

Unit 8: World at War

Inquiry Journal

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 1: World War I Supporting Questions	
LESSON 1	What was the most significant cause of World War I?
	K:
	W:
LESSON 2	How did World War I change the lives of people and nations?
	K:
	W:
LESSON 3	How did the end of World War I reshape European empires and influence global relationships?
	K:
	W:



Topic 1: World War I
Compelling Question

In what ways did the peace settlements after World War I address—or fail to address—the underlying causes of the war?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.



Unit 8 Inquiry Journal: World at War

Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 2: Interwar Years Supporting Questions	
LESSON 4	<i>What key factors contributed to the establishment of the Soviet Union?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 5	<i>Why did some countries embrace fascist leadership in the interwar period?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 6	<i>How did the Nazi Party harness nationalism to strengthen their control over Germany?</i>
	K:
	W:



Topic 2: Interwar Period

Compelling Question

How did the political and economic instability of the interwar years contribute to the rise of totalitarian regimes in Europe?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.



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Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 3: World War II Supporting Questions	
LESSON 7	<i>What was the most significant cause of World War II?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 8	<i>How did military strategies, technology, and key battles shape the course of World War II?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 9	<i>How did atrocities during WWII contribute to a push for a global human rights framework?</i>
	K:
	W:



Topic 3: World War II

Compelling Question

How did the causes of World War II, major military developments, and wartime atrocities shape both the war's course and its impact on global human rights?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.



Unit 8 Inquiry Journal: World at War

Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 4: Genocide & The Holocaust Supporting Questions

LESSON 10	<i>How do the Armenian and Holodomor genocides demonstrate the warning signs and consequences of mass atrocities?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 11	<i>How and why did Nazi Germany strip victims of their humanity?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 12	<i>Why did people choose to collaborate with or resist the Nazis?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 13	<i>How did the Holocaust impact Jewish communities and global affairs immediately and in the modern era?</i>
	K:
	W:



Topic 4: Genocide & The Holocaust
Compelling Question

What do genocides reveal about the causes, human choices, and lasting impacts of mass atrocities?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.



Essential Question

How did global conflicts in the 20th century reshape socio-political ideologies, geopolitical dominance, and the lives of ordinary people?

Directions: Read the essential question. Explain what you LEARNED throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.



Paragraph Template

Claim, Evidence, Reasoning

CLAIM (Your argument)	
EVIDENCE #1 (Facts, examples, sources)	
REASONING #1 (Explanation of how the evidence supports the claim)	
EVIDENCE #2 (Facts, examples, sources)	
REASONING #2 (Explanation of how the evidence supports the claim)	



Unit 8: World at War

Inquiry Journal (Exemplar)

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 1: World War I Supporting Questions	
LESSON 1	<i>What was the most significant cause of World War I?</i>
	K: World War I caused immense destruction and loss of life.
	W: Who was most responsible for starting the war?
LESSON 2	<i>How did World War I change the lives of people and nations?</i>
	K: In World War I, millions of people died which had significant implications for all the countries involved.
	W: How were specific groups of people, like women and children, impacted even if they weren't fighting as soldiers?
LESSON 3	<i>How did the end of World War I reshape European empires and influence global relationships?</i>
	K: Wars can lead to the end of empires and political instability.
	W: Did World War I lead to the end of any European colonial empires in Africa or Asia?



Topic 1: World War I

Compelling Question

In what ways did the peace settlements after World War I address—or fail to address—the underlying causes of the war?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

The peace settlements after World War I, especially the Treaty of Versailles (1919), tried to deal with the causes of the war but mostly failed to create lasting peace. While the treaties attempted to control militarism, change alliances, and fix territorial disputes, they actually led to future conflicts. One of the biggest causes of World War I was militarism, as European countries built up huge armies before the war. The Treaty of Versailles tried to stop this by limiting Germany's military to only 100,000 soldiers and banning tanks, submarines, and an air force. However, this only weakened Germany without reducing militarism in other nations. The alliance system, which had pulled so many countries into war, was not fully dismantled but instead changed in a way that caused new problems. The breakup of Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire led to new countries like Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Poland. The League of Nations was created to prevent future wars, but it was too weak because powerful countries like the United States never joined. Imperialism, another major cause of the war, was not solved at all. Germany lost its overseas colonies, but instead of giving independence to these territories, they were taken over by Britain and France as mandates under the League of Nations. This frustrated people in colonized nations, especially in Africa and Asia, who had hoped for self-determination, as promised by Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points. Finally, nationalism, which had caused tensions before the war, was actually made worse by the Treaty of Versailles. Germany was forced to take full blame for the war under Article 231 and had to pay huge reparations—132 billion gold marks. This crushed Germany's economy, leading to hyperinflation and suffering, which angered many Germans. This made Germans feel humiliated and bitter, increasing nationalist feelings and making them eager to undo the treaty's terms. Overall, the peace settlements tried but failed to address the causes of World War I. Instead of bringing lasting peace, the treaties made many countries angry and left unresolved problems, which eventually led to World War II.



Unit 8 Inquiry Journal: World at War (Exemplar)

Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 2: Interwar Years Supporting Questions	
LESSON 4	<i>What key factors contributed to the establishment of the Soviet Union?</i>
	K: Russia became known as the Soviet Union. Lenin and Stalin were leaders in the Soviet Union.
	W: How did the Soviet Union differ from Russia? What were the main challenges they faced while building the Soviet Union?
LESSON 5	<i>Why did some countries embrace fascist leadership in the interwar period?</i>
	K: Hitler was a fascist leader in Germany.
	W: What is fascism? How did fascist leaders convince people to support them even when their countries were in bad shape?
LESSON 6	<i>How did the Nazi Party harness nationalism to strengthen their control over Germany?</i>
	K: The Nazis were responsible for the Holocaust and World War II.
	W: How did nationalism in Nazi Germany affect people who weren't German?



Topic 2: Interwar Period

Compelling Question

How did the political and economic instability of the interwar years contribute to the rise of totalitarian regimes in Europe?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

The political and economic instability of the interwar years significantly contributed to the rise of totalitarian regimes in Europe, as people sought strong leadership and radical solutions to their economic and political crises. After World War I, the Soviet Union emerged from the chaos of the Russian Revolution and civil war, with Lenin and later Stalin using promises of stability and prosperity to consolidate power. The failure of the Weimar Republic in Germany, exacerbated by hyperinflation and the Great Depression, created widespread discontent, paving the way for Adolf Hitler's Nazi Party, which exploited national humiliation from the Treaty of Versailles and promised to restore Germany's glory. Similarly, in Italy, Benito Mussolini capitalized on the economic turmoil and social unrest caused by post-war disillusionment, promising to revive Italy's strength through fascism and aggressive nationalism. The turmoil in Europe made citizens vulnerable to radical ideologies that promised stability and a return to national pride. Totalitarian leaders like Stalin, Mussolini, and Hitler skillfully manipulated these fears and frustrations, offering strong, centralized control that appealed to those desperate for change. Their regimes thrived by suppressing opposition, controlling economies, and using propaganda to create a unified vision of the future.



Unit 8 Inquiry Journal: World at War (Exemplar)

Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 3: World War II Supporting Questions	
LESSON 7	<i>What was the most significant cause of World War II?</i>
	K: The Treaty of Versailles punished Germany after World War I and led to an increased interest in fascism.
	W: Why didn't the League of Nations successfully prevent World War II?
LESSON 8	<i>How did military strategies, technology, and key battles shape the course of World War II?</i>
	K: World War II was fought because of the Nazis in Germany. The Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor.
	W: How did World War II affect global regions differently?
LESSON 9	<i>How did atrocities during WWII contribute to a push for a global human rights framework?</i>
	K: World War II was when the Holocaust happened and millions of people died.
	W: Were there other atrocities besides the Holocaust?



Topic 3: World War II

Compelling Question

How did the causes of World War II, major military developments, and wartime atrocities shape both the war's course and its impact on global human rights?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

World War II's causes, military advancements, and human rights violations shaped both the course of the war and its impact on global human rights. The aggressive expansion of Axis powers, combined with new technologies and military strategies, escalated the conflict into a total war. Meanwhile, the horrific violations of human rights, including by the Red Army and war crimes in the Pacific, revealed the urgent need for international policies protecting human dignity, ultimately leading to the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948.

The war's causes played a crucial role in its outbreak and expansion. The Treaty of Versailles (1919) imposed harsh economic and political penalties on Germany, fostering resentment that enabled Hitler's rise to power. Meanwhile, Japanese militarism and expansion in the Pacific, including the invasion of Manchuria (1931) and China (1937), demonstrated the failure of the League of Nations to prevent war. Once the war began, new military developments, like atomic bombs, and strategies, including island-hopping, played a significant role in shaping its outcome. Turning points such as D-Day (1944) and the Battle of Midway (1942) shifted the war in favor of the Allies, demonstrating how military strategy and technology influenced the war's direction.

Wartime atrocities also had a profound impact, exposing the need for global human rights protections. Over the course of the war, hundreds of thousands of people were subjected to brutal war crimes, including the Nanjing Massacre (1937) and the inhumane experiments conducted by Unit 731. The devastation of World War II made it clear that existing international agreements had failed to prevent war and protect civilians, leading world leaders to establish new global frameworks for accountability and peacekeeping. The United Nations (1945) was created to promote diplomacy and prevent future conflicts, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) ensured that fundamental human rights would be recognized worldwide.



Unit 8 Inquiry Journal: World at War (Exemplar)

Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 4: Genocide & The Holocaust Supporting Questions

LESSON 10	<i>How do the Armenian and Holodomor genocides demonstrate the warning signs and consequences of mass atrocities?</i>
	K: A genocide involves a mass killing of a specific group of people, like in the Holocaust.
	W: Why are some genocides, like the Holocaust, widely known and others aren't? Why do some people deny their occurrence?
LESSON 11	<i>How and why did Nazi Germany strip victims of their humanity?</i>
	K: The Nazis put Jewish people in concentration camps where millions were murdered.
	W: Why did the Nazis hate Jewish people so much?
LESSON 12	<i>What factors shaped people's decisions to collaborate with or resist Nazi oppression?</i>
	K: Some non-Jewish Germans helped to hide Jewish people, such as the people who tried to help Anne Frank and her family.
	W: What happened to people who resisted the Nazis? Were they treated as badly as Jewish people?
LESSON 13	<i>How did the Holocaust impact Jewish communities and global affairs immediately and in the modern era?</i>
	K: Even after the Holocaust, there is still anti-semitism.
	W: How many Holocaust survivors are still alive today?



Topic 4: Genocide & The Holocaust

Compelling Question

What do genocides reveal about the causes, human choices, and lasting impacts of mass atrocities?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

Genocides, including the Holocaust, reveal the warning signs of mass atrocities, the role of human choices in either enabling or resisting them, and their long-lasting global impacts. These events show how propaganda, dehumanization, and government policies create conditions for genocide, while also highlighting the moral dilemmas faced by individuals and societies. The Armenian and Holodomor genocides demonstrate early warning signs, such as the targeting of specific groups and government-led oppression. During the Holocaust, Nazi Germany systematically dehumanized victims through propaganda, forced labor, and mass extermination, stripping them of their rights and dignity. Some individuals and governments chose to collaborate with or ignore Nazi policies, while others resisted through underground movements, sabotage, or efforts to hide victims. The Holocaust's impact extended beyond the war, influencing the creation of Israel, shaping human rights policies, and increasing global efforts to prevent future genocides. Understanding genocides helps us recognize patterns of hatred, discrimination, and government control that lead to mass violence. The choices people made—whether to resist, comply, or ignore atrocities—show the complexity of human behavior under oppressive regimes. The lasting impact of these events, from refugee crises and the conflicts over the creation of Israel, demonstrates how history continues to shape global politics and human rights movements today. By studying these events, we learn the importance of vigilance, education, and action to prevent future genocides.



Essential Question

How did global conflicts in the 20th century reshape socio-political ideologies, geopolitical dominance, and the lives of ordinary people?

Directions: Read the essential question. Explain what you LEARNED throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

Global conflicts in the 20th century reshaped socio-political ideologies by accelerating the rise of new political systems and movements. World War I led to the collapse of empires, including the Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, and Russian Empires, paving the way for political shifts such as the rise of communism in Russia and fascism in Italy and Germany. The destruction and instability caused by World War II further fueled anti-colonial movements in Africa and Asia, as colonized nations sought independence from weakened European powers. Additionally, the war reinforced the need for global cooperation, leading to the formation of the United Nations, which aimed to promote peace and human rights. These conflicts demonstrated how war could radically transform governments, leading to new ideologies, national movements, and international policies that reshaped the modern world.

The wars also altered global power structures, shifting geopolitical dominance and reshaping international influence. Before World War I, European nations such as Britain, France, and Germany were the dominant global powers, controlling vast colonial empires and maintaining strong economic and military influence. However, the devastation of both world wars significantly weakened these nations, reducing their ability to exert global control. In contrast, the United States and the Soviet Union emerged as the most powerful nations following World War II, with the U.S. gaining economic and military strength and the Soviet Union expanding its influence in Eastern Europe. Additionally, the establishment of the United Nations reflected a shift toward diplomatic conflict resolution, aiming to prevent future global wars. These changes demonstrated how war could redefine global leadership and alter the balance of power among nations.

Beyond politics and global power, these wars had a profound impact on the daily lives of ordinary people. Civilians endured immense suffering, with mass displacement, destruction of homes, and food shortages affecting millions. The Holocaust and other war crimes left deep scars, as survivors struggled to rebuild their lives amid lost families and destroyed communities. Additionally, women entered the workforce in large numbers during both wars, taking on new roles in factories and industries to support the war effort, leading to long-term changes in gender roles and labor rights. In Japan, the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki caused unprecedented devastation, killing hundreds of thousands and leaving lasting health effects from radiation exposure. These wars demonstrated that conflict extended far beyond the battlefield, permanently reshaping societies, economies, and cultural norms.

