depth study – core

World War II

Although World War I had been called ‘the war to end all wars’, only 20 years after it ended the world was again plunged into war. World War II was fought from 1939 to 1945 in almost every part of the world. Battles were fought in Europe, Russia, the Middle East, northern Africa, Asia and the Pacific – even the city of Darwin in Australia was bombed.

Although the official numbers of those killed and wounded are impossible to confirm, it is clear that World War II was responsible for a devastating loss of life. Historians estimate that around 22 million soldiers died in battle and 38 million civilians were killed. Among the dead were around 6 million Jews murdered by the Nazis during the **Holocaust**.

chapter 6

SAMPLE

Source 6.1 Many rows of stone heads now cover the ground at the Mauthausen war memorial in Austria, the site of a Nazi concentration camp during World War II.

6.1

What were the causes of World War II and what course did it take?

1 There were both short- and long-term factors and events that can be seen as causes of World War II. Make some predictions about what some of these might have been based on what you already know.

6.2

What were some of the most significant events of World War II?

1 The stone heads shown in Source 6.1 commemorate victims of an event known as the Holocaust. As a group, discuss your understanding of the term Holocaust. Why is it remembered as one of the most significant events of World War II?

6.3

How did the events of World War II affect the lives of Australians and Australia’s international relationships?

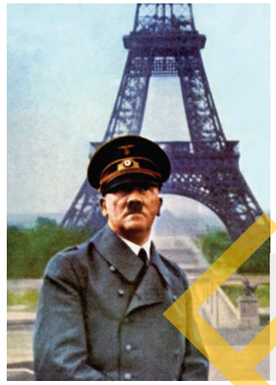
1 World War II had a significant impact on people at home in Australia, especially women. How and why do you think this was the case?

World War II: a timeline

30 January 1933
Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany leading the National Socialist German Workers Party (better known as the Nazi Party).

9–10 November 1938
A series of attacks take place on Jewish homes, businesses and synagogues across Germany and Austria. The attacks become known as *Kristallnacht* (Night of the Broken Glass).

A Jewish-owned shopfront after *Kristallnacht*


Adolf Hitler touring the French capital, Paris, in June 1940 – one year before invading the USSR.

22 June 1941
Beginning of Operation Barbarossa (German invasion of the USSR).

July–November 1942
The Kokoda campaign fought between Australia and Japan in New Guinea.

Kokoda Trail campaign

8 May 1945
VE Day (Victory in Europe Day) – marks the end of the war in Europe.

Aerial view of Hiroshima, Japan, after the atomic bomb was dropped

6–9 August 1945
The USA drops two atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima (6 August) and Nagasaki (9 August) leading to Japan's surrender.

15 August 1945
VP Day (Victory in the Pacific Day) officially marks the end of war in the Pacific.

30 April 1945
Hitler commits suicide in Berlin, leading to the surrender of Germany.

6 June 1944
D-Day landing of Allied troops in Europe.

19 February 1942
Darwin bombed by the Japanese, Australia put on 'total war' footing.

December 1941
Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and Singapore – war in the Pacific war begins.

1940
France, Belgium, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands fall to Germany; Dunkirk evacuation.

1939

1938

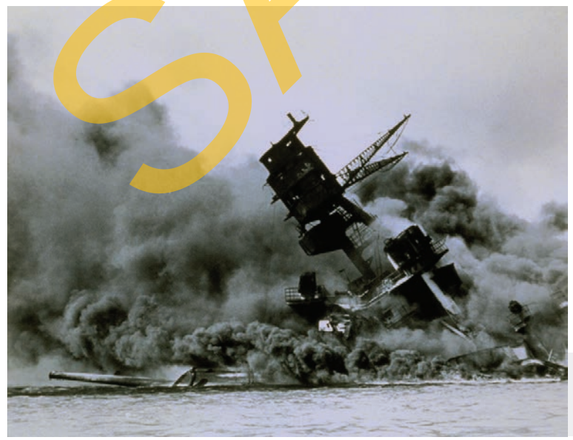
1933

1919

1919
The Paris Peace Conference is held and the Treaty of Versailles is signed, leaving Germany humiliated.

Signing of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919

1 September 1939
Germany attacks Poland and German troops cross the border, causing Britain and France to declare war on Germany. All countries in the British Empire, including Australia, also declare war on Germany.


USS *Arizona* sinking in Pearl Harbor – the USA enters the war the next day

Source 6.2 A timeline of some key events and developments relating to World War II

Check your learning 6.1

Remember and understand

1. In what year did Hitler become Chancellor of Germany?
2. When did Britain and France declare war on Germany?
3. When was Darwin bombed by the Japanese?

Apply and analyse

4. How do you think the Paris Peace Conference may have contributed to the beginning of World War II?
5. What event initiated the Pacific war?
6. Using the timeline, calculate how long the Pacific war lasted.

SAMPLE

6.1 What were the causes of World War II and what course did it take?

Causes of World War II

Only 20 years after the end of World War I, Europe was once again at war. At the time, many people blamed the outbreak of World War II on those who had negotiated the terms of peace at the end of World War I. In particular, they blamed the treaty that Germany was forced to sign – the Treaty of Versailles. The reality was more complex than that, with many short- and long-term factors contributing to the outbreak of conflict in 1939.

The Paris Peace Conference and the Treaty of Versailles

Immediately after World War I ended in 1918, members of the victorious Allied powers (Britain, France, the USA and Italy) met at the Palace of Versailles just outside Paris to negotiate the terms of surrender for the defeated central powers (Germany, Austria–Hungary, the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria) and agreed on a set of penalties. After months of tense negotiations, the Treaty of Versailles was signed. It imposed a series of harsh terms on Germany (see Source 6.3).

Source 6.3 Key outcomes of the Treaty of Versailles

- Article 231 (known as the 'War guilt clause') blamed Germany and its allies for starting World War I and declared that Germany was responsible to pay for 'loss and damages' – the payments Germany had to make were called **reparations**.
- Germany's army was limited to 100 000 men; conscription (compulsory military service) was banned, the German air force was disbanded, and the production of weapons and ammunitions in German factories was limited.
- German territory was given to neighbouring nations such as France, Denmark, Belgium, Poland – other German-controlled areas were reclaimed in order to create the country of Czechoslovakia (see Source 6.5) and Italy was also given two small areas.
- German colonies were divided between the Allies – this included Australia, which claimed German New Guinea and Nauru.
- The League of Nations was established – an organisation formed with the aim of preventing another war and maintaining world peace by settling disputes between nations through negotiation.

The terms of the Treaty of Versailles were devastating for Germany, both politically and economically. The terms created a weak and unstable economy in Germany with mass unemployment and severe rates of inflation (price rises). Over time this led to a sense of resentment and bitterness among the German people. Many of them felt that they had been unfairly treated. This resentment was exploited by a number of German politicians during the 1920s and 1930s.

The Paris Peace Conference alienated some of the Allies. Italy was outraged that it received few benefits for joining the Allies.

The conference also sowed the seeds for war in the Pacific. Japan was permitted to keep Chinese territory it had seized from Germany during the war. However, Japan unsuccessfully tried to introduce a 'racial equality' clause to the Treaty of Versailles. The clause was opposed by Britain and Australia in particular. Japan's failure to ensure its equality with the other powers contributed to the breakdown in Japan's relations with the West, and the rise of Japanese **nationalism** and **militarism**.

Source 6.4 British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, French Premier Georges Clemenceau and US President Woodrow Wilson walk together in Paris during negotiations for the Treaty of Versailles

EUROPE: BORDERS AFTER THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES

Source 6.5 Source: Oxford University Press

keyconcept: significance

The League of Nations

The League of Nations was established as part of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. The league was the brainchild of US President Woodrow Wilson. The idea was that the league would settle disputes between nations through negotiation, with the aim of preventing another world war. Only as a last resort would troops be used to settle a dispute.

One of the major weaknesses of the scheme was that the USA did not join the league. Although a US president had proposed the idea, the US Congress refused to join. Wilson's party, the Democrats, was defeated at the 1920 election. It seemed that a majority of Americans wanted to maintain a neutral position and not become caught up in world affairs.

The League of Nations had no armed forces of its own, and had little power to force members to comply with its decisions. It had some minor successes in the 1920s, such as resolving some territorial disputes between countries in Europe, but it failed in its central aim of preventing another world war. By 1939, Japan, Germany, Italy and the USSR had all terminated their membership of the organisation.

Despite the failure of the League of Nations, it is still considered to be a significant organisation in history because it laid the foundations for the formation of the United Nations at the end of World War II.

For more information on the key concept of significance, refer to section HT.1 in 'The historian's toolkit'.

The Great Depression and the rise of dictatorships

At the end of World War I in 1918, Germany had been defeated and Kaiser Wilhelm II – the emperor of Germany – stood down. A new democratic government, known as the Weimar Republic, took power in the Kaiser's place. Even though the new government had no choice in the matter, many Germans blamed it for agreeing to the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. As a result, it was very unpopular with the people.

The new government also had serious economic problems to deal with. In 1929, a stock market crash in New York triggered a period of severe economic hardship that lasted until the late 1930s. This was known as **the Great Depression**. Germany was one of the worst affected nations during this time, suffering mass unemployment, record price rises and a fall in the standard of living. Workers went on strike, German currency depreciated in value, and the economy suffered as foreign investors moved their money out of Germany.

Source 6.6 A German housewife using millions of *Deutschmarks* to light her stove. During the hyperinflation of 1923, bank notes were worth so little that it was more useful to burn them than spend them

SAMPLE

As a result of these tough economic and political conditions, a number of political movements and ideologies became popular in Europe and Asia, including **communism**, **fascism** and militarism. These movements emphasised strict government control and military power and were quick to take hold in countries such as the Soviet Union, Italy, Japan and Germany. Although these countries were very different, they shared a few common features:

- the importance of the state over the individual
- support for a strong central leader
- public displays of power and authority, such as parades and rallies (see Source 6.9)
- a reliance on **propaganda** campaigns to promote the views of the party and suppress opposition
- a belief in the importance of national pride
- an ambition to increase the size of their territories
- the need for force in the struggle against foreign enemies.

The Nazi Party

One such group that formed in Germany in 1921 was the National Socialist German Workers' Party – better known as the Nazi Party. It's founder, Adolf Hitler, had fought with the German army in World War I and, like most Germans, resented the restrictions placed on Germany by the Treaty of Versailles.

Nazism was characterised by the strong and charismatic leadership of Adolf Hitler, supported by a small, powerful inner circle of people. Its ideology was built on German nationalism, anti-communism, **anti-Semitism** (hostility towards Jews), and the idea that ethnic Germans were racially superior to all other races. Nazis also believed in the 'stab-in-the-back myth'. This was the idea that Germany was not defeated in World War I, but was betrayed by socialists and Jews on the home front.

The Nazi Party attempted to seize power in 1923 in Munich in an uprising known as the 'Beer Hall Putsch'.

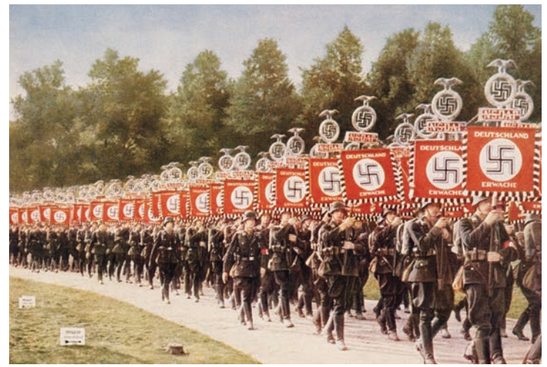
Sources 6.7 and 6.8 Nazi propaganda posters showing the swastika and the eagle (both symbols of the Third Reich)

This uprising failed, and the ringleaders, including Hitler, received short prison sentences. After this incident, Hitler was determined to win power legally at the ballot box. In November 1932, the Nazi Party received 37.3 per cent of votes, more than any other party but not a majority. In 1933 Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany after negotiating a deal with other leaders.

The Third Reich

After coming to power, Hitler began putting his beliefs into practice. The period of his rule became known as the Third Reich. During this time there was little or no personal freedom. People were encouraged to report on friends, neighbours and even family members suspected of disloyalty to the regime. Propaganda and large well-organised rallies were used to convince citizens of the legitimacy of the regime and to silence critics. Punishments were severe and often involved torture and **internment** in concentration camps. Jews were the primary targets of Nazi persecution. Writers, artists, playwrights, university professors and others traditionally associated with free thinking were also targets of Nazi persecution.

Ceremonies, uniforms, symbols, marches, music and rallies were used by the Nazis to create a sense of belonging and show strength. There was a particular attempt to gain the support of young people through organisations such as Hitler Youth. The huge Nuremberg rallies held in the 1930s played an important role in gaining popular support for the Third Reich (see Source 6.9).



Source 6.9 Members of the Nazi Party display their strength at the Nuremberg Rally, 1933

Check your learning 6.2

Remember and understand

1. What were some of the conditions imposed on Germany by the Treaty of Versailles?
2. Which other countries were dissatisfied with the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, and why?
3. When and why was the League of Nations formed?
4. Even though the League of Nations ultimately failed, many historians still consider its formation to be a significant historical event. Why?
5. In your own words, define the word 'reparations'.
6. Why was the Weimar Republic unpopular in Germany in the 1920s?
7. Describe some of the ideological beliefs of the Nazi Party.
8. How did the Third Reich restrict personal freedom?
9. How did the Nazis create a sense of belonging among German people?

Apply and analyse

10. What were some of the early problems encountered by the League of Nations?
11. Explain how the outcomes of the Paris Peace Conference contributed to the outbreak of war in the Pacific.
12. Study the propaganda posters used by the Nazis at the Nuremberg Rallies (Sources 6.7 and 6.8), held between 1927 and 1938 to celebrate the Third Reich.
    a. What impression do they create of the Nazi regime and the Third Reich?
    b. What aspects of the posters (such as signs, symbols, colours) help to create this impression?
13. Imagine you are US President Woodrow Wilson in 1920. Write a short speech to deliver as part of your election campaign, in which you try to convince the American public of the importance of the League of Nations and why America should join. You will need to conduct some research to ensure that your speech accurately reflects Wilson's views.
14. Search the Internet to locate a map of Europe in 1917, just prior to the end of World War I. Compare your map with Source 6.5 that shows the borders of European countries brought about by the Treaty of Versailles. List the key differences.

SAMPLE

Significant individual: Adolf Hitler

For generations, the name Adolf Hitler has been linked with the idea of 'evil'. What is often forgotten is that Hitler exploited democratic processes in Germany to seize unparalleled power and impose his ideology on the world.

Early life

Hitler was born in the Austrian village of Braunau in 1889. He was very close to his mother Klara but is said to have had a bad relationship with his father, who died when Hitler was 13. Hitler showed early academic promise in primary school but dropped out of secondary school at 16 and went to Vienna to become an artist.

During his time in Vienna, Hitler was a drifter. He was twice rejected by the Academy of Fine Arts. Historians debate whether Hitler already held anti-Semitic views before he moved to Vienna, or whether his experiences there caused him to look for others to blame and inspired his hatred of Jewish people.

During World War I

Despite his Austrian birth and his father's position in the Austrian public service, Hitler became a strong believer in German nationalism. He evaded conscription into the Austro–Hungarian army by travelling across the border to Munich, where he enlisted in the German army in 1914. Hitler served as a message runner on the Western Front, a job that was considered 'safe'. Nevertheless, he was wounded in October 1918, and was in hospital at the time of the armistice (ceasefire). He passionately opposed the armistice and believed that Germany should never have surrendered. This influenced his later ideology. During the war, Hitler's superiors thought he lacked leadership skills, so he was never promoted beyond the rank of corporal.

Key influences and ideas

Hitler was influenced by a number of competing ideologies, such as German nationalism, ideas of 'racial purity', anti-communism and, arguably most importantly, by anti-Semitism.

Anti-Semitism (hostility towards and persecution of Jews) existed in German society, and in other European countries, long before the Nazi Party came to power in 1933. In fact, anti-Semitism can be traced back as far as the ancient world.

Source 6.10 Hitler held crowds mesmerised for hours with his speeches

Hitler's political career began in 1919 when he joined the German Workers' Party (DAP), a small group of extreme nationalists and anti-Semites who saw their role as trying to convince the German people that Jews were primarily responsible for Germany's plight.

In July 1921, he took over the leadership of the party, by then renamed the National Socialist German Workers' Party (or Nazi Party).

The Nazis wanted to make Germany great again after its defeat in World War I. As part of this goal, they used pseudoscientific theories about race that have since been discredited. These theories divided the human race into a hierarchy of distinct racial groups. The nationalist movement and the pseudoscientific **eugenics** movement (see 'Beginnings of the Holocaust' in section 6.2) influenced their thinking. The Nazis believed that 'Aryan' Germans were a 'master race' destined to rule the world. Jews were seen as the single most dangerous threat to this plan because of their supposed racial differences, economic power and social values.

The Nazis used anti-Semitic propaganda to influence the German public. Jews everywhere were portrayed as acting as a single unit. Anti-Semitism was emphasised as a 'racial' prejudice rather than a religious one. In order to achieve their 'Aryan' society, other races considered by the Nazis to be 'weak' or 'polluting' were to be removed from society. In addition to the Jews, these groups included Slavs and Sinti/Roma people (Gypsies), as well as non-racial groups such as those with disabilities, Jehovah's Witnesses and homosexuals. While Nazi persecution of these groups was widespread, Jews in particular were made a scapegoat for many of Germany's problems.

Rise to power

The Nazi Party's first attempt to seize power in 1923 was a disaster. Hitler was charged with treason (betrayal of country), but received friendly treatment from the court. In his defence he claimed honourable and nationalistic motives. The judge allowed Hitler to discuss his ideas in court with few restrictions. He eventually served only eight months in prison enjoying many privileges such as daily visits from friends and family, and no forced labour. Hitler used this time to write *Mein Kampf*, a book outlining his ideology, experiences and plans for the Nazi Party.

On his release from jail, Hitler decided that the Nazis should try to gain power by exploiting the political system rather than attacking it. His party gained a small number of seats in the Reichstag (the German legislative assembly) during the 1920s, but it was the Great Depression that gave the party its real opportunity. By 1932 the Nazi Party was the largest single party in the Reichstag. Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany in January 1933 by President Hindenburg (see Source 6.11). After Hindenburg's death in 1934, Hitler combined the roles of Chancellor and President, making himself the *Führer* (supreme ruler) of Germany. Hitler's government then began implementing many of the plans and policies described in *Mein Kampf*. These included the expansion of the military, expansion of Germany's borders, systematic persecution of the Jewish community, and compulsory sterilisation for many Jewish and Sinti/Roma people, as well as those with disabilities.

For the first three years of the war, Hitler's popularity remained strong. However, in 1942 Germany suffered severe military losses and German cities were regularly bombed by the Allies. Some Germans began to turn against Hitler. There were at least 17 recorded assassination attempts against him and many more were rumoured to have occurred. Hitler gradually withdrew from public life and directed operations from his underground 'bunker' in Berlin. Hitler took his own life as the Soviet Army overran Berlin on 30 April 1945.

Source 6.11 Hitler is sworn in as the new Chancellor in January 1933, taking over from President Hindenburg (right)

Check your learning 6.3

Remember and understand

1. List four facts about Hitler's childhood and teenage years.
2. What nationality was Hitler?
3. During World War I:
   a. What job did Hitler perform in the German army?
   b. Why was Hitler never promoted beyond the rank of corporal?

Apply and analyse

4. What special treatment did Hitler receive when he was tried for treason after the Nazi Party's first attempt to seize power in 1923? Why do you think that was?
5. Describe some of the key characteristics of Hitler's ideology.
6. How did the Great Depression help Hitler and the Nazis rise to power?
7. How did Hitler exploit the democratic process to seize power?

Evaluate and create

8. Conduct a class debate on the following topic: 'Hitler himself was not personally significant. Any dictator could have seized power in Germany at that time'.

SAMPLE

The course of the war in Europe

Appeasement

Immediately after coming to power in 1933, Hitler started to violate the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. He began increasing the size of the military, reintroduced conscription in Germany, re-established the German *Luftwaffe* (air force), and increased the production of weapons and ammunition.

One of Hitler's aims in the 1930s was to regain the territories taken from Germany under the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. Under the terms of the treaty, the Rhineland (a region in western Germany) had been made into a demilitarised zone. Although Germany had political control of this area, it was not allowed to base any troops there. In 1936, however, Hitler ordered that German troops enter the Rhineland.

EUROPE: GERMAN TERRITORIAL EXPANSION 1936–39

Source 6.13 Source: Oxford University Press

The British and French response to these events was largely to tolerate them, known as a policy of **appeasement**. Britain and France followed this policy because:

- they believed that giving in to Hitler's demands would avoid another war
- neither France nor Britain could afford to go to war as the economies of both countries were in the grip of the Great Depression
- many people believed that the Treaty of Versailles was too harsh on Germany and some believed that Hitler's actions were justified.

In 1938, Hitler went a step further by annexing (taking control over) Austria (see Source 6.13). Once again, France and Britain did not react. In the same year, Hitler demanded that the Sudetenland region (part of the newly formed country of Czechoslovakia) be returned to Germany. The Sudetenland had a population of around three million ethnic Germans. Hitler used this fact to justify his claims to the region. In September 1938, representatives from Britain, France, Italy and Germany met in Munich (see Source 6.12). They agreed to return Sudetenland to Germany (see Source 6.14). In return, Hitler agreed not to make any further claims over disputed territory in Europe. Despite these assurances, Germany invaded the rest of Czechoslovakia in March 1939.

However, when Hitler began demanding the return of territories in Poland later that same year, Britain formed an alliance with Poland to guarantee the latter's security and independence. On 1 September 1939, Germany invaded Poland and the policy of appeasement was abandoned. France and Britain (including British colonies and dominions such as Australia) declared war on Germany in September 1939.

Source 6.12 British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain arrives back from his meeting with Hitler in 1938, holding the agreement which he said would deliver 'peace for our time'

Source 6.14 Women respond to the arrival of Hitler's troops in the Sudetenland in 1938

Initial German success

The invasion of Poland, launched on 1 September 1939, was the first example of what became known as ***Blitzkrieg*** ('lightning war') tactics. *Blitzkrieg* tactics involved the use of coordinated air and land forces to quickly overrun the enemy, followed by slower-moving ground forces, often using horse-drawn transport, which 'mopped up' the shattered defenders and occupied their territory.

Despite the British and French commitment to support Poland, the speed of the German advance made it virtually impossible for either power to offer practical military support. By the end of September, Poland was divided between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, with which Hitler had signed a pact in August.

The 'Phoney War'

The period after the German invasion of Poland in September 1939, is known as the 'Phoney War'. Although Germany, France and Britain were officially at war from October 1939 up until April 1940 there were no major battles. There were some sea battles, but Britain and France did not attack Germany on land; instead the British built up their strength and prepared to defend France against German attack. The Phoney War ended in April 1940, when Germany attacked and defeated Denmark and Norway.

For the first two years of the war, Nazi Germany and its allies enjoyed considerable military success. In a series of military campaigns, they used new tactics and equipment to establish an empire that stretched from the English Channel to the Soviet Union; from Norway to the African countries of Algeria and Libya.

The Battle of France

In May 1940, Germany invaded the Low Countries (Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg) and France using *Blitzkrieg* tactics. Despite outnumbering the Germans, the Allied forces were unable to deal with the speed of the German attack. The British Government evacuated 338 000 British and French troops from the port of Dunkirk, in northern France (see Source 6.16). On 22 June 1940, France surrendered (see Source 6.17), although some military units outside of France rejected the surrender and continued fighting Germany as the Free French Forces.

Source 6.15 German troops drive into Poland in September 1939

Source 6.16 In May–June 1940, more than 300 000 Allied troops were cut off by the German Army and were evacuated from the French port of Dunkirk. This event became known as the Dunkirk evacuation.

SAMPLE

Source 6.17 Adolf Hitler at the Eiffel Tower following the fall of France in 1940

The Battle of Britain

Germany turned its attention to defeating Britain. The plan for an invasion required the *Luftwaffe* to destroy Britain's air force, before a combined land and sea assault could be launched. If the Royal Air Force could be destroyed, the *Luftwaffe* could prevent the Royal Navy from interfering with a German invasion fleet. Facing stiff resistance, Germany eventually changed its tactics to focus on bombing Britain's industrial cities, a period of the war known as the ***Blitz***. The Royal Air Force, which included around 100 Australians, was extremely successful in resisting the German attacks from July 1940 to May 1941. By then, Germany was focused on the invasion of Russia, and the threat to Britain had passed.

Source 6.18 A British propaganda poster praising the efforts of the Royal Air Force during the *Blitz* featuring the famous words of British Prime Minister Winston Churchill

The Siege of Tobruk

Italy entered the war on Germany's side in June 1940. Its leader, Benito Mussolini, planned to conquer Egypt from the Italian territory of Libya. However, Australian troops led a British counterattack into Libya, capturing Bardia, Tobruk and Benghazi early in 1941. Hitler sent General Rommel, one of his most experienced officers, with German forces to support the Italians in Libya. Rommel drove the British back into Egypt, although a force of Australian and British troops held on to Tobruk. German propaganda described these men as 'rats', a name that was embraced by the Australian troops as a compliment. The 'Rats of Tobruk', as they became known, proved very aggressive and successful, despite primitive conditions and a complete lack of air support (see Source 6.20). Royal Australian Navy ships braved enemy air attack to bring in supplies and evacuate the wounded. By September 1941 most of the Australians had been replaced by Polish troops. Rommel did capture Tobruk in June 1942.

Source 6.19 German bombers during the Battle of Britain, 1940

Source 6.20 Australian troops, nicknamed the 'Rats of Tobruk', occupy a frontline position (AWM 041790)

Operation Barbarossa

The peak of the campaign by the Axis powers (Germany, Italy and Japan) in Europe was the *Blitzkrieg* invasion of the Soviet Union (USSR), which began in June 1941. Code-named Operation Barbarossa, it is still the largest military operation – in terms of manpower, area covered and casualties – in human history. The Axis force was made up of more than three million troops, 3600 tanks and 4300 aircraft.

In 1939, Germany and the Soviet Union had signed a pact, agreeing not to attack each other. Germany's invasion of the USSR in 1941 broke this agreement. There were several reasons for the invasion. Hitler had long argued that the large landmass of Eastern Europe was to provide *Lebensraum* ('living space') for ethnic Germans, and would provide useful resources for the war effort. The motivations were also ideological. The Nazis hated communism and considered Russia's Slavic peoples to be racially inferior to Germans.

Despite the fact that Hitler had outlined a plan to invade the Soviet Union in his book, *Mein Kampf*, the Soviets were still caught unprepared for the invasion. Germany won several major battles and captured huge areas of territory, while the Soviet army was forced to retreat. By November 1941, German forces were within striking distance of Moscow, the Soviet capital.

However, the German forces were unable to capture Moscow. They were unprepared for the severity of the Soviet winter and were met by stubborn resistance (see Source 6.21). When the winter of 1941–42 ended and the Germans could manoeuvre again, Hitler directed his forces to southern Russia and its oilfields. Their advance eventually came to a halt at Stalingrad (now known as Volgograd) in September 1942, in a battle that would become one of the bloodiest in history. The German army eventually surrendered at Stalingrad in February 1943. Nevertheless, the Nazi forces still occupied a great area of the USSR, and their control extended over most of continental Europe.

Source 6.21 German troops were defeated as much by the weather as by the Russian troops on the Eastern Front in 1941–42.

Check your learning 6.4

Remember and understand

1. Identify some of the ways in which Germany violated the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.
2. What was the policy of appeasement? In what way did it fail?
3. Why did Hitler claim that the Sudetenland should be returned to Germany?
4. What was the 'Phoney War'? How did it end?

Apply and analyse

5. Who were the 'Rats of Tobruk'? Why were they called that?

Evaluate and create

6. Create a diagram or flowchart to explain how *Blitzkrieg* tactics worked. Why do you think they were so effective?
7. During the Battle of Britain, British fighter pilots were instructed to shoot down German sea rescue planes if they thought those planes were being used for surveillance purposes. According to the Geneva Convention – an agreement signed in 1929, outlining the basic standards of war – this was a crime.
   a. In pairs, conduct research on the Internet into the Geneva Convention and make a list of the rights protected under it.
   b. With your partner, discuss whether shooting down rescue planes is acceptable conduct when your nation is fighting for its survival.
   c. Compare your responses with others in your class. Do you all agree?

SAMPLE

The end of the war in Europe

The tide of war turns in Europe

By 1943, the German *Blitzkrieg* tactics had lost the element of surprise and their wartime success had peaked (see Source 6.22). That year, Britain, the British dominions (including Australia), the USA, the Soviet Union and the Free French Forces formed an alliance to force Germany and its allies into an unconditional surrender.

From 1943, the Soviet army won a series of battles against Germany. By 1945, Germany had been forced out of most of Eastern Europe, with Soviet troops occupying Russia, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia and the Baltic States. The Russians continued their advance into Germany, and reached the German capital, Berlin, in April.

In Western Europe, the Allies began major bombing campaigns on Germany from 1942, initially focusing on destroying German airfields but later bombing industrial cities.

Source 6.23 American troops storming a beach at Normandy, France, on D-Day

EUROPE AND NORTH AFRICA: THE HEIGHT OF AXIS POWER 1942

Source 6.22 Source: Oxford University Press

This campaign failed to significantly affect German morale or industries, and on its own could not win the war. The Allies developed a plan to invade France. On 6 June 1944, around 160 000 Allied troops landed on the beaches of Normandy, in northern France. This operation, known as 'D-Day', led to the liberation of France in August 1944 (see Source 6.23).

The defeat of Germany

In September 1944, Allied ground troops invaded Germany from the west. The Allies continued bombing major German cities, including Berlin. In April, the Soviets encircled Berlin and launched a final assault. Hitler remained in Berlin, to direct the defence of the city from his underground bunker. Although most of Berlin's population was forced to take part in the fighting, the Soviets seized Berlin after a week of fighting in the streets. Hitler committed suicide on 30 April (see Source 6.24), and Germany officially surrendered on 7 May 1945.

keyconcept: contestability

Conflicting reports surrounding Hitler's death

In the years following the defeat of Germany in World War II, there were many reports about Hitler's death and what was done with his body. Numerous conflicting accounts of what actually happened were published in the days and months following the event.

Some reports claimed that Hitler had committed suicide with his wife Eva Braun and that, afterwards, their bodies were burnt. Some reports claimed that the bodies had been buried and were recovered by Soviet troops when Berlin fell and shipped back to Russia. Other reports claimed that Hitler's body was never found at all.

While there was little evidence to support the idea that Hitler had escaped, many alleged sightings of him were reported all around the world in the years following the war. In addition to these reports, the FBI kept detailed records on Hitler for 30 years after the war, and is rumoured to have fully investigated any report that alleged he was still alive.

For more information on the key concept of contestability, refer to section HT.1 in 'The historian's toolkit'.

News Chronicle

HITLER DEAD

Doenitz, new Fuehrer, says: We fight on

WEHRMACHT ORDERED TO MAINTAIN DISCIPLINE

The man who now leads the Third Reich

Bernadotte tells his story

Berlin's garrison herded together in last stand

Hitler's birthplace overrun

All the generals must surrender

FOOD GOING TO DUTCH BY SEA, AIR, ROAD

GERMAN NAVY MAY FIGHT ON

Iller teeth are YOUR concern—

Source 6.24 The front page of the News Chronicle (London), 2 May 1945, announces the death of Adolf Hitler

Check your learning 6.5

Remember and understand

1. Which countries formed an alliance in 1943 in order to try and force Germany and its allies to surrender?
2. Using Source 6.22, list all of the countries that were controlled by the Axis powers by the end of 1942.
3. How did Hitler die?
4. Which country was eventually responsible for the capture of Berlin?
5. When did Germany officially surrender?

Apply and analyse

6. Why do you think that German *Blitzkrieg* tactics were less effective later in the war?
7. Why were there conflicting reports surrounding Hitler's death at the end of the war?

SAMPLE

The course of the war in Asia and the Pacific

Background to Japan's involvement in World War II

Compared to many countries in the Asia–Pacific region during the early 1900s, Japan was a powerful, independent and nationalistic country with a strong army. Unlike many other Asian countries, however, Japan had very limited access to natural resources such as oil, coal, rubber and iron ore for steel production. Instead, it relied on other countries such as China and the USA for these.

Japan had supported the Allies (Britain, France and Russia) during World War I, but it was disappointed by the terms of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. Although Japan was permitted to keep Chinese territory it had seized from Germany during the war, in the years after the war Western powers such as the USA began to limit Japan's influence there.

CHINA: JAPANESE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AT THE START OF WORLD WAR II

Source 6.25 Source: Oxford University Press

The Great Depression of the 1930s caused massive unemployment and major social problems in Japan. This led to a military takeover of the government. The military rulers of Japan took a far more aggressive approach to solving their economic problems. Throughout the inter-war period, Japanese politics was dominated by nationalist and militarist movements. Out of these movements came the idea of a 'Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere'. This was the idea that East Asia could exist free of Western influence. It proposed that Japan act as the leader of a bloc of Asian and Pacific nations working together. In reality though, it was designed to allow Japan greater influence and access to oil and rubber resources in neighbouring countries. In 1936, Japan signed an agreement with Germany known as the Anti-Comintern Pact. The following year, Japan invaded China (see Source 6.25). Finally, in 1940, Japan signed the Tripartite Pact, which cemented the alliance of the Axis powers (Germany, Italy and Japan).

Despite the fact that Japan's invasion of China was in 1937 and the signing of these pacts took place before the war, these events are generally considered to be part of World War II. However, the event that has come to symbolise Japan's entry into World War II is the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Source 6.26 The bombing of Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941

Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor

When World War II began in Europe, the attention of Britain, France, the USA and even Australia was diverted away from Japan. Despite evidence of Japanese aggression, there was still a belief that the Japanese did not pose a significant threat.

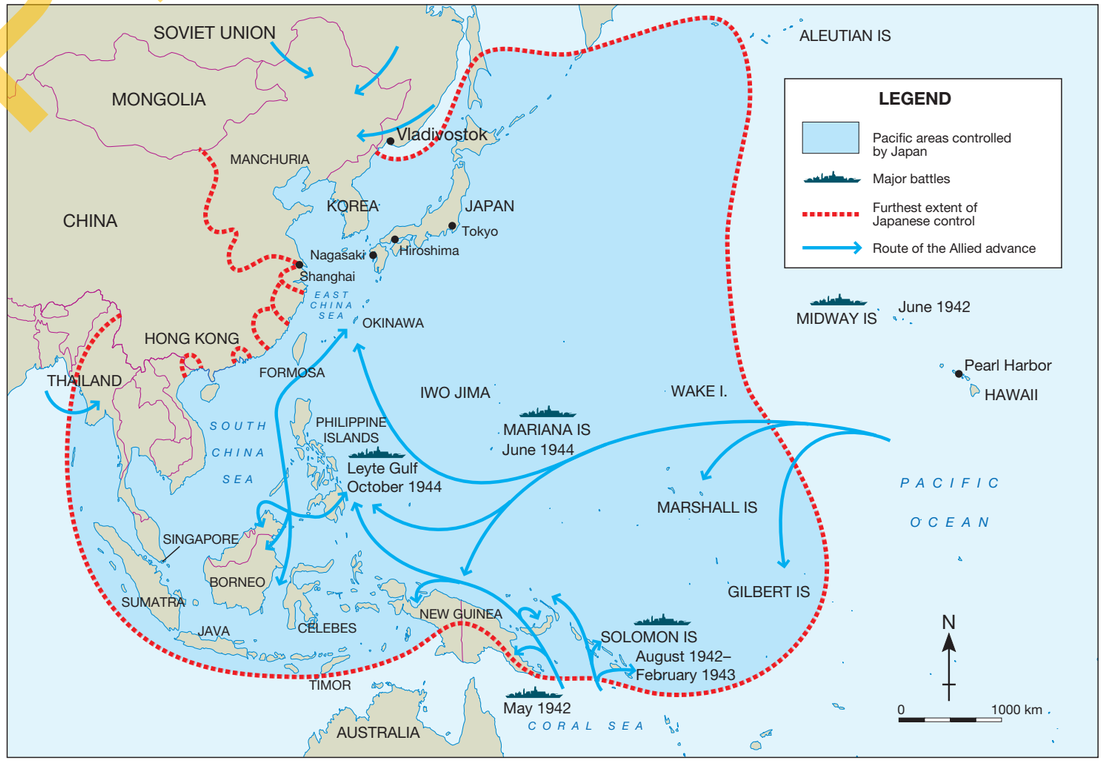
The attack on the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on 7 December 1941 changed this (see Source 6.26). It alerted the Allies to the nature of the Japanese threat. Japan hoped to destroy America's Pacific fleet, as a preventative strike to stop American interference in the Pacific. While the attack on Pearl Harbor seemed to be successful, the damage inflicted on the American fleet was less than originally thought. Rather than preventing American intervention, the attack caused the USA, Australia and the Netherlands to declare war on Japan. Germany (an ally of Japan) declared war on the USA. This brought the USA into the European war.

War in the Pacific

For the first two years of the war, Japan appeared to have the upper hand. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japanese forces quickly occupied Malaya, Singapore, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Guam and Wake Island. Malaya was attacked by the Japanese for its rubber resources, quinine was taken from Java and Borneo was raided for its oil – all resources that were much needed for battle.

Japan also conquered Burma in the west, and pushed south through French Indochina (Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos) and the Dutch East Indies to reach Australia's doorstep in New Guinea (see Source 6.27). Britain and the USA had seriously underestimated Japan's military ability. This, together with the element of surprise and the imaginative use of combined naval and air forces by the Japanese, gave Japan an early advantage.

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC: THE JAPANESE EMPIRE IN 1942



Source 6.27 Source: Oxford University Press

SAMPLE

The fall of Singapore

Singapore surrendered to the Japanese on 15 February 1942, and more than 130000 allied troops, including 15000 Australians, became Japanese prisoners of war. Controversially, a small number of soldiers, including the Australian commander Gordon Bennett, escaped on ships to avoid capture.

The fall of Singapore caused great concern in Australia. Singapore had been regarded as almost impossible to invade, and strong British presence there prior to 1942 had meant that Australia felt protected. The defeat of the British base in Singapore meant that there was nothing to stop the Japanese advance into Australia. Australia's leaders realised that they could no longer depend on Britain, and that they needed new allies against Japan.

Source 6.28

> I make it quite clear that Australia looks to America, free of any pangs as to our traditional links of kinship with the United Kingdom … We know the problems that the United Kingdom faces. We know the constant threat of invasion … but we know too that Australia can go, and Britain can still hold on … We are therefore determined that Australia shall not go, and we shall exert all our energies towards the shaping of a plan, with the United States as its keystone, which will give our country confidence of being able to hold out until the tide of battle swings against the enemy.
>
> Australian Prime Minister John Curtin, quoted in the Melbourne *Herald*, 27 December 1941

The Battle for northern Australia

The fall of Singapore brought the war much closer to Australia than had ever been anticipated. From December 1941, there began an evacuation of women and children from Darwin and surrounding areas in fear of a Japanese attack. On 19 February 1942, Japan launched an assault on Darwin (see Source 6.30). Officially, around 250 people were killed, although the real death toll continues to be debated. Most other Australians were unaware of the seriousness of the attack. The government played down the bombing and the number of deaths. A Royal Commission into the events surrounding the attack revealed that some people, including members of the defence forces, had panicked under fire. There were also stories that some people had looted bombed buildings or simply fled the city.

By November 1943, Darwin had suffered 64 air raids. Other towns in the Northern Territory, Queensland and Western Australia were also struck. In total, there were 97 airborne attacks on northern Australia and approximately 900 Allied

Source 6.29 A propaganda poster used to rally Australian support following the Japanese attack on Darwin (AWM ART09225)

troops and civilians were killed. Several ships and almost 80 aircraft were lost. Many people felt that the bombing of Darwin was the beginning of a full-scale invasion of Australia, but whether this is the case or not remains a controversial topic.

War comes to Sydney Harbour

On 31 May 1942, three Japanese midget submarines, launched from a group of five larger submarines further out to sea, entered Sydney Harbour. The submarines sank a ferry carrying military personnel. Twenty-one people were killed before Australian forces sank the submarines. A week later, two larger submarines surfaced off the coast at Bondi, shelling several Sydney suburbs and the nearby city of Newcastle. While little damage was done, the appearance of Japanese vessels emphasised to Australians that the war was now much closer to home.

Turning points

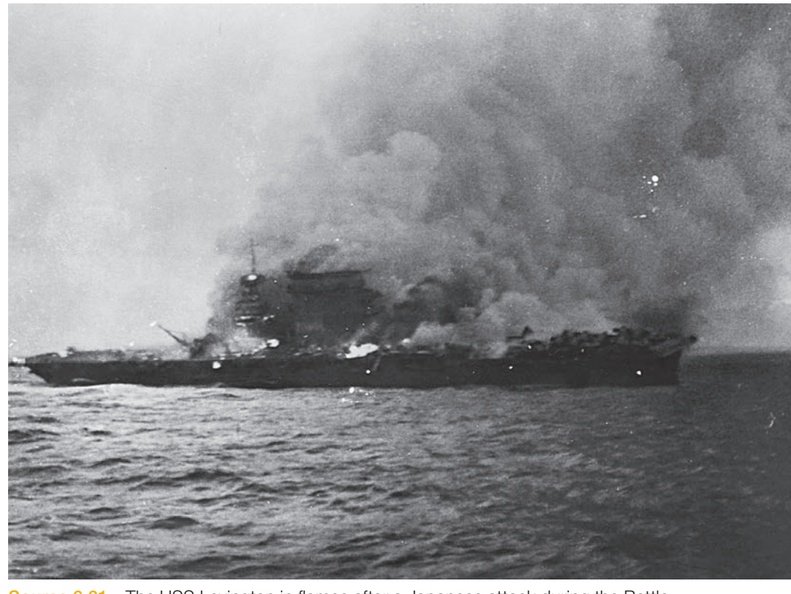
In March 1942, Japanese forces established bases on mainland New Guinea, with the objective of capturing Port Moresby. From there, they could launch regular bomber raids against northern Australia. With this threat looming, Prime Minister Curtin agreed to place all Australian forces under the command of the American General Douglas MacArthur, formerly the commander of the US-controlled Philippines. While American forces were assembling in Australia, and the battle-hardened soldiers of the Second AIF were returning to defend Australia, it was left to inexperienced Australian militia units to stop the Japanese advance to Port Moresby.

Several battles are identified as key turning points in the Asia–Pacific war zone. At sea the most significant were the Battle of the Coral Sea and the Battle of Midway. Both involved the navies of the USA and Australia in cooperative ventures.

The Battle of the Coral Sea (4–8 May 1942) was fought off the north-east coast of Queensland, just south of New Guinea. Although the Allies suffered a number of casualties (see Source 6.31), it prevented the Japanese from launching a sea-based assault on Port Moresby. This forced them to make a land-based assault via the Kokoda Trail.

In the Battle of Midway (4–7 June 1942) Japanese naval forces attempted to lure several US aircraft carriers into a trap to capture the strategically important Midway Islands. US code-breakers intercepted Japanese communications. The US Navy destroyed four Japanese aircraft carriers and more than 200 aircraft, severely weakening the Japanese war machine. The USA would use this weakness to prevent supply ships taking war materials, such as oil, munitions and food to Japanese forces in the region. Historians have described the Battle of Midway as 'the most stunning and decisive blow in the history of naval warfare'.

Source 6.30 Bomb damage to the Darwin post office and surrounding buildings as a result of the first Japanese air raid



Source 6.31 The USS Lexington in flames after a Japanese attack during the Battle of the Coral Sea, 1942

SAMPLE

The Kokoda campaign

Japanese forces occupied parts of the north-east of New Guinea in early 1942. As the Japanese navy was halted at the Battle of the Coral Sea, Japan's only option to seize Port Moresby seemed to be an overland assault through dense jungle along a narrow path known as the Kokoda Trail.

The Kokoda Trail (sometimes called the Kokoda Track) is a roughly 96-kilometre-long narrow path in New Guinea, connecting Port Moresby to the village of Kokoda (see Source 6.32). Surrounded by steep mountains and jungle, the trail was frequently a river of sticky mud, and it was extremely slippery.

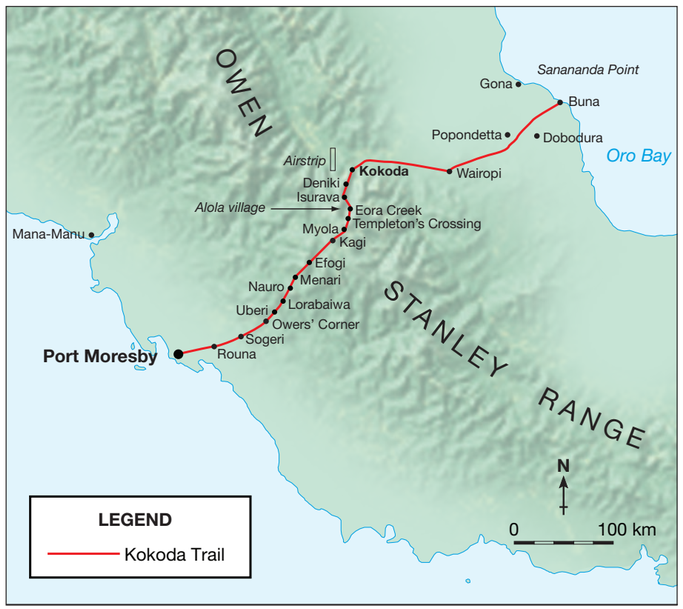
As the risk of a Japanese attack on Port Moresby increased, a military force had to be assembled. Because most Australian troops had been fighting for more than two years in Africa and the Middle East, or had been captured as prisoners of war in the Fall of Singapore, a new group of soldiers had to be assembled. Military leaders gathered a group of volunteers from the Citizen's Military Forces (CMF) and local Papuan soldiers. They became known as Maroubra Force. These troops were young, inexperienced and underprepared for frontline combat. They received little training in jungle warfare, and were equipped with old, outdated weapons. By mid-1942, however, more experienced officers were sent to support the young soldiers.

Some units were kept around Port Moresby in reserve, while a smaller force was posted to the village of Kokoda in July 1942. They were sent to defend the airfield there. It took eight days and nights to reach Kokoda, with the troops arriving on 15 July.

The first clash of the Kokoda campaign occurred on 23 July, when a small Australian platoon slowed the Japanese advance across the Kumusi River, before falling back to Kokoda. On 29 July, 80 men defended Kokoda against a Japanese attack, suffering heavy casualties as they engaged in hand-to-hand fighting. The next morning, they retreated further along the trail to the village of Deniki. They suffered heavy casualties attempting to retake Kokoda on 8 August, as well as during the retreat along the trail. This retreat was followed by a two-week break in the fighting, when the survivors met with reserves from Port Moresby and prepared to defend the trail at Isurava.

The Battle of Isurava was a major turning point in the Kokoda campaign. Maroubra Force defended the trail valiantly, but was outnumbered and suffered heavy casualties on the first day of battle. At Isurava, however, the first substantial reinforcements from the AIF began to arrive, providing a vital boost for the depleted Maroubra Force. The battle lasted four days, before the Australians had to retreat further, mounting small-scale delaying actions along the way.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA: THE KOKODA TRAIL



Source 6.32 Source: Oxford University Press

Source 6.33 Steps on the Kokoda Trail (AWM 026821)

Further battles took place at Mission Ridge and Imita Ridge, before the Japanese troops began to run out of supplies and their advance stalled. In October, Australian troops launched a counterattack along the trail, gradually forcing the Japanese back. By 2 November, Kokoda was back in Allied hands. Months of hard fighting lay ahead before the Allies could shift the Japanese from their bases at Buna and Gona.

Approximately 625 Australians were killed fighting along the Kokoda Trail, while at least 16000 were wounded. More than 4000 also suffered from serious illnesses such as malaria. In the immediate aftermath of the campaign, members of Maroubra Force were hailed as 'the men who saved Australia'. The campaign also had an immediate impact on the organisation of both the American and Australian armies. The Australian troops on the trail had been poorly supplied because of the unreliability of air drops. Both the Australian and American militaries developed new techniques for dropping supplies after their experiences at Kokoda.

The drive to Japan

With increased US involvement in the Pacific, Japan became drawn into a war of **attrition**, meaning that both sides attempted to wear each other down to the point of collapse (even though forces and supplies were depleted). Under pressure to replace its depleted forces, particularly after the disastrous Battle of Midway, Japan threw inexperienced recruits into the frontlines. Japan's war industries could not keep up with demand for replacement ships and aircraft. Japan gradually lost the resources to undertake major offensives. With Japan on the back foot, the Allies made two successful counterattacks in 1943.

For the remainder of the war, Australia's role changed. The involvement of the Australian military was decreased, and more emphasis was placed on moving Australians into war-related industries and production. Australia's task was often seen as providing other nations with the food and resources needed to defeat Japan and Germany. Despite this, many Australians continued to be involved overseas.

By late 1944, American B-29 bombers had bases from which they could strike Japan's home islands. These raids were highly effective because most Japanese buildings, made of paper and wood, burned easily. On 8 March 1945, a single raid on Tokyo killed 83000 people, mainly civilians. As US forces got closer to mainland Japan, they found that the Japanese defence was becoming tougher and more desperate. Japanese *Kamikaze* pilots would carry out suicide missions, crashing their planes into US ships. The US government, in an attempt to bring the war to a swift end, began to consider new options, including the use of nuclear weapons (discussed in section 6.2).

Check your learning 6.6

Remember and understand

1 Which nations were involved in the Tripartite Pact?
2 What was Japan's main reason for attacking Pearl Harbor?
3 Why was the attack on Pearl Harbor less successful than initially thought?

Apply and analyse

4 Using Source 6.27 identify and locate the countries and areas taken over by the Japanese between 1937 and 1942.
5 In your own words, explain why the fall of Singapore was such a significant event for Australians.
6 Analyse Source 6.28. What was Prime Minister Curtin saying about Australia's changing relationship with Britain and the United States?

Evaluate and create

7 Research the experiences of Australian **prisoners of war** (**POWs**) in the Pacific, and the experiences of Soviet POWs in Germany and Eastern Europe. Prepare a PowerPoint presentation that compares and contrasts the experiences of the two groups.
8 During the fall of Singapore, the Australian commander Gordon Bennett escaped the city and returned to Australia after a difficult two-week journey. Bennett believed that it was his duty to escape, and was initially praised by the Australian Prime Minister John Curtin. The vast majority of the soldiers under Bennett's command became Japanese prisoners of war, and many of them were killed. Using the information provided, and your own research, complete the following tasks:
   a Discuss with a partner whether Bennett's actions were justified.
   b Research General Douglas MacArthur's escape from the Philippines to Australia. Can you see any similarities between the two escapes? What are the important differences?

SAMPLE

Significant individuals: wartime leaders

During times of war, political and military leaders assume more prominent roles than they do during peacetime. As a result, they are often held responsible for the success or failure of wars.

Initially, these leaders decide whether to declare war or remain neutral. They also decide how many troops to commit. They are also ultimately responsible for the actions of their troops, including the responsibility for upholding the laws of warfare. In World War II, the Allied leaders had monumental decisions to make, and had to accept the consequences of their actions. The political and military leaders discussed here are among the most significant individuals of the Allied forces.

President of the United States – Harry Truman

Franklin D Roosevelt was President of the USA for most of the war. When Roosevelt died on 12 April 1945, Truman became President. It was only then that Truman was briefed on the ultra-secret Manhattan Project – the research and development plan for the atomic bomb. In July 1945, Truman joined the other Allied leaders for the Potsdam Conference. While there, he was informed that the atomic bomb had been successfully tested. At Potsdam, the Allied leaders agreed on the terms of surrender to be offered to Japan. When Japan rejected these terms, Truman authorised atomic strikes on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These bombings forced Japan to unconditionally surrender. Despite the consequences of the bombings, Truman never publically regretted his decision, and said that 'under the same circumstances, I would do it again'.

Source 6.34 Harry Truman

Prime Minister of Great Britain – Winston Churchill

Churchill had been involved in politics since 1900, and was military strategist behind the disastrous Dardanelles campaign (including the Australian attack at Gallipoli) during World War I. He held several different positions between the wars, and became a vocal critic of the policy of appeasement during the late 1930s. He was appointed to the War Cabinet by Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain on the day Britain declared war on Germany, and became Prime Minister in May 1940. Churchill's main contribution to the war effort was to maintain the morale of the British people through his rhetoric and charisma, steering the nation through the Battle of Britain, the Blitz and the D-Day landings. Despite his popularity as a wartime leader, he was defeated in the 1945 elections. He served a second term as British prime minister between 1950 and 1955.

Source 6.35 Winston Churchill

Premier of the Soviet Union – Joseph Stalin

Stalin joined the Bolsheviks (a militant communist organisation) in 1903, and became the organisation's main operative in his home region of Georgia. When the Bolshevik Revolution installed a communist government in Russia in 1917, Stalin became an increasingly important political figure. By World War II, Stalin was the Premier and undisputed leader of the Soviet Union. He signed a non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany in 1939, which also divided Eastern Europe into German and Soviet spheres of influence, but then Germany invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, starting the war on the Eastern Front. Stalin proved to be a ruthless negotiator at the wartime and post-war conferences, and laid the groundwork for the 'Sovietisation' of Eastern Europe and the Cold War.

Source 6.36 Joseph Stalin

French General – Charles De Gaulle

Charles de Gaulle held no official government role. When World War II broke out, he was a colonel in the French army. When his unit achieved a rare victory during the Battle of France, the French Prime Minister, Paul Reynaud, appointed de Gaulle to his War Cabinet. In this role, de Gaulle argued against surrendering to Germany. When France surrendered, de Gaulle rejected the decision and fled to Britain to continue fighting. De Gaulle frequently clashed with the other Allied leaders. Despite this, he proved a charismatic and intelligent leader. His Free French Forces continued to grow, and eventually merged with the French Army of Africa in 1943. By the time of the D-Day landings, Free French Forces numbered 400 000 men. They played a significant part in the liberation of France, and de Gaulle assumed the role of Prime Minister of the Provisional Republic of France from 1944 to 1946.

Source 6.37 Charles de Gaulle

Check your learning 6.7

Remember and understand

1 Did President Harry Truman regret his decision to authorise the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Why did he authorise the bombings?

2 What was different about Charles de Gaulle's role as an Allied leader?

Evaluate and create

3 Conduct further research on one of these Allied leaders, covering the following:
- a Identify how he came to power.
- b Decide what you think his most significant decision during World War II was.
- c Analyse his importance after World War II.

SAMPLE

6.1big**ideas:** rich task

The Kokoda campaign

The Kokoda campaign was arguably the most significant military campaign in Australia's history. Although it is generally accepted that Japan did not plan to invade mainland Australia during World War II, this was a real fear at the time. Given the limited information available to them, the soldiers of Maroubra Force believed they were fighting the 'battle to save Australia'. Had the soldiers of Maroubra Force not held back the Japanese advance in New Guinea, the war in the Pacific would have gone on for much longer, and cost even more lives.

The campaign is made even more incredible by the conditions in which it was fought. Sources 6.38 and 6.39 provide an insight into the experiences of soldiers on the Kokoda Trail.

Source 6.38

They'd wish they were down with Satan, instead of this hell on earth,
Straining, sweating, swearing, climbing the mountain side,
'Just five minutes to the top'; my God how that fellow lied,
Splashing through mud and water, stumbling every yard
One falls by the wayside when the going is extra hard

Extract from 'The Crossing of the Owen Stanley Range', by Private H McLaren

Source 6.39

You are trying to survive, shirt torn, arse out of your pants, whiskers a mile long, hungry and a continuous line of stretchers with wounded carried by 'Fuzzy-Wuzzies' doing a marvellous job. Some days you carry your boots because there's no skin on your feet …

Private Laurie Howson, 39th Battalion, diary entry

Despite the significance of the Kokoda campaign in World War II, the Gallipoli campaign of World War I is usually remembered as Australia's proudest battle. Over time, Gallipoli and Anzac Day have become the main focus of public commemoration and remembrance. Some historians and critics now argue that Kokoda would be a more appropriate focus of national commemoration than Gallipoli. They suggest that the Kokoda campaign was fought in defence of Australia, whereas Gallipoli was an invasion of a foreign nation that posed no threat to Australia. Some people also argue that the 'Kokoda spirit' is more relevant to modern Australia than the 'Anzac spirit'.

Source 6.40 A still from the film *Kokoda: 39th Battalion* showing members of the 39th battalion on the Kokoda Trail

skill**drill**

Writing a historical discussion

Historical discussions present different opinions about particular historical questions or issues. Follow these steps to write your own historical discussion.

Step 1 Consider evidence from a range of sources, and outline different possible interpretations of that evidence.

- Consider various primary sources – such as newspapers, photographs or political and legal documents from the period being studied.
- Also consider the ideas of other historians, presented in secondary sources such as textbooks and websites.

Step 2 You need to mention in your writing where information is coming from. Some examples of how you can do this include:

- 'According to the historian Peter Williams …'
- 'The depiction of Australian soldiers' experiences in Alister Grierson's film *Kokoda: 39th Battalion* shows that …'

Step 3 Conclude with your own point of view on the question or issue.

Source 6.41 Summary of the structure of a written discussion

Introduction	• Introduces the topic, question or issue • Outlines why the topic, question or issue is important
Main body	• A series of paragraphs that outline different arguments or opinions about the topic, question or issue • Each opinion or argument that is presented should also refer to the evidence which supports it
Conclusion	• Sums up the issue and gives the writer's opinion

Step 4 Include a bibliography that references all sources used in the discussion. When citing a book in a bibliography, include the following information, in this order:

- Author surname(s) and initial(s)
- Year of publication
- Title of book (in italics)
- Edition (if relevant)
- Publisher
- Place of publication
- Page number(s)

Example:

Braga, S, 2004, *Kokoda Commander: The Life of Major-General 'Tubby' Allen*, Oxford University Press, pp 83–84.

When citing an online source in a bibliography, include the following information, if available:

- Author surname(s) and initial(s) or organisation name
- Year of publication or date of web page (last update)
- Title of document (article) enclosed in quotation marks
- Organisation name (if different from above)
- Date you accessed the site
- URL or web address enclosed in angle brackets

Example:

James, K, 2009, 'The track: a historical desktop study of the Kokoda Track', Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, accessed 10 July 2013 <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/publications/pubs/awm-kokoda-report.pdf>

Apply the skill

1 Write a 500-word historical discussion on the following topic:

'Kokoda was Australia's most successful and significant military campaign and should be commemorated as such.'

Use the information and sources in this section together with your own research to locate a range of primary and secondary sources of information which provide evidence about the significance of Kokoda. Make sure you include a bibliography that references all your sources using the conventions outlined above.

Extend your understanding

1 What was significant about the units that made up Maroubra Force at the start of the Kokoda campaign?

2 Use the sources in this section as well as information you have located through research to write a paragraph describing the conditions in which the soldiers fought along the Kokoda Trail.

3 Research the 'Fuzzy-Wuzzies' mentioned by Private Howson in Source 6.39.

a What role did they play in the Kokoda campaign?

b Has the contribution of the Papua New Guineans to the campaign been officially recognised?

c Imagine you have been asked by the Australian Government to design a new war memorial for the Papua New Guineans. Design a plan for an appropriate memorial, considering: appropriate symbols, where your memorial will be built, the materials you would use, and the message you want your memorial to send.

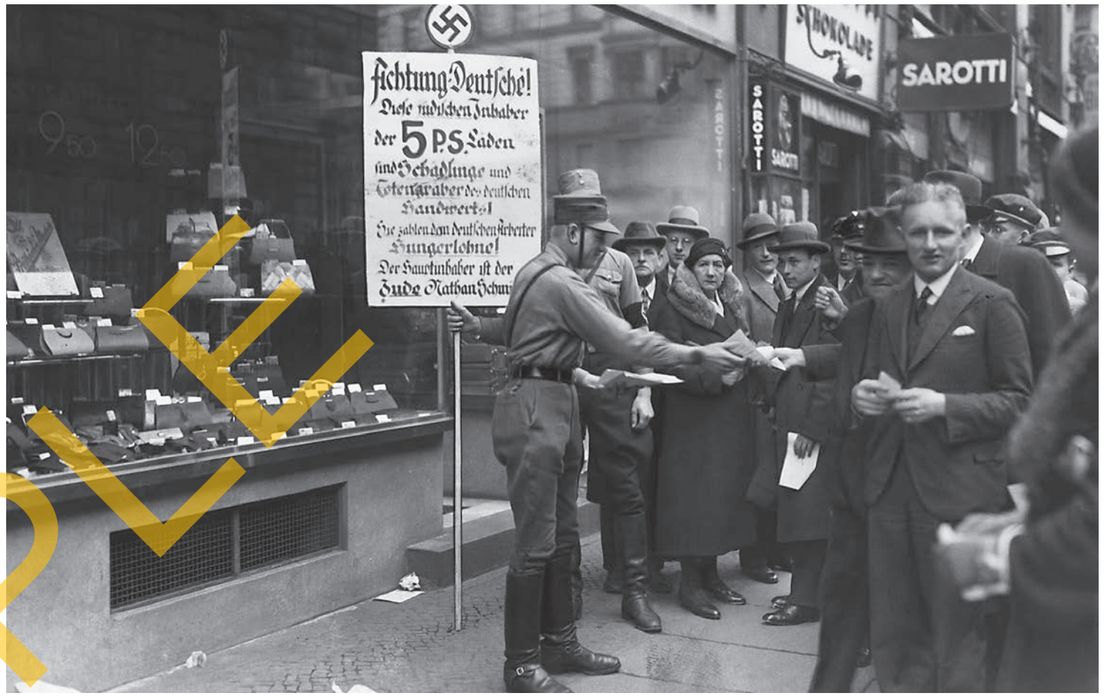
SAMPLE

6.2 What were some of the most significant events of World War II?

The Holocaust

In 1933, it is estimated that the Jewish population of Europe stood at around 11 million. By the end of the war in 1945, it is estimated that more than six million Jews had died at the hands of the Nazis. To put this into perspective, more than half of all European Jews were killed. This systematic, government-endorsed persecution and murder of Jews took place throughout the Nazi-occupied territories under the command of Adolf Hitler. It is among the most brutal and destructive policies of the 20th century, and is referred to as the **Holocaust**. Hundreds of thousands of German military and civilian personnel were involved in the mass murder. Millions more collaborated or accepted these events without protest. The word 'Holocaust' is of Greek origin and means 'sacrificed by fire' or 'burnt'. Out of respect for the dead, Jewish communities today use the Hebrew word ***Shoah*** instead, meaning 'catastrophe'.

Source 6.42 The conical-shaped Hall of Names in the Holocaust History Museum in the Yad Vashem Holocaust complex in Israel – the Hall of Names shows around 600 portraits of Jewish Holocaust victims



Source 6.43 Nazi storm troopers (also known as brownshirts) outside a Jewish business, directing people to shop elsewhere, 1933

Beginnings of the Holocaust

The origins of the Holocaust can be traced back further than Adolf Hitler's lifetime. Anti-Semitism has its origins in the ancient world, and was rife throughout Europe in the Middle Ages.

In the 1880s, the **eugenics** movement became popular. Eugenics, a practice that aimed to 'improve' the human gene pool by controlling the types of people giving birth to children, was taught as a subject at many universities. For a time, eugenics was supported by people like Winston Churchill, and was government policy in countries such as the United States. By the 1930s the popularity of the eugenics movement was declining, but the Nazi Party's policies were heavily influenced by its ideas.

Hitler outlined the development of his anti-Semitism and even some of his proposed policies towards Jews in his book *Mein Kampf*. Many of these beliefs were borrowed from the eugenics movement. He declared that 'the personification of the devil as the symbol of all evil assumes the living shape of the Jew'. *Mein Kampf* also outlined Hitler's hatred of communism, and his belief that Germany would have to expand east to provide *Lebensraum* ('living space') for ethnic Germans. The seeds of Hitler's cruel and murderous policies were present in his ideology at least a decade before he became Chancellor of Germany in 1933.

Within months of coming to power, Hitler also introduced a law that allowed the compulsory sterilisation of people with mental or physical disabilities. In other words, anyone who was disabled (a broad definition of 'disabled' was used, ranging from schizophrenia, to deafness, to alcoholism) could be legally forced to have an operation to ensure they could not have children. More than 400 000 people were sterilised and around 5000 died as a result of these operations. Another 70 000 were killed under a related euthanasia program.

Anti-Semitism and eugenics eventually combined in Germany's racial policies. As well as violence against Jews and boycotts of Jewish businesses (see Source 6.43), the government refused to grant German citizenship to Jews and sought to remove all Jews from the government, the legal professions and universities. Laws limited the number of Jewish students allowed in public schools, banned Jews from many public places, expelled Jewish officers from the army, and transferred ownership of many Jewish businesses to non-Jewish Germans.

SAMPLE

As Hitler's policies began to take hold, many Jews (and Germans) refused to believe the reality of what was taking place around them. Some, including the famous scientist Albert Einstein, left Germany. Others believed that they would be protected because they were German citizens. By the time the reality dawned, they had been stripped of their citizenship and, often, the avenues of escape had been closed to them.

In 1938 there was a wave of violence directed against Jewish synagogues, businesses and houses across Germany. It was known as *Kristallnacht* or the 'Night of Broken Glass'. While there is no doubt that this was organised by the Nazis, Hitler claimed that it was a spontaneous attack by German people, and that it showed the depth of anti-Jewish feeling. The Nazi regime was widely criticised in the international press as a result of *Kristallnacht*.

Source 6.44 A cloth Star of David badge that Jews were required to wear in public – the word 'Jude' means 'Jew' in German

Spread of anti-Semitism and the formation of ghettos

Soon after the invasion of Poland in 1939, **ghettos** were set up in Nazi-occupied territories, such as Poland, Hungary and the Soviet Union. Ghettos were small areas of larger cities that were used to isolate Jews from the rest of the population. They were bricked off or encircled with barbed wire to stop people from escaping. Over the course of the war, many Jewish people were rounded up and forced to leave their homes and move into ghettos. One of the largest ghettos was in Warsaw, Poland (see Source 6.46). Conditions inside the ghetto were extremely brutal. It was

Source 6.45 A Jewish youth selling Star of David armbands in Warsaw

very crowded and there was often no running water, or toilet facilities. Jews were often not allowed to leave the ghetto and had to depend on the few rations provided by the Nazis. One survivor described the Warsaw ghetto as 'a prison without a roof'. Approximately 800 000 Jews died in the ghettos from malnutrition, disease and forced labour. Others were murdered outright by shooting.

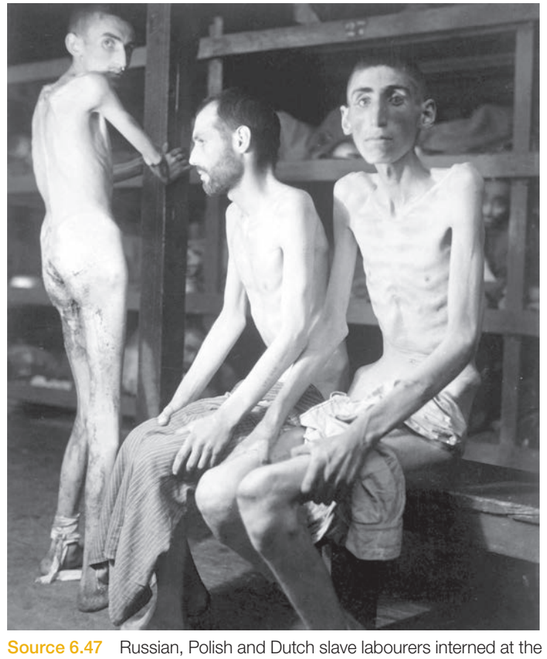
Although the principal victims of the Holocaust were European Jews, Nazi policies also targeted other segments of society, such as Sinta and Romani peoples (often referred to as Gypsies) as well as homosexuals and people with physical or intellectual disabilities. Between 200 000 and 500 000 Sinta and Romani peoples alone were killed by the Nazis. These criminal actions were later labelled **genocide** – the deliberate attempt to wipe out a religious, racial or ethnic group. Nazi occupation policies, particularly in Eastern and Central Europe, were also brutal. In Poland and the Soviet Union, for instance, they resulted in the deaths of millions of civilians.

Source 6.46 The clearing of Jews from the Warsaw ghetto in Poland in 1943. Towards the end of the war, German troops cleared ghettos and transported those living in them to concentration camps either to work or to be killed.

Concentration camps

In addition to the formation of ghettos in large cities to confine Jews and other 'undesirables', the Nazi government used existing concentration camps in Germany and built many new camps throughout the occupied territories, mostly in Poland. The exact number of concentration camps is not known; however, it is generally accepted that there were between 2000 and 8000 camps.

The camps varied in character. Some were forced labour camps where inmates were compelled to do hard physical labour such as mining and road building under harsh conditions (see Source 6.47). Others were prisoner of war camps where Allied soldiers were held and often tortured in order to reveal secret information. Still others functioned as extermination camps designed for the sole purpose of murdering. Many camps, however, served a combination of these functions. The best known and largest of these camps was Auschwitz–Birkenau, where inmates considered unsuitable for forced labour were gassed and their bodies burnt in crematoria (giant ovens – see Source 6.48). More than one million Jews alone were murdered at Auschwitz.



Source 6.47 Russian, Polish and Dutch slave labourers interned at the Buchenwald concentration camp had an average weight of 75 kilograms each before entering camp. Eleven months later, when this photograph was taken, their average weight had dropped to 31 kilograms.

SAMPLE

Source 6.48 Crematoria where the remains of people killed at Buchenwald concentration camp were cremated

Mass shootings

With the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, Nazi policy towards the Jews began to move into its most extreme phase. Between the start of the invasion and early 1943, roughly 1.6 million eastern European Jews were executed in mass killing campaigns that were conducted by members of the *Einsatzgruppen* (mobile killing squads). Local collaborators, the SS (Hitler's elite forces) and some members of the *Wehrmacht* (German armed forces) also participated in this extermination. The process generally involved rounding up the members of a local Jewish community and executing them in an area close to their homes. On 29–30 September 1941 at Babi Yar, near the city of Kiev, 33 771 Jews were executed. This phase of the Holocaust was the most public, and rumours of executions began to spread in the occupied areas and in Germany itself.

The 'Final Solution'

In January 1942, at a meeting in the city of Wannsee near Berlin, leading Nazi officials identified a process to achieve a 'final solution to the Jewish question'. The aim was to eliminate the estimated 11 million European Jews. This 'Final Solution' combined forced deportation and transportation of Jews to labour camps before extermination.

Historians generally agree that around three million Jews were killed in concentration and extermination camps, while another three million died in other violent or oppressive circumstances outside the camps. All six million deaths were a result of Nazi extermination policies. Many other non-Jewish inmates died of maltreatment, disease and starvation.

Source 6.49 Polish prisoners dig graves for their fellow prisoners after a mass execution by the Nazis, 1941

The Holocaust's legacy

More than 6 million of Europe's 11 million Jews were killed in a deliberate campaign of extermination during the Holocaust. Some survivors endured slave labour in the various camps. Many others hid or were protected by sympathetic non-Jews. There were also those who took up arms against the Nazis, such as the Jewish Combat Organisation whose members led uprisings in some of the major ghettos.

After the war, many European Jews migrated to other countries, including Australia, where they have established vibrant new communities. After enduring the horrors of the Holocaust, many Jews wished to join their fellow Jews who were already living in their ancient homeland. So, in November 1947, the United Nations endorsed the establishment of an independent Jewish state in what became known as Israel (see 'Foundation of the United Nations' in section 6.3). Israel declared its independence in May 1948.

The horrors of the mass murders and other atrocities committed by the Nazis shocked people all around the world. After World War II, the nations of the world were determined to prevent such grave crimes from ever happening again or, at least, ensuring that people committing such crimes would not go unpunished. The facts and lessons of these events are commemorated in Holocaust museums that have been established in many countries, while memoirs and films communicate the Jewish experience of the *Shoah* to the world. New international treaties on human rights, the humane treatment of civilians in times of war, sanctuary for refugees and the elimination of racial discrimination have come into effect since the events of the Holocaust. These treaties, such as the Declaration of Human Rights, recognise the inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human race as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

Source 6.50 These are the tracks along which trains took people to their death at the Auschwitz–Birkenau concentration camp in Oswiecim, Poland

Check your learning 6.8

Remember and understand

1 What does the word 'Holocaust' mean? What term do Jewish communities use to refer to the Holocaust?
2 What was the eugenics movement? How popular was it?
3 What were some of the laws implemented during Nazi Germany to persecute Jews?
4 Apart from Jews who else was persecuted by the Nazis?
5 Explain the difference between concentration camps and extermination camps.
6 What was the 'Final Solution' and how was it carried out?
7 Why do some sources say that there were six million victims of the Holocaust, and some say 11 million?
8 What are some of the ways in which people have ensured that the events of the Holocaust will not be forgotten?

Apply and analyse

9 Hitler outlined his anti-Semitic attitudes in his book *Mein Kampf*, and introduced anti-Semitic policies after coming to power in 1933. Why do you think that so few Jews fled Germany before it was too late?

Evaluate and create

10 Some Holocaust survivors who spent time in the Auschwitz–Birkenau camp have said that the people who were sent to the gas chambers were the 'lucky ones'. Conduct some research into the conditions faced by Auschwitz prisoners. Why do you think survivors have made these types of statements?

SAMPLE

The atomic bombings

In addition to the horrific events of the Holocaust, the dropping of the atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which effectively ended the war, is remembered as one of most significant events of World War II.

The development of more sophisticated technology in World War II culminated in the invention of the atomic bomb. In spite of the horrific bombing raids experienced in Europe during the war, the use of nuclear weapons remains a symbol of the terrifying force and destructive effects of war. The use of the two bombs that successfully ended the war also marked the beginning of the Cold War and the ever-present threat of nuclear destruction.

Source 6.51 Robert Oppenheimer and General Leslie Groves (centre) examine the wreckage of the tower and shack that held the first nuclear weapon, 11 September 1945

The Potsdam Declaration

Following the end of the war in Europe, the Allies turned their attention to the war in the Pacific – with the goal of forcing Japan to surrender. At the Potsdam Conference in July 1945, the Allied leaders issued the Potsdam Declaration to Japan. This was an ultimatum, threatening that if Japan did not unconditionally surrender it would face 'prompt and utter destruction'.

The Manhattan Project

The Manhattan Project was the name given to the research program that developed the first atomic bomb. It had its origins in a letter from two of the world's leading physicists, Leo Szilard and Albert Einstein, that was sent to President Franklin D Roosevelt in 1939. The letter outlined their fears that Nazi Germany was beginning research into atomic bombs, and recommended that the USA should begin its own nuclear program. Roosevelt accepted their proposal, and began funding secret research into atomic energy. In 1942, the research program was placed under the command of the American military, and became the Manhattan Project.

Even before the USA entered World War II, it was dedicating huge resources to the Manhattan Project. By 1944, approximately 129000 people were working on the Manhattan Project, including scientists, construction workers and military personnel. Included was a physicist named Robert Oppenheimer (see Source 6.51) who became known as the 'father of the atomic bomb' for his role in the project.

After three years of using their research to develop a weapon, members of the Manhattan Project tested the first atomic bomb on 16 July 1945, in New Mexico. This test was codenamed 'Trinity'.

The Trinity test was extremely successful. At the time it was the largest man-made explosion in history. The shock wave made by the explosion was felt up to 160 kilometres away. The test observers immediately contacted President Harry Truman, who was at the Potsdam Conference, and told him that they had been successful. The following month, two other atomic bombs developed by the Manhattan Project were dropped on Hiroshima (on 6 August, 1945) and Nagasaki (on 9 August, 1945) Japan, in what history would record as the last major acts of World War II.

The Japan campaign

In mid-1945, Japan was losing the war in the Pacific. America had recaptured the Mariana Islands and the Philippines, and Japan was running out of resources.

The Japan campaign began with a series of minor air raids. These raids soon developed into a major strategic firebombing campaign in late 1944, which involved dropping large numbers of small bombs designed to start fires. The change to firebombing tactics resulted in devastating attacks on 67 Japanese cities, killing as many as 500000 people. Despite the damage and the huge civilian death toll, the Japanese military refused to surrender.

America therefore continued to push towards the Japanese Home Islands (the islands that the Allies had decided would be the extent of Japan's territory after the war). Two major land battles, at Iwo Jima and Okinawa, revealed how fierce Japan's defence of the Home Islands would be. Both islands were heavily fortified and fiercely defended. Around 6800 American troops and approximately 21000 Japanese soldiers were killed at Iwo Jima. The Battle of Okinawa (see Source 6.52) was the bloodiest in the Pacific, with 50000 Americans wounded, and 12000 killed. Approximately 95000 Japanese soldiers were killed, including many who committed suicide rather than surrender. It is unknown how many civilians were killed in the American invasion of Okinawa, but estimates vary from 42000 to 150000.

Despite the immense loss of life on both sides at Iwo Jima and Okinawa, the American commanders in the Pacific continued preparations for Operation Downfall, the plan to invade Japan. The Soviet Union also prepared to enter the war in the Pacific, planning to declare war on Japan and invade the Japanese-occupied region of Manchuria on 9 August. However, these commanders were not aware of the Manhattan Project. Japan's rejection of the Potsdam Declaration in July 1945 caused President Truman to authorise the atomic bombings of Japanese cities, hoping that it would force Japan to surrender and save millions of lives that might be lost in Operation Downfall.

Source 6.52 US marines watch a phosphorous shell attack on the Japanese in the Battle of Okinawa

The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

On 6 August 1945, an atomic bomb nicknamed 'Little Boy' was dropped on the city of Hiroshima (see Source 6.53). Hiroshima was chosen because it was a large, urban, industrial city that also served as a military storage area and an assembly point for troops. No one knew how much damage the bomb would do, so Hiroshima was one of the few major cities not targeted by the American firebombing campaign. In that way the damage caused by the bomb could be more easily observed.

Source 6.53 'Little Boy' – the atomic bomb that destroyed almost 70 per cent of Hiroshima in August 1945

The bombing occurred at 8.15 on a Monday morning in Hiroshima. The city's residents had been given no warning of the atomic bombing. The bomb's immediate impact was incredible. Approximately 80000 people, or 30 per cent of Hiroshima's population, were killed, and another 70000 were injured. Roughly 69 per cent of the city's buildings were completely destroyed. The long-term effects of the bombing were even worse. People suffered from burns, radiation, cancer and many other side effects. The exact figures are disputed, but the total number of deaths caused by the bomb by the end of 1945 was between 90000 and 160000. By 1950, around 200000 people had died because of side effects from the bomb.

After the bombing of Hiroshima, President Truman released a statement saying that a new weapon had been used, and that 'if they [the Japanese government] do not now accept our terms, they may expect a rain of ruin from the air'. On the same day, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan and invaded the Manchuria region. However, the Japanese government still did not respond to the Potsdam Declaration. On 9 August, a second atomic bomb was dropped on the port city of Nagasaki.

The bomb's impact on Nagasaki was just as devastating as it was on Hiroshima. Between 40000 and 75000 people were killed by the immediate effects of the bomb, and a further 74000 were injured. By the end of 1945, at least 80000 were dead because of the bomb's long-term effects.

It is often forgotten that the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki also killed at least 2000 Korean forced labourers, and an unknown number of Allied prisoners of war.

SAMPLE

key**concept:** empathy

The story of Sadako Sasaki

Sadako Sasaki is one of the most famous victims of the atomic bombings in Japan during World War II. She was only two when the atomic bomb was dropped on her home city of Hiroshima. She survived the explosion, but began to develop symptoms nearly a decade after the bombing. In November 1954, Sasaki developed swelling on her neck, and purple spots on her legs. She was diagnosed with leukaemia, and hospitalised in February 1955.

While in hospital, she was visited by a friend who taught her to fold paper to make origami cranes. There is a Japanese tradition that folding 1000 paper cranes brings good luck and grants the person who folds them one wish. Sasaki attempted to fold 1000 cranes, but died in October 1955 before she could complete her task. Her friends and family finished the cranes, and built a memorial to Sasaki, and all the children who were affected by the bombings.

Sasaki's story is just one of tens of thousands of victims of the atomic bombings. Her story puts a human face on the suffering of the victims, and helps to ensure that the victims are not considered simply as statistics.

For more information on the key concept of empathy, refer to section HT.1 in 'The historian's toolkit'.

Source 6.54 Statue of Sadako Sasaki holding a crane in the Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima

Japan surrenders

Japan was shocked and devastated by the two atomic bombings and the declaration of war by the Soviet Union. Although the Japanese military commanders wanted to continue fighting the war, Emperor Hirohito ordered his government to surrender.

On 14 August the Japanese government notified the Allies that it would accept the terms of the Potsdam Declaration, provided the Emperor retained full sovereignty of Japan (the right to rule independently and free of foreign influence). That night, members of the Japanese military attempted to overthrow the government and remove Emperor Hirohito from power. They were unsuccessful. On 15 August 1945, Hirohito's surrender speech was broadcast on Japanese radio, marking the end of World War II. The formal declaration of surrender was signed on 2 September, and the Allies occupied Japan from that date until 1952.

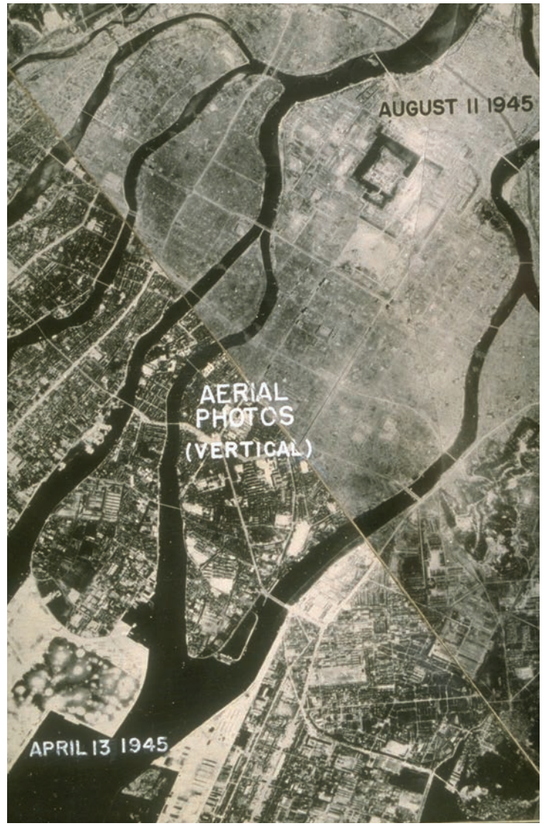
Debate about the bombings

Immediately after World War II ended, most Americans supported the use of the atomic bombs to force Japan to surrender. Disturbing images of maimed survivors were censored in the USA, and many people were so used to anti-Japanese propaganda that they felt little empathy for the victims of the bombings. Since then, however, there have been fierce debates over whether the atomic bombings were justified or necessary to win the war.

Some argue that the bombings saved millions of lives by preventing the need for an invasion of the Japanese Home Islands. The ferocity with which Japanese soldiers fought at Iwo Jima and Okinawa made this a popular view among American soldiers and their families. Other supporters of the decision to use the atomic bombs say that Japan's 'never surrender' warrior culture meant that, without the bombings, Japan would not have surrendered. Another argument is that the atomic bombings were the inevitable result of both sides engaging in total war. At the time, many people believed that it would not be practical to spend $2 billion on the Manhattan Project, and then decide not to use the atomic bombs created to save American lives.

Some critics of the bombings argue that the surprise bombing of civilians with nuclear weapons was fundamentally and morally wrong. Others argue that the bombings constituted war crimes, or crimes against humanity. In a 2003 interview, Robert McNamara, who was the US Secretary of Defence from 1961 to 1968, recalled General Curtis LeMay, who was involved in planning the bombings, telling him 'if we'd lost the war, we'd all have been prosecuted as war criminals'.

Source 6.55 General Sir Thomas Blamey, the commander of the Australian army, accepts the surrender of the 2nd Japanese Army on the island of Morotai, in September 1945 (AWM 115645)



Source 6.56 Hiroshima before (13 April) and after (11 August) the atomic bombing

Check your learning 6.9

Remember and understand

1. What were some of the reasons for the choice of Hiroshima as the target for the first atomic bombing?
2. Who sent the letter to President Roosevelt that kick-started the Manhattan Project? What were the two main points of the letter?
3. What was Operation Downfall? Why was it never fully carried out?

Evaluate and create

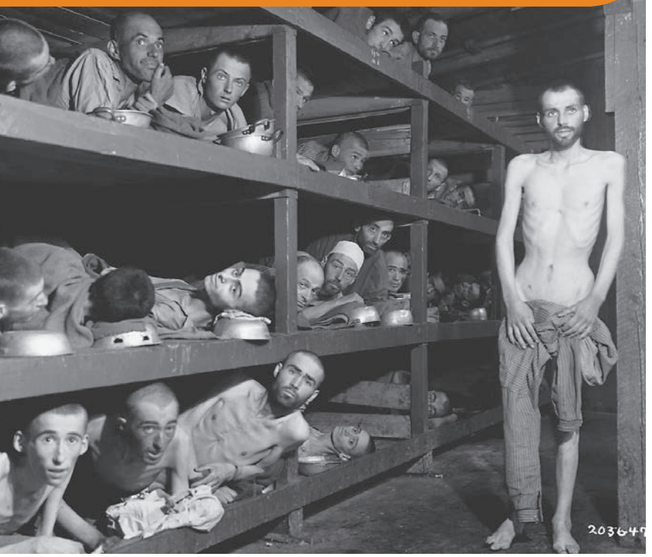
4. Outline some of the arguments for and against the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II. Do you believe the bombings were justified?
5. Collect a series of images and quotations to create a PowerPoint presentation showing the impact of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima or Nagasaki. You should consider both the short-term and long-term effects of the bombings.

SAMPLE

6.2 big**ideas:** rich task

Anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany

There is considerable evidence that shows the nature and complexity of the experiences of those who were subjected to anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany, before, during and at the end of World War II. Evidence includes the many laws passed in Germany during the 1930s. Once the war started, the Nazis took photographs in the ghettos and in concentration and extermination camps. Then, when the camps were liberated by the Allies in May 1945, there were more photographs taken and views recorded by those who liberated the camps. The soldiers were shocked at what they found. Still later, as Holocaust survivors began to readjust to life after the trauma, many of them documented their experiences and feelings.



Source 6.57 Buchenwald prisoners liberated by the US army in April 1945

Source 6.58
I hated the brutality, the sadism, and the insanity of Nazism. I just couldn't stand by and see people destroyed. I did what I could, what I had to do, what my conscience told me I must do. That's all there is to it. Really, nothing more.

Oskar Schindler, German Industrialist who saved many Jews

Source 6.59
When people came to gas chamber, they had a soldier going around and said, 'Women here, men here. Undress. Take shower.' They told them, 'You're going to a camp. Going to work. Tie shoes together. And make sure your children tie their shoes together. Because when you come out, you don't so much spend time look for your shoes and your clothes.' All a lie. They were not thinking about it that they will be dead in another fifteen minutes.

Holocaust survivor Sigmund Boraks

Source 6.60
A Jew cannot be a citizen of the Reich. He cannot exercise the right to vote; he cannot hold public office … Marriages between Jews and nationals of German or kindred blood are forbidden … Jews are forbidden to display the Reich and national flag or the national colours.

Selected points from the Nuremberg Laws, a series of anti-Semitic laws put in place in Germany by the Nazis

Source 6.61
I feel the urge to present to you a true report of the recent riots, plundering and destruction of Jewish property [on *Kristallnacht*]. Despite what the official Nazi account says, the German people have nothing whatever to do with these riots and burnings. The police supplied SA men with axes, house-breaking tools and ladders … the mob worked under the leadership of [Hitler's] SA men.

Anonymous letter from a German civil servant to the British Consul, 1938

skill**drill**

Evaluating the reliability and usefulness of sources

Historians use a range of sources to make speculations, develop insights or draw conclusions about the thoughts and actions of people in the past, including letters, diaries, photographs, artworks, legislation, buildings and clothing as well as reminiscences about an event, even if they were not recorded until many years later. Being able to evaluate the reliability and usefulness of different sources is one of the most important, and perhaps most difficult, historical skills you need to master. The first thing to understand is that these terms (reliable and useful) are not interchangeable: a source can be both unreliable and useful at the same time, or reliable and not useful at the same time!

Step 1 Evaluating reliability

To determine the reliability of a source, you need to identify whether it is **biased**. Bias means having an unbalanced or one-sided opinion. Bias is found in secondary and primary sources. It is natural for people to show their opinion when they write something. To recognise bias in a source, think about:

- who wrote/created it
- when it was written/created
- why it was written/created
- whether the source distorts the facts
- whether the source gives or shows one side of the story, or whether it is balanced
- whether the views expressed in the source can be verified.

You can then come to a conclusion about whether the source is biased. Make sure you give specific reasons for your conclusion. You need to explain how and why a source is biased, and how this bias affects its reliability. The more biased the source, the less reliable it is, but remember that sources are never completely reliable nor unreliable.

Step 2 Evaluating usefulness

Some historical sources are more useful than others. But sources are not simply useful or not useful in their own right. They are useful or not useful depending on what you wish to find out from them.

Just because a source is biased does not automatically mean that it is not useful. It may be extremely useful if you are investigating the opinions of a particular group at a particular time. However, if you are investigating 'the facts' of an event, a biased source may be much less useful. For example, anti-Jewish propaganda during World War II may be very useful when considering Nazi attitudes towards Jews in the 20th century, but not much use as evidence that there were some Germans who did not support the Nazi's anti-Semitic policies. To make a conclusion about whether a source is 'useful', you need to be very clear about what you want to use the source for.

Use the following steps to evaluate a source's usefulness:

- Be clear about what historical question you are investigating.
- Identify whether the source is biased/reliable using the process above.
- Look at what the source is telling/showing you and compare it to what you need/would like to know. Remember to consider both explicit (clear) and implicit (hidden) messages.
- Ask yourself: what are the uses of this source to answer my historical question?
- Ask yourself: what are the problems of using this source to answer my historical question?
- Make a final judgement about the source's usefulness for your purposes.

Apply the skill

1 Analyse each of the sources provided in this section. Then, using the process outlined above:
   a evaluate each source's reliability.
   b evaluate how useful each source would be in explaining Nazi attitudes towards Jews.
   c evaluate how useful each source would be as evidence that not all Germans supported the Nazi's anti-Semitic policies.
2 For each source, be sure to explain how you reached your conclusions.

Extend your understanding

1 Conduct research into some of the main concentration camps that were built by the Nazis in Germany and its occupied territories. For each camp, take notes on the following:
   - name of the camp
   - location
   - when it was built
   - its main purpose (that is, as a holding place; forced labour; extermination)
   - the years in which it operated
   - estimated number of Jews killed in the camp.
2 See if you can locate the story of a person who survived the camp, and summarise some of their main experiences. If possible, try and also find some images, drawings or photographs of some aspect of the camp.
3 Create a PowerPoint presentation that highlights your findings.

SAMPLE

6.3 How did the events of World War II affect the lives of Australians and Australia's international relationships?

Australia's commitment to the war

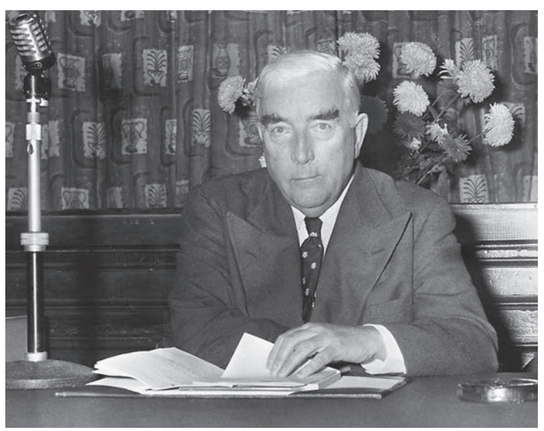
When Britain declared war on Germany in September 1939, Australia gave its full support to the declaration. Only a few hours after Britain declared war on Germany, the Australian Prime Minister, Robert Menzies, made a radio broadcast to the nation.

Source 6.62

> Fellow Australians,
>
> It is my melancholy duty to inform you officially, that in consequence of a persistence by Germany in her invasion of Poland, Great Britain has declared war upon her and that, as a result, Australia is also at war. No harder task can fall to the lot of a democratic leader than to make such an announcement.
>
> From a speech made by Prime Minister Robert Gordon Menzies, 3 September 1939

Despite the declaration of war, Menzies was initially reluctant to commit Australian troops to fight in Europe. Australia's military was in a depleted state, and Menzies wanted to ensure that Australia could defend itself at home if required. The first Australian Imperial Force (AIF) had been disbanded after World War I. In 1939, the army consisted of around 3000 professional soldiers, and a voluntary **militia** (non-professional soldiers) called the Citizen Military Force (CMF). The CMF could only serve in defence of Australia. These units were mainly equipped with weapons brought home from World War I by the first AIF.

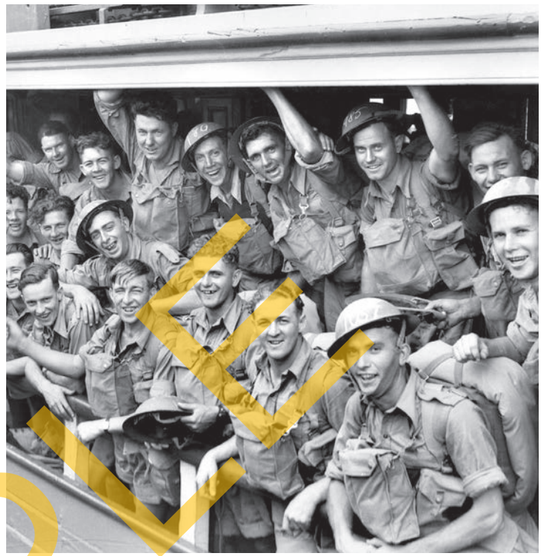
Source 6.64 Second AIF recruitment poster (AWM ARTV06723)



Source 6.63 Robert Gordon Menzies (1894–1978), Prime Minister of Australia when World War II was declared

Despite his doubts, Menzies authorised the creation of a second AIF in September 1939. The Australian Government had promised 20000 soldiers for the British war effort, but initially struggled to fulfil this commitment. Soldiers in the AIF were paid less than those in the CMF, and AIF wages were even lower than the dole. As a result, many members of the CMF were reluctant to transfer to the AIF. The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) was also much more attractive to many Australians, because it seemed more exciting and offered higher wages. It took three months to fill the 6th Division of the AIF, in contrast to the three weeks it took to raise 20000 men at the start of World War I.

The fall of France in 1940 changed Australia's perception of the war. Recruitment rates surged, three new divisions of the AIF were formed, and the government began to pour money into war-related industries. From 1940 to 1942, the AIF served mainly in Libya, Greece, Crete, Syria, Egypt and Malaya. The Australian air force and navy also served in a number of significant battles during this time.



Source 6.65 Soldiers of the Second AIF leaving Australia to serve in the war, January 1940 – their helmets show their enlistment numbers and the cases on their chests hold their gas masks (AWM 011141)

Conscription was still a matter of great debate in Australia at the start of World War II. When conscription was introduced in October 1939, it only required unmarried men aged 21 to report for three months' militia training and service in the CMF. They could also choose only to serve in Australia or its territories. This mild form of conscription did not cause too much outrage among Australians in 1939. Soon after, in 1942, however, all men aged 18–35 and single men aged 35–45 became eligible to be conscripted into the CMF. These conscripts, despite being given the derogatory nickname 'Chocos', performed admirably under incredibly difficult conditions in the Kokoda and Milne Bay campaigns. (Choco was short for 'chocolate soldier' because militia were thought to 'melt' in the heat of battle.)

From September 1939 until December 1941, Australia gave full support to the European war but Australians at home felt little impact from the war. This changed dramatically with the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the fall of Singapore.

After John Curtin was elected Prime Minister in 1941 and Japan entered the war, Australia's experience of the war changed as the whole population mobilised to support the war effort. Women were encouraged to enter the workforce; industry and the production of goods and equipment became regulated by the government; and coastal defences were extended and reinforced. With the fall of Singapore, Australia was directly under threat for the first time.

On 8 December 1941, the Prime Minister, John Curtin, addressed the nation.

Source 6.66

> Men and women of Australia, we are at war with Japan. That has happened because, in the first instance, Japanese naval and air forces launched an unprovoked attack on British and United States territory; because our vital interests are imperilled and because the rights of free people in the whole Pacific are assailed. As a result, the Australian Government this afternoon took the necessary steps which will mean that a state of war exists between Australia and Japan. Tomorrow, in common with the United Kingdom, the United States of America and the Netherlands East Indies governments, the Australian Government will formally and solemnly declare the state of war it has striven so sincerely and strenuously to avoid.
>
> John Curtin, Declaration of war on Japan; excerpt from ABC radio broadcast of the Prime Minister's address to the nation, 8 December 1941

The war actually reached Australia's shores in February 1942, when Japanese fighter and bomber planes launched a series of bomb attacks across northern Australia. The most serious was the bombing of Darwin on 19 February (see Source 6.30). The Prime Minister declared that Australia was now in a state of 'total war'.

Check your learning 6.10

Remember and understand

1. Why was Prime Minister Menzies initially reluctant to commit Australian troops to fight in Europe?
2. What were some of the reasons the AIF initially struggled to fulfil its commitment of supplying 20000 soldiers to support British troops in Europe? What event boosted recruitment?
3. Why were conscripted members of the CMF nicknamed 'Chocos'?

Apply and analyse

4. What do Menzies' words (see Source 6.62) tell us about the relationship between Britain and Australia in 1939?
5. How and why did Australia increase its commitment to the war after 1941? Refer to Source 6.66 in your answer.

SAMPLE

Australian experiences of the war abroad

In the early years of World War II, Australia's contribution to the war effort closely mirrored that of World War I. Roughly 550 000 Australian men served overseas in the armed forces out of a total population of seven million. Australian servicemen fought in campaigns in Europe, the Middle East and the Pacific.

In 1941, Australian ground forces were stationed in North Africa, Greece, Crete and Syria as part of the wider imperial commitments. Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) pilots and crew also played a major role in the Allied bombing campaigns over Germany, where 6500 died.

The bombing of Pearl Harbor and the fall of Singapore increased the level of Australia's involvement. From 1942, the majority of Australian forces were deployed in the South-West Pacific area – in New Guinea, the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) and the Pacific Islands.

In 1943, conscription into the armed forces in Australia's overseas territories including New Guinea and the Solomon Islands was introduced with little opposition. Because of the real threat of Japanese invasion, the issue of conscription was much less divisive than it had been during World War I.

In Australia, as with the other nations involved in World War II, 'total war' meant that both servicemen and civilians became part of the war effort. From early 1942, when the war came close to Australia's shores, all aspects of the Australian economy were focused on the war effort. 'Luxury' industries such as furniture making were disbanded, and men involved in 'critical' war-related industries were not allowed to enlist. The USA made Australia its main base for the South-West Pacific meaning that up to one million American servicemen were based in Australia. The economy was geared to meet the needs of these soldiers as well as supporting the Australian forces and maintaining the war effort.

Source 6.67 Australian Army Rising Sun Badges like this one from 1942 were issued to soldiers of the AIF during World War II. They helped identify Australians fighting abroad.

Prisoners of war

Australian service personnel were captured by the enemy in all the major areas of war. Roughly 8184 Australians were held as **prisoners of war (POWs)** in German and Italian camps. Of these, 269 died. These men were mostly captured in Greece and North Africa, while many members of the RAAF had been shot down in bombing raids over Germany and captured there. Most Australian POWs in Europe were imprisoned in purpose-built POW camps under decent conditions. Nine Australians were, however, among a group of 168 Allied pilots shot down over France and imprisoned in the Buchenwald concentration camp.

By far the highest number of Australian POWs were captured by the Japanese in the Pacific (see Source 6.70). Between January and March 1942, more than 22 000 Australian service personnel were captured by Japanese forces in the region, with 15 000 captured in Malaya and Singapore alone. By 1945, more than 8000 had died. The significantly higher rate of deaths among POWs captured by the Japanese can be attributed to Japan's attitude towards prisoners. Japanese military culture, shaped by traditional values, meant that the Japanese treated enemy prisoners poorly. Japan refused to follow the terms of the **Geneva Convention**, an international agreement on the treatment of captured civilians and military personnel.

At camps in Ambon in Indonesia and Rabaul in Papua New Guinea, conditions were so appalling that more than half those captured died, and hundreds of Australian prisoners were massacred. POWs were also killed in tragic accidents. In 1942, 1053 Australian POWs were killed while being transported from New Guinea to Japanese-occupied China. The Japanese ship they were on was torpedoed and sunk by an American submarine unaware that the ship was carrying ally POWs.

The Japanese also made use of POWs as forced labour, most notably on the Burma Railway. Along with British, Dutch and American prisoners, 13 000 Australian POWs were used as forced labour to build the Thailand–Burma railway line, which was to supply the Japanese campaign (see Source 6.71). About 2800 Australians died from malnutrition, mistreatment and disease.

SAMPLE

key concept: significance

Edward (Weary) Dunlop

Among Australia's prisoners of war there were many remarkable stories of heroism and resilience. One of the most notable was the story of Edward (Weary) Dunlop, a Melbourne doctor who was captured by the Japanese in Java in 1942. Dunlop was sent to work on the Burma Railway where he often put his own life on the line to care for sick and wounded soldiers. He also stood up to the Japanese on behalf of those unfit for work. For this reason he is remembered as a significant Australian.

For more information on the key concept of significance, refer to section HT.1 in 'The historian's toolkit'.

Source 6.68

> … thousands of us starved, scourged, racked with malaria, dysentery, beri beri, pellagra and the stinking tropical ulcers that ate a leg to the bone in a matter of days, and always Weary Dunlop and his fellow MOs [medical officers] stood up for us, were beaten, scorned, derided, and beaten again.
>
> An ex-prisoner-of-war (from Weary Dunlop page at vicnet)

Source 6.69 Sir Edward (Weary) Dunlop, right, in Singapore, 1942

Source 6.70 Australian POWs in a Japanese prison camp at the end of the war (AWM 019199)

Source 6.71 Malnourished prisoners forced to work on the construction of the Thailand–Burma Railway (AWM P00761-011)

Check your learning 6.11

Remember and understand

1. List some of the places where Australian soldiers served during World War II.
2. Describe the ways in which the Japanese treated their prisoners of war. Give examples.
3. What is the Geneva Convention?

Apply and analyse

4. Why do you think there was minimal opposition to the introduction of conscription in World War II when the same issue caused such controversy and division during World War I?

Evaluate and create

5. Conduct some further research into Edward (Weary) Dunlop and write a short biography that provides details about his early life, his experiences and actions during World War II, and his life after World War II including the work he undertook to help former prisoners of war.

Life on the home front

When Australian Prime Minister Robert Menzies committed Australia to the war in 1939, the direct threat to the Australian mainland was fairly low. The war was mostly seen as a European conflict. However, when the threat of a Japanese invasion of Australia became a reality in 1941, the Australian war effort had a serious impact on the lives of ordinary Australians at home.

National Security Act

One of the first steps towards 'total war' taken by the Australian Government was the National Security Act. This Act, passed on 8 September 1939, introduced laws that gave the federal government greater powers to respond to the threat of war. It allowed newspapers and the media to be censored, and legalised the detention of so-called 'enemy aliens' – for example, Germans and Italians living in Australia. It also meant that groups who opposed the war, such as the Communist Party of Australia and Jehovah's Witnesses, were banned.

Source 6.72 A campaign poster urging civilians in Australia not to gossip (AWM ARTV02497)

Censorship and propaganda

During the war years, the Australian Government believed that strict **censorship** was necessary to maintain national security and boost public morale. The Department of Information was responsible for its administration. All forms of media, such as newspapers and radio broadcasts, were subject to controls that limited what they could report. For example, when Japanese forces bombed Darwin in 1942, the extent of damage, the scale of the attack and the loss of life were downplayed in newspapers and on radio.

Similarly, when Australian and US soldiers brawled in the so-called 'Battle of Brisbane' on 26 November 1942, the death of one Australian and the injury to others was censored because the event was seen as threatening US–Australian relations.

In addition to this, the Department of Information censored mail (see Source 6.73) and monitored phone calls to ensure that military information relating to troop movements and locations was not communicated to the enemy.

Source 6.73 Mail being censored (AWM 139316)

Source 6.74 Italian POWs at Liverpool Prisoner of War and Internment Camp, New South Wales, during World War II (AWM 123706)

In addition to censoring information during the war, the Australian government also relied heavily on **propaganda**. Propaganda is information designed to influence the ideas and attitudes of a group of people by presenting only one side of an argument. Throughout World War II propaganda was used to encourage Australians to support the war in different ways: enlist to fight; work in certain industries; support certain causes. Most importantly propaganda was used to unite Australians against a common enemy. Propaganda did this by encouraging an emotional response from people. Anger, fear and a sense of national pride were all strong motivations.

Censorship and propaganda were used together during the war to ensure that Australians were sympathetic to significant changes being made to laws and government policies.

Internment

During World War II, the Australian government took steps against people living in Australia who they believed threatened national security. Initially, this included the **internment** (detaining people in special camps) of Germans and Italians living in Australia who were believed to be pro-Nazi or pro-fascist (see Source 6.74). When war with Japan began, all Japanese who lived in Australia were also interned. Approximately 7000 'enemy aliens', many of whom had lived peacefully and innocently in Australia for decades, were interned in camps around the country.

Everyday life

Although the people of northern Australia suffered numerous air attacks from the Japanese, the lives of most Australians further south were not dramatically affected by the actual fighting of World War II. However, their lives were influenced in other ways, including the types of work they were allowed to perform. The government gave priority to industries such as manufacturing (for war materials such as aircraft and munitions) and agriculture (which was vital for food supplies).

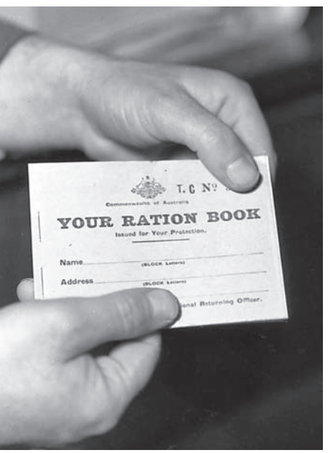
In 1942, the federal government established the Directorate of Manpower to control the workforce. This allowed the government to force people to work in particular jobs or industries. In a way, this was similar to conscription – only for industry service rather than military service.

Other government policies influenced many aspects of Australian life during the war years. The fear of air raids, for example, led to the introduction of blackouts, which plunged major cities into darkness. Streetlights were switched off, car headlights reduced to narrow beams, and houses were required to have blackout curtains to prevent light showing in the street (see Source 6.75). Failure to comply could result in fines.

SAMPLE

Source 6.75 Preparing for the night-time blackout

The wartime government also imposed many other restrictions. It reduced hotel and bar trading hours and set maximum prices for restaurants. In 1942, the government brought in national identity cards that included personal details and listed the industry an individual worked in. Daylight saving was introduced to save power, and annual leave entitlements were cut back.



Source 6.76 Ration coupons entitled civilians to certain goods

Rationing

As the war dragged on, the supply of many basic goods and products was limited. Restrictions on trading ships coming to Australia and the need to dedicate supplies of food and products to the war effort overseas meant that there were shortages of food and clothing for many ordinary Australians. In order to ensure that available supplies were distributed evenly, the Australian government introduced a **rationing** system in May 1942. Products such as butter, milk, eggs, meat, tea, shoes and clothes were all rationed. Alcoholic drinks were also rationed and people were encouraged to restrict travel unless it was absolutely necessary.

The government issued civilians with ration books containing coupons, which had to be presented when paying for certain goods (see Source 6.76). Pregnant women and families with young children were given extra rations.

During the war, some items simply could not be produced, such as pyjamas, lawnmowers and children's toys. Recycling was encouraged and depots were set up for scrap metal, cloth and rubber. People were also urged to grow their own food to supplement rationing. Vegetable patches appeared in front gardens and many families kept chickens in the backyard. Australians responded imaginatively to wartime rationing. Newspapers and magazines such as the *Women's Weekly* offered advice to housewives about how to cope with the shortages. This included handy hints for cooking, or advice about how to paint seams on the backs of their legs to look as if they were wearing stockings. Women were encouraged to avoid buying new items, by repairing and patching clothes for as long as possible.

Men on the home front

Almost three-quarters of a million Australians (mostly men) enlisted in the Second AIF during World War II. However, a great many more men and women were engaged in the war economy. Many men were not allowed to enlist in the armed forces because they worked in reserved occupations, such as farming and manufacturing (see Source 6.77). Men were needed at home to construct vital wartime infrastructure and military buildings, such as ports, aerodromes, bridges and barracks, and also to make war equipment and munitions. The Allied Works Council was set up in 1942 to oversee such projects. As part of this program, the Civil Construction Corps was established. The corps, while a civilian organisation, was run with military-style discipline. By mid-1943, more than 50 000 men served in the corps, which was mostly made up of labourers, carpenters and truck drivers.

Men who were unable to enlist because of age, health or their positions in reserved professions also joined the Volunteer Defence Force. Members of this force, including many veterans of World War I, were trained to protect against enemy attack on the home front. The Volunteer Air Observers Corps monitored the sky for potential air raids. Air-raid wardens made sure that everyone followed blackout procedures and participated in evacuation drills.

Source 6.77 These men are shown producing munitions during World War II. Jobs such as these were known as reserved occupations because they were essential to the war effort.

Women's role in the war

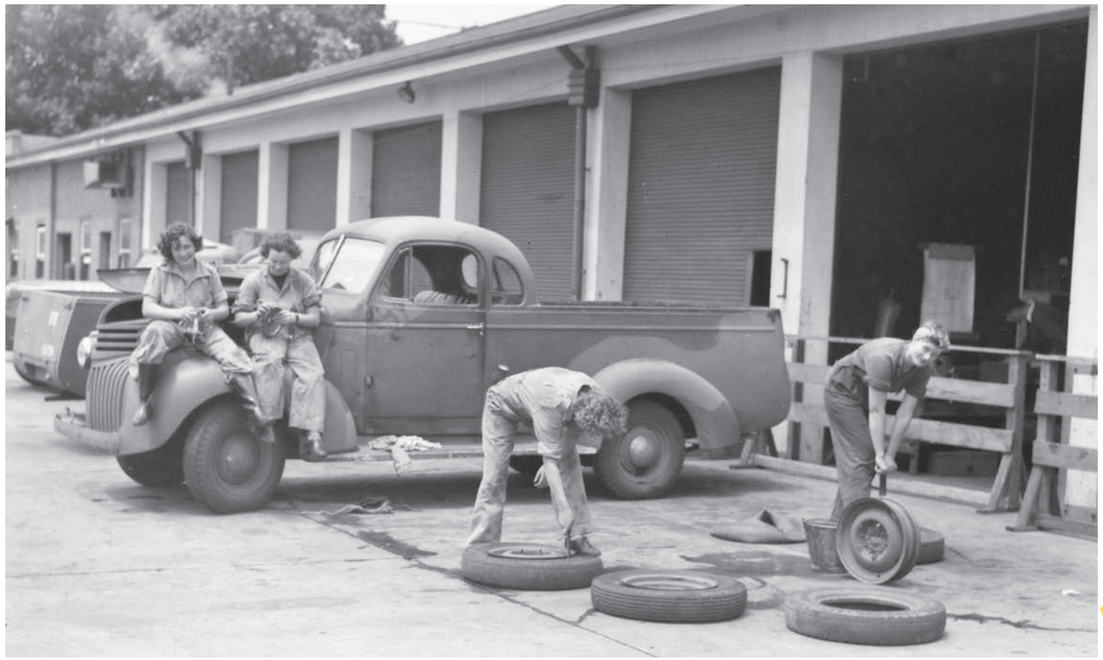
Australian women had a very broad range of duties and responsibilities during World War II. The needs of the armed forces, the war economy and the deployment of many men overseas created new types of work possibilities. Before World War II, Australian women were not permitted to serve in the military. Most working women were employed in factories, shops or in family businesses. It was expected that women would resign from their employment once they had children. Although the number of women entering the workforce between 1939 and 1945 only increased by about 5 per cent, the types of jobs they were involved in changed dramatically.

At the start of World War II, women on the home front were encouraged to take the sorts of roles that they had held during World War I. They were expected to knit and sew, pack parcels, raise money, encourage enlistment and maintain the home.

This changed as the war came closer to Australia. From late 1940, women were not only permitted but were encouraged to join the services (see Source 6.78). Around 35 000 women served in the army, making up around 5 per cent of the entire force. The Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force (WAAAF) established in October 1940 was quickly followed by the women's army and navy forces. Women were not sent overseas to fight, but were trained in many of the home-front tasks so that more servicemen could be freed up to join the overseas forces.

Source 6.78 Recruitment poster to attract women into the services (AWM ARTV00332)

SAMPLE



Source 6.79 Australian Women's Army Service mechanics

By the end of the war, the WAAAF was made up of 18 500 women; the Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS) had 24 000 women (see Source 6.79); and the Women's Royal Australian Naval Service (WRANS) boasted 2000. Most commonly, women's roles in the armed forces were clerical. However, some were involved in traditional men's roles, as signallers, truck and ambulance drivers, intelligence officers, wireless telegraphers or aircraft ground staff (see Source 6.80). Despite their new skills women were still not permitted to take on combat roles or serve outside Australia. The exception to this was the nurses who served in most areas where Australian troops were sent.

Even if women did not enlist in the Auxiliary Forces, it was argued that increasing women's employment would enable more men to enter military service. However, the understanding was that their employment was only for the duration of the war. Women entered new areas of work, acting as tram conductors, and taxi and truck drivers. As the war progressed, Australian women worked increasingly in war industries, such as manufacturing munitions and military equipment. Under Manpower regulations, women could be deployed in occupations that suited their skills. A woman trained as a florist could be compelled to work in a factory because of her skills with wire; a dancer could be sent to work on a farm because she was agile and physically fit. By mid-1943, nearly 200 000 women were employed in roles that would assist the war effort. They were paid roughly two-thirds of men's pay rates.

As the war continued, and conscription called up more and more men, many farms were suffering from a shortage of workers. The Women's Land Army was set up to distribute female labour to farms and orchards to keep food production going (see Source 6.81). Around 3000 women were members of the Land Army. Volunteer groups such as the Australian Women's National League continued to take on the more traditional tasks for the war effort, such as knitting socks for the troops, preparing Red Cross food parcels, and raising money for soldiers' families. Other volunteers completed training in emergency services such as first aid and ambulance driving in case of air raids.

At the end of the war there was a general expectation that women would return to domestic duties in the home and that the returned soldiers would be welcomed back into the workforce. This is mostly what happened, but there were some women, especially single women, who remained in their jobs.

It is often argued that women were forced out of the workforce and back to a dull domestic existence at the end of the war. There is some truth in this, but there is also evidence that many women wanted to return to traditional roles. Many who had had boring and unfulfilling jobs during the war were glad to be rid of them. Others who had put off marriage and childbearing during the war were delighted to return to domesticity and begin raising their families.

Source 6.80 Female plane-maintenance workers

Source 6.81 Members of the Australian Women's Land Army gather flax straw as part of their farm work (AWM P00784.128)

Check your learning 6.12

Remember and understand

1. What were some of the ways the National Security Act allowed the Australian Government to respond to the threat of war?
2. What was the 'Battle of Brisbane' and why were details about it censored?
3. What were some of the items that were rationed in Australia?
4. What kinds of jobs did women do in the services and the general economy during World War II?
5. What were some of the other restrictions placed on the lives of Australian citizens by the Australian Government during World War II?

Evaluate and create

6. Write a role play based around some of the issues women faced at the end of World War II. Adopt the roles of the following two characters:
   - A woman who has been working as a meteorologist during the war. She is single and has been earning a good wage during the war. She has also enjoyed the work and the independence. She does not see why she should now be forced to leave the workforce.
   - A man who has recently returned from the war and is keen to begin work as an accountant with his previous employer. Unfortunately, there are no vacancies at the accounting firm, because all available roles are filled by well-qualified women.

   Each person must speak at least five times during the role play and support their arguments for and against the sacking of women and the re-employment of men in the workforce after the war.

SAMPLE

Indigenous Australians at war

It is impossible to know how many Indigenous Australians served during World War II. At the start of the war, the AIF officially only accepted Aborigines who were of 'substantially European descent'. However, the RAAF accepted Aborigines from the outset, and many Indigenous Australians joined the AIF by claiming to be another nationality. Due to the early shortage of recruits, many recruiters also accepted Aboriginal volunteers, despite official restrictions. Reg Saunders became the first Aboriginal commissioned officer in the Australian army in 1944. After the bombing of Darwin, the restrictions on Aborigines joining the AIF were relaxed. A small number of Torres Strait Islanders were also recruited into the United States army. It is estimated that around 3000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander soldiers served in the armed forces during World War II, but the number who enlisted under another nationality was probably much higher.

In addition to the regular army, a number of Indigenous Australians served in Special Forces. The Torres Strait Light Infantry was formed in 1941 to defend the strategically important Torres Strait area. In 1941, anthropologist and soldier Donald Thomson was authorised to organise and lead the Northern Territory Special Reconnaissance Unit. This unit contained 51 Aborigines and five white Australians. They lived off the land while they patrolled the coastline of northern Australia. In the event of a Japanese invasion, they were to conduct a guerrilla campaign from behind enemy lines using traditional Aboriginal weapons. The Aboriginal soldiers in these units were not formally enlisted in the army, and received goods such as tobacco rather than monetary pay until 1992, when back-pay and medals were awarded.

Source 6.82 Indigenous soldiers on parade in 1940 (AWM P02140.004)

Other Indigenous Australians were also employed by the army in a variety of roles. Aborigines worked on farms and in butcheries; built roads and airfields; were construction workers, truck drivers and general labourers. They also filled more specialised roles, such as salvaging downed aircraft and organising munitions stockpiles. Many Aboriginal women were also involved in these roles, as well as joining organisations such as the Australian Women's Army Service. Despite their important work, pay rates remained low for Indigenous workers. The RAAF briefly increased wages for Aboriginal workers, but was pressured to lower them again by the civilian government.

Indigenous Australians made a huge contribution to the war effort. By 1944, almost every able-bodied male Torres Strait Islander had enlisted. This meant that, as a proportion of its population, no other community in the world voluntarily contributed as many men to the war effort.

There seems to have been remarkably little racism or tension between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in the army. When they returned to civilian life, however, many Aboriginal veterans faced the same discrimination they had left behind before the war. Many were banned from Returned and Services League (RSL) Clubs except on Anzac Day. Most Indigenous Australians were not given the opportunity to use the skills they had learnt during the war when they returned home. Len Waters, who joined the RAAF in 1942 and flew 95 missions, dreamed of becoming a civilian pilot after the war. Waters was forced to return to his pre-war occupation as a shearer.

One ex-soldier, Tommy Lyons who had served at Tobruk said on his return: 'In the army you had your mates and you were treated as equal, but back here you were treated like dogs.'

Source 6.83 Informal group portrait of members of the 2/18th Australian Field Workshop, which included Indigenous and non-Indigenous soldiers: Alick Jackomos (centre front row), a Greek Australian, worked for Aboriginal rights and was one of the founders of the Aboriginal Advancement League after the war (AWM P00898.001)

Check your learning 6.13

Remember and understand

1 Did Indigenous Australians who had served in World War II receive the same benefits as non-Indigenous veterans?

Apply and analyse

2 Who was Len Waters? What does his experience suggest about the treatment of Indigenous Australians after World War II?

3 Use the Internet to conduct some research on the Coloured Digger Project and the proposed memorial to Aboriginal soldiers. Record some of the opinions on the proposed memorial.

Evaluate and create

4 In pairs, discuss how significant you think Reg Saunders' promotion to become the first Aboriginal commissioned officer was. Why do you think it took until 1944 for an Aboriginal soldier to get promoted to officer rank? Compare your responses with other pairs.

SAMPLE

Australia's international relationships

Although Australia did not experience the levels of war damage of many of its allies and was never occupied by enemy forces, the conflict had a number of important consequences. It fundamentally altered Australia's relationship with Britain and the USA. The legacies of World War II also laid the foundations for great economic and social change in the second half of the 20th century.

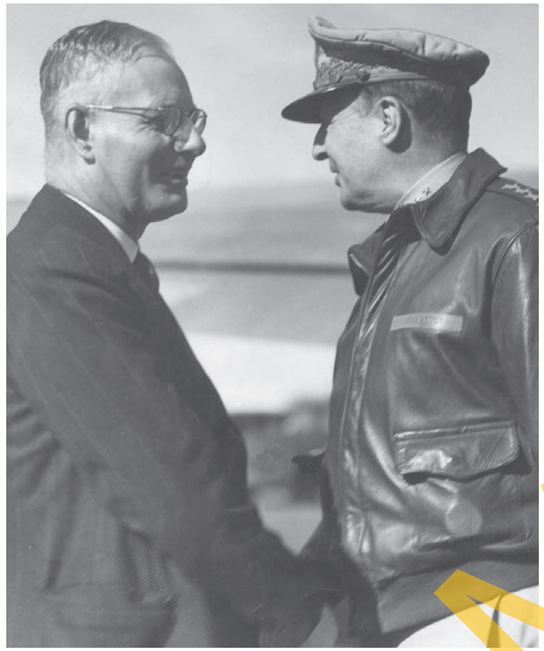
Australia and the USA

In 1939, Australia's Prime Minister Robert Menzies had committed Australia to a war in support of the British Empire. By 1945, though, the world had changed markedly. Britain had entered the conflict as one of the world's greatest powers. The countries of the empire cooperated to confront Nazi aggression in Europe. However, as the conflict expanded into a global one, the strains of war took their toll. In confronting Nazi Germany, Britain became dependent on the financial, military and economic support of the USA.

As the war continued, Britain's resources were reduced, and the nation found it increasingly difficult to defend itself and fight Germany and Italy in Europe and North Africa. Britain could only send limited resources to Asia, when the war expanded into the Asia–Pacific region. When Japan struck, Britain experienced its greatest wartime defeat with the fall of Singapore in 1942.

To address this changing situation, Prime Minister John Curtin moved Australian troops from the Middle East to Australia, against the advice of the British Government. This was a practical, short-term solution to a major strategic problem. The long-term consequence was the realisation that Australia could no longer rely on Britain to defend it. Australia now focused on a strategic relationship with the USA. As a result of this new arrangement, Curtin placed Australian forces under the control of the broader US military campaign in the Pacific.

American General Douglas MacArthur would also establish his base for the south-west Pacific campaign in Australia (see Source 6.84). Until this point, Australia's foreign policy had largely been determined by the needs of the British Empire. This relationship with the USA was an important step in establishing an independent Australia and continues to have an important bearing on Australian foreign policy decisions.



Source 6.84 Australian Prime Minister John Curtin welcomes General Douglas MacArthur to Australia, 1942

Domestic changes

The social and economic implications of the war were also far-reaching for Australia. Wartime industries had encouraged the growth of manufacturing and services. For the first time in the nation's history, farming ceased to be the major area of economic activity. Food processing and canning, an increase in steel production, and the manufacture of consumer goods such as washing machines and refrigerators all expanded during and after World War II. The first Holden car rolled off the assembly line at Fisherman's Bend, Victoria, on 29 November 1948, and cost the equivalent of two years' wages for the average worker – £675 ($1350).

The presence of almost one million American service personnel in Australia during the war also had a significant cultural impact. For some Australian women these men would become boyfriends or husbands. The influence of American cinema, language and culture made its first major inroads in Australia during this period. Australians had mixed feelings about this cultural 'invasion'. On one level, many feared the loss of Australian culture and traditions. On the other hand, for many younger Australians there was a fascination with American music, dress and slang.

The experiences of the war years also reshaped the role of Australian governments in people's lives and cemented the place of the federal parliament as the most significant of the three tiers of government in the nation. In order to fight the war, the federal government had significantly expanded the scope of its activities. Income taxation and its spending were now centrally controlled, and the banking system was regulated by government. The Australian public placed greater reliance and expectations on the government to successfully manage the economy and social issues.

The experience of war and the death of roughly 28000 Australian service personnel and civilians also shaped Australia's future. The commemoration of the 1939–45 fallen was incorporated into commemorations of World War I. Local communities recognised the sacrifice of the more recent deaths by extending and expanding the monuments originally constructed to remember the dead of the 1914–18 conflict, ironically described as 'the war to end all wars'.

Source 6.85 Memorial to those who lost their lives in the bombing of Darwin, February 1942

Source 6.86 The first production-model Holden rolled off the assembly line in 1948.

Source 6.87 US sailors and soldiers on their arrival in Australia quickly made friends wherever they went, and were received with hospitality.

SAMPLE

Source 6.88 Immigrants arrived from all corners of Europe as part of the 'Populate or perish' campaign.

Post-war migration

After World War II, many Australians felt that they had only narrowly avoided a Japanese invasion. The government, under the new Prime Minister Ben Chifley, decided that Australia needed to increase its population to protect itself from the threat of foreign invasion. The slogan 'Populate or perish' was coined by the Immigration Minister, Arthur Calwell, to promote this new immigration policy. The 'Populate or perish' campaign initially focused on encouraging British migrants, but this failed to increase the population enough. For the first time, Australia began to actively seek migrants from continental Europe (see Source 6.88).

The war had caused somewhere between 11 and 20 million refugees in Europe. Many of these refugees, including Holocaust survivors and people who had fled the Soviet occupation of Eastern European nations, were housed in Displaced Persons (DP) Camps. These camps were initially organised by the armies of various nations, but were gradually taken over by the United Nations. They provided shelter, nutrition and basic health care for the refugees. A more permanent solution had to be found, however. Around six million refugees were returned to their own countries by the end of 1945, but a huge number of refugees still faced persecution in their homelands and remained in the DP Camps. In 1947, around 850 000 refugees were still living in DP Camps in Europe. The International Refugee Organization (IRO) was founded by the United Nations in 1946 to find homes for these people.

In 1947, desperate to increase its population, Australia reached an agreement with the IRO to resettle 12 000 refugees a year. These 'new Australians', as they came to be called, were accepted on the condition that they agreed to work in government-selected jobs. Australia eventually exceeded its commitment to the IRO, and resettled approximately 180 000 refugees.

As well as refugees, the government sought to encourage people from southern and central Europe to migrate to Australia. In the 20 years after the end of World War II, almost two million people migrated to Australia. The influx of migrants from non-English speaking nations, as well as the belief that Australia's security was linked to its population size, changed Australia's migration policy. The dictation test, which had been used to effectively exclude migrants on the basis of race, was abolished in 1958. This led to Australia accepting refugees throughout the rest of the 20th century, including those from the Middle East and Vietnam; and, eventually, to accepting Asian migration.

World War II was the catalyst to change Australia's migration policies and Australia's relationships with the rest of the world.

Foundation of the United Nations

The **League of Nations**, which had been set up after World War I to provide an international forum to promote peace, had clearly failed. The first step towards establishing its replacement was the Declaration of the United Nations. Even while World War II was still in progress, plans were underway to create a new international body.

The **United Nations** officially came into existence in 1945, with 51 nations as founding members. The first major meeting to prepare the Charter of the United Nations was held in San Francisco in April 1945 (see Source 6.89). Australia's delegate, the then Minister for External Affairs, Herbert 'Doc' Evatt, played a key role in drafting the charter of the United Nations. The Charter outlined the role of the United Nations as an international organisation to prevent war. It also included provisions for the United Nations to aid refugees, support economic reconstruction after the war, and protect human rights.

Evatt argued that larger powers, such as the USA and the Soviet Union, should not dominate the system, and that smaller nations, such as Australia, had an important role to play. Evatt was involved in negotiating the establishment of the state of Israel, one of the first initiatives of the United Nations. He also played a key role in the drafting of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.

Evatt went on to become one of the first presidents of the United Nations General Assembly, the UN's main organisational structure. Other elements of the United Nations (such as the Security Council, the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank, the International Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC), the International Court of Justice, and the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)) all have their origins in the foundation of the United Nations and continue to play a significant part in world affairs.

Source 6.89 Australia's delegation to the United Nations Conference, San Francisco, 25 April 1945 – Herbert 'Doc' Evatt is seated second from the right

Check your learning 6.14

Remember and understand

1 Why did Prime Minister Curtin turn to the USA for support?
2 What moves did Curtin make once war loomed on Australia's doorstep?
3 Who coined the slogan 'Populate or perish'?
4 Why were many people forced to remain in DP Camps across Europe long after World War II had finished?
5 Why did Australia want a larger population after World War II?

Apply and analyse

6 How do you think Australia would be different today if Robert Menzies had remained prime minister throughout World War II?
7 Can the wartime relationship between Australia and the USA be described as a 'love–hate' relationship? Give reasons for your response.

SAMPLE

6.3 big**ideas:** rich task

Australian wartime propaganda posters

Throughout the course of World War II, a range of propaganda was used in Australia in order to encourage Australians to think and act in particular ways. Propaganda came in many different forms, including newspapers, radio, posters and other forms of mass communication (such as the short newsreels shown before feature films in cinemas).

skill**drill**

Analysing propaganda posters

Propaganda is anything that has been deliberately created to influence an audience's beliefs or actions. Even though the word propaganda has a negative connotation today, it is only information – a tool – and is neither good nor bad. It can provide historians with lots of information about the period being investigated. However, it needs to be very carefully analysed and evaluated. Use the following steps to guide your analysis of a propaganda poster.

Step 1 Establish the intended audience – who the producer of the poster intended to influence.

Step 2 Check the context of the poster. Consider:

- other events that may have been happening at the time and might have influenced the producer of the poster
- the political environment at the time the poster was created
- the common prejudices and social norms that existed at the time, which may have influenced the producer of the poster.

Step 3 Check the message that is being conveyed. Consider:

- the main images on the poster and what they seem to suggest or represent
- any text written on the poster – what it says or whether the message is direct or suggestive
- the persuasive techniques used – these can include: emotional appeals; generalisations; stereotypes; name calling (direct or indirect); repetition; social disapproval (that is, a suggestion that if the viewer acts in a different way to what is being promoted in the poster they will be rejected or made fun of by their friends or loved ones).

Source 6.90 An Australian propaganda poster produced by the Department of Aircraft Production (Beaufort Division) in 1942 – 'Beauforts' were the first all-metal aircraft built in Australia

Source 6.91 Recruitment poster 1942

Step 4 Establish the intended effect on the audience – what the producer of the poster hopes the audience will think/do/feel.

An example of the way in which propaganda can be analysed is provided in Source 6.91.

Apply the skill

1 Look carefully at Source 6.90 and analyse it using the steps above as a guide.

2 Write a short paragraph comparing and contrasting Sources 6.90 and 6.91 in terms of audience, message, intended effect and purpose.

Extend your understanding

1 What forms does propaganda take today that were not available during World War II? (For example, Twitter, Facebook etc.)

2 It is often assumed that propaganda contains false or untrue information. This is not always the case. Consider, for example, the many advertisements produced by the government to influence people to quit smoking. These can be defined as propaganda, given that they are an attempt to influence people's opinions and behaviour. Locate an example of modern-day propaganda, and analyse it using the steps outlined above.

3 Create your own propaganda poster to influence a specific audience to think or act in a particular way. Write a short paragraph explaining your intended audience, purpose, message and techniques used.

SAMPLE