

Name: _____

The Bombing of Pearl Harbor

By Anita Venegas

December 7, 1941 is "a date which will live in infamy," meaning it is famous for bad reasons. That's when Pearl Harbor was attacked. It might be the most memorable event of World War II for the United States. But how much do you know about the moments leading up to the bombing of Oahu, Hawaii?



USS Arizona



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of Manchuria in northeastern China in September 1931. They didn't stop there. By 1937, war had fully broken out between China and Japan.

The United States government disliked Japan's invasion of China, but it hesitated to enter another war. About 117,000 American soldiers had died in World War I. However, when Japan invaded French Indochina in 1940, the U.S. couldn't ignore it. Instead of fighting, the U.S. embargoed all oil shipments to Japan in summer 1941. Japan's economy

through diplomacy, or discussion. Soldiers kept moving down China's eastern coastline and into the islands of Indonesia and the Pacific. How would they stop the U.S. from interfering in the land grab?

Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto was educated at Harvard University. He thought attacking the American bases at Pearl Harbor, on the island of Oahu, would cripple the U.S. military. On November 26, 1941, six aircraft carriers sailed out of Hitokappu Bay carrying more than 400 warplanes. They headed

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View of Pearl Harbor during Japanese attack

toward the Hawaiian Islands. They waited for orders about 200 miles (320 km) north of the target.

In the early morning of December 7,

2,400 Americans lost their lives.

Speaking to a joint session of Congress on December 8, President Franklin D.

Roosevelt addressed the nation:



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spotted on radar. warning messages were either ignored or arrived too late. An hour later, the second wave—nearly 170 warplanes—continued the attack.

There were about 100 ships at Pearl Harbor. Less than one third were damaged. Most were recovered, repaired, and returned to service. The *USS Arizona*, *USS Utah*, and *USS Oklahoma* were damaged beyond repair. They remain on the ocean floor. Almost 350 out of 400 American planes, however, were damaged or destroyed. About

two fronts: Europe and the Pacific. The war in Europe ended May 8, 1945.

Japan refused to surrender. As a result, the president decided to use a new weapon—the atomic bomb. In August 1945, two atom bombs, nicknamed Little Boy and Fat Man, were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki three days apart. It is estimated that over 200,000 people died as a result of the bombs.

Japan surrendered to the United States on September 2, 1945.

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The Bombing of Pearl Harbor



**Wreckage
at Naval Air
Station**

1. Which statement about the attack on Pearl Harbor is *not* true?
 - a. The U.S. bases received no warnings before the first bombs.
 - b. The Japanese ships took more than a week to get into position.
 - c. The Air Force suffered the greatest loss of property.
 - d. It was a preventative attack to defend Japan's Pacific expansion.
2. Japan is an island nation. What did that *most* contribute to in the lead-up to and aftermath of Pearl Harbor?
 - a. Japan's ability to launch surprise aerial attacks
 - b. Japan's use of oil in its economy and war efforts
 - c. Japan's refusal to surrender even after European nations did



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What can you reasonably infer based on the underlined word?

- a. The U.S. had expressed little interest in the war until then.
 - b. The U.S. had already been assisting in the war but not fighting.
 - c. The U.S. would never have joined the war if not for Pearl Harbor.
 - d. The U.S. joining the war was the greatest factor in its final outcome.
5. Who were Little Boy and Fat Man?

6. Why do you think the author says the attack on Pearl Harbor might be the most memorable event of World War II for the United States?

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The Bombing of Pearl Harbor



President Franklin D. Roosevelt

The scrambled words below are vocabulary words from the article. Unscramble each word and write it on the line. Please be sure each word is spelled correctly.

1. _____ o c n e m o y
clue: production and distribution of goods and services
2. _____ l i d m o p y a c
clue: peaceful international relations through talk



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- clue:** a meeting of both the senate and house
6. _____ r u s n e r r e d
clue: to give up, especially in battle or war
 7. _____ v a i n o i n s
clue: forceful and unwanted entry
 8. _____ f i n y a m
clue: an evil reputation; something famously bad
 9. _____ t e x c a r t
clue: to draw out; to take or pull out from
 10. _____ m e g o b r a
clue: a ban, especially on trade

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The Bombing of Pearl Harbor



USS Oklahoma

In the article, "The Bombing of Pearl Harbor," you read about the lead-up to and aftermath of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

In your own words, explain why Japan attacked Pearl Harbor.

Be sure to mention both long- and short-term causes as well as Japan's goal(s) for the attack. Do you think the mission achieved its goal(s)? Why or why not? Use specific details from the text to support your answer.



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ANSWER KEY

The Bombing of Pearl Harbor



1. Which statement about the attack on Pearl Harbor is *not* true?

a. The U.S. bases received no warnings before the first bombs.

b. The Japanese ships took more than a week to get into position.

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6. Why do you think the author says the attack on Pearl Harbor might be the most memorable event of World War II for the United States?

Answers will vary. An example is: The author says it might be the most memorable event of World War II for the United States because it was the reason the United States joined the war to begin with.

ANSWER KEY

The Bombing of Pearl Harbor

The scrambled words below are vocabulary words from the article. Unscramble each word and write it on the line. Please be sure each word is spelled correctly.



President Franklin D. Roosevelt

1. **economy**

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10. **embargo**

clue: to draw out; to take or pull out from

m e g o b r a

clue: a ban, especially on trade