World War II (1939-1945)
Path to War

- Causes of WWII
  - Rise of Nationalism and Fascism in Germany, Italy, and Japan
  - Resentment of the Treaty of Versailles
  - Failure of the League of Nations
  - Economic hardships of the Great Depression
  - US isolationism
  - Pacifism and the policy of appeasement
Path to War

• Events
  • Japan’s invasion and takeover of Manchuria in China (1931) – League of Nations fails to react
  • Italy’s invasion of Ethiopia (1934) – L of N actions ineffective
  • Spanish Civil War (1936) – Western gov’ts failed to support democratic Republicans against Gen Francisco Franco’s Fascists.
  • Germany reoccupies the Rhineland (1936) – France and Gr. Britain fail to react
Path to War

• Events
  • Germany/Austria unification (Anschluss - 1938) - France and Gr. Britain fail to react
  • Germany takes control of Sudentland (1938) - Chamberlain follows policy of appeasement when he meets with Hitler at the Munich Conference
  • Failure of the Munich Conference (1938) - Hitler ignores agreement and takes over rest of Czechoslovakia
Path to War

• Events

• Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact (1939) – Germans and Soviets agree not to attack each other

• German invasion of Poland (1939) - Hitler ignores Gr. Britain/ France’s ultimatum

• Great Britain and France declare war on Germany - Sept 3, 1939
Holocaust

• Hitler - Germans = “Master Race”, Jews and Slavs = “Undesirable elements” that needed to be exterminated

• Final Solution (1941-1945)
  • Genocide = deliberate, carefully planned killing of an entire people based on their race, politics, or culture
  • Final Solution = Plan to kill all European Jews
  • 6 million Jews + 4 million Slavs, Gypsies, homosexuals, mentally disabled died or were killed
  • Creation of “ghettos” in Poland and Soviet Union - parts of cities where Jews were sent to suffer starvation and disease, then ultimately deportation and extermination
Holocaust

- Gas chambers, bullets, starvation used to kill, ovens/furnaces used to dispose of remains
- EX: Auschwitz – large camp in Poland
- Other Genocides in History:
  - Armenian Genocide – 1915
  - Stalin’s Genocide – 1932
  - Pol Pot’s Cambodia Genocide – 1975
  - Bosnian Genocide – 1992
  - Rwandan Genocide – 1994
US Enters the War

- Japanese Expansion in the Pacific
  - French Indochina
  - Dutch East Indies
  - Singapore
  - Established “Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (1940)”

- USA reacts - places embargo on Japan
  - Scrap iron, then oil

- Tripartite Pact (1940) - Japan joins Germany/Italy = AXIS powers
US Enters War

• Japan sees USA as obstacle to further expansion
• Attacks US Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii – Dec 7th 1941 (know the date!)
• USA declares war on Japan
• Germany/Italy declare war on USA
• USA joins Britain, France, and USSR (ALLIES) against Axis powers
Turning Points in the War

• Battle of Britain – air battle prevents German invasion of Great Britain
• Battle of the Atlantic – German U-boats unable to stop Allied convoys from USA to Great Britain
• Operation Barbarossa – Hitler turns on Stalin and invades Russia (1941)
• Battle of Stalingrad – Soviet Union stops German advance into Russian territory USSR starts to push Germans back
• North Africa – Allies stop German advance into the Middle East
Turning Points in the War

• Invasion of Italy - Allies open “second front” against Germany. Italy drops out of the war.

• Battle of Midway - Ends Japanese naval supremacy in Pacific. Allows for US to conduct “island-hopping” campaign against Japan

• Battle of Coral Sea - Prevents Japanese invasion of Australia
Victory and Occupation (Germany)

- D-Day (June 6, 1944) - Allies open Western Front in France
- Allies race to invade Germany and take Berlin
- Germany surrenders (V-E Day) - May 7, 1945
- Allies occupy Germany
Victory and Occupation (Germany)

• Yalta Conference (Feb 1945)
  • USA (Roosevelt), Great Britain (Churchill), USSR (Stalin) meet to discuss “post-war” world
  • Agree to form United Nations – to maintain peace after the war
  • Divide Germany and Berlin into 4 Zones of Occupation (West Ger.= GB, USA, France, East Ger.= Soviet Union)
  • Stalin agrees to hold free elections in Soviet-occupied Eastern Europe
  • Stalin agrees to fight Japan as soon as war with Germany ends
Victory and Occupation (Germany)

- Potsdam Conference (Aug 1945)
  - USA (Truman), Great Britain (Attlee), USSR (Stalin) meet in Germany
  - FDR died, Truman was Vice President
  - Churchill’s Conservative Party lost in a general election - Attlee = Leader of Labour Party
- Allies called for unconditional surrender by Japan
- Further plans made to occupy Germany after the war
Victory and Occupation (Japan)

• “Island-hopping” campaign successful but costly (large # of casualties)
• Japanese gave stiff resistance. USA worried about # of casualties during invasion of Japanese home islands
• Pres. Truman decides to use new atomic bomb weapon against Japan
• Aug 6, 1945 - 1st A-Bomb dropped on Hiroshima. World enters the “Atomic Age”
Victory and Occupation (Japan)

• Aug 9, 1945 - 2nd Atomic Bomb dropped on Nagasaki
• Aug 14, 1945 - Japan surrenders
• Sep 2, 1945 - V-J Day - Japanese sign official surrender treaty
• WWII officially over
• USA begins occupation of Japan
Effects of the War

• 55 million people had died (Soviet Union = 22 million alone)
• 10 million people died due to genocide
• Nuremberg Trials - to punish people accused of “war crimes” and “crimes against humanity”
• Europe and parts of Asia devastated
• 12 million homeless, starvation widespread
Effects of the War

• Independence movements with European colonies grew:
  • Mother country was weak and could not resist
  • People of these colonies fought in WWII - believed they deserved independence because of their service to the mother country
  • Support of armed revolutions in some colonies by the Soviet Union