

Lesson Title:

World War 2

Subjects:

U. S. History, World History



Mass. Social Studies Standards:

Defending democracy: responses to fascism and Communism [USII.T3]

Topic 4. The Great Wars, 1914–1945 [WHIII.T4]
Sections 8, 9 and 10

Suggested time:

10 - 15 minute per lesson

Grade Level:

8-12

Essential Questions:

- How and why does a nation go to war?
- How do you convince an entire nation to go to war?

Learning Targets:

- Students will observe videos and artifacts and be prepared to answer questions regarding the Second World War galleries.

Overview:

The Second World War is one of the most studied events in world history. Of the many facets that embrace this topic, one question with an often oversimplified answer is, how did the Second World War begin?

The War Clouds presentation provides a synopsis on the rise of fascism and nationalism in both Europe and Asia and presents the primary causes that begin the Second World War in Europe and ultimately the involvement of the United States.

The artifacts in this gallery represent the antebellum period of the 1930s on Hitler's rise to power and to groom a nation that the ideology of the National Socialist Workers Party was the correct course of action to follow promoting German nationalism and prosperity.

Lesson 1: War Clouds

Materials:

War Clouds video presentation (6 min)

Procedure:

Warm-up: Ask students to think about the video they just watched. Why did it take Adolf Hitler, after he became Chancellor, almost 10 years before invading Poland and starting World War 2. After students share their answers shift conversation to what they saw in the video and ask if there was anything that stuck out to them and why?

War Clouds Video: Based on the answers and discussion from the warm-up ask students what they identify as some of the key causes of the Second World War. Discuss their answers. The video states in 1936 Adolph Hitler forms an alliance with Benito Mussolini of Italy another fascist dictator. Take this opportunity to either ask or explain Fascism; Fascism is a system of government led by a dictator who typically rules by forcefully and often violently suppressing opposition and criticism, controlling all industry and commerce, and promoting nationalism and often racism. Explain that also at this time Adolph Hitler and the Nazi Party begins to develop plans for The Final Solution, the deportation and extermination of Europe's Jewish population. Discuss with students that the Nazi Party inaccurately placed the blame for Germany's defeat in World War 1 on Jewish bankers. Ask the students to think about why the Nazis did this and to think about a time where the student have lost or have been beaten at something and did, they place the blame on themselves or something/someone else?

Two years later in 1938 the evening Nov. 9-10 the para-military forces of the Nazi party as well as German civilians smashed the windows of Jewish owned shops, businesses, homes and synagogues what has been called Kristallnacht (The night of Broken Glass). Ask the students why they think this is significant and to explain their answers. Discussion should include that the German civilian population also took part and not just members of the party which is evidence of the Nazi ideology of blaming the Jewish people was taking hold in the collective conscience of the German people.



Panzer Kpfw 1A: Ask students to picture a tank in their minds. Select one or two students to describe what imagine. Most common answers will big, heavy, big gun(cannon), treads etc. Directing their attention to the Panzer Kpfw 1A have students compare what they imagined to what they see. Explain to students that this tank was referred to as a "Landwirtschaftlicher" (roughly translated to "farm tractor"). Ask students to explain why they think that Germany and Adolph Hitler went with this design versus what they have imagined or know tanks to be. Reiterate that because of the Treaty of Versailles, the German military was not allowed to have tanks and by covertly building them and calling them "farm tractors" he was able to keep them a secret.



Hitler Youth Uniform: Ask students why they think there is a Nazi uniform made for a teenager in the case.

Discuss their answers and follow up discussion about German teenagers being inducted into the Nazi party.

Break the class into small groups and take 3-5 minutes for them to come up with a list of pros and cons about wearing uniforms (example such as school uniforms). Ask students to share their lists and identify commonalities. Discussion along the pros and cons often lead to feeling of conformity, community and pride versus individualism, restrict freedom of expression, promote socio-economic division.

Either read or have a student read the placard in front of the uniform and highlight that there were over 8 million members between ages 14 to 18 that were required to join and were taught military techniques. Ask the students what, if any, was significant about what the sign said. Discuss their answers dealing with long term goals for the Third Reich and their vision of their future.

German Hitler Youth Outfit Placard: "All German boys between the ages 14 and 18 were required to join the Hitler Youth. By 1940 there were over 8,000,000 members. They were taught many military techniques. This youngster was from group #664 of the South Baden district and the blue piping on his shoulder boards means that he was with a flight unit."