

ACTIVITY 10**Document-Based Activities****World War II****Using Source Materials**

HISTORICAL CONTEXT When World War II began, millions of American men left to serve overseas. As a result businesses and industries at home needed a new supply of workers. Women and African Americans got the opportunity to take over many jobs previously done by white males. On the other hand, over 110,000 Japanese Americans were forced into relocation camps. The U.S. government feared that they might help the enemy.

TASK

Using information from the documents in Part A and your knowledge of U.S. history, answer the questions that follow each document. Your answers to the questions will help you write the Part B essay, in which you:

- discuss how World War II increased opportunity and power for some Americans.
- describe how World War II decreased opportunity and power for other Americans.

PART A

DIRECTIONS Read and examine the following documents. Underline key words and make notes in the margin if you wish. Then answer the questions using complete sentences.

DOCUMENT 1

... men called to war service actually have been replaced by women in types of work formerly not done, or done only rarely, by women.

... They include ... taxi drivers, bank tellers, electricians ... Women are operating service stations. They are replacing men as finger-print classifiers. A southern city reports a woman manager of a parking lot.

—*The Woman Worker*, U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, 1942

1a. List three jobs that a woman might not have been able to get before 1942.

1b. In 1942 women began to get jobs that were previously not available to them. Why?

Activity 10, World War II, continued

DOCUMENT 2



National Archives (NWDNS-179-WP-1563)

2a. Who was the “We” referred to in this poster? What was it that they could do?

2b. What image of women does this poster present?

2c. What did the War Production Co-Ordinating Committee want American women to do after seeing this poster?

Activity 10, World War II, continued

DOCUMENT 3

Before You Read: The following words in the document below may be new to you: *utmost, discourtesy, segregate, sadistic, prejudice, technical, courageous*. You may want to look them up in a dictionary. The Tuskegee Airmen were a group of African American pilots who were trained at Tuskegee, Alabama, to help win World War II.

I applied to the U.S. Army in the middle of '41. Of course I was treated with the utmost discourtesy. I was disgusted and wrote to Eleanor Roosevelt, who responded in three days and told me there was a program for black fliers in Tuskegee and apologized for the segregated nature of things. As a result, in September 1942, I had an opportunity to go to Tuskegee for flight training . . . However, the town of Tuskegee itself was not a good place to be in. They had a sadistic sheriff named Pat Evans, who loved hassling black soldiers, and we got hassled at every opportunity.

—Captain Charles Bussey, pilot
Tuskegee Airman

The key to the civil rights movement was the Tuskegee Airmen. Our aim was to convince white people that if we could do the job as well as, or better than they, they wouldn't be prejudiced . . . If we had lost a lot of bombers . . . we'd have been remembered, but not well. But because of our outstanding record of not losing a bomber, of shooting down three jets, of destroying the first enemy naval destroyer, and a lot of other things, we showed that black people could do technical and courageous things and could do them as well as, or better than, white folks.

—Captain Roscoe Brown, pilot
Tuskegee Airman

3a. What challenges did African Americans face while serving in the U.S. armed forces?

3b. What opportunities did World War II provide for African Americans?

3c. What accomplishments of the Tuskegee Airmen are described above?

Activity 10, World War II, continued

DOCUMENT 4

WHEREAS it is the policy of the United States to encourage full participation in the national defense program by all citizens of the United States, . . . in the firm belief that the democratic way of life within the nation can be defended successfully only with the help and support of all groups . . .

WHEREAS there is evidence that . . . workers have been barred from employment in industries engaged in defense production solely because of considerations of race, creed, color, or national origin, . . .

NOW THEREFORE, . . . I do hereby reaffirm the policy of the United States that there shall be no discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or government because of race, creed, color, or national origin . . .

—President Franklin D. Roosevelt
Executive Order 8802, June 25, 1941

4a. What were two reasons given by President Roosevelt for issuing this order?

4b. Who do you think benefited most from Executive Order 8802?

Activity 10, World War II, continued

DOCUMENT 5

Before You Read: The following words in the document below may be new to you: *evacuation, Gestapo, righteous, descent, incongruous, transient, inalienable*. You may want to look them up in a dictionary. *Nisei* is the Japanese term for an American-born son or daughter of a Japanese immigrant.

I am strongly opposed to mass evacuation of American-born Japanese. It is my honest belief that such an action would not solve the question of Nisei loyalty.

... I would like to ask the committee: has the Gestapo come to America? Have we not risen in righteous anger at Hitler's mistreatment of the Jews? Then, is it not incongruous that citizen Americans of Japanese descent should be similarly mistreated and persecuted?

... We cannot understand why General DeWitt can make exceptions for families of German and Italian soldiers in the armed forces of the United States while ignoring the civil rights of the Nisei Americans. Are we to be condemned merely on the basis of our racial origin? Is citizenship such a light and transient thing that that which is our inalienable right in normal times can be torn from us in times of war?

—James Omura, a Japanese American
testifying against the relocation of Japanese Americans, 1942

5a. How did Omura compare the U.S. government to Hitler's Nazi government?

5b. For what reason did Omura believe that Japanese Americans were being persecuted?

Activity 10, World War II, continued

DOCUMENT 6

Before You Read: The following words in the document below may be new to you: *occupancy, fraught, Caucasian*. You may want to look them up in a dictionary.

I hesitate to think what the result would be of the destruction of any of our big airplane factories in this State. It will interest you to know that some of our airplane factories . . . are entirely surrounded by Japanese land ownership or occupancy. It is a situation that is fraught with the greatest danger and under no circumstances should be permitted to exist . . .

. . . when we are dealing with the Caucasian race we have methods that will test the loyalty of them, and we believe that we can, in dealing with the Germans and the Italians arrive at some fairly sound conclusions . . . But when we deal with the Japanese we are in an entirely different field . . . Their method of living, their language, make for this difficulty. Many of them who show you a birth certificate stating that they were born in this State . . . can hardly speak the English language because . . . when they were 4 or 5 years of age they were sent over to Japan to be educated . . . and then they came back here thoroughly Japanese . . .

—Earl Warren, Attorney General of California,
testifying for the relocation of Japanese Americans, 1942

6a. Why was Warren in favor of forcing Japanese Americans to relocate?

6b. What kind of test did Warren feel unable to give to Japanese Americans? Why?

Activity 10, World War II, continued

DOCUMENT 7

Before You Read: The following words in the document below may be new to you: *frantic*, *barrack*, *sheetrock*. You may want to look them up in a dictionary.

As we plodded through the powdery sand toward Block 7, I began to understand why everyone looked like pieces of flour-dusted pastry. In its frantic haste to construct this barrack city, the Army had removed every growing thing, and what had once been a peaceful lake bed was now churned up into one great mass of loose flour-like sand. With each step we sank two to three inches deep, sending up swirls of dust that crept into our eyes and mouths, noses and lungs.

Each barrack was one hundred feet in length, and divided into six rooms for families of varying sizes. We were assigned to a room in the center, about twenty by eighteen feet, designed for occupancy by four people. When we stepped into our room it contained nothing but four army cots without mattresses. No inner sheetrock walls or ceilings had yet been installed, nor had the black pot-bellied stove that stood outside our door. Cracks were visible everywhere in the siding and around the windows, and although our friends had swept out our room before we arrived, the dust was already seeping into it again from all sides.

—Yoshiko Uchida, *Desert Exile*, 1982

7a. How did Yoshiko Uchida describe the Army’s construction of the relocation camp?

7b. What hardships did Japanese Americans encounter upon arriving at the Topaz relocation camp?

Activity 10, World War II, continued

DOCUMENT 8



—housing at the relocation camp at Poston, Arizona, 1942

8a. Describe the buildings in the photograph. What do they look like?

8b. How do you think relocated Japanese Americans felt about their new living quarters?

Activity 10, World War II, continued

Writing a Document-Based Essay

PART B

DIRECTIONS Write a well-organized essay. It should include an introduction, a body of several paragraphs, and a conclusion. Use evidence from at least *four* documents in Part A to support your response. You may draw on any additional knowledge you have learned about the subject.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT When World War II began, millions of American men left to serve overseas. As a result businesses and industries at home needed a new supply of workers. Women and African Americans got the opportunity to take over many jobs previously done by white males. On the other hand, over 110,000 Japanese Americans were forced into relocation camps. The U.S. government feared that they might help the enemy.

TASK

Using information from the documents in Part A and your knowledge of U.S. history, write an essay in which you:

- discuss how World War II increased opportunity and power for some Americans.
- discuss how World War II decreased opportunity and power for other Americans.

GUIDELINES

In your essay, be sure to:

- Provide a thorough response to the Task. Be sure to cover all parts of the assignment.
- Include specific information from at least *four* of the sources in Part A.
- Incorporate relevant information from your textbook and classwork.
- Organize your essay in a clear and logical way.
- Support your statements with facts and information that address the topic.
- Write a conclusion that sums up your ideas.

Note: Do not simply restate the Task or Historical Context. Your essay should include more information.