

Dear Family Member,

In this unit, students will learn about the causes of World War II, America's involvement and role in the war, and the lasting effects of World War II in and beyond America.

What's the story?

Students will first learn about how the **causes of World War II** were, in many ways, rooted in World War I. They will then learn about the **rise of fascism** and the Nazi Party, the beginning of World War II, and the attack on **Pearl Harbor** that influenced America's choice to enter the war. This unit includes a lesson on the **Holocaust** and includes information about genocide and the system of **concentration camps**. These sensitive topics will be approached with an age appropriate context and care. Families can encourage respectful dialogue and remind their student to be mindful of the gravity of the subject matter. Students will also gain an understanding of the **European and Pacific Theaters** and consider how America contributed to the war effort on both fronts. Later, students will learn about **America's role** in ending the war, how World War II helped establish America as a leading industrialized nation and set the stage for our current economy, and how these events have **shaped our country**, continuing even to today.

What will my student learn how to do?

Throughout the unit, students will have opportunities to analyze informational texts, including primary source documents such as historical photographs and excerpts from speeches. Students will practice identifying the **purpose, audience, and message** of **argumentative texts**. Students will also engage in **reading and writing activities**, such as **identifying claims and supporting details**, to support their thinking about the unit texts. These activities will prepare them to **compose a five-paragraph argumentative essay** in which they **present a claim** and **provide evidence** to support the claim.

Conversation starters

Ask your student questions about the unit to promote discussion and continued learning:

1. What people, events, and beliefs led to the start of World War II?

Follow up: What prompted the change in Americans' opinions about entering World War II?

2. How did the United States contribute to the Allied war effort in World War II?
3. What significant events occurred in the Pacific Theater?

Follow up: How was the fighting in the Pacific Theater different from the fighting in the European Theater?

4. How did Americans at home support the war effort?
5. What were some of the lasting effects of World War II?