

On the Home Front

1. How many Americans entered the armed forces after Pearl Harbor?
2. How did the US troops receive the nickname "G.I."?
3. Explain the role of women in the military and on the home front during the war.
4. What were the roles of the National War Labor Board and the War Production Board?
5. How much did the US spend on the war?
6. What is a war bond?
7. What did civilians do at home to help the war effort?
8. How many African Americans served in World War II?
9. Who were the Tuskegee Airmen?
10. Who was the first African American general in the Air Force? Army?
11. Who were code talkers?
12. Explain the role that Latinos played in the war effort (War and at home).
13. Explain the controversy of the internment camps.

- ✓ GRAPHIC ORGANIZER
New Roles for Men and Women
- ✓ SLIDE SHOW
Minority Forces of World War II
- ✓ VIDEO



Lesson 3

On the Home Front

ESSENTIAL QUESTION *Why does conflict develop?*

IT MATTERS BECAUSE

Getting ready for and fighting World War II brought out the best in the people of the United States.

The United States Prepares

GUIDING QUESTION *How did the United States change its economy to provide supplies for the war effort?*

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor united Americans. With great speed, the nation and its people prepared to fight.

Building the Military

Even before Pearl Harbor, the United States had been building up its military with the Selective Service Act. Now that the country was at war, more than 15 million more Americans entered the armed services as volunteers or draftees.

Recruits had to pass a physical exam to enter military service. Then they got uniforms and equipment. Clothing was labeled "G.I." for "Government Issue." In this way, U.S. soldiers came to be called "GIs."

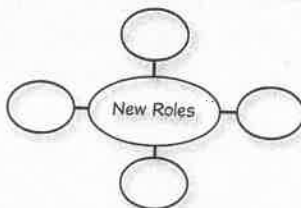
New GIs went through basic training for eight weeks. They learned to handle weapons, read maps, set up tents, and dig trenches. They also learned to work as a team.

For the first time, large numbers of women served in the military. About 250,000 served in the WAC (Women's Army Corps), the WAVES (Women Appointed for Volunteer Emergency Service in the navy), and women's units in the Marines, Coast Guard, and Army Air Corps. Women did not fight in combat, but

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Taking Notes: Describing

As you read, use a diagram like this one to describe the new roles adopted by American men and women during World War II.



Content Vocabulary

- ration
- civil defense
- internment camp

their work was vital to the war effort. Most worked in military offices or as nurses. Some served as Women's Air Force Service Pilots (WASPs). WASPs flew airplanes to and from bases for repair. They also served as co-pilots on night searchlight missions, flew weather planes, and performed many other tasks.

A Changing Economy

Equipping the troops required changes to the nation's economy. The government set up new agencies to speed the preparations for war. For example, the National War Labor Board helped settle labor disputes that could slow down war production. The War Production Board supervised the change from peacetime industries to war production. It helped automakers **shift** from making cars to building trucks, jeeps, tanks, and planes. By the summer of 1942, almost all major industries and some 200,000 companies had changed over to war production.

Women rushed to join the work force, laboring on assembly lines that turned out tanks and airplanes. Eventually, 2.5 million women worked in shipyards, aircraft factories, and other manufacturing plants. Although most women left the factories after the war, their efforts changed American attitudes about women in the workplace.

Funding the War

The United States spent more than \$320 billion on the war effort—10 times the spending in World War I. To raise money, the government relied on taxes. The Revenue Act of 1942 raised business taxes and required most Americans to pay income tax. Congress approved withholding taxes from workers' paychecks—a practice still in effect today.

The government also borrowed money from ordinary Americans by selling war bonds. A bond is a certificate promising to pay the buyer a set amount at a future date. So, a citizen might pay \$75 for a bond that could be cashed in for \$100 at a future date. The government gets to use the \$75 for a time, and the buyer earns a little money. Movie stars and other celebrities urged people to buy bonds to support the war effort.

PROGRESS CHECK

Explaining What was the purpose of the War Production Board?

About 2,000 women were accepted into the Women's Air Force Service Pilots. Thirty-eight WASPs lost their lives serving the country.



Academic Vocabulary

shift to move

The United States at War

GUIDING QUESTION *How did Americans help the war effort?*

Americans who remained at home provided food and shelter for those in uniform. Civilians—people not in the military—also provided training, equipment, transportation, and medical care.

Making Sacrifices for Victory

The war required sacrifices from most Americans. For example, people had to deal with shortages of products needed for the war effort. Government **rationed** these products, meaning consumers could buy only limited numbers or amounts of them. People got government-issued ration stamps, which allowed them to buy their limited share of gas, tires, shoes, sugar, coffee, meat, and other goods.

Many Americans had to face a much more serious sacrifice—separation from a family member serving **overseas**. Those at home lived in dread of getting the news that a loved one had been wounded, captured, or killed.



The government issued books of ration stamps, which people used to buy their share of food, gasoline, and other necessities.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Making Connections What do you think the poster below says about the role of children in World War II?



Helping in Many Ways

Despite the hardships, people found creative ways to help the war effort. Many planted “victory gardens” to grow vegetables and ease food shortages. Children collected scrap metal for industry.

Many people took part in **civil defense**—protective measures taken in case of attack. Volunteer spotters scanned the skies for possible enemy aircraft. Coastal cities enforced blackouts at night so that lights could not serve as beacons for enemy pilots. Meanwhile, the Office of War Information promoted patriotism to unite Americans behind the war effort.

Women at Work

Even for women who did not join the military, life changed. As you have read, millions stepped in to fill the jobs of men who went to war. An ad campaign featuring “Rosie the Riveter” encouraged women to

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ration to make scarce items available to people on a limited basis

civil defense protective measures taken by civilians in case of attack

Academic Vocabulary

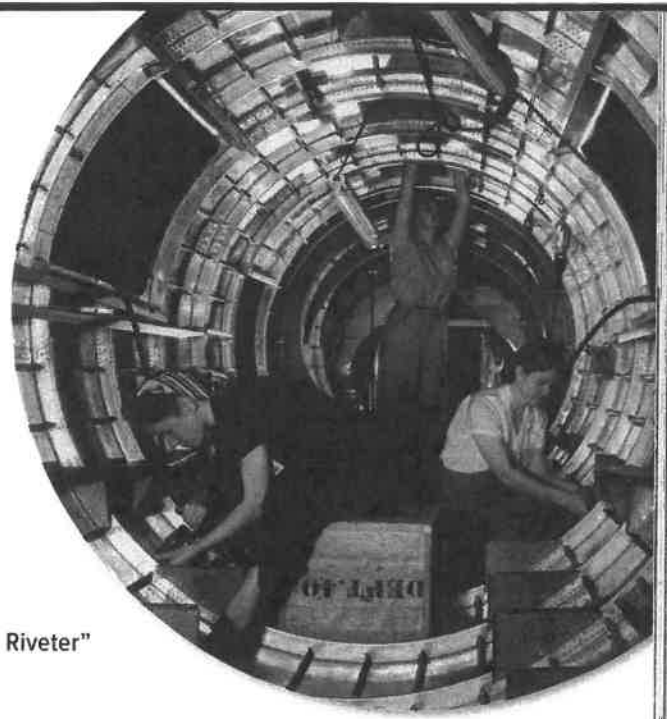
overseas across the ocean

take these jobs. Many had never worked outside their homes. Sybil Lewis, a riveter for Lockheed Aircraft in Los Angeles, gave this description of her wartime job:

PRIMARY SOURCE

“ The women worked in pairs. I was the riveter and this big, strong, white girl from a cotton farm in Arkansas worked as the buckler. The riveter used a gun to shoot rivets through the metal and fasten it together. The buckler used a bucking bar on the other side of the metal to smooth out the rivets. Bucking was harder than shooting rivets; it required more muscle. Riveting required more skill. ”

—from “Rosie the Riveter”



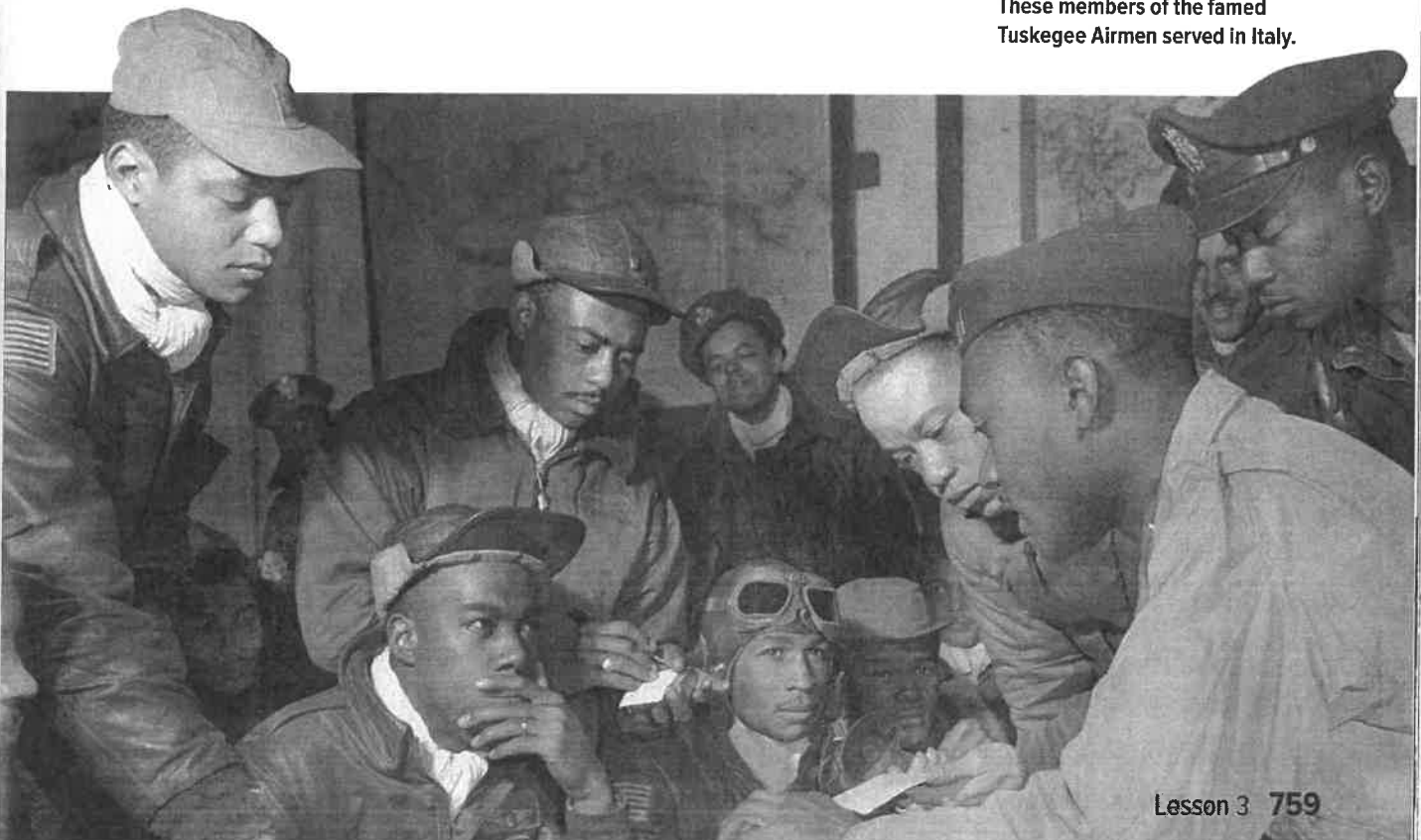
During the war, women worked at jobs traditionally held by men. These women are working on a section of a B-17F bomber aircraft—a “Flying Fortress.”

African Americans

The war also changed attitudes about minority groups. About 1 million African Americans served in World War II. At first, most received low-level assignments and served only in segregated units. In 1942, however, the army began training whites and African Americans together. African Americans began to fill combat assignments in 1944.

African Americans made key contributions in combat. For example, pilots trained at the Tuskegee Army Air Field—the Tuskegee Airmen—destroyed more than 250 enemy planes. One unit’s commander, Benjamin Davis, Jr., later became the first African American general in the Air Force. His father, Benjamin Davis, Sr., was the first African American general in the army.

Though forced to serve in segregated units, African Americans served courageously. These members of the famed Tuskegee Airmen served in Italy.



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Outside of the military, African Americans also sought change. In 1941, labor leader A. Philip Randolph demanded that the government outlaw job discrimination in American defense industries. In response, President Roosevelt signed an executive order creating the Fair Employment Practices Committee. The order states, "There shall be no discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or government because of race, creed, color, or national origin."

Native Americans

Thousands of Native Americans worked in defense industries or served in the armed forces. Ira Hayes of the Pima tribe became a hero in the battle for Iwo Jima in the Pacific. A special group of Navajo formed a unit called the "code talkers." They used a code based on the Navajo language to send vital military messages about troop movement and battle plans. The Japanese never broke this code.

Latinos

Hundreds of thousands of Latinos served in the United States military. In fact, 13 Mexican Americans won the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military medal. Mercedes Cubría of Cuba became the first Latina woman officer in the Women's Army Corps. Horacio Rivero of Puerto Rico became the first Latino four-star admiral to serve in the United States Navy since Civil War hero David Farragut.

Latinos also contributed at home. Prompted by the wartime need for labor, U.S. labor agents recruited thousands of farm and railroad workers from Mexico. This effort, called the *Bracero*

Starting in World War II, the Mexican government helped provide the United States with a temporary supply of workers—*braceros*. Under the *Bracero Program* (1942–1964), millions of Mexican workers were contracted to work in the United States.



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internment camp camp where Japanese Americans were kept during World War II

(brah·SEHR·oh) Program, encouraged emigration from Mexico. Like African Americans, Mexican Americans suffered from discrimination. In spite of their contributions, they were not welcomed in some cities.

Japanese Americans

As the war progressed, second-generation Japanese Americans served in the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat team. Together, these units became the most decorated in the history of the U.S. military.

U.S. Internment Camps

Japanese Americans won glory on the battlefield, but they faced trouble at home. Some military and political leaders worried what Japanese Americans would do if Japan invaded the United States. As a result, President Roosevelt ordered the relocation of more than 100,000 Japanese Americans living on the West Coast. The army forced them to move to **internment** (ihn·TUHRN·muhnt) **camp**s, which were crowded and uncomfortable.

Most Japanese Americans were forced to stay in the camps for three years. Some lost businesses and homes.

Some Americans disagreed with the internment. The Supreme Court, however, upheld the order in a 1944 case, *Korematsu v. United States*. Only in 1988 did the United States acknowledge the injustice. Congress issued an apology and gave each survivor \$20,000 as a token of the nation's regret.

PROGRESS CHECK

Explaining What was the purpose of the *Bracero* Program?

LESSON 3 REVIEW

Review Vocabulary

- Write a sentence that uses the following terms to describe the home front during the war.
 - ration
 - civil defense
- Use the term *internment camp* in a sentence that explains the term's meaning.

Answer the Guiding Questions

- Identifying** What kinds of sacrifices did American civilians make during wartime?

4. Analyzing Explain why some consumer goods were in short supply during the war.

5. Summarizing Besides living with rationing of goods, in what ways did American men, women, and children support the war effort at home?

6. ARGUMENT Decide how you feel about the detention of Japanese Americans during the war. Then write a persuasive paragraph to convince a reader to agree with your point of view on this issue.