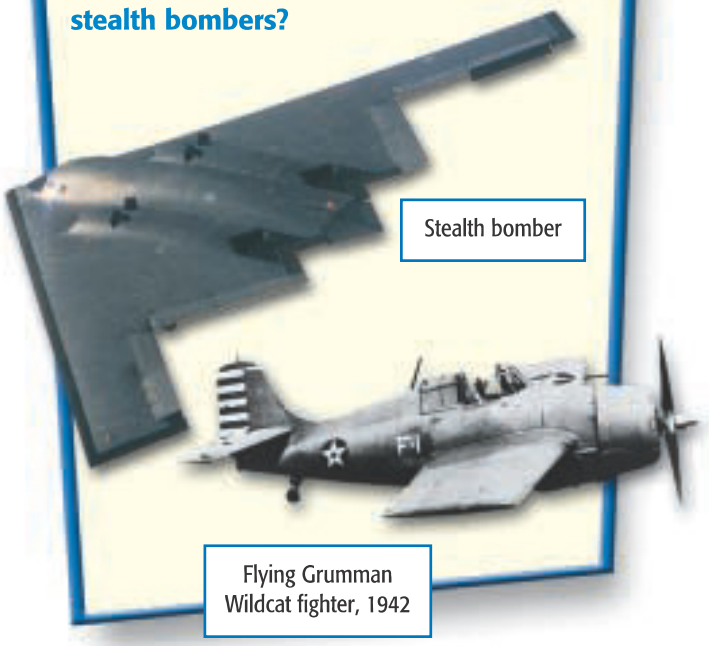
Linking Past & Present

Aerial Warfare

Germany introduced jet planes late in World War II. The German jets could fly almost 550 miles per hour. By the 1960s American and Soviet jets roared through the skies at 1,000 miles per hour. Today United States military aircraft includes the F-117 stealth fighter. A winglike shape and flat surfaces that absorb radar energy make it difficult for enemy radar to detect it. **How do World War II planes differ from modern stealth bombers?**



Stealth bomber

Flying Grumman Wildcat fighter, 1942

America and the War

The United States watched the war in Europe with growing concern. Although most Americans sympathized with the Allies, they were determined to avoid war. Isolationists banded together to form the **America First Committee.** Its members thought the United States should keep out of Europe's business. Among those who led this group were aviation hero Charles Lindbergh and automaker Henry Ford.

While vowing to remain neutral, Roosevelt took steps to prepare for war. In 1938, at his request, Congress voted to strengthen the navy. In 1939 the president asked Congress to pass a new Neutrality Act that allowed the United States to sell weapons to other countries on a "cash and carry" basis. In 1940 FDR signed the Selective Training and Service Act, the first peacetime draft in United States history. The law applied to American men between the ages of 21 and 35.

Neutrality Acts

The Neutrality Acts were laws that were passed by the United States Congress in the 1930s, in response to the growing turmoil in Europe and Asia that eventually led to World War II. They were spurred by the growth in isolationism and non-interventionism in the US following its costly involvement in World War I, and sought to ensure that the US would not become entangled again in foreign conflicts.

The legacy of the Neutrality Acts in the 1930s was widely regarded as having been generally negative: they made no distinction between aggressor and victim, treating both equally as "belligerents"; and they limited the US government's ability to aid Britain against Nazi Germany. The acts were largely repealed in 1941, in the face of German submarine attacks on U.S. vessels and the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

The 1940 Election

With the world in crisis, President Roosevelt decided to run for a third term, breaking the tradition set by George Washington. The Republicans chose as their candidate a former Democrat—business leader Wendell L. Willkie of Indiana. Willkie approved almost all of Roosevelt's New Deal reforms and generally agreed with his foreign policy. Public sentiment to stay out of the war was so strong that Roosevelt promised the American people, "Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars." Roosevelt won an easy victory.

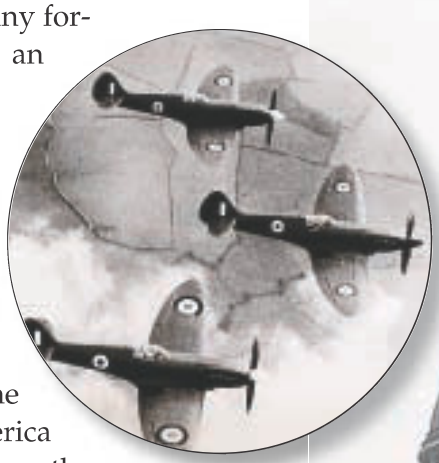
U.S. Involvement Grows

With the election won, Roosevelt moved to support the Allies openly. At Roosevelt's urging, Congress approved the **Lend-Lease** Act in March 1941. The Lend-Lease Act allowed America to sell, lend, or lease arms or other war supplies to any nation considered "vital to the defense of the United States." Britain, which was running out of cash, was the first to use lend-lease. Isolationists opposed the Lend-Lease Act, arguing that it would increase American involvement in the war.

German submarines in the Atlantic Ocean had been sinking British ships, including those carrying supplies from the United States. In April 1941, American ships began escorting convoys of British merchant ships. After the Germans began firing on American destroyers, Roosevelt issued a "shoot-on-sight" order to American naval vessels that found German and Italian ships in certain areas.

The Atlantic Charter

In August 1941, President Roosevelt and British prime minister Churchill met and drew up the **Atlantic Charter.** While Roosevelt made no military commitments, he joined Churchill in setting goals for a world after "the final destruction of the Nazi tyranny." The two nations pledged that the people of every nation would be free to choose their own form of government and live free of "fear and want." They urged **disarmament**—giving up military weapons—and the creation of a "permanent system of general security."





The bombing of London caused much ruin. The Royal Air Force (inset) forced Hitler to abandon his invasion plans.



Picturing History

Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor severely damaged the U.S. Pacific Fleet. **How did the attack affect American neutrality?**

U.S. Losses at Pearl Harbor

Human Casualties	Killed	Wounded
Navy	1,998	710
Marine Corps	109	69
Army	233	364
Civilian	48	35
Ships		
Sunk or beached	12	
Damaged	9	
Aircraft		
Destroyed	164	
Damaged	159	

Source: USS *Arizona* Memorial.

The Japanese Threat

While Hitler and Mussolini were waging war in Europe, the Japanese were making military conquests in the Far East. After seizing much of China in the 1930s, the Japanese continued their expansion. After the fall of France in 1940, they seized the French colony of **Indochina** in Southeast Asia. Japan also planned to take the Dutch East Indies, British Malaya, and the American territory of the Philippines, primarily to acquire badly needed rubber and oil.

The United States Responds

The United States responded to Japan's aggression by applying economic pressure. Roosevelt froze all Japanese assets in American banks, preventing the Japanese from obtaining funds they had in the United States. He also stopped the sale of oil, gasoline, and other natural resources that Japan lacked. The action outraged the Japanese.

In October 1941, the Japanese prime minister, Fumimaro Konoye, resigned. Konoye had been willing to negotiate with the United States because he did not believe Japan could defeat America in a war. The new prime minister, General **Hideki Tōjō,** did not share Konoye's views. Still, on November 20, negotiations were opened in Washington between the United States and Japan. At the same time, confident of Japan's military might, the Tōjō government began planning an attack on the United States.

Attack on Pearl Harbor

At 7:55 A.M. on Sunday, December 7, 1941, Japanese warplanes attacked the American military base at **Pearl Harbor,** Hawaii. The American installations at Pearl Harbor could not have been more vulnerable to attack. Ships were anchored in a neat row and airplanes were grouped together on the airfield, easy targets for a Japanese air attack. As the following excerpt shows, the Americans at Pearl Harbor were taken completely by surprise:

> In the Navy housing areas around Pearl Harbor, people couldn't imagine what was wrecking Sunday morning. Captain Reynolds Hayden, enjoying breakfast at his home on Hospital Point, thought it was construction blasting. . . . Lieutenant C. E. Boudreau, drying down after a shower, thought an oil tank had blown up near his quarters . . . until a Japanese plane almost grazed the bathroom window. Chief Petty Officer Albert Molter, puttering around his Ford Island flat, thought a drill was going on until his wife Esther called, 'Al, there's a battleship tipping over.'

The attack devastated the American fleet, destroying eight battleships, three cruisers, and four other vessels. Hundreds of planes were destroyed on the ground. More than 2,300 soldiers, sailors, and civilians were killed.

Fortunately, at the time of the attack, the navy's three aircraft carriers were at sea. Their escape from destruction provided the only good news that day.

Grace Tully, one of the president's secretaries, received an urgent call to report to the White House. She later recalled:

> Most of the news on the . . . attack was then coming to the White House by telephone from Admiral Stark, Chief of Naval Operations, at the Navy Department . . . each report more terrible than the last, and I could hear the shocked unbelief in Admiral Stark's voice.



Pearl Harbor was the worst defeat in United States military history. Yet Pearl Harbor also united Americans. All debate about involvement in the war ended. On the day after Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt asked Congress for a declaration of war, calling December 7 "a date which will live in infamy." Congress quickly approved the president's request to declare war on Japan.

Three days later Germany and Italy, Japan's allies, declared war on the United States. Congress then declared war on them as well. The United States had joined the Allied nations—including Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union—against the Axis Powers—Germany, Italy, and Japan—in World War II.

(On a Separate Piece of paper) Answer the following questions:

1. What was the Lend Lease Act?

2. What did it allow the United States to do?

3. What was the policy of the United States before the Lend Lease Act?

4. What was the U.S. response to Japanese imperialism in the Pacific?

5. Who attacked the U.S. at Pearl Harbor?

6. Why did the United States enter World War II?

7. Name the Axis Powers (Countries):

8. Name the Allied Powers(Countries):

9. What branch of the U.S. government, under the U.S. Constitution has the power to Declare War?