet Union in 1941, which opened a huge eastern front. Italy's Benito Mussolini joined Hitler's alliance and sent Italian forces into conflicts, but Italy depended heavily on German support. In Japan, Prime Minister Hideki Tojo led the wartime government that approved the attack on Pearl Harbor. Japan's emperor, Hirohito, remained head of state.
- ③ Leaders mattered, but they did not control every result. Roosevelt and Churchill built cooperation across oceans, while Stalin's Soviet armies carried much of the fighting against Germany in Europe. Hitler's choice to fight the Soviet Union weakened Germany by creating a long, costly war. Tojo's government hoped a surprise attack would protect Japan's expansion, but it brought the United States into the war. Mussolini's weak military position limited Italy's influence. Evaluating leaders means connecting each choice to its effects on allies, enemies, and the war.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What role did Stalin and the Soviet Union play in the Allied war effort?

2 How did Roosevelt and Churchill help shape Allied strategy?

3 Compare Hitler's military decision with Mussolini's role in the war. What effect did each have on Germany or Italy?

4 What decision did Tojo's wartime government approve, and what was its major effect?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose one Allied leader and one Axis leader from the passage. Write four sentences evaluating one choice by each leader, its effect on that leader's side, and how the two choices were different.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each leader's name, circle each decision or action connected to that leader, and write a + or - beside actions that helped or harmed that leader's side. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What role did Stalin and the Soviet Union play in the Allied war effort?	Stalin directed the Soviet government after Germany invaded. Soviet armies carried much of the fighting against Germany in Europe.
2	How did Roosevelt and Churchill help shape Allied strategy?	Roosevelt asked Congress to declare war and worked with Allies on strategy. Churchill kept Britain fighting and argued to defeat Germany before Japan.
3	Compare Hitler's military decision with Mussolini's role in the war. What effect did each have on Germany or Italy?	Hitler invaded the Soviet Union, creating a long and costly eastern front that weakened Germany. Mussolini sent Italian forces into conflicts, but Italy's dependence on German support limited its influence.
4	What decision did Tojo's wartime government approve, and what was its major effect?	Tojo's government approved the attack on Pearl Harbor. The attack brought the United States into the war.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Franklin D. Roosevelt helped shape Allied cooperation by asking Congress to declare war and working with other Allies on strategy. This leadership strengthened the Allied side after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Adolf Hitler weakened Germany when he invaded the Soviet Union and created a long, costly eastern front. Roosevelt's cooperation helped his side, while Hitler's decision harmed his side.

Accept equivalent descriptions of each leader's role and the effects stated in the passage. In the open response, look for two leaders from opposing sides, accurate evidence about each choice, and a clear comparison or evaluation.