



World War II Memorial Washington, D.C.

Introduction and Instructions

World War II was the biggest and deadliest war in history, and more than 30 countries were involved in the massive conflict. What do you know about the history, significance, and symbolism of the World War II Memorial? In addition to any prior knowledge you may have, use your research skills and the resources provided here to answer the questions below.



Watch this video for a brief overview of WWII.

WATCH: <https://youtu.be/HUqy-OQvVtI>

1. What action triggered the start of WWII? What year did this occur?

Answer: Nazi Germany invaded Poland in September of 1939.

2. What two major events happened in 1941?

Answer: The Germans invaded the Soviet Union (Russia) and the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, bringing the US into the war.

3. Who were the main countries that comprised the Axis and Allied Powers?

Answer: Axis Powers: Germany, Italy, and Japan; Allied Powers: Britain, USA, and the Soviet Union (Russia).

4. What was the "Final Solution"?

Answer: The Nazi plan to exterminate all Jewish people

5. What happened on D-Day?

Answer: Operation Overlord – the Allied Powers invaded Normandy, France.

World War II Memorial Washington, D.C.

6. When did the Germans surrender?

Answer: May of 1945

7. What happened in August of 1945 and how did Japan respond?

Answer: The Americans dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. They surrendered on August 15, 1945.



Check out this link to learn more about the design on the WWII Memorial and its history.
READ: <https://www.thoughtco.com/world-war-ii-memorial-washington-dc-1778319>

8. Why was the memorial created?

Answer: To honor the Americans who helped fight World War II

9. How was the design chosen? Who was the creator of the memorial?

Answer: There was a contest. Architect Friedrich St. Florian's design was chosen.



Learn more about the symbolism and meaning of the memorial.
WATCH: <https://youtu.be/n-LOcdQLPnY>

10. Use what you have learned about the WWII Memorial to summarize the main elements of its design.

Answer: Answers may vary. The design consisted of the Rainbow Pool in a sunken plaza, surrounded in a circular pattern with 56 pillars which represent the unity of the U.S. states and territories during the war. There are two giant arches (each 41-feet tall) that represent the two fronts of the war.

Inside is the Freedom Wall covered with 4,000 gold stars, each representing one star for every 100 Americans that died during World War II. There is a sculpture placed in the middle of the Rainbow Pool and two fountains.

World War II Memorial Washington, D.C.

WHAT DO YOU THINK? *This is your chance to share your opinions, make connections, and apply what you've learned!*



Rationing of goods took place in America during WWII. Rationing is defined as a fixed allowance of provisions or food. This was done on the home front to aid in the war effort. Read more about it here.
READ: <https://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1674.html>

1. Imagine how it would be to live in America during WWII. In what ways would your life be impacted the most?

Answers will vary.



The decision President Truman made to drop the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki is still controversial today.
WATCH: <https://youtu.be/Bm1BbcxseXM>
WATCH: <https://youtu.be/ya3et3mhdWw>

2. After watching the videos, present a case for or against the use of the atomic bomb during WWII.

Answers will vary.



The generation that fought in WWII has been called “The Greatest Generation.” Learn more about why this name came to be applied to them.
WATCH: <https://youtu.be/xQFAhIPFLDc>

3. What are some of the reasons why this generation is known as “The Greatest”?

Answers will vary.